

JAN FONTEIN

ENTERING THE DHARMADHĀTU

A Study of the *Gandavyūha* Reliefs
of Borobudur



Studies in Asian Art and Archaeology

BRILL

Entering the Dharmadhātu

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Entering the Dharmadhātu

A Study of the *Gandavyūha* Reliefs
of Borobudur

By
Jan Fontein



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Cover illustration: Sudhana enters the *kūtāgāra* (third gallery, main wall). See also p. 72 and Fig. 19 in this volume.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In writing this study of the *Gandavyūha* reliefs of Borobudur, I have profited in many different ways from the works of the scholars who preceded me in the study of Borobudur and the Buddhist scriptures that have been illustrated in the bas-reliefs sculpted on its walls. First and foremost I wish to acknowledge my great debt of gratitude to the late Dr. N.J. Krom (1883-1945) and my late teacher Dr. F.D.K. Bosch (1887-1967), both professors of Leiden University. Their pioneering studies on the *Gandavyūha* reliefs have been an inexhaustible source of inspiration for me. As most of the Borobudur studies by these two eminent scholars were written in Dutch, the results of their research have for a large part remained inaccessible to the international community of scholars of Borobudur. It is my hope that the translation into English of selected key passages from their studies may finally grant them the international recognition their pioneering work so clearly deserves. Although not dealing specifically with the bas-reliefs of Borobudur, the much more recent studies of the *Gandavyūha* by Phyllis Granoff, Tilmann Vetter, and Douglas Osto have added much to my appreciation of the rich store of Avatamsaka lore that inspired the architects and sculptors of the monument.

I would be negligent if I did not recognize here the immense help I received from the *Gandavyūha* translations into western languages by other scholars. The first is a German translation of Buddhahadra's Chinese translation (T.278), *Das Kegon Sutra, Das Buch vom Eintreten in den Kosmos der Wahrheit* by Dōi Torakazu (Tōkyō, 1978). During my student days in Japan I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of this gifted translator, a disciple of the distinguished philosopher Nishida Kitarō (1870-1945) and a dedicated student of Avatamsaka Buddhism. Like Dōi's German translation Thomas Cleary's English translation, *Entry into the Realm of Reality* (Boston and Shaftesbury, 1989) is based upon a Chinese translation of the entire *Avatamsaka-sūtra* of which the *Gandavyūha* forms the concluding chapter. By translating the entire *sūtra* both authors have provided their readers with a unique insight in the wider context of the Avatamsaka philosophy as it is articulated in the *Gandavyūha*.

I have also greatly profited from the highly useful partial translations of the Sanskrit text of the *Gandavyūha* by Mark Allen Ehman (1977) and Yuko Ijiri (2005). Whenever possible, I have indicated my borrowings from all of these different sources. Although references to the exact choice of words or expressions used by each of these translators could not always be included for practical reasons, the crucial contributions made by all of them are hereby gratefully acknowledged. I remain, of course, solely responsible for any misinterpretation of their work that I may have inadvertently committed.

The present study complements part of my doctoral dissertation, *The Pilgrimage of Sudhana* (1966), which discussed only the *Gandavyūha* reliefs of the second main wall of Borobudur. *Entering the Dharmadhātu* covers the entire set of 460 bas-reliefs which together illustrate the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī*.

Entering the Dharmadhātu also reflects the results of my lifelong scholarly interest in Borobudur. In 1947, at the very beginning of my career as a scholar, I had the good fortune to

make the acquaintance of Dr. Theodoor van Erp (1874-1958), the legendary first restorer of Borobudur. It was this soldier, artist, architect, and scholar who introduced me to the magic world of Borobudur. He awakened in me an interest that I have continued to pursue—albeit intermittently—for more than sixty years. The inspiring example set by Dr. van Erp has made me realize that the ideals of the *kalyānamitras*, the spiritual mentors who guided the pilgrim Sudhana of the *Gandavyūha*, have lost little of their relevance in today's world.

My decision to postpone an examination of the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries of Borobudur until my years of retirement from my activities in the museum world has had one sad consequence. Some of my fellow-scholars and close friends, who dedicated years of their lives to the study and preservation of Borobudur and who gave me steadfast encouragement, are no longer with us to read and offer their criticism of the final results of my research. I would like to mention here especially the constant support and sound advice that I received over the years from the late Prof. Dr. A. J. Bernet Kempers, the last Dutch director of the Archaeological Service of Indonesia. I am likewise grateful to my longtime Indonesian friend, the late Prof. Dr. R. Soekmono. As the second restorer of Borobudur he fully deserves to be remembered as a *Jirnnodhāra*, or “Restorer of Ruins”, a royal epithet first mentioned in the Singosari inscription of 1273. C.E. I am also deeply indebted to my late friend *in situ*, the distinguished soldier and diplomat, Air Marshal Boediardjo, who grew up in the village of Pawon, next to Borobudur, and who played a crucial role in the reshaping of the modern environment of the monument. Last but not least I wish to express my profound gratitude to my last *kalyānamitra*, the late Reverend Father Prof. Dr. P.J. Zoetmulder, S.J., who invited me to conduct research in his extensive library in Yogyakarta for more than one year and who unstintingly shared with me his vast knowledge of ancient and contemporary Java.

As a member of the dwindling first generation of post-colonial Borobudur scholars I am particularly gratified to witness the recent growth of interest in the monument far outside its homeland Indonesia and that of its former colonial rulers, the Netherlands. Especially gratifying is the profound interest in Borobudur expressed by the Japanese Buddhist clergy of the Kegonshū (Avatamsaka sect) of the Tōdaiji temple in Nara, led by its *chōrō*, or former abbot, the Reverend Morimoto Kōsei. Invigorated by new philological and buddhological research on the *Gandavyūha* in countries as far apart as Hungary and New Zealand, a solid foundation is being laid for a continuation of the re-appraisal of the many different aspects of this great monument. May the present study contribute to that never ending pursuit.

Jan Fontein
Newton, Mass., October, 2011

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Of Krom's publications dealing with the *Gandavyūha* reliefs of Borobudur, only the detailed discussion of the reliefs of the second gallery has been translated into English. They appear in N.J. Krom, *Barabudur, Archaeological Description*, vol. II, (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1927). All other quotations from Krom's publications have been translated from the originals in Dutch. Unless indicated otherwise, they have been taken from N.J. Krom and T. van Erp, *Beschrijving van Barabudur*, vol. I, *Archaeologische Beschrijving*, 's-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff 1920. As I have followed Krom's system of numbering the reliefs, most of the original passages in Dutch can be found in his descriptions of the reliefs in the original 1920 publication under the numbers which Krom had assigned to them. For the quotations translated from the introductory remarks in the same chapters, page references to the 1920 publication are given.

In discussing the reliefs of the second and third galleries, as well as those of the balustrade of the fourth gallery, all quotations from Bosch are taken from his article "De beteekenis der reliefs van de derde en vierde gaanderij van Baraboedoer" (The meaning of the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries of Borobudur), in: *Oudheidkundig Verslag*, derde en vierde kwartaal, 1929, (Weltevreden, 1930), 179-243. Another version of this article was reprinted in T. van Erp, *Beschrijving van Barabudur*, vol. II, *Bouwkundige Beschrijving* (Architectural Description), The Hague: Nijhoff, 1931, 21-58, but the page references given in the present study are all taken from the original 1929 publication.

In discussing the reliefs of the fourth main wall, illustrating the *Bhadracarī*, all quotations from Bosch have been translated from his article "De Bhadracarī afgebeeld op den hoofdmuur der vierde gaanderij van den Baraboedoer" (The Bhadracarī illustrated on the main wall of the fourth gallery of Borobudur) in: *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. 97 (1938), no. 2, 241-293.

There are two complete and several partial translations of the *Gandavyūha* into western languages. The first of these is the translation of Buddhahadra's Chinese translation (T.278) into German by Dōi Torakazu, *Das Kegon Sutra, Das Buch vom Eintreten in den Kosmos der Wahrheit*, Tōkyō, 1978. The English translation by Thomas Cleary is largely based upon Śiksānanda's Chinese translation (T.279). Additional passages, including the entire *Bhadracarī*, were translated from the Chinese translation of the *Gandavyūha* by Prajñā (T.293). His *Entry into the Realm of Reality*, Shambala: Boston and Shaftesbury, 1989, is the sequel to his complete translation of the earlier parts of the Chinese *Avatamsaka sūtra*, entitled *The Flower Ornament Scripture*, 2 vols., Boston: Shambala, 1985-86.

Dr. Cleary's principal aim was to make this important Buddhist scripture accessible to a wider audience. In discussing the reliefs of the second main wall it was my original intention to quote for each visit a passage from his translation, as it provides the reader with an excellent and highly readable impression of the general contents of the *Gandavyūha*. However, the restrictions imposed by Dr. Cleary on quotations from his translation obliged me to abandon this idea. For those readers who do not read German, Chinese, or Sanskrit, but who wish to compare the reliefs with the contents of the *Gandavyūha* I have therefore inserted only page references to Cleary's English translation of the descriptions of Sudhana's visits.

In the later chapters of the present study I have focused on the last part of the text which is entirely devoted to the reliefs illustrating Sudhana's last three visits to the Bodhisattvas Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, and Samantabhadra. These visits have been extensively illustrated on the third and fourth galleries of Borobudur in a long sequence of more than three hundred reliefs. One of the principal aims of my research was to match text passages with the images on these panels. For this purpose I had to cast a wider net, gathering as many variants of the text as possible. For the passages dealing with these three visits I have focused especially on the elaborate Chinese translation by Prajñā (T.293) which most often contains variant readings providing a clue to the meaning of the reliefs.

From time to time I have quoted from two excellent and highly useful partial translations of the Sanskrit text. Mark Allen Ehman, *The Gandavyūha: Search for Enlightenment*, a typescript dissertation of the University of Wisconsin (1977), contains translations of the prose prologue and five other chapters, all translated from the Sanskrit edition by Vaidya. Recently a first critical edition of the Sanskrit text of four chapters of the *Gandavyūha*, accompanied by synoptically arranged Chinese and Tibetan parallel texts and an English translation of the Sanskrit text have been published by Yuko Ijiri (Yuko Ijiri, *The Four Upāsikā Chapters of the Gandavyūha, A Comparative Edition and a Translation*, doctoral dissertation, Leiden University, 2005). Whenever possible, I have indicated my borrowings from all of these earlier translations. Translations from the Sanskrit texts have been borrowed exclusively from Bosch (1929 and 1938), Ehman (1977), and Ijiri (2005).

After Krom and Bosch only two scholars have ventured to provide new identifications for the Borobudur reliefs of the *Gandavyūha*. The first of these is the Japanese Buddhistologist Hikata Ryūshō. His identifications are contained in the following two publications: "Gandavyūha and the reliefs of Barabudur Galleries" in: *Studies in Indology and Buddhism*, presented in honour of Professor Gishō Nakano on the occasion of his seventieth birthday, Kōyasan University, 1960, 1-51, and "Buddhist Scripture and the Wall Reliefs of Borobudur", in: *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Chandi Borobudur*, Kyodo News Enterprise, 1981, 105-127.

Most of Hikata's identifications have been adopted by Jean-Louis Nou and Louis Frédéric, who have produced a handsome volume, *Borobudur*, New York/ London/Paris, 1994. One of its most useful features is a complete set of illustrations of all Borobudur reliefs, reproduced in reduced size after the original photographs by Theodoor van Erp. For many scholars this will remain a handy work of reference, more easily accessible for quick reference and more affordable than the voluminous portfolios of splendid illustrations prepared by van Erp. The readers will notice, however, that Frédéric's captions of the reliefs, some descriptive and some interpretative (the latter often based upon Hikata's identifications), differ frequently from those proposed in the present study. In order not to burden this study with a complete record of all different interpretations, reference to Hikata's and Frédéric's captions has been made only when the differences between their and my own identifications were deemed to be of sufficient significance for our understanding of the reliefs that mention of them seemed useful or necessary.

Because the time they can actually spend on the monument is often limited, most scholars of Borobudur who followed in Krom's and Bosch's footsteps relied on van Erp's portfolios of excellent photographs. Krom, stranded in Leiden during the First World War, even had to rely on them when he wrote his *Archaeologische Beschrijving* (1920). Its publishers decided to reproduce the reliefs by means of a now obsolete printing process which involved the destruction of the original glass negatives. Before this was done, however, a complete set of

photographic prints was deposited in the library of Leiden University. Since that time, this complete photographic record has greatly increased in documentary value. Since the first restoration of the monument, between 1907 and 1911, when van Erp's photographs were taken, many reliefs have suffered serious erosion as a result of their long exposure to the scorching Javanese sun and the heavy monsoon rains. Consequently, van Erp's photographs show many more details of the reliefs than are visible today. A few years after completing his monograph Krom had an opportunity to return to Borobudur to check on the validity of his often detailed descriptions of the reliefs, based exclusively on these photographs. He revised his comments whenever necessary (Krom 1921).

The reliance on van Erp's precious photographic record may have had one unintended side effect. As many negatives showed only a single relief, scholars relying on these photographs have tended to view the bas-reliefs primarily as independent, self-contained entities. As a result sometimes less attention has been paid to their context and their visual relationship with adjacent panels. Frédéric's more recent publication has inadvertently compounded this problem. The layout of his illustrations of the reliefs has been arranged in several registers across facing pages in a sequence running from left to right. This layout arranged the reliefs of the main wall in the opposite of the actual viewing direction, which is based on the *pradakṣiṇā*, the Buddhist ritual clockwise circumambulation, adopted by the sculptors. This layout sometimes deprives us of an opportunity to notice the visual connection between adjacent individual reliefs.

In my dissertation, *The Pilgrimage of Sudhana* (The Hague, Mouton & Cie, 1966), I proposed a number of new identifications for the bas-reliefs of the main wall of the second gallery. They add to those made by Krom and Bosch, but they often differ from those made by Hikata. At the time I focused primarily on the reliefs of the second main wall which illustrate Sudhana's pilgrimage up to his arrival at Maitreya's *kūtāgāra*, the palace of miracles. I postponed a discussion of the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries for a later occasion. However, since this is the first time in many years that a detailed study of the sculpted illustrations of these last visits appears, it seemed advisable to use the occasion to treat the entire topic of the *Gandavyūha* reliefs of Borobudur in a comprehensive manner. This provides the reader with a fuller account of the range of problems encountered when we try to identify and interpret the reliefs. I decided, therefore, to include in the present study a revised and expanded version of my previously published identifications of the reliefs of the second main wall (Fontein 1966). This will give the reader a better impression of the contrasting ways in which the sculptors have interpreted the earlier and later parts of the text. This decision inevitably resulted in a certain amount of duplication with my earlier publications. I believe, however, that the flexible methods of illustration that were used by the sculptors can only be fully appreciated if we compare the methods and procedures which they adopted for the illustration of the earlier visits on the second gallery with those selected for the illustration of the three final visits on the third and fourth galleries of the monument.

Throughout this book the Roman numerals in parentheses immediately following the names of Sudhana's *kalyānamitras* indicate the sequential number of the visit. The Sanskrit names of the *kalyānamitras* and all other Sanskrit names and terms have been rendered in a simplified transcription of Sanskrit, omitting most of the diacritical marks.

All illustrations have been reproduced after the originals by van Erp. They are published courtesy of the Leiden University Library.

INTRODUCTION

The *Gandavyūha-sūtra* is one of the great sacred scriptures of Mahāyāna Buddhism, widely known and deeply revered throughout the Buddhist world. Sometimes regarded as the Buddhist counterpart of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, it tells an allegorical tale of a pilgrimage undertaken by a "son of good family" named Sudhana. The Great Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī singles him out from among a large crowd of worshipers as a person who is spiritually prepared to embark on the final stretch of the path leading towards Enlightenment. The Great Bodhisattva sends him on a pilgrimage to visit more than fifty Good Friends, spiritual mentors, known as *kalyānamitras*, in order to seek their instruction in the Conduct of the Bodhisattva. These wise teachers come from all walks of life and include a surprisingly large number of women and non-Buddhists. Among them are five monks, a nun, four Buddhist lay women, an itinerant hermit, a ship's captain, several householders and bankers, two kings, eight Night Goddesses, five Bodhisattvas, and even the Hindu God Śiva Mahādeva, as well as Gopā and Māyā, the Historical Buddha's spouse and mother. None of these wise mentors is in possession of perfect knowledge, but each one of them has achieved a different state of spiritual detachment, variously called *vimoksa* or *dharmaparyāya*, which they describe for Sudhana's benefit before they refer him to his next teacher. The accumulative effect of their teachings is that Sudhana advances to a state of mind in which only the Great Bodhisattvas are able to provide him with additional instruction. After a lengthy visit to Maitreya, the Buddha of the Future, in his palace of miracles, and a brief, second encounter with Mañjuśrī, Sudhana arrives at the residence of his last teacher, the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. The scripture concludes with the *Bhadracarī*, a Buddhist hymn in praise of Samantabhadra, verses of which are still regularly recited by Buddhists in countries as far apart as Tibet and Japan. The meaning and etymology of the name *Gandavyūha* remain unknown. Its Chinese title, *Rufajiepin*, or *The Chapter on Entering the Dharmadhātu* (the Realm of Ultimate Reality) aptly sums up the *Leitmotiv* of the *sūtra* and has therefore been incorporated in the title of the present study.

The text of the *Gandavyūha* has been preserved in several Sanskrit manuscripts and two modern editions, as well as in three complete Chinese and several Tibetan translations. The *Gandavyūha* enjoyed immense popularity in the Buddhist world. In ancient times it served as a source of inspiration for artists of murals in Buddhist cave temples in Central Asia, sculptors and book illustrators in China, as well as painters of hand scrolls and hanging scrolls in Japan. The most monumental and by far the most elaborate set of illustrations of this *sūtra* was created by the sculptors of the Buddhist sanctuary Borobudur in Central Java (9th century C.E.). The contents of the *Gandavyūha* and its appendix, the Buddhist hymn *Bhadracarī*, have been illustrated in 460 bas-relief panels on the second, third, and fourth level of this great Buddhist monument. This set of bas-reliefs will be analyzed in detail in the following chapters.

A Short History of the Identification of the Gandavyūha Reliefs of Borobudur

The Dutch scholar N.J.Krom can lay claim to the discovery that the *Gandavyūha* was the literary source of inspiration for the sculptors of the reliefs on the main wall of the second gallery of Borobudur. In 1915 Krom returned to Holland on extended home leave from his duties as director of the Archaeological Service of Indonesia, at that time known as the Dutch East Indies. Shortly after his return he was commissioned by the Dutch government to write an archaeological description of Borobudur. The result of this assignment was the first installment of an impressive five-volume monograph on Borobudur (Krom 1920). His collaborator was Theodoor van Erp, an officer in the Corps of Engineers, who had conducted the first restoration of Borobudur. Van Erp assumed responsibility for the three portfolios of photographs and architectural drawings. He later published a companion text volume, devoted to an architectural description of the monument, in which he gave a detailed account of the first partial restoration of the monument, carried out under his supervision between 1907 and 1911 (van Erp 1931).

Krom took up his assignment while the First World War raged across Europe. Stranded in isolated, neutral Holland, he found there all the peace and quiet he needed to complete his detailed and voluminous monograph in record time. Other scholars had earlier recommended that a survey of Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese Buddhist texts should precede efforts to identify the literary sources of the many unidentified bas-reliefs of Borobudur. However, due to war-time travel restrictions, the rich South and Southeast Asian library resources of England and France, where such research could have been conducted to better advantage, remained inaccessible to Krom. Undaunted by this obstacle, he began to peruse a vast amount of secondary literature in search of potential clues to the identification of the Borobudur reliefs. While pursuing this task, he chanced upon two excerpts, which the Indian scholars Rajendralala Mitra and Haraprasad Sastri had made of a palm leaf Sanskrit manuscript, preserved in the Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in Calcutta. It was a little known Buddhist scripture bearing the title *Gandavyūha*, a name of uncertain etymology and obscure meaning (Krom 1920, 481-84).

Krom was struck by the resemblance between the visits paid by the chief protagonist of the story, a young pilgrim named Sudhana, to a number of Good Friends, or *kalyānamitras*, and the scenes carved in bas-relief on the main wall of the second gallery of Borobudur. There a story has been illustrated of a young man, who can be seen paying homage to a succession of teachers from many different walks of life, including even deities, goddesses, and Bodhisattvas. Krom correctly concluded that it was the *Gandavyūha* which had provided the inspiration for the sculptors of Borobudur.

The *Gandavyūha* was accessible to Krom only in these two incomplete and sometimes rather sketchy excerpts. Most of the wise mentors whom Sudhana encounters in the course of his quest for Enlightenment were mentioned by name in the excerpts and several of them could easily be recognized in the reliefs by their traditional attributes. Among them were the Bodhisattvas Mañjuśrī and Avalokiteśvara, as well as the Hindu god Śiva Mahādeva. The rather non-specific, stereotypical manner of representing some of Sudhana's other mentors sometimes made their identification more speculative. However, such mentors as *bhiksus*, a *bhiksuni*, and a Brahman could easily be identified by the dress and hair style indicative of their status. Together with the above-mentioned Bodhisattvas and Śiva they provided Krom with a

sufficient number of secure benchmarks to permit him to identify, at least tentatively, many of the remaining, often less easily recognizable panels in which Sudhana receives instruction from the other *kalyānamitras* who are mentioned in the two excerpts. Krom was unable to explain why such eminent Good Friends as Avalokiteśvara and Śiva made a second appearance in the reliefs. It was also unclear to him why the concluding visits to the Great Bodhisattvas Mañjuśrī, and Samantabhadra, described in the excerpts, appeared to be not shown at all on the second main wall, while Maitreya made his first appearance only on the very last panel of that wall. Krom soon discovered, however, that these three Bodhisattvas all made repeated appearances on the first twenty reliefs of the third main wall. From these observations he drew the conclusion that the text, which the sculptors of Borobudur had at their disposal, must have been a much shorter recension of the *Gandavyūha* than the text which Mitra and Sastri had summarized in their excerpts. Although this hypothesis would later turn out to be incorrect, we can only admire Krom for having discovered the scriptural source of the reliefs in spite of the obvious limitations of the textual resources at his disposal.

Krom's successor as the director of the Archaeological Service in Indonesia, Dr. F.D.K. Bosch, was among the first scholars to review Krom's monograph (Bosch 1922). He expressed his admiration for Krom's impressive scholarly achievement, but held an opposite view regarding the *Gandavyūha* reliefs. He pointed out that many more visits are illustrated on the second main wall of Borobudur than the forty-seven mentioned in the two excerpts. Instead of accepting Krom's idea of a shorter version, Bosch took the position that the version of the text followed by the sculptors must have been much more elaborate than the text excerpted by Mitra and Sastri. The concluding pages of the *Gandavyūha* describe Sudhana's visits to the Great Bodhisattvas Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, and Samantabhadra. The chief protagonists of the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries turned out to be these Bodhisattvas, all clearly recognizable by their customary attributes. Bosch suggested, therefore, that a much more elaborate version of the *Gandavyūha* might hold the key to the identification of all the reliefs on the second and higher galleries of Borobudur. Noting the considerable difference in the number of fascicles, or scrolls, between the three successive Chinese translations of the *Gandavyūha* (sixty, eighty, and forty respectively), he suggested that we should look for an answer to the remaining problems of identification in these Chinese translations. He concluded his review with the words "the sinologues shall have the last word."

Krom had been cut off from the library resources in France and England by a lack of opportunity to travel abroad during the First World War. Bosch was unable to consult the Sanskrit manuscript collections in European libraries because he lived and worked in far-away Indonesia, from where he returned on home leave only once every six years. These at that time all too common logistical obstacles forced both scholars to fall back on an ingenious patchwork of bits of information, culled from a variety of secondary sources. In addition to the obvious hazards of having to rely on excerpts instead of complete texts, minor mistakes and casual remarks made by other scholars sometimes created confusion. Even the judicious manner in which Bosch managed to utilize these secondary sources could not completely overcome these disadvantages.

Another drawback was that neither Krom nor Bosch was able to consult the more readily available Chinese translations. Two of the Chinese translations of the *Gandavyūha* are attached as the final chapter to translations of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, while the third *Gandavyūha* translation, which treats it as a separate text, bears the title *Huayanjing*, i.e. *Avatamsaka-sūtra*.

Initially, this caused some confusion, only made worse by vague or inaccurate statements on this topic by such authoritative scholars as Takakusu (reprint 1947, 108) and Pelliot (1914, 118-121). These scholars had left Bosch with the mistaken impression that *Avatamsaka-sūtra* and *Gandavyūha* were merely two interchangeable titles of the same text. After carefully sifting through the often contradictory observations made by other scholars, Bosch succeeded in establishing that the *Gandavyūha* is the final chapter of the much larger *Avatamsaka-sūtra*.

In retrospect it is easy to see that Bosch overestimated the significance of the differences in the number of fascicles (*juan*) of the three Chinese translations. He did not realize that the most elaborate of the three Chinese *Gandavyūha* translations (T. 293) also happens to be the text which was divided in the smallest number of fascicles. He remained convinced that the Chinese translations held the key to the problem of the identification of the reliefs. By pinning his hope on these Chinese texts, he may not have foreseen the decisive role which the Sanskrit manuscripts of the *Gandavyūha*, still inaccessible to him, would eventually play in the identification of the reliefs. A few years later, however, the great potential of Sanskrit sources for the identification of the reliefs of Borobudur was, once again, clearly demonstrated.

A visit to Java by Sylvain Lévi in 1928 led to his remarkable discovery that a Sanskrit manuscript of a text, dealing with the Law of Cause and Effect, entitled *Karmavibhanga*, which he had discovered in Nepal six years earlier, provided the key to almost the entire series of reliefs on the hidden base of Borobudur (Lévi 1932). When Bosch asked him for his opinion on the question of the different versions of the *Gandavyūha*, Lévi quite correctly expressed the view that neither the various Sanskrit manuscripts nor even the Chinese translations displayed anywhere near the vast differences in content that Bosch had hoped to find in them.

The successful identification of the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs prompted an official decision that the questions concerning the contents of the *Gandavyūha* and its illustrations should be settled once and for all by comparing the Sanskrit manuscripts of the *Gandavyūha* in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris with the reliefs of Borobudur. Bosch, who happened to be on home leave when Lévi visited Java, was asked to proceed forthwith from Holland to Paris to consult the Sanskrit manuscripts. The results of his investigations, contained in his report "The meaning of the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries of Borobudur" (Bosch 1929), were as surprising, as they were—at least in some respects—somewhat disappointing.

Slowly making his way through the two sometimes hardly legible manuscripts, Bosch was able to correct a number of minor mistakes and fill in some of the lacunae in the excerpts by Mitra and Sastri. This way he succeeded in identifying a small number of additional reliefs. However, just as Lévi had predicted, the number of Sudhana's visits, described in the Sanskrit manuscripts, turned out to be only slightly larger than that given in the two excerpts. Many reliefs on the second main wall still remained unidentified. Disappointed because the results of his investigation seemed hardly worth the time and effort he had spent on it, Bosch reached the last part of the manuscripts. It was there that he made an important discovery.

He discovered that the final pages of the *Gandavyūha* manuscripts contained the text of the well-known Buddhist hymn *Bhadracarī*. The distinguished Japanese buddhologist Watanabe Kaikyoku had already published a critical edition of this hymn more than fifteen years earlier (Watanabe 1912). As soon as Bosch began to compare the contents of this poem with the reliefs of the main wall of the fourth gallery of Borobudur, he discovered that part of this hymn was illustrated there. The logical consequence of this discovery was that all reliefs of the main wall and balustrade of the third gallery had to be illustrations of the *Gandavyūha* as

well. While most of the contents of the *Gandavyūha* had been illustrated on the 128 reliefs of the main wall of the second gallery, the much shorter concluding section of the text held the key to the meaning of the 332 reliefs of the third and fourth galleries.

Having used up almost all of his precious time in Paris studying the earlier parts of the manuscript, and in the—in retrospect too optimistic—expectation that he would soon be able to consult a copy of Watanabe’s critical edition, Bosch now wisely decided to postpone a study of the *Bhadracarī* reliefs. He used what little time was left to him in Paris to interpret the *Gandavyūha* reliefs of the third and fourth galleries, comparing them with the contents of the Sanskrit manuscripts, word for word and sentence after sentence.

In one respect this discovery, important as it was, turned out to be somewhat anticlimactic. Even without knowing which text had been illustrated, Krom and van Erp, both gifted with a remarkable intuitive grasp of the intentions of the sculptors, had already succeeded in establishing the approximate meaning of a considerable number of reliefs. The high artistic quality of many panels had, of course, been universally recognized much earlier. Bosch was now for the first time able to establish the exact textual content of many additional reliefs. Yet, now that he was in a position to evaluate not only the artistic quality of the reliefs, but also their effectiveness as text illustrations, he perceived a certain weakness in the composition not only of some individual reliefs, but also in the overall composition of the entire series.

Bosch had been educated in a keen appreciation of high classical Sanskrit literature. Perhaps he could not help being somewhat biased against the literary merits of the *Gandavyūha*, “a relatively standard Sanskrit text, mixed with verses of hybridized Sanskrit” (Osto 2008) and replete with all the repetitions that are typical of other examples of Mahāyāna prose. His comparison of text and image also revealed what he considered to be a lack of substantial textual content of many of the reliefs. For example, to his disappointment some of the finest panels with Buddha scenes turned out to be based on the mere occurrence of the word “Buddha” or “*bodhi*” in the text. However, without trying to hide his disappointment, Bosch also made a first attempt to explain these reliefs as the consequence of the curiously uneven distribution of topics over the available wall space. It was this type of planning which created the disparity between the length of certain passages in the text and the number of reliefs assigned to their illustration. He finally reached the conclusion that it was primarily the overall planning of the reliefs that had created the challenges which the sculptors had to overcome.

When Bosch began to examine more closely the allocation of reliefs devoted to Sudhana’s successive visits to the Great Bodhisattvas Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, and Samantabhadra, he reached the conclusion that the architects of Borobudur, in assigning themes to the available wall space, must have adopted a deliberate policy. Their planning involved not only the number of reliefs allotted to each of these three Bodhisattvas. It also affected the way in which the themes of these three consecutive series of reliefs were made to fit into the architecture of the monument. As we shall see, in this respect further research tends to confirm Bosch’s preliminary conclusions.

In the last paragraph of his report Bosch addressed one question which his close scrutiny of the Sanskrit manuscripts had been unable to resolve. It is the inconsistency between the number of the visits to Good Friends, described in the manuscripts, and the far larger number of visits that is shown in the reliefs. Bosch found a similar contradiction in the text itself, where it is said that “when Sudhana had visited one hundred and ten towns, he proceeded to Sumanamukha” to pay a second visit to Mañjuśrī (Fontein 1966, 119). Bosch noticed that the

number of reliefs on the second main wall, devoted to the actual pilgrimage up to Sudhana's encounter with Maitreya, is also exactly one hundred and ten. From this correspondence Bosch and Lévi drew the same conclusion. The large number of additional visits, shown in the reliefs, had been created for the sole purpose of reaching the required number of one hundred and ten—"seulement pour remplir le nombre", as Lévi put it.

More than seventy-five years have passed since Bosch wrote his first report on the *Gandavyūha* reliefs. Eight years later, after finally locating a rare copy of Watanabe's edition of the *Bhadracarī*, he followed it up with a study of the reliefs illustrating the *Bhadracarī* (Bosch 1938). Since that time, two independent efforts have been made to solve the puzzle of the large number of *kalyānamitras* and the reduplication of a number of visits that Sudhana paid to these Good Friends, illustrated on the reliefs of Borobudur.

The Japanese scholar Hikata Ryūshō was the first to advance the hypothesis that the reason for the large number of visits is that the entire contents of the *Gandavyūha* had been illustrated twice (Hikata 1960 and 1981). As a Japanese buddhologist, known for his studies of the *jātakas*, Hikata had an obvious advantage over Krom and Bosch. He was well versed in both Sanskrit and Chinese Buddhist literature. It is all the more unfortunate, however, that due to his lack of familiarity with the sculptors' methods of illustration, he seems to have underestimated the problems of matching the text passages with the reliefs. Upon closer scrutiny many of his identifications cannot be confirmed. Moreover, in order to establish some of these questionable identifications, Hikata attributes "mistakes" or "misplacement of the reliefs" to the sculptors whenever the gender of the *kalyānamitra*, whom he believes to be represented on the relief, does not match the gender given in what he considers to be the corresponding passage in the text. He also believes that some of the most convincingly identifiable narrative scenes have "no connection with the text." Louis Frédéric's captions of the illustrations, when not simply descriptive, often rely on Hikata's identifications, while the many more accurate identifications made by Bosch have been entirely ignored (Frédéric 1994).

In my dissertation, *The Pilgrimage of Sudhana* (Fontein 1966), I drew upon the ideas contained in the Chinese commentaries of the *Gandavyūha* and reached a conclusion that differed somewhat from those of both Bosch and Hikata. I proposed to interpret the number of one hundred and ten as that of exactly twice the number of *kalyānamitras*. In China and Japan, the number of Sudhana's visits is traditionally given as fifty-three. However, if we count the single visit to Śrīsambhava and his sister Śrīmatī as two, and also count the two separate visits paid to Mañjuśrī as two, we arrive at a number of fifty-five visits. An explanation of the seemingly inconsistent number of one hundred and ten, mentioned in the text, has been proposed in the Chinese commentary *Tanxuanji* (T.1733) by the patriarch Fazang [643-712 C.E.]. He maintained that Sudhana could be said to have paid two visits to each of his teachers. One visit presumably stood for Sudhana's personal quest for Enlightenment, the other for the advance towards Enlightenment that each of the *kalyānamitras* had previously made and upon which their instructions to Sudhana were based (Fontein 1966, 127). In his 1980 publication Hikata seems to have accepted this explanation. Yet, even if we lend credence to this ingenious Chinese interpretation, we cannot take for granted that the Javanese monks and sculptors of Borobudur held similar views. Nevertheless it would appear that they, too, considered the number of one hundred and ten, mentioned in the *Gandavyūha*, as at least of sufficient importance that they allotted exactly that number of reliefs on the second gallery to Sudhana's pilgrimage. It is evident that they arrived at this large number by duplicating the illustration of many of the visits.

Recently Tilmann Vetter has published an essay on the *Gandavyūha* in which he advances the idea that it may have been the original intention of the author of the *Gandavyūha* to include one hundred and ten visits in Sudhana's pilgrimage, but that he left his work unfinished (Vetter 2004). This idea parallels the ancient legend concerning the *Jātakamālā*, already mentioned by Tāranātha, according to which it had been Āryaśūra's original plan to include one hundred *jātakas* (ten for each of the *Ten Pāramitās*), but that he had somehow been unable to carry out his initial intention (Krom 1920, 286).

In my dissertation (Fontein 1966), I discussed not only the illustrations of the *Gandavyūha* at Borobudur, but also Chinese books and Japanese painted scrolls illustrating Sudhana's pilgrimage. At the time I decided not to include a study of the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries. I made this decision in the expectation that a critical edition of the Sanskrit text of the *Gandavyūha*, complete with a listing of all known variant readings, would soon be published in Japan. This would create an excellent opportunity for an art historian with a command of Sanskrit to make a new effort to identify the reliefs of the higher galleries.

In his foreword to his Sanskrit edition of the *Gandavyūha*, Daisetz T. Suzuki mentions the long history of the ill-fated Japanese efforts to edit the Sanskrit text (Suzuki 1934). An annotated critical Sanskrit edition, prepared by Watanabe Kaikyoku, listing numerous variant readings, was consumed by fire during the great Kantō earthquake of 1923. This was not the last of the misfortunes that plagued this project. Suzuki also refers to a Sanskrit-Chinese index to the *Gandavyūha*, "which, however, requiring further elaboration, we withhold from publication for some time yet". According to Nakamura Hajime this index was lost during the Second World War (Nakamura 1989, 195, n.13). Suzuki also mentions that "the plan is also on foot to have a complete index of various kinds which is absolutely needed for a thorough understanding of the sūtra in its varied significations", but this plan never came to fruition during his lifetime.

The first step towards publishing a new critical edition and index of the Sanskrit text was recently taken with Yuko Ijiri's synoptic analysis of the four *upāsikā* chapters (Ijiri 2005), and Tamura Chijun's recent critical edition of the prologue (Tamura 2006). However, Suzuki's hope for a critical edition of the entire *Gandavyūha* has yet to be fulfilled. The collection of more variant readings—as we shall see, a *sine qua non* for the interpretation of many reliefs—has yet to be accomplished. Initially, the plans of our distinguished Japanese colleagues seemed to justify a postponement of any new effort to interpret the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries based upon the three Chinese translations. However, with the passing of the years it would now seem advisable not to postpone this project any longer and to proceed without the benefit of a critical Sanskrit edition and accompanying index of the entire text. A new generation of scholars, schooled in Sanskrit and better prepared than the present author, will undoubtedly have ample opportunity later to improve on my efforts by utilizing a wider choice of textual variants.

There is yet another reason for focusing now on the problems of the identification of the bas-reliefs of the third and fourth galleries. With the sole exception of the English translation of parts of Krom's *Archaeologische Beschrijving* (1927), all of the publications on the *Gandavyūha* reliefs of Borobudur by Krom and Bosch, have appeared only in Dutch. This had the inevitable result that their studies remained inaccessible to most foreign scholars. They also often remained unaware of Krom's numerous observations on iconographic details of the reliefs which could have given them a clue to their identification. It was an unfortunate coinci-

dence that the partial English translation of Krom's *Archaeologische Beschrijving* (1927) happened to appear just two years before Bosch succeeded in establishing that the *Gandavyūha* was the source of inspiration for all of the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries. To this day foreign scholars continue to base their observations upon those of Krom's early speculations that were translated into English, not realizing that these had already been superseded two years later by Bosch's new findings. We will later see that the timing of Krom's and Bosch's publications only added to the problems created by the inaccessibility of their work to foreign scholars.

Hikata arrived at his conclusions largely without knowledge of Bosch's studies, and Louis Frédéric likewise seems to have been unaware of most of Bosch's identifications. The lack of access to Bosch's studies by foreign scholars is also noticeable in the opinions expressed by other scholars. Typical examples are the views expressed by several participants in the International Conference on Borobudur at the University of Michigan in May, 1974. One of the organizers of this conference went so far as to maintain that the *Bhadracarī* was not part of the *Gandavyūha* and that this text was not even illustrated on Borobudur (Gómez 1981, 184).

During the last few decades little progress has been made in the identification of additional Borobudur reliefs illustrating the *Gandavyūha*. On the other hand, advances in other fields that are of immediate relevance to the interpretation of the *Gandavyūha* reliefs should be mentioned. Before Bosch began his research at the Bibliothèque Nationale, our knowledge of the *Gandavyūha* was sketchy and incomplete. Since those days, two editions of the Sanskrit text have been published, one by Suzuki Daisetz and Hokei Idzumi in 1934 (republished Kyōto, 1949) and one by P.L. Vaidya in 1960. Since that time the contents of the text have also become accessible to a wider public through two translations from the Chinese versions. The first is a translation into German by Dōi Torakazu. Dōi actually accomplished the monumental task of translating the entire Chinese *Avatamsaka-sūtra* in sixty fascicles (T.278) into German, but the publication of his bulky manuscript was initially deemed too costly. It remained unpublished and was deposited in the library of the Tōdaiji temple in Nara. Finally, a publisher was found for the manuscript of the last section, the *Gandavyūha* (Dōi 1978). During subsequent years Dōi's widow and daughter succeeded in raising the funds to publish the earlier sections of the manuscript, which appeared in three installments between 1981 and 1983.

The English version of the *Gandavyūha* by Thomas Cleary, entitled *The Flower Ornament Scripture, Entry into the Realm of Reality*, has largely been translated from the second Chinese translation by Śikṣānanda (T.279). It represents the last of three installments of the entire translated text of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, for the first time making the complete text of this *sūtra* available to an anglophone readership (Cleary 1989). Less easily accessible is *The Gandavyūha: Search for Enlightenment* by Mark Allen Ehman, a typewritten doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Wisconsin (Ehman 1977). It contains a detailed discussion of the contents of the *Gandavyūha*, followed by an English translation of six chapters of the Sanskrit text. Finally, there is the recent publication by Yuko Ijiri of a critical edition of the Sanskrit text of Sudhana's four visits to lay women, or *upāsikās*, accompanied by an English translation of these chapters (Ijiri 2005). An even more recent development is the publication in Japan by Tamura Chijun, Katsura Shōryū, and Francis Brassard of a revised critical edition of the Sanskrit text of the prologue to the *Gandavyūha*, based upon the editions of Vaidya and Suzuki, three other manuscripts in London, Cambridge, and Baroda, as well as upon the three Chinese and two Tibetan translations. The Chinese and Tibetan texts have been presented syn-

optically (Tamura 2006). It is hoped that one day this project can be completed. It would offer future students of Borobudur ample material to revise and improve upon the identifications made in the present study. The only complete translation of the Sanskrit *Gandavyūha* into a foreign language is one into Japanese (Kajiyama 1994).

An important contribution to a better understanding of the *Gandavyūha* is the publication *Power, Wealth and Women in Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism The Gandavyūha-sūtra* by Douglas Osto (2008). Focused on the text, it mentions Borobudur only in passing. It is nevertheless of great interest for students of the monument because it analyzes in detail certain key passages, such as Sudhana's visit to Ratnacūda's ten-storied palace, and the stories from their previous lives told by the Night Goddesses, Gopā and Māyā. It also provides new insights in the Buddhist world view and the Indian context of the *sūtra*.

Another area in which considerable progress has been made is the study of the *Bhadracarī*. A new edition of the Sanskrit text was prepared by Sushama Devi (1958). Shindō Shiraishi, like Bosch initially unable to locate a copy of Watanabe's doctoral dissertation, prepared a new critical edition of the text together with a new German translation (Shiraishi 1962). The important role played by the *Bhadracarī* in other countries of the Buddhist world has been demonstrated in studies of Khotanese (Asmussen 1961), Uigur (Ishihama 1950) and Korean versions of the hymn (Kim Chikyōn 1977, Lee 1957 and 1961). In addition, several new translations into European languages have appeared since Leumann's early rendering in German, appended to Watanabe Kaikyoku's edition of the text, and Bosch's translation into Dutch. These include translations into English by Izumi Hokei (1929-1931) and Mark Tatz (1977). Thomas Cleary (1989) included a translation of Prajñā's Chinese translation of the *Bhadracarī* and inserted it in his translation of Śikṣānanda's Chinese translation of the *Gandavyūha*, in which this part was missing.

Textual Variants of the Gandavyūha and the Reliefs of Borobudur

Sylvain Lévi was the first to observe that the text of the *Gandavyūha*, as it has been transmitted to us in Sanskrit manuscripts as well as in several Chinese and Tibetan translations, is not more variable or less perfectly transmitted than that of many other Buddhist texts. That the question of the textual variants nevertheless assumes such crucial importance here is only due to an unprecedented, almost word-for-word conversion of certain passages in the last section of the *Gandavyūha* into the imagery of the Borobudur reliefs. Sometimes even seemingly insignificant textual variants turn out to hold the key to the precise identification of an entire relief.

Soon after he began to compare the text of the *Gandavyūha* with the reliefs, Bosch discovered that the early part of the third main wall marks the beginning of an entirely novel method of illustration. A single word, lifted from the text, now often determines the content of an entire relief. This new word-for-word type of illustration—probably without precedent in the history of Buddhist art—was forced upon the sculptors by the lopsided imbalance between the relatively short length of the passages describing Sudhana's last visits to Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, and Samantabhadra and the vast amount of wall space reserved for their illustration.

This uneven distribution of themes over the available wall space can perhaps best be illustrated by a comparison of the length of text and the number of reliefs devoted to a single visit. The most elaborate description of Sudhana's visit to Maitreya's palace of miracles, the *kūtāgāra*, is told in the 37th fascicle of Prajñā's Chinese translation (T. 293, 831b- 835a). It

deals almost exclusively with Sudhana's visual experiences inside this miraculous edifice. In the text the beginning and end of this episode are clearly defined. It begins when Maitreya grants Sudhana permission to enter his *kūtāgāra*. It ends when Maitreya himself finally enters the building to break the spell under which Sudhana has been able to witness all the miracles that have been performed inside. In Prajñā's translation this part of the story consists of more than 4500 Chinese characters. In the earlier, more concise translation by Buddhahadra (T.278) the corresponding passage consists of almost 3000 characters. The length of text in Prajñā's translation, devoted to Maitreya, is only slightly larger than that of the description of Sudhana's visit to Gopā in the same text. However, whereas the visit to the Buddha's spouse is illustrated in only four or five reliefs, Sudhana's sojourn in Maitreya's *kūtāgāra* alone is illustrated in no less than 214 reliefs. It will be evident that such vast differences between the length of text and the amount of wall space set aside for its illustration, magnify exponentially the potential for those problems of identification that are due to textual variants. Usually these problems are caused by relatively minor discrepancies between the transmitted versions of the text of the *Gandavyūha* and the visual evidence of the reliefs. It is only in these reliefs that the contents of the lost Borobudur version of the text have been inalterably preserved.

The cause of this disparity appears to have been the crucial role which the number one hundred and ten played in the allocation of wall space by the architects of Borobudur. In the *Gandavyūha* the number of one hundred and ten, first noticed by Bosch, is not mentioned once, as he believed, but three times. It first occurs in Maitreya's lengthy praise of Sudhana, in which the Bodhisattva tells his audience: "Long ago, this youth received instruction from Mañjuśrī in the city of Dhanyākara. At his direction he left in search for Good Friends, visiting altogether one hundred and ten *kalyānamitras*, enquiring from them about the Conduct of the Bodhisattva. His heart never grew weary as he gradually reached my residence" (T.278, 772b, 8). While this passage states that Sudhana actually visited one hundred and ten *kalyānamitras*, the other passage, previously noticed by Bosch, is less specific: "At that time (i.e. after having taken leave of Maitreya), Sudhana, having thus passed through one hundred and ten cities, arrived in the outskirts of the city of Sumanamukha" (T.279, 439b, 10; T.293, 836c, 17). The third time the number one hundred and ten is mentioned is when Sudhana pays a second visit to Mañjuśrī. The Bodhisattva greets him, stretching out his right hand from a distance of one hundred and ten leagues (*yojanas*) to touch his forehead (T.293, 836c, 20).

From the triple mention of the number one hundred and ten in the *Gandavyūha* we can only conclude that this number is not just an inconsequential textual inconsistency that we can afford to disregard, but a number endowed with some sort of special significance. It must have prompted the architects of Borobudur to assign 110 reliefs to the pilgrimage of Sudhana from the moment he first takes leave of Mañjuśrī up to his arrival at the palace of Maitreya. It also equals, as we shall see later, the number of reliefs devoted to Sudhana's visit to Samantabhadra. The visit to Maitreya is illustrated on exactly twice that number of reliefs.

If we count the pages in the different editions and translations of the *Gandavyūha*, we notice that the segment of the text which describes the events from the moment of Sudhana's arrival at Maitreya's palace to the end of the *Bhadracarī* takes up approximately between 15% and 18% of the total length of text. Only in the Chinese translation of Śikṣānanda does the last part take up a substantially lesser percentage of the total. As a count of the pages of the various Sanskrit editions (Osto 2008, 125-126) and Chinese translations produce similar results, these percentages may be accepted as reasonably accurate for other versions of the text. Thus 82 to

85% of the text is illustrated on 125 reliefs of the second main wall. This wall space equals 28% of the total amount set aside for *Gandavyūha* illustrations. The themes for the 335 following reliefs, accounting for 72% of the available wall space, had to be extracted from the remaining 15 to 18% of the text. Moreover, the themes of this part of the text consist for a large part of philosophical abstractions or almost indescribable visionary miracles, which often defy any attempt to represent them in stone sculpture in any intelligible, clearly recognizable fashion. This poses not only an obstacle for us twenty-first century viewers, but may even have posed problems for literate Javanese pilgrims who visited Borobudur in ancient times. The fantastic and imaginative, but often non-visual contents of the text can only have added to the daunting challenge which the sculptors faced in the execution of their commission.

The sculptors had already demonstrated their considerable artistic talents and creative ingenuity in the emblematic representation of human virtues and follies in the reliefs illustrating the *Karmavibhanga*. There they had already faced a similar problem, but on a smaller scale, when they were obliged to illustrate such intangible concepts as, for example, specific types of heresy or other abstract sins or virtues. They had also displayed their narrative genius in their vivid depiction of the *jātaka* stories and the Life of the Buddha. In the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries they now faced an even more difficult task, an assignment which dwarfed the scope of all of their previous challenges. The almost word-for-word conversion of passages into images which they opted for is a feature that is unique in ancient Javanese art. It is strictly limited to the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries of Borobudur.

In yet one more respect the sculptors may have found themselves at a definite disadvantage. The artists, who created the reliefs of the *Life of the Buddha*, as told in the *Lalitavistara*, and of the *jātakas* and *avadānas* may at least have had continental prototypes to inspire them. The extent of their reliance on Indian prototypes is a topic that has yet to be fully explored. Nevertheless certain similarities in narrative technique in the treatment of the same *jātaka* stories in Ajantā and at Borobudur suggest at least the possibility that the sculptors may have profited in some ways from continental examples. For illustrations of the *Gandavyūha*, especially those of the third and fourth galleries, there exists no clear precedent in South, Central, or Southeast Asian sculpture that could possibly have served as an example for the sculptors of Borobudur. It is quite possible, therefore, that the sculptors were left to their own devices. They seem to have had, at least as far as we can establish, no earlier illustrative tradition to draw upon.

Although each can profit from the results of the research of the other, the aims of the philologist and the art historian are fundamentally different. In studying the ancient Buddhist texts that have been illustrated on Borobudur, philologists seek to establish the most accurate text and try to trace the affiliation and the genealogy of its different versions. They compare all versions of the text in order to establish the exact meaning of obscure passages and to rid the text of scribal errors and a variety of other imperfections that may have crept into it during centuries of transmission through copying.

The art historians' primary concern, on the other hand, is not the reconstruction of the original editorial shape of the text. They regard the text primarily as a tool to interpret the visual language of its illustrations. They use it in order to establish, to the extent possible, the exact meaning of each individual work of art. For the art historian, therefore, any textual variant can be of potential value, no matter how minor or inconsequential it may seem to be from a strictly philological or buddhological point of view. For the art historian every word counts, as long as it can provide the key to the correct interpretation of a Borobudur relief. For any variant reading can throw new light on the precise intentions of the sculptor.

At Borobudur, the best opportunities for combined philological and art historical research are to be found in the reliefs of the hidden base, where the *Karmavibhanga* has been illustrated. There our knowledge of the Sanskrit text, transmitted in Nepal, is supplemented by a number of brief, inscribed instructions to the sculptors, engraved in Sanskrit in the borders of some of the unfinished reliefs. These inscriptions were probably meant to be effaced after completion of the bas-reliefs. They have afforded scholars a unique opportunity to compare the transmitted texts with the language of the inscriptions. Like the visual evidence of the sculptured panels these inscriptions reveal all kinds of differences between the *Karmavibhanga* as it has been preserved in Nepal and the version of the text which guided the sculptors of Borobudur. Sometimes, the inscriptions and the text use the same or nearly the same words; at other times they use synonyms. But even a *varia lectio* of a single compound, found in a fragmentary Kuchean version of the text, can provide the clue to the meaning of a Borobudur relief (relief O-139, Fontein 1989, 62). Recently published new editions of the Nepalese Sanskrit manuscripts (Kudo 2004) and the translation of a Khotanese *Karmavibhanga* (Maggi 1995) have drawn renewed attention to this text. They create an excellent opportunity for a renewed effort to identify additional *Karmavibhanga* reliefs on the hidden base of Borobudur.

The brief inscriptions of the hidden base represent the only textual evidence regarding the exact words of the scriptures upon which the sculptors based their illustrations. In all likelihood not only the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs, but also all other reliefs of Borobudur were inspired by texts which were written in Sanskrit. The reliefs from time to time provide evidence which suggests variant readings in the Borobudur texts, but we have no other means to establish the state of preservation or judge the editorial shape of the text that guided the sculptors of Borobudur. No palm leaf manuscript of the period could possibly have survived the Javanese monsoon climate, which reduces the lifespan of even the most perfectly polished and carefully preserved palm leaf to at best a few centuries. The surviving manuscripts are, therefore, all of foreign, i.e. Indian, Nepalese or Central Asian origin. Without exception they represent the final result of centuries of copying.

The Buddhist texts which have been illustrated in the reliefs of Borobudur have been handed down to us with all the accretions, lacunae, errors, transpositions, and other types of mistakes that centuries of copying inevitably produce. Sometimes, a few palm leaf pages were lost or misplaced when the strings that once held them together broke and the readers or copyists were somehow at a loss how to restore their original sequence. At Borobudur, almost every word of certain passages in the concluding chapters of the *Gandavyūha* ended up being illustrated in stone. The possibility that pages of the Borobudur manuscript were lost or placed back in the wrong sequence should always be kept in mind whenever major sequential discrepancies between the transmitted texts and the visual evidence of the reliefs become apparent.

It is, of course, not possible for us to assess to what extent such evidence of textual discrepancies as we may encounter in our texts today existed already more than twelve centuries ago, when Borobudur was built. For example, it will always remain debatable whether the sculptors chose to skip a certain passage or whether the manuscript which guided them lacked the passage in question. This lack of specific information may perhaps justify a search for evidence elsewhere.

We are fortunate to have a wealth of information on the history of the Chinese translations of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* and the *Gandavyūha*. Most of this information dates from approximately the time when Borobudur was built. It can help us to evaluate the problem of textual

variants from a different historical and geographical perspective. The meticulously recorded, often detailed information on the preparation of the translations, preserved in Chinese sources, throws some light on the history of the compilation of all three Chinese translations of Indian manuscripts of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* and the *Gandavyūha*. These manuscripts differed widely in age and geographical provenance. They had been brought to China by pilgrims returning from India or Central Asia. In the bibliographical notes in Chinese Buddhist sources we find ample evidence that the various imperfections in the manuscripts that we have mentioned above already occurred at an early time (Malalasekara 1966a, *s.v.* *Avatamsaka sūtra*).

The first complete Chinese translation of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* by Buddhahadra (359-429 C.E.) was based upon a manuscript that had been brought back by a pilgrim from Khotan, a Central Asian kingdom which was at that time an important center of Avatamsaka Buddhism. Its translation was prepared between 418 and 420 C.E. by a working committee, directed by the Indian monk Buddhahadra, who was reputed to be a native of Kapilavastu (T.278). Although the translation was thoroughly checked for errors and omissions during the next year, it was not until 680 C.E., when the monks Divākara (613-688 C.E.) and Dharmagupta went over the text once again that a gap of considerable length was discovered in Buddhahadra's translation. The two monks found that the section beginning after Sudhana's visit to Queen Māyā and ending with his arrival at the *kūtāgāra* of Maitreya was missing. They made therefore a translation of the missing part from another manuscript and inserted it into Buddhahadra's translation. In view of the fact that the original translation had been prepared by a team of monks, each one of whom was usually assigned his own specific task, it does not seem very likely that the gap should be attributed to mere oversight or carelessness on the part of the translation team. This possibility remains unlikely, even if we assume that Buddhahadra was probably the only member of the translation team who was well versed in Sanskrit. Much more likely is that the original manuscript from which Buddhahadra had made his preliminary oral translation lacked the passage that was later discovered to be missing.

The Japanese scholar Haseoka Kazuya (1963) discovered that in Buddhahadra's translation, in the passage describing Sudhana's visit to Maitreya, three short sections occur in reverse order. Haseoka offers no explanation for this reversal. It seems most likely, however, that at some time prior to its translation into Chinese a few pages of the palm leaf Sanskrit manuscript of the *Gandavyūha* had somehow inadvertently been placed in the wrong order.

The second Chinese translation of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* seems to have had problems similar to those of the first, but in this case the possibility of a translator's mistake is even less likely. It was the great Buddhist patron, Empress Wu Zedean, who commissioned this second translation (T.279). It was based upon a manuscript that she herself had ordered from Khotan. The monk Śiksānanda (651-710 C.E.) was invited to come to China to preside over the imperially sponsored translation team. In this translation project, which took from 695 to 699 C.E. to complete and in which the Empress herself took a keen personal interest, Śiksānanda was assisted by the famous pilgrims Bodhiruci (died 727 C.E.) and Yijing (635-713 C.E.). Both monks were known for their considerable linguistic skills. Nevertheless, when the famous monk-scholar Fazang later checked the translation, he discovered that a passage was missing from the *Gandavyūha*. When he and Divākara, who has been mentioned earlier as an Avatamsaka specialist, rechecked the entire text, they located the missing passage at the beginning of the 80th fascicle and reinserted it in its proper place. Here again a scribal or translator's error is not likely to have occurred, given the extensive scrutiny to which the translation had been

subjected in the course of its preparation by this team of highly experienced translators. The inadvertent misplacement of a single leaf of the Indian manuscript would, therefore, appear to be a more likely possibility.

The third translation of the *Gandavyūha* was based upon a Sanskrit manuscript, reputedly hand written personally by the South Indian King of Odra (Orissa) and offered as a gift to the Chinese Emperor. (It was considered by the Chinese to have been sent as tribute). Although the translation bears the title *Huayanjing*, i.e. *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, it is actually only a translation of the *Gandavyūha* with the *Bhadracarī* attached to it. It is highly unlikely that the King would have personally copied the entire voluminous *Gandavyūha*. To judge from the language of the accompanying letter, it would seem more likely that the King copied only the *Bhadracarī* by his own hand. The manuscript arrived in the Chinese capital Chang'an in 795 C.E. In the following year, the Emperor commissioned the Master of the *Tripitaka*, the monk Prajñā from Kashmir, to prepare a translation of the scripture. Working in the capital in the Chongfusi monastery, with a staff of more than ten assistants, each duo with its own specific assignment, he completed his translation within two years (798 C.E.). The detailed report in the *Record of Buddhist Texts of the Zhenyuan period* (785-805), ch. 17, lists the names of all monks involved in the translation and interpretation of the text. From this record we know that the translation was checked with the help of the two previous translations, on which the translation team obviously often relied. The translation nevertheless turned out to be much longer than the two previous translations. Cleary has added a few selected passages from Prajñā's Chinese translation to his English translation of Śikṣānanda's text (Cleary 1989, appendix). He believes that the additional paragraphs, which are "not in the earlier Chinese translations, nor in the Sanskrit original" (Cleary 1989, p.395), are Prajñā's own additions. However, a comparison with only the Sanskrit "original" (Cleary probably refers to the Suzuki or Vaidya edition), which may represent an earlier version of the Sanskrit text than the lengthier Parisian manuscripts used by Bosch, may not be the best method to settle this question. The Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts appear to be close to the Prajñā translation. The recorded involvement of so many scholarly monks in all stages of the translation process makes it rather unlikely that Prajñā deliberately made additions to the text of the manuscript which he was asked to translate.

From these meticulously recorded instances of textual variants and imperfections, encountered by Chinese and Indian monks in translating Indian and Central Asian Buddhist texts of the *Gandavyūha* into Chinese, we can draw only one conclusion. Already before Borobudur was built other Sanskrit manuscripts of the same texts that guided the sculptors of Borobudur circulated in other Buddhist countries. They had the same type of flaws, such as lacunae and inadvertently transposed pages or passages, as those which are typical for later and modern manuscript versions of the text. Therefore, whenever in the course of our comparison of the *Gandavyūha* texts with the reliefs of Borobudur the possibility of similar discrepancies should come to light, there is no need to attribute them to sculptors' mistakes, as Hikata presumed. Neither need they be due to a lack of understanding of the contents of the texts or simple carelessness on the part of the architects or the sculptors, as Krom and Bosch occasionally suggested, or to deliberate liberties taken by the sculptors, as suggested by Gómez.

THE *GANDAVYŪHA* RELIEFS OF BOROBUDUR

SECOND GALLERY, MAIN WALL

PROLOGUE (II-1—II-15)

Borobudur scholars are in general agreement that the first fifteen reliefs of the main wall of the second gallery (II-1—II-15) illustrate the prologue to the *Gandavyūha*. Krom and Bosch, relying on the abstracts of Rajendralala Mitra and Haraprasad Sastri, as well as on descriptions of similar prologues in other *sūtras*, translated or excerpted by Edkins and Wassilyew, were able to establish the approximate meaning of these reliefs. Later, Bahadur Chand Shastri devoted an entire article to the prologue (Bahadur Chand Shastri, “The identification of the first sixteen reliefs on the second main wall of Barabudur”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol. 89, 1932, 173-181). The identifications given below differ on some points from those of Shastri.

In addition to the published German and English translations of the Chinese versions of the prologue to the *Gandavyūha* by Dōi Torakazu and Thomas Cleary, there is also an unpublished English translation of the Sanskrit prose part of the prologue by Mark Allen Ehman. It is based on the text edition of Vaidya. It is this version which will be quoted in the next few pages (Mark Allen Ehman, *The Gandavyūha: Search for Enlightenment*, typescript dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1977).

Recently, a new text edition of the first section of the *Gandavyūha*, including the prologue, has been prepared by Tamura Chijun, Katsura Shōryū, and Francis Brassard. It gives the text of the Vaidya and Suzuki editions, the three Chinese and two Tibetan translations, as well as the *variae lectiones* found in Sanskrit manuscripts in the Royal Asiatic Society, in Baroda, and in Cambridge (Tamura 2006).

II-1 The Buddha in Jetavana (fig. 1)

The Buddha is seated, his right hand raised in what appears to be *vitarka-mudrā*. One would perhaps have expected the sculptors of a Buddha assembly to represent the Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā* and not in *vitarka-mudrā*. However, this *mudrā* is not a sculptor's error, for we will see that at Borobudur the *dharmacakra-* and the *vitarka-mudrā* are not always used in exact accordance with the conventions of standard Buddhist iconography.

Even more unusual than this relief is the last relief in the upper register of the first main wall, which illustrates the *Life of the Buddha* according to the *Lalitavistara* (Ia-120). Although it is supposed to illustrate the First Sermon in the Deer Park of Benares, it appears to have likewise shown the Buddha in *vitarka-mudrā*. The protruding parts of that relief, including the right hand of the Buddha, have suffered extensive damage, but the fact that the right hand was raised while the left hand rests in the lap clearly suggests that the Buddha was indeed shown displaying the *vitarka-mudrā* instead of the *dharmacakra-mudrā*.

There is another indication that the *vitarka-mudrā* may have had a symbolical connotation for the Buddhist community of Borobudur that differs from the Indian tradition. The Bud-



1. The Buddha in Jetavana (II-1).

dha statues facing the cardinal points, installed in the niches above the first, second, and third galleries, display different *mudrās*, depending upon their orientation. According to conventional wisdom these statues represent the Buddhas Aksobhya (East), Ratnasambhava (South), Amitābha (West), and Amoghasiddhi (North). The central figure in this well-known system of Five Jinas is Vairocana, who is represented by the Buddha statues in *dharmacakra-mudrā* inside the latticed *stūpas* of the terraces. However, the statues in the niches above the fourth gallery all display the *vitarka-mudrā*, irrespective of their orientation. This apparent insertion into the traditional system of Five Jinas of a sixth Buddha in *vitarka-mudrā* has no parallel in Indian iconography, and puts into question the true identity of some of these Buddhas (see below, pp.237-239). The installation of these statues on a high level of the monument and their uniform *vitarka-mudrā* suggest that these Buddhas were thought to reside in a transitional level of spiritual development in which they have already transcended any difference in orientation. The uniformity of the *mudrā* at this level of the monument also creates a smooth transition to the Buddhas inside the latticed *stūpas* of the near-circular terraces on the next levels of the monument. They all face different directions, but invariably display the *dharmacakra-mudrā*, the *mudrā* most often associated with Vairocana.

The second remarkable feature of relief Ia-120 is the absence from the scene of the First Sermon at the Deer Park in Benares of the deer, who are rarely lacking in illustrations of this

significant event. Krom noticed their absence as well as that of the Wheel of the Law (*dharmacakra*), which is often shown flanked by deer in illustrations of the First Sermon. At a short distance from Borobudur, in the cella of Candi Mendut, the reconstructed plinth of the pedestal of the Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā*, the principal statue of the shrine, shows the wheel flanked by two deer. Krom notes the omission of the deer from relief Ia-120, but assumes that there was no need for their presence, as the last relief of the *Lalitavistara* series “cannot be taken for anything but the First Sermon” (Krom 1927, I, 228).

A possible explanation for the *mudrā* is suggested by the opening sentence of the prologue of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, preserved in the two Chinese translations: “Thus I have heard. Once upon a time the Buddha resided in a state of tranquility in the country of Magadhā at the site of Supreme Enlightenment, having just achieved his True Awakening.” With these words the *sūtra* establishes the primacy of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, claiming it to have been “taught” immediately after the Buddha’s Enlightenment, and, therefore, even before the First Sermon. This claim, made in a *sūtra* which was the canon of the Buddhist community of Borobudur, may have prompted the sculptors not to represent the Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā*.

That the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* was “taught” immediately after the Buddha’s Enlightenment and, therefore, prior to the Turning of the Wheel of the Law, requires further clarification. In his introduction to his German translation of the *Gandavyūha* Dōi has drawn attention to a paradox in the assignment of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* to the class of canonical works known as *sūtra*. He writes: “In all *sūtras*’ the Holy Buddha himself preaches before many different audiences. However, in the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* the Buddha remains silent throughout all thirty-four books of the *sūtra*. The Holy Buddha does not speak, but is being spoken of. The innumerable Bodhisattvas all take turns in speaking of the Holy Buddha and praise only him. The Holy Buddha is not, as in all other *sūtras*, the subject of the sermon, but the object and the theme of the sermon. Seen from this perspective, our *sūtra* obviously contradicts the definition of *sūtra*. But all these sermons of the innumerable Bodhisattvas are set in motion by and are based upon the miraculous silence of the Holy Buddha. This is why all sermons and all speech of the Bodhisattvas can be attributed to the miraculous action of the Buddha. The Holy Buddha speaks in the quiet of the silence and preaches without preaching. The Holy Buddha is not only the object of the sermon, he is, at the same time, its origin, its foundation, its subject in the true meaning of the word. The whole *sūtra* is more of an internal dialogue of the Holy Buddha with himself. Consequently, our *sūtra* can be called the most excellent *sūtra*, i.e. sermon [originating] from the golden mouth of the Buddha, because there is nothing else besides the Holy Buddha” (Dōi 1978, 12, transl. J.F.).

Strictly speaking, therefore, by representing the silent Buddha in *vitarka-mudrā* the sculptors did not accurately render the contents of the *Gandavyūha*. Perhaps because the sculptors deemed it “premature” to show the Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā*, the *mudrā* symbolizing the beginning of the First Sermon, they opted instead for its nearest equivalent, the *vitarka-mudrā*. However, if the sculptors had really intended to portray the Buddha in *simhavi-jrimbhita samādhi*, as Shastri assumes, they would probably have chosen to represent him in *dhyāna-mudrā* (see below, II-3).

The prologue of the Chinese *Avatamsaka-sūtra* states that the first assembly was held in Bodhgayā at the site of the Buddha’s Enlightenment. In the prologue of the *Gandavyūha* the final assembly of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* gathers at Jetavana. By omitting the deer from the scene on Ia-120, the sculptors may have deliberately rendered the scene less site-specific. The identical *mudrās* of the Buddhas on the two consecutive reliefs (Ia-120 and II-1) and the omis-

sion of the symbolic references to the Deer Park helped create a visually harmonious transition from the first to the second gallery. It also emphasizes the immediate chronological connection between the concluding section of the *Lalitavistara* and the prologue of the *Gandavyūha*.

Shastri takes the two lions (*simha*) of the Buddha's throne as an indication that the Buddha is shown already entering the "*Lion's yawn samādhi*". In the reliefs of Borobudur lion thrones serve as attributes of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and of some of Sudhana's most important *kalyānamitras*. Although these thrones are shown on many Borobudur reliefs, they do not seem to have the narrow, specific connotation Shastri attributes to them. The representations of the lion throne in the reliefs sometimes do not even seem to accurately reflect the contents of the text (see below, relief II-65). We shall presently see that the actual entrance of the Buddha into the "*Lion's yawn*" *samādhi* is shown on relief II-3.

Finally, there is yet one other feature of this relief that does not seem to be directly inspired by a passage in the text. The heavenly musicians (*gandharvas?*), hovering above the clouds in the middle and top register of the relief, carry a *vinā*, a monochord, and lutes. They pay a musical tribute to the Buddha. It should be noted that when Sudhana takes leave of Maitreya (IVB-42), the Bodhisattva is likewise accompanied by an orchestra, albeit not one of the heavenly kind. There even dancers are added to the parting scene.

II-2 The *Śrāvakas* and the *Lokendras* fail to witness the Miracles Performed by the Buddha (fig. 2)

Both Bosch and Shastri believe this scene to be an illustration of a lengthy passage in the text which describes how the *Śrāvakas* and the *Lokendras* ("Lords of the World") in the Buddha's audience were unable to see the miracles performed by the Buddha. Krom initially (1920) thought that the reason for the absence of the Buddha from this panel is that the scene serves as an extension of the preceding panel, merely showing additional members of the Buddha's assembly. By the time the English translation of his *Archeologische Beschrijving (Archaeological Description)* was published in 1927, Krom favored another solution. Even without knowing the text, he now speculated that the scene on II-2 shows how the Buddha made himself invisible through the power of his *samādhi*, a guess remarkably close to the explanation given in the text.

It should be noted, however, that the passage, in which the inability of the *Śrāvakas* and *Lokendras* to witness the miracles performed by the Buddha is described, occurs *after* the Buddha has entered the "*Lion's yawn samādhi*", not before. Shastri recognized this difficulty, but he assumed that a minor textual variant was the cause of this discrepancy, or that the sculptors may have deviated from the sequence of events as it was described in their text.

There is no need to attribute this deviation to a *varia lectio*, for the prologue itself suggests another, more likely possibility. After describing the gathering at Jetavana, the *Gandavyūha* contains a passage in which the feelings of inadequacy of the members of the assembly are recounted: "Then, indeed, this occurred to the Bodhisattvas and their retinue and to the *śrāvakas* who possess great supernatural powers and to these lords of the world and their retinue: It is not possible by means of the Sahādevaka world to learn of the sphere of the Tathāgata, the range of the Tathāgata knowledge, the magic power of the Tathāgata, the force of the Tathāgata....or to be absorbed [in these], to understand [these], or to manifest [these]" (Ehman, 116).



2. The *Śrāvakas* are unable to see the miracles performed by the Buddha (II-2).

All three Chinese translations of this passage translate *wuneng guan*, i.e. “unable to observe [these]” instead of “to manifest [these]” (Tamura 2006, 19-20). It would seem more likely, therefore, that the relief represents exactly what Bosch and Shastri thought it did, i.e. the inability of part of the audience to behold the Buddha’s miracles, but that the relief illustrates another passage of similar content. This passage occurs in the text before the Buddha enters *samādhi*, at exactly the place where we would expect to find it. The sculptors selected the “inability to behold” as the only one of the many limitations to the skills of part of his audience that could be rendered in stone in an intelligible manner.

There is yet another, equally plausible explanation for the particular location of the relief illustrating the inability of the *śrāvakas* to witness the miracles produced by the Buddha. As we shall see, the *Gandavyūha* frequently draws a clear distinction between those who are capable of having visions and witnessing miracles, and those who are not. This ability depends upon the degree of Enlightenment of the persons in question. After a lengthy discourse on this topic, the *Gandavyūha* sums it up as follows: “The Buddha sphere is inconceivable and insuperable to all the *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas*. Because of this these great *śrāvakas*, present at the feet of the Blessed One there in Jetavana, do not see these miracles of the Buddha. And they do not see Jetavana, possessing the assembly of Great Bodhisattvas and the collection and orderly arrangement of worldly virtues, inconceivable, innumerable and pure. They do not know these because they were not proper vessels” (Ehman, 162).

The panels II-4 through II-13 all illustrate those miraculous events that could not be seen by most of those present in the audience. In order to emphasize the distinction between seeing and an inability to see, and in order to avoid potential confusion in the minds of the prospective viewers of their reliefs, the sculptors changed the sequence of the scenes. They moved the scene, which clearly demonstrates the inability of part of the audience to see those miracles, ahead of the illustrations of the actual miracles themselves. This would be the first, but, as we shall later see, by no means the last time that the sculptors adopted this device, deliberately deviating from the exact sequence of events, as described in the text. In most cases this seems to have been done for a specific reason, in order to clarify or emphasize a point, or to remind the viewer of a particular situation. They obviously considered these points of sufficient importance to deviate from the sequence of events, as described in the text. The seemingly premature introduction of Samantabhadra (IVB-60) is another example of this type of deliberate, meaningful deviation from the sequence of events as described in the text.

II-3 The Buddha enters the *Lion's Yawn Samādhi*

“Then indeed the Blessed One, having known the thoughtful reflection by the mind of those Bodhisattvas—that thoughtful reflection which is the entrance to great compassion, which is preceded by great compassion, which is followed, through training in innumerable *dharmas*, by great compassion—entered into the *samādhi* called ‘*Lion's yawn*’, which is the manifestation of light to the world” (Ehman, 119).

This is the only relief among the illustrations of the prologue in which a Buddha is shown in a meditative pose. It is evident, therefore, that only this relief can illustrate the Buddha's *Lion's yawn samādhi*.

II-4 The Bodhisattva from the East worships the Buddha

“And as the Blessed One entered uninterruptedly into this *Tathāgata samādhi* called the “*Lion's yawn*”, then already beyond the oceans of *lokadhātus* equal to the atom-dust of indescribable Buddha fields in the eastern direction, there was a Bodhisattva, great being, named Vairocana-pranidhānābhiraśmiprabha, from the Buddha field of the *Tathāgata Vairocanaśrītejorāja*” (Ehman, 125).

This panel is the first of a series of ten reliefs of similar composition, all of which illustrate a visionary miracle produced by the Buddha while he was immersed in the *Lion's yawn samādhi*. The text describes in ten consecutive, largely repetitive paragraphs how out of the Buddha fields of each of the Ten Directions a succession of Bodhisattvas arrived to pay homage to the Buddha and to perform miracles of their own. The descent of each Bodhisattva, named in the text, is the principal event in this string of similar episodes. The composition of the reliefs faithfully represents the repetition of the same overall theme and similar variations in minor matters of detail. All ten reliefs represent a Buddha residing in an ornate building who is being worshiped by an audience consisting of *bhiksus*, *bhiksunis*, and male and female members of the elite or Bodhisattvas, all lined up in similar, but never identical fashion in two or three registers.

Shastri believes that the descent of the Bodhisattvas is shown on these reliefs, and at first sight the members of the elite, who appear on these reliefs, could indeed represent the “innumerable Bodhisattvas” mentioned in the text. What argues against Shastri’s identification is that none of the reliefs seems to single out any individual Bodhisattva, who could be regarded as representing one of those, who lead the descent of these ten pageants and who are all mentioned by name in the text. If Shastri’s interpretation should nevertheless turn out to be correct, we can only conclude that the ten successive Buddhas, who are all of varying appearance and who are all seated in different types of buildings, should then actually all represent the Buddha Śākyamuni.

The differences in the portrayal of these ten Buddhas do not necessarily contradict Shastri’s identification. As we will have ample opportunity to see later, the sculptors of Borobudur never made any effort to treat the appearance of any of the chief protagonists of the *Gandavyūha* in a consistently uniform manner. It should also be noted that the sculptors seem to have ignored the only specific iconographic statement in the text, repeated ten times. The text states each time that all leading Bodhisattvas assumed *panyankāsana*, the pose in which one leg is folded on top of the other. The ten-fold repetition of this descriptive detail, and the fact that it is mentioned in all of the texts included in Tamura’s critical edition, makes it highly likely that the sculptors chose to ignore it (see II-74 for exactly the same omission).

Another alternative is that the ten reliefs represent the Tathāgatas, who preside over the Buddha fields in the Ten Directions, and who are also mentioned by name in the text. The sequence of the cardinal and intermediate points (east, south, west, north, northeast, southeast, southwest, northwest, nadir and zenith) appears to be fixed by convention. One could, therefore, assign to these Buddha reliefs either the names of the Tathāgatas, or those of the Bodhisattvas, in the same order as they are mentioned in the text. However, the reliefs do not reveal any visual references to the specific contents of the text passage which they are believed to illustrate. Therefore the question whether the order in which these Bodhisattvas and Buddhas make their appearance on the reliefs is exactly the same as that in the text cannot be resolved. In this respect the identification of this sequence of ten reliefs must, therefore, remain tentative.

It should be noted that nine of the ten Buddhas in this series of reliefs are shown with their right hand in *vitarka-mudrā*, and one (II-7) with both hands in *dharmacakra-mudrā*. The text offers no explanation for this difference in treatment, for it deals with all ten Buddhas in identical fashion. The text also offers no explanation for the appearance in the Buddha’s audience of relief II-11 of two *nāgas* and one *garuda*. The appearance of these mythical animals should, therefore, probably be considered an example of artistic licence on the part of the sculptors.

II-5 The Bodhisattvas from the South worship the Buddha

II-6 The Bodhisattvas from the West worship the Buddha

II-7 The Bodhisattvas from the North worship the Buddha

II-8 The Bodhisattvas of the NE worship the Buddha

- II-9 The Bodhisattvas of the SE worship the Buddha
- II-10 The Bodhisattvas of the SW worship the Buddha
- II-11 The Bodhisattvas of the NW worship the Buddha
- II-12 The Bodhisattvas from the Nadir worship the Buddha
- II-13 The Bodhisattvas from the Zenith worship the Buddha
- II-14 Samantabhadra explains the *Lion's Yawn Samādhi*

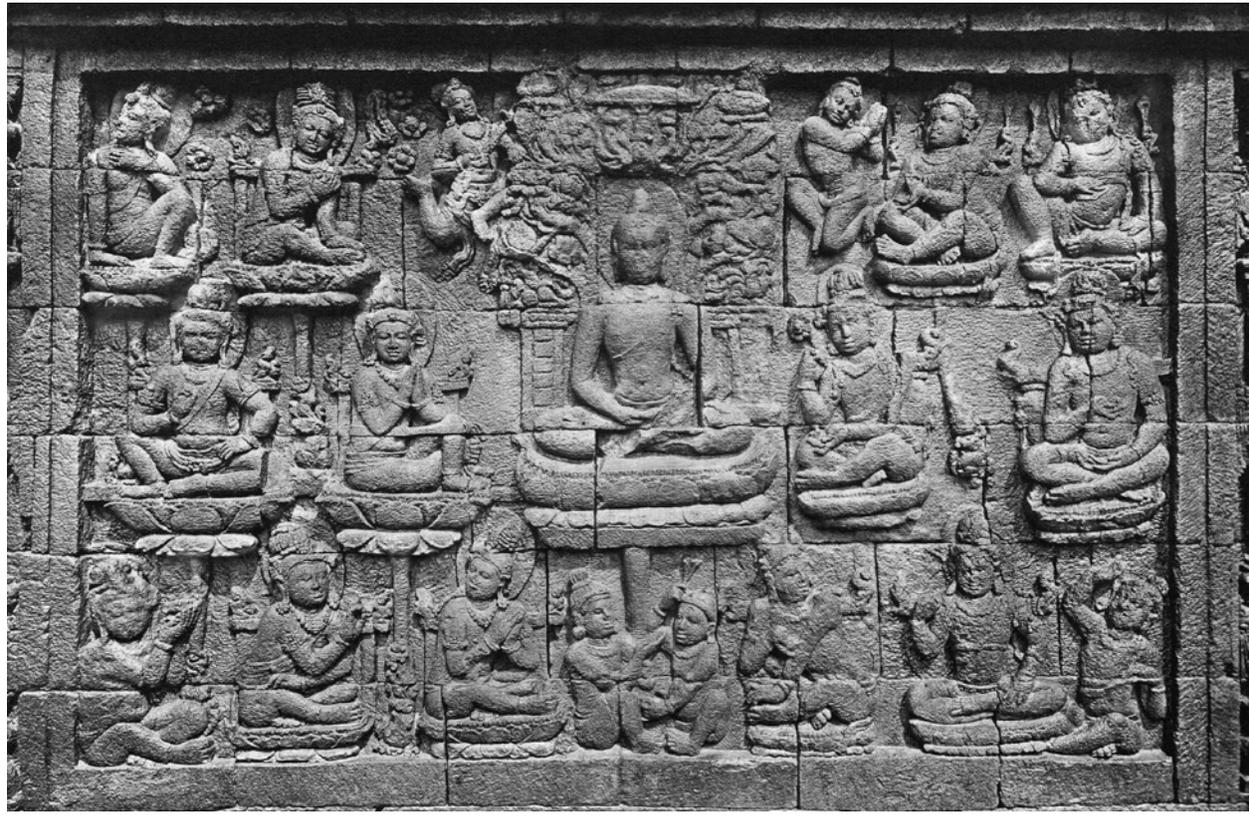
After the conclusion of these miraculous appearances, the Great Bodhisattva Samantabhadra comes forward to offer the assembly a ten-fold explanation of the Buddha's *samādhi*.

- II-15 The Bodhisattvas see the Buddha Seated underneath the Bodhi Tree (fig. 3)

The prologue concludes with another miraculous vision. The Bodhisattvas assembled in Jetavana witness how in every Buddha land in all universes extending to the limits of outer space a Bodhisattva achieves Enlightenment, seated on a lion throne and surrounded by all Lords of the World.

In the center of the relief rises a large lotus on a stalk. On top of it a Buddha is seated in a meditative pose under a bodhi-tree. Twelve Bodhisattvas, striking varying poses, are seated on lotus seats, eight of which rise on stalks while four are placed on the ground. Two dwarf-like figures support the stalk of the Buddha's lotus seat. The text of the *Gandavyūha* makes the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas all sit on lion seats [*simhāsana*], but the sculptors have instead opted for lotus seats. The Sanskrit text and the Chinese translations call the seats of the Bodhisattvas "lion seats of the Lotus Repository" [Skt: *padmagarbhāsimhāsana*]. The sculptors chose to substitute a lotus seat for the lion-lotus seat. The *Gandavyūha* contains several other fanciful compounds beginning with the word *simha*, such as lion pearls and lion standards (for a *simhadhvaja* see III-32), but the shape of a combined lion-lotus seat is hard to visualize.

In this connection it may be of interest to mention that early Chinese translations of what has been called the *Smaller Buddhāvataṃsaka sūtra*, forerunners of the complete *Mahāvaiṣṭya Buddhāvataṃsaka sūtra*, as represented in T. 278 and 279, contain a prologue that is very similar to that of the transmitted versions of the *Gandavyūha*. However, one version (T.281) has the Bodhisattvas sit on lotus seats, the other (T. 280) on lion thrones (Nattier 2007, 113). The sculptors, instead of taking liberties with their text, may have stuck to the letter of it. The possibility exists that the manuscript which guided the sculptors of Borobudur partially preserved the early version of this miracle as it is represented in T.281.



3. The Bodhisattvas see the Buddha seated underneath the Bodhi Tree (II-15).

This impressive spectacle, a miraculous display of the Buddha's boundless might, concludes the prologue of the *Gandavyūha*. The action now shifts from Jetavana to the city of Dhanyākara, where Mañjuśrī will be the chief protagonist. He will act as the first of Sudhana's many *kalyānamitras*. Under his spiritual guidance Sudhana will be embarking upon his long pilgrimage to learn about the Conduct of the Bodhisattva. Mañjuśrī sends him off on his south-bound journey and will only meet with him again towards the end of his pilgrimage.

SECOND GALLERY, MAIN WALL

PILGRIMAGE, FIRST SERIES (II-16—II-72)

With panel II-16 begins the first series of reliefs illustrating the pilgrimage of Sudhana. It consists of fifty-five panels, a number equal to one half of the 110 destinations and *kalyānamitras* mentioned in the *Gandavyūha*.

II-16 Mañjuśrī instructs Sudhana and a Gathering of *Bhiksus* (I)

The focus now shifts from the Buddha in Jetavana, still immersed in *samādhi*, to the Great Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī in his youthful appearance (*kumārabhūta*). The Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī recites *gāthās* in praise of Jetavana and then proceeds from there to the city of Dhanyākara, where the local population has gathered to welcome him. Mañjuśrī singles out from among the crowd a young man named Sudhana, whom he recognizes as a person who is ready to embark upon his pilgrimage in search of the Conduct of the Bodhisattva, and whom he forthwith proceeds to instruct. Their meeting is shown on relief II-16.

Earlier Mañjuśrī had instructed a gathering of sixty monks, led by the Buddha's disciple Śāriputra. In Buddhist scriptures a common number indicating a large crowd is five hundred. For obvious practical reasons the sculptors of the Borobudur reliefs often reduced this number to five. This is the number of *bhiksus* actually seen in this relief. In this instance, however, the sculptors may have also intended to bring the number of *bhiksus* in line with that of the Buddha's former pupils (see reliefs Ia-117-118) or with that of the monks present at the First Sermon in the Deer Park of Benares (shown on relief Ia-120).

Sudhana's pilgrimage starts when Mañjuśrī refers him to another Good Friend, who lives somewhere in a region to the south. From now on most of the following reliefs illustrate Sudhana's visits to his successive Good Friends. However, right at the start of his pilgrimage we are confronted for the first, but certainly not for the last time, with a problem of identification of the reliefs that may be regarded as typical of the *Gandavyūha* reliefs of the main wall of the second gallery. This problem occurs whenever we are dealing with a succession of two or more *kalyānamitras* of the same gender and walk of life, as, for example, three *bhiksus*, two kings, or eight Night Goddesses.

The first three *kalyānamitras*, to whom the young pilgrim now successively turns for further instruction, are all *bhiksus*. On the reliefs all three of them are clearly recognizable as members of the Buddhist clergy by their shaven heads and their monks' garb. Both the text and the reliefs suggest, however, that all three are solitary monks, who do not seem to be members of a larger monastic community.

Without exception the transmitted texts and translations of the *Gandavyūha* agree that the first three Good Friends, to whom Sudhana is referred after his initial encounter with Mañjuśrī, are Buddhist monks. When we match the text with the reliefs, which likewise show a succession of three monks, we are inclined, therefore, to take for granted that the sculp-

tors were guided by a manuscript in which these three visits occurred in the same order as is given in the transmitted texts. However, we have no real proof that this is indeed the case, for nowhere in the reliefs II-17—II-19 do the sculptors even hint at the highly unusual venues of all three of these encounters. The first occurs on top of a mountain peak, the second on the seashore, and the third in mid-air. The absence of any visual references to the settings in which these encounters took place seems to suggest that the sculptors did not regard them of sufficient importance to illustrate them on their reliefs. We will have other occasions to observe this habit of the sculptors. For the moment, we need only point out the particular obstacle this type of illustration poses for the precise determination of the identity of these three *kalyānamitras*.

As we will see later, the sculptors were asked to duplicate almost the entire pilgrimage, illustrating most of Sudhana's visits to his *kalyānamitras* twice. Variations in this duplication of almost the entire series of visits occasionally afford us a glimpse behind the veil of anonymity in which the protagonists are shrouded in some of these rather non-specific, stereotyped visiting scenes. It sometimes even allows us to establish the precise identity of some of these Good Friends. The reliefs discussed here (II-17, -18, and -19) represent the first example of this kind of opportunity.

Almost exactly at the point where we would expect Sudhana's second pilgrimage to begin, i.e. fifty-five reliefs after Sudhana has taken leave of Mañjuśrī, we encounter a curious scene of a procession of figures walking in the clouds (II-73). There can be little doubt that this scene illustrates Sudhana's visit to the monk Supratisthita (IV), for this is the only visit of the entire pilgrimage that takes place in mid-air. The next two panels (II-74—II-75) illustrate figures rising from the water on lotuses, an unmistakable reference to the visit to the *bhikṣu* Sāgaramegha (III). He describes to Sudhana how after residing on the seashore for twelve years he witnessed the apparition of a Buddha, who emerged from the sea, enthroned on a lotus (Cleary 1989, 58-62). However, in all transmitted versions of the *Gandavyūha* the visit of Sudhana to Supratisthita takes place *after* he has visited the *bhikṣu* Sāgaramegha, not before.

As we will see later, the sculptors of the second series of reliefs of Sudhana's pilgrimage sometimes chose to deviate from their stereotyped, non-specific, "Sudhana meets mentor" formula for these visiting scenes. Instead, they chose to depict the visionary miracles that occurred or were described to Sudhana by the *kalyānamitras* in the course of these two visits. Only this decision of the sculptors enables us to detect this minor discrepancy between the transmitted texts and the scripture that guided the sculptors of Borobudur. This is the first, but certainly not the last example of a change in the sequential order in which Sudhana's visits have been illustrated. We will see later that the visits to the Eight Night Goddesses present a similar, but—perhaps, because of their larger number—an even more complex problem.

That such minor changes could be made at all is probably due to the fact that the order of the visits in the text often does not seem to have a direct bearing on the content of the message which each of these Good Friends delivers. Chinese commentators have tried to coordinate Sudhana's visits with specific stages of spiritual progress, as described in other sections of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* (for a complete listing of these stages see Rahder 1929 and Fontein 1966, appendix). However, the connection between these stages of spiritual development and the individual *vimokṣa* of each *kalyānamitra* frequently seems rather tenuous. Although the sculptors as a rule followed their text, the scripture itself offers no obvious, compelling internal reason for the sculptors to adhere rigidly to the exact sequential order of most of Sudhana's visits.

II-17 Sudhana visits the *Bhikṣu* Meghaśrī (II)

Concluding his instruction of Sudhana, Mañjuśrī refers the young pilgrim to the *bhikṣu* Meghaśrī, who resides on Mt. Sugrīva in Rāmavarta. “After seven days of searching he saw the *bhikṣu* Meghaśrī, having made obeisance with his head at the feet of the *bhikṣu* Meghaśrī, having circumambulated the *bhikṣu* Meghaśrī, having stood before him, he, making *añjali* said these words: ‘May the worthy one be informed that by me a thought has been produced in highest perfect enlightenment. And I do not know how by the Bodhisattva one is to be instructed in the Bodhisattva course, how one is to be accomplished in it, how the Bodhisattva course is to be begun....Let the worthy one tell me this—how the Bodhisattvas go forth into highest perfect enlightenment’” (Ehman, 163).

The text describes how the encounter with Meghaśrī takes place on a mountain top (Cleary 1989, 56-58), but the relief does not even reveal a hint of this unusual setting and places the *kalyānamitra* inside an ornate building.

For a complete translation of the Sanskrit text describing the visit to Meghaśrī, see Ehman, 163-172.

II-18 Sudhana visits the *Bhikṣu* Supratisthita (IV)

The transmitted texts of the *Gandavyūha* all make Meghaśrī refer Sudhana to the *bhikṣu* Sāgaramegha (III). The second set of illustrations of the visit to Supratisthita (IV) on the reliefs II-74 and II-75 precede that of the visit to Sāgaramegha (III). For this reason alone this relief is identified here as the visit to Supratisthita. Once again the sculptors gave no indication of the setting described in the text (Cleary 1989, 62-65) and placed the *bhikṣu* inside a building. He raises his right hand in *abhaya-mudrā* while Sudhana sits at his feet, his arms crossed, listening attentively to his mentor’s discourse.

For a complete translation of the Sanskrit text describing the visit to Supratisthita, see Ehman, 186-196.

II-19 Sudhana visits the *Bhikṣu* Sāgaramegha (III)

The *bhikṣu* is seated in a relaxed pose on a pillow underneath a magnificently spreading tree, teeming with birds and small animals. His right hand is lowered in the gift-bestowing *vara-mudrā*. This is one of the few reliefs in which Sudhana is shown on the left side of the panel.

For a complete translation of the Sanskrit text describing the visit to Sāgaramegha, see Ehman, 173-185. (Cleary 1989, 58-62)

II-20 Sudhana visits the Physician (Dramida) Megha (V)

The text states that Sudhana meets this teacher “at a crossroads”. Accordingly, the sculptors did not portray him seated inside a building, as is usual, but underneath a tree. The physician Megha is a Dravidian. Osto (2008, 77) and Cleary (1989, 62-65) call him a “grammarian”. He

wears the tall headdress of the elite, but is shown without the usual sacred thread of the Hindus. His plain seat contrasts with the splendid lion throne mentioned in the text. The most memorable moment of this visit occurs when the *kalyānamitra* dispenses with all teacher-pupil protocol and prostrates himself in front of Sudhana. This is Sudhana's first encounter with a lay mentor, which may explain this extraordinary act of homage (Osto 2008, 77-78). The sculptors have forgone the opportunity to depict such an unusual reversal of roles, perhaps because it could easily have confused the viewer, as both protagonists are shown in the dress of members of the elite. In the text it is Megha himself who showers Sudhana with flowers, but in the relief flying heavenly beings and a pair of *kinnaras* render this homage on Megha's behalf from high up above the clouds.

II-21 Sudhana visits the *Śresthin* (Merchant) Mukta (VI)

Mukta, a *śresthin* (banker, merchant, or master of a guild), is seated inside a building with a plain base, but elaborate roof decorations. He assumes a meditative pose, as mentioned in the text (Cleary 1989, 68-73). Sudhana is standing on the right, raising his right hand as if adding emphasis to his request for instruction. This gesture may perhaps allude to the fact that the text makes Sudhana frame his initial question much more elaborately than he had done during the preceding interviews.

Mukta describes for Sudhana his visions of Tathāgatas in all Ten Directions, "as numerous as specks of dust in ten Buddha lands" (see Vetter 2004, 2-3, and Granoff 1998, 361-362). None of these innumerable Tathāgatas appears in the relief, but the *śresthin* is shown with a halo, an unusual attribute for a lay person.

II-22 Sudhana visits the *Bhikṣu* Sāgaradhva (VII)

For six months and six days the *bhikṣu* Sāgaradhva remains deeply immersed in meditation (Cleary 1989, 73). During his meditation, countless apparitions emanate from different parts of his body. None of this is seen on the relief, which merely shows the *kalyānamitra* in conversation with Sudhana, presumably after he has emerged from his meditative trance.

II-23 Sudhana visits the Princess and Lay Woman (*Upāsikā*) Āśā (VIII)

Krom, led astray by the slightly confusing English terminology of the two Indian excerpts, which seem to make Āśā a *bhikṣunī*, or nun, hesitated to identify this relief as a representation of Sudhana's visit to Āśā. However, all transmitted texts call her an *upāsikā*, or lay woman (Cleary 1989, 84-90). As she is shown not with the shaven head of a nun, but with an elaborate headdress, as mentioned in the text, it is obvious that a Buddhist lay woman is represented here. The lay woman assumes a meditative pose. Why Āśā, like Mukta (II-21), has been singled out for the distinction of being shown with a halo remains unclear.

For a critical edition of the Sanskrit text of Sudhana's visit to Āśā and its translation see Ijiri 2005, 1-96. For an earlier translation of the Sanskrit text of this visit see Paul 1985, 94-102.

II-24 Sudhana visits the *Rsi* Bhismottaranirghosa (IX)

The bearded *rsi* (seer), recognizable by his braided hair, is seated on a dais flanked by stylized rocks underneath the trees, exactly as told in the text (Cleary 1989, 90).

II-25 Sudhana visits the Princess Maitrāyanī (XI)

It should be noted that Sudhana's tenth *kalyānamitra*, the Brahman Jayosmāyatana, seems to have been skipped by the sculptors. It is, of course, quite possible, that a *lacuna* in the Borobudur version of the *Gandavyūha* was responsible for this unique omission, for it can hardly be a coincidence that this Brahman is also absent from the second pilgrimage. It is also conceivable, however, that the highly dramatic episode of Sudhana's jump into the fire from a mountain top in order "to purify his actions"—the crucial event during his visit to Jayosmāyatana—was deemed too graphic to be suitable for inclusion in the solemnly sculptured narrative of Sudhana's pilgrimage (Cleary 1989, 98).

Princess Maitrāyanī (again, with halo), the daughter of King Simhaketu, is seated in a meditative pose in an elaborately decorated building, exactly as told in the text (for a discussion of her palace see Granoff 1998, 362-363). Her ornate palace, lacking the customary palisade, is called the Vairocanagarbha, a name which prefigures that of Maitreya's palace of miracles, which Sudhana will visit later (see p.69). To the right is Sudhana with his retinue and to the left stands another woman with a halo, who turns away from the *kalyānamitra*. The texts offer no explanation for this additional figure and her unusual posture.

II-26 Sudhana visits the *Bhikṣu* Sudarsana (XII)

Both Sudhana and his *kalyānamitra* are seated on plain pedestals, the one for the teacher, as always, appropriately higher. The stylized rocks flanking the *bhikṣu's* seat indicate that the meeting takes place in the open air, as stated in the text (Cleary 1989, 102). The two highly decorative trees are an additional reference to the outdoor setting of the visit. The presence of an elephant and two horses—usually an allusion to Sudhana's travels—perhaps reflect Sudhana's protracted search for this *kalyānamitra* that is mentioned in the text. This time it is Sudhana who has been supplied with a halo.

II-27 Sudhana visits the *Dāraka* (Boy) Indriyeśvara (XIII)

The young *kalyānamitra* is shown with a halo and with the crescent-shaped ornaments, the customary attribute of youthful persons in ancient Javanese art. In the text Sudhana finds this youthful teacher playing in the sand of a river bank with a crowd of ten thousand other boys (Cleary 1989, 105). Instead, the sculptors chose to represent him in a sumptuous building, flanked by rows of servants bringing gifts. This is one of the few panels in which Sudhana is shown seated on the left side.

II-28 Sudhana visits the *Upāsikā* (Lay Woman) Prabhūtā (XIV)

The composition of this panel is similar to that of II-23 and II-25. The text tells us that the *upāsikā*, here shown seated in a niche and flanked by servants holding fly whisks, possesses a magic receptacle which is capable of producing any kind of food. If the sculptors had chosen to adopt the compositional scheme of II-25, the vessel could easily have been shown in front of the *kalyānamitra*, but the sculptors omitted the vessel that plays such a crucial role in the story.

For a critical edition and an English translation of the Sanskrit text of Sudhana's visit to Prabhūtā see Ijiri 2005, 99-140. For an earlier translation of the Sanskrit text of the visit see Paul 1985, 155-162. (Cleary 1989, 107-111)

II-29 Sudhana visits the *Grhapati* (Householder) Vidvān (XV)

This is one of the few panels in which Sudhana is shown twice, once in the center, seated to the left while receiving Vidvān's instruction, and the second time farther on the left, while taking leave from the householder. The concluding paragraph of the description of this visit does not treat Sudhana's ceremonial departure in any way different from that of his other visits. It remains unclear whether there was any special reason for this duplication.

As Krom had already suspected, the row of money bags underneath Vidvān's seat symbolizes the great wealth of this *kalyānamitra*, as is mentioned in the text. The cloth fluttering in the air in the upper right corner represents the variety of precious objects which the teacher could make descend from heaven by merely looking up at the sky (Cleary 1989, 111-114).

II-30 Sudhana visits the *Dharmaśresthin* Ratnacūda (XVI) (fig. 4)

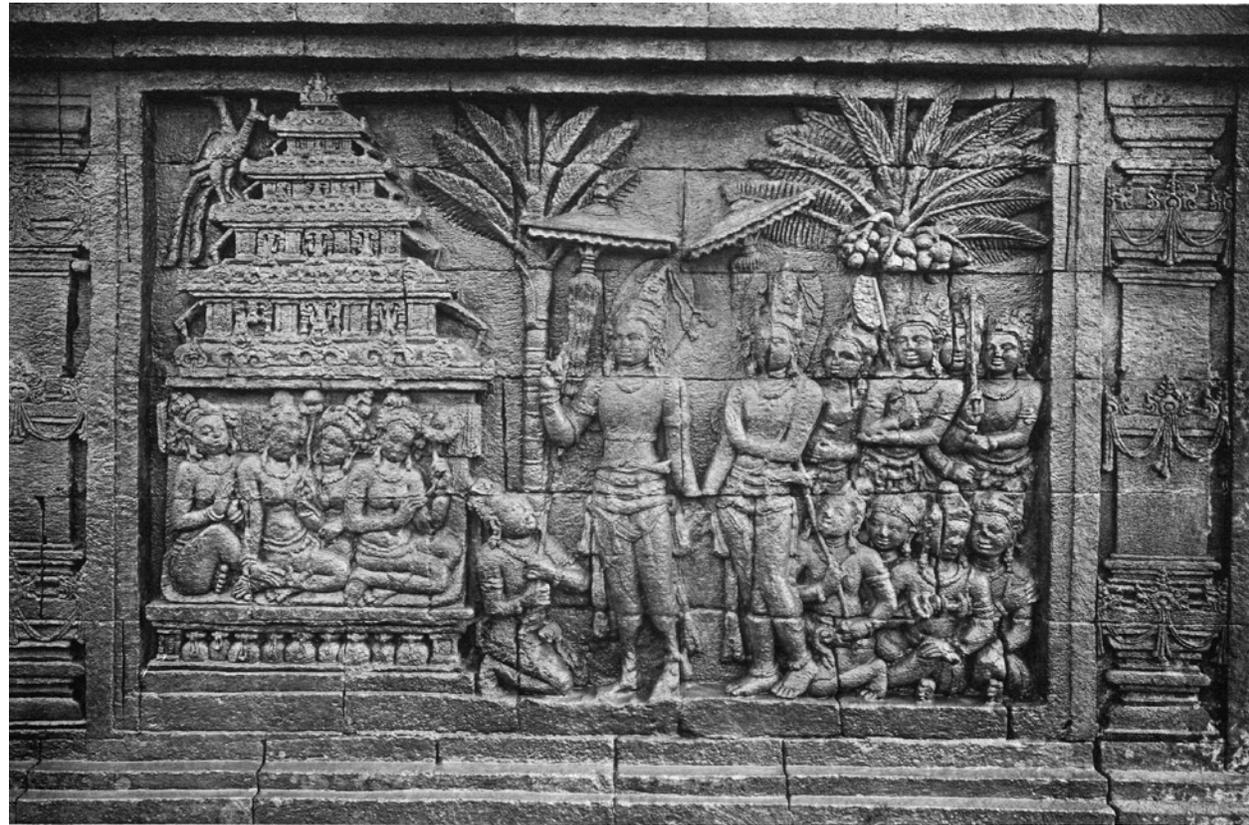
According to all versions of the text, Sudhana, looking for the dharma merchant (*dharmaśresthin*) Ratnacūda, meets this Good Friend "in the midst of the market place of Simhapota" (Cleary 1989, 114-116). The sculptors, ignoring the specifics of the setting given in the text, chose to represent him seated in a splendid building instead. Whatever their reasons for this deviation from the text may have been, it cannot have been ignorance of the details of the story, for the next panel proves the sculptors' familiarity with the description of the visit.

For a translation of the Sanskrit passage describing the visit to Ratnacūda, see Ehman, 197-204.

II-31 Ratnacūda shows Sudhana his Residence (XVI Continued) (fig. 4)

The relief shows how Ratnacūda, taking Sudhana by the hand, guides him towards his multi-storied residence. It aptly illustrates the words: "Then indeed Ratnacūda, the dharma merchant, having grasped the hands of Sudhana the merchant's son, having approached his own house, having beheld this house, said thusly: 'Oh son of good family, behold my house!'" (Ehman, 197).

Due to the obvious limitations of space, imposed upon them by the horizontal format of the relief, the sculptors have reduced the ten-storied palatial building of the text to a five-storied



4. Ratnacūda (XVI) shows Sudhana his ten-storied residence (II-31).

building. There is no archaeological evidence that multi-storied buildings of this type ever existed in ancient Java. This relief is the first example of an architectural representation in the *Gandavyūha* reliefs which reveals the hazards of deducting information on ancient Central Javanese architecture from the buildings illustrated in the reliefs. Another example of architecture that is not likely to have existed in Central Java at the time Borobudur was built, is shown on relief III-38. For a discussion of Ratnacūda's ten-storied residence and its possible significance for the symbolism of the architectural shape of Borobudur see pp.213-214.

In a Chinese stone relief representing Sudhana's visit to Ratnacūda in the Beita or Northern Pagoda at Dazu, (Sichuan Province, built between 1148 and 1155 c.e.), the palace has been reduced in similar fashion to a five-storied pagoda (Liu Changqiu, ed., *Dazu Shike Neirung Zonglu* (A Comprehensive Catalogue of Dazu Stone Carvings), Sichuan Institute of Social Studies Press, 1985, 134, no. 24).

II-32 The Apparition of the Tathāgata Dharmarāja (XVI Continued)

After admiring Ratnacūda's residence, Sudhana asked his host: "O worthy one, from whence is this sort of perfection of yours purified? Where are your roots of merit planted from which

this kind of perfection of maturity of yours [comes]?” (Ehman, 201). In answer to this query, Ratnacūda tells how in aeons past a Tathāgata named Dharmarāja (as abbreviated in the Parisian mss. from Anantaraśmidharmadhātusamalamkritadharmarāja) appeared in the world. Invited by king Dharmeśvararāja, the Tathāgata entered the royal park, where a drop of perfume, which was offered to him, miraculously permeated all of Jambudvīpa for seven days.

Bosch (1929, 236) mentions “the apparition of the Tathāgata Dharmarāja” as if this event actually occurred during Sudhana’s visit to Ratnacūda. However, all texts consulted are in agreement that this auspicious event did not take place during Sudhana’s visit, but occurred during one of the *kalyānamitra*’s previous rebirths. This relief provides, therefore, the first clear indication that not only the actions of the chief protagonists, as Bosch maintained, but also the contents of a teacher’s oral instruction and the description of events which occurred in one of his or her previous lives could be illustrated in the reliefs.

This type of representation of a “story within a story” is, as we shall see, not uncommon in the reliefs of Borobudur. Monika Zin, in discussing narrative reliefs from Amarāvati and Nagarjunakonda (Zin 2004, 176) maintains that what she calls a “depiction within a depiction” does not occur in the arts of the Indian subcontinent. If this is indeed correct, the representation of the contents of the oral instructions of Sudhana’s *kalyānamitras* would be a clear departure from Indian illustrative conventions.

The sculptors’ habit of representing classes or types of people rather than individuals makes Sudhana and some of his teachers indistinguishable from each other. The sculptors drew no visible distinction between two persons belonging to the class of the elite. The *dharmāśrethin* (Ratnacūda) and a *śrethidāraka* (Sudhana) obviously belong to the same social class. Therefore, it is only the text which tells us that the first kneeling figure on the right of this panel, whom we might otherwise easily have mistaken for Sudhana, is in reality Ratnacūda in a previous life.

II-33 Sudhana visits the *Gāndhika* Samantanetra (XVII)

The pilgrim and his teacher, a *gāndhika* or perfumer, are shown in conversation, seated underneath the elegant *kāla-makara* arch of a building. The relief does not illustrate the teacher’s magic healing powers, which he exercises by administering ointments and perfume, as is mentioned in the text (Cleary 1989, 116-118).

For a complete translation of the Sanskrit text describing the visit to Samantanetra see Ehman, 205-213.

II-34 Sudhana travels on Foot

Although the text of the *Gandavyūha* describes in a repetitive formula of stock phrases the pilgrim’s ceremonial departure from one and his arrival at the next mentor’s residence, it never specifies his means of transportation. We are left with the distinct impression, however, that Sudhana, like all proper Buddhist pilgrims through the ages, was traveling on foot, just as he is shown on this relief. Elsewhere on Borobudur, however, Sudhana is seen using all kinds of different means of transportation, ranging from a horse-drawn carriage (II-46) to a palanquin (II-42) and elephants (II-54 and II-97).

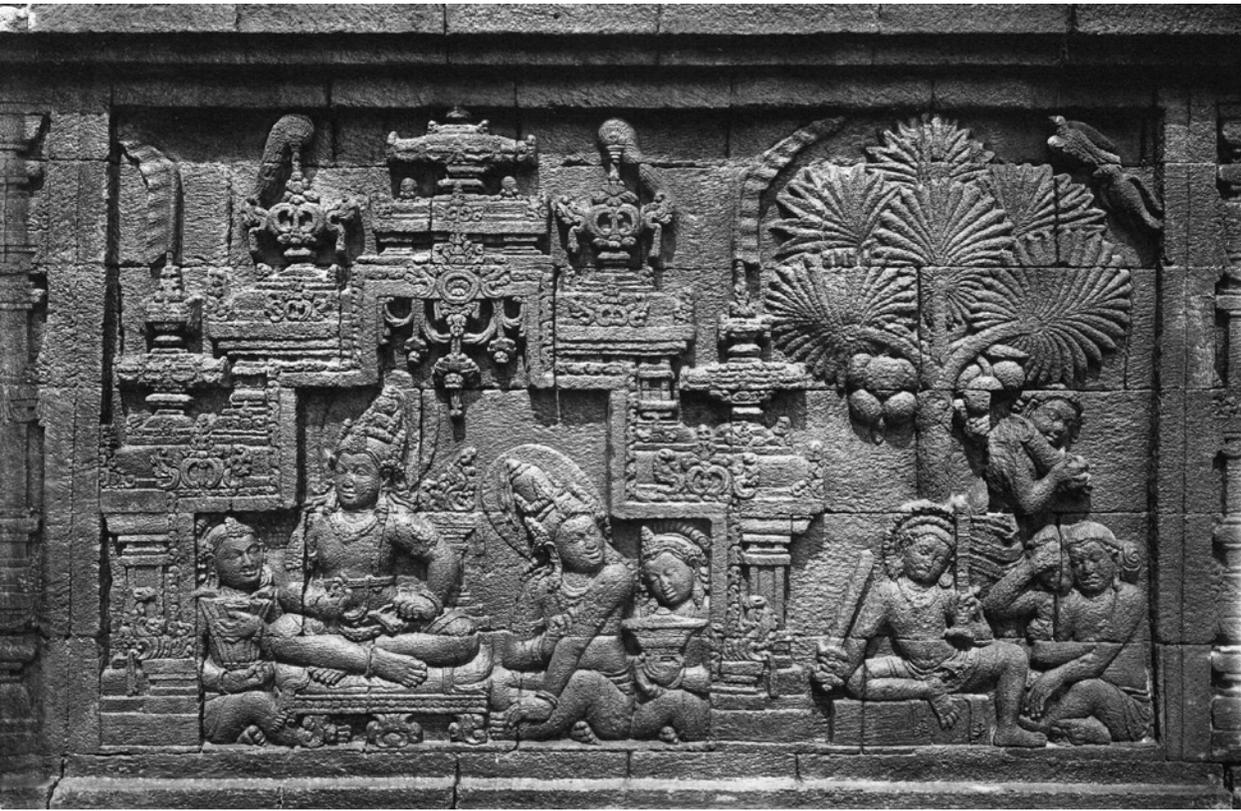
There is no indication that the insertion of traveling scenes was triggered by the occurrence of certain words or phrases in the text. As we shall see later, this happens in some of the *Bhadracarī* reliefs. There the word *careyam* in the text prompted the sculptors to represent a procession (see e.g. IV-42). It should also be noted that traveling scenes are, with one possible exception (II-97), not to be seen among the reliefs devoted to the second pilgrimage. This could be an indication that the sculptors tried to express the difference between the two series of visits. The first pilgrimage could represent Sudhana's personal pilgrim's progress, the second the individual spiritual achievement attained by each of his successive *kalyānamitras*.

II-35 Sudhana visits King Anala (XVIII) (fig. 5)

After the reliefs illustrating Sudhana's visit to Ratnacūda (II-30—II-32) this panel is the second example in which the sculptors provide evidence of their familiarity with the contents of the text which they had been commissioned to illustrate. Here, however, this specific visual reference to events described in the text as having taken place during the visit has not been moved to a separate relief, but has been incorporated in the panel which functions simultaneously as the introductory visiting scene.

In an elaborately decorated palace on the left side of the panel King Anala receives Sudhana. Parmono Atmadi singles out this building as a typical example of what he calls "decorative structures". He defines these structures as: "representations of buildings, the primary aim of which is to give the impression that the activity expressed in the panel takes place inside a building. Decorative structures are thus represented as vertical sections of buildings, but because of limited space on the panels, which contain them, they are not drawn to scale" (Atmadi 1988, 46). His count of the total number of structures of this type on the Borobudur reliefs is 463. The palatial mansion in this relief is a characteristic example of this type of decorative structure. In the text its lavish decoration is mentioned (Cleary 1989, 119). However, the sculptors of Borobudur usually represented royal palaces as buildings surrounded by a palisade (Ia 53 and II-68). They elected not to do so in this relief and the next, which shows a visit to another king.

The body language of the two principal occupants of the palace is highly unusual. Contrary to previous practice, this *kalyānamitra* does not seem to address Sudhana directly, but instead turns away from his visitor. Sudhana, too, does not look directly at the King, but turns his attention—and, thereby, that of the viewer—towards the scene outside the palace on the right. There, a *yaksa* with drawn sword sits on a plain seat next to two men, who are obviously in a state of distress. One is shielding his eyes and the other grasping his upper arm. Underneath the palm tree a third man is shown walking away, carrying what Krom (1927, 36) called "a cylinder-shaped object". The text provides the key to this curious scene. It describes how Sudhana sees the king's henchmen, armed with all kinds of weapons, mete out cruel punishments to the king's subjects who have broken the law. They cut off their hands, limbs, ears and noses, and gauge out their eyes (Cleary 1989, 119). Krom's "cylinder-shaped object" turns out to be a criminal's severed arm. Following a tradition honored earlier by the sculptors of some of the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs, the sculptors exercised great restraint in their depiction of scenes of violence. Instead of actually showing undisguised cruelty, they represented its victims covering their eyes that are about to be gauged out or grasping those body parts that are about to be cut off.



5. Sudhana visits King Anala (XVIII) (II-35).

Less clear is the meaning of the unusual body language of the royal *kalyānamitra*. Sudhana, instead of respectfully facing his teacher, turns around to witness the scene of cruelty that unfolds on his left. The King, on the other hand, turns away to the other side, as if he does not wish to see how his subjects are being punished. The key to this “negative” body language of the chief protagonists may be found in the text. It turns out that the entire display of horrendous violence is merely a phantasmagoria, an illusory apparition, a fact that Sudhana—at least initially—fails to grasp. The dramatic body language may reflect the sculptor’s effort to draw the viewers’ attention to the crucial difference between “real” and “unreal.”

II-36 Sudhana visits King Mahāprabha (XIX)

In theory either II-36 or II-37 could represent Sudhana’s second visit to a royal *kalyānamitra*. However, the bells which are the most conspicuous ornaments of the palace on II-36 are a perfect match for “the nets of golden bells making pleasant sounds” of the text (Cleary 1989, 123). A similar passage, describing the decorations of Maitreya’s *kūtāgāra*, has been illustrated on relief III-21.

II-37 Sudhana visits an Anonymous Person

The reliefs show an additional visit prior to Sudhana's arrival at the residence of the *upāsikā* Acalā (XX). This visit is not accounted for in the text. It is possible that in the Borobudur manuscript of the *Gandayūha* a passage had been inserted at this point, describing another visit. Such an addition could have made up for the earlier loss of the Brahman Jayosmāyatana (X), who does not seem to have been represented on Borobudur at all (see II-25).

However, it may not be a coincidence that exactly at this juncture persons, who remain anonymous in the text, interrupt the narrative and intervene in Sudhana's search for his next Good Friend. The first intervention is by a group of heavenly beings, who urge Sudhana to proceed to the residence of Acalā (Cleary 1989, 127-128). As they are said to be high up in the sky, they are not likely to have been portrayed as terrestrial *kalyānamitras* in the relief.

The text next describes Sudhana's continuing search for the whereabouts of Acalā. Not long after his meeting with the celestial beings an unnamed person informed Sudhana: "the *upāsikā* Acalā lives at home, caring for her parents, and surrounded by her relatives; she gives spiritual guidance to large crowds of people". The sculptors probably elected to portray this anonymous informant in what at first sight appears to be a typical visiting scene. An identification of the principal figure in this relief as one of these anonymous informants seems to be the most likely explanation of what would otherwise be a deviation from the accepted sequence of Sudhana's *kalyānamitras*, as given in all transmitted texts.

Hikata solves the above-mentioned discrepancies between text and reliefs by assuming a "misarrangement in the reliefs". Frédéric assigns II-36 to "Rāja Mahāprabha, his 19th master" and II-37 to "Rāja Mahāprabha, his 20th master". As a result of this probably inadvertent duplication, he assigns wrong sequential numbers to the subsequent *kalyānamitras*, up to the 29th.

II-38 Sudhana visits the *Upāsikā* (Lay Woman) Acalā (XX)

Although gender, dress, and headdress are clearly those of an *upāsikā*, the relief contains no other visual clues to the precise identity of this *kalyānamitra*. Both the lay woman and the pilgrim have been provided with a halo.

For a critical edition of the Sanskrit text and an English translation of this visit, see Ijiri 2005, 143-202.(Cleary 1989, 127-132).

II-39 Sudhana visits the *Parivrājaka* Sarvagāmin (XXI)

The *parivrājaka*, or itinerant mendicant, whom Sudhana finds residing on a mountain top (Cleary 1989, 132-134), is shown here seated among outcroppings of stylized rocks, which protrude from a forest teeming with wildlife. The mendicant with his long, pointed beard and his tall, braided hairdo is seated on a low rattan stool. His traditional attributes, the water jar and trident, are placed next to him. Both the teacher and the pilgrim have been provided with a halo. In the second pilgrimage we will see that the "cave dweller" of relief II-86, who looks quite different from this *kalyānamitra*, nevertheless represents the same mendicant.

This is characteristic for the art of the sculptors of Borobudur, in which the same person can be variously portrayed, with or without beard and with or without halo. Such differences in portrayal even occur when the reliefs showing the same person are located in close proximity or adjacent to one another.

II-40 Sudhana visits the *Gāndhikaśresthin* (Perfume Merchant) Utpalabhūti (XXII)

The *kalyānamitra* receives Sudhana in a vast palace which occupies almost the entire length of the panel. Except for the gender, the heavily damaged relief offers no other clue to the identity of this male *kalyānamitra* (Cleary 1989, 134-136).

II-41 Sudhana visits the *Dāśa* (Slave) and Mariner Vaira (XXIII) (fig. 6)

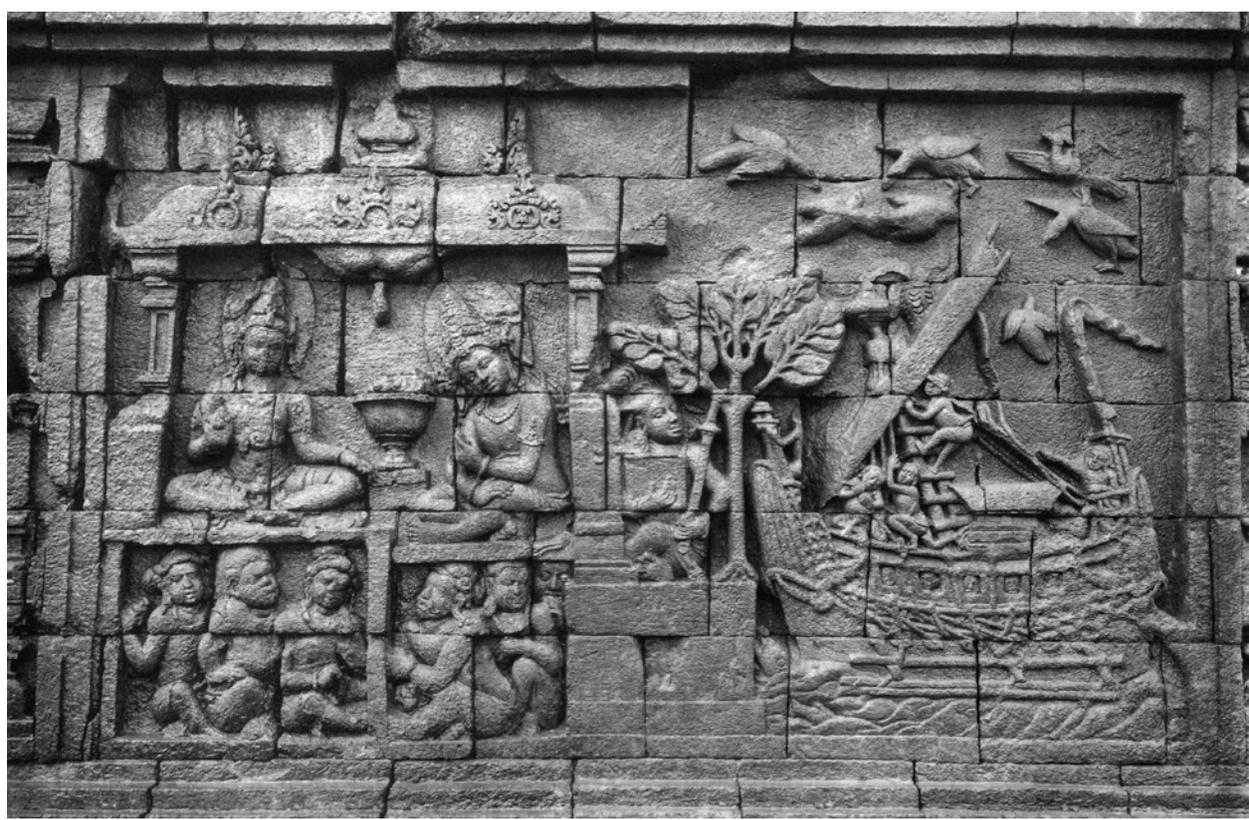
With this maritime scene we are, once again, on firm ground, for the relief itself supplies an unmistakable clue to the identity of the *kalyānamitra*. The outrigger sailing vessel on the right identifies the *kalyānamitra* as the mariner Vaira. A tree, clinging precariously to the edge of the pier, separates the seascape on the right from the simple, two-storied dwelling on the left. Perhaps because of the teacher's humble social status as a slave, Vaira and Sudhana are this time seated on mats at almost the same level, that of Vaira being only slightly higher. The bare interior of the ground floor room and the simple dress of its occupants are reminders of the teacher's humble social—but, nevertheless, obviously high spiritual—status (Cleary 1989, 136-139).

II-42 Sudhana travels in a Palanquin

The sculptors elected to show our pilgrim traveling comfortably to his next mentor in a palanquin. The palanquin is a sculptor's addition that is not mentioned in the text (see II-34).

II-43 Sudhana visits the *Bhiksuni* (Nun) Simhavijrmbhitā (XXV)

Although Sudhana counts many women among his Good Friends, only one of them is a nun, the *bhiksuni* Simhavijrmbhitā (Cleary 1989, 141-146). In spite of the considerable damage inflicted upon this figure, her simple monastic robe indicates that this *kalyānamitra* is a nun. The text describes the magnificent Sūryaprabha Park in which she resides, but nothing of this splendor is shown in the relief. The identification as Simhavijrmbhitā confirms that the sculptors skipped the visit to the banker Jayottama (XXIV, Cleary, 139-141). That Sudhana's visit to this banker was nevertheless included in the sculptors' manuscript of the *Gandavyūha* is evident from Jayottama's appearance in the second pilgrimage on relief II-89.



6. Sudhana visits the mariner Vaira (XXXIII) (II-41).

II-44 Sudhana visits the *Grhpati* (Householder) Vesthila (XXVII)

Hikata identified this relief as an illustration of Sudhana's visit to the *bhagāvatī* Vasumitrā (XXVI), a suggestion also adopted by Frédéric. However, since the *kalyānamitra* is definitely male, he is more likely to represent the next teacher, the householder Vesthila (Cleary 1989, 149-151). The visit to Vasumitrā seems to have been skipped, but she has been represented in the second pilgrimage (see relief II-91). Just as in the reliefs illustrating Sudhana's visit to Ratnacūda (II-30 and 31) the first introductory panel devoted to the visit to Vesthila shows a typically non-specific visiting scene. That the sculptors were nevertheless fully aware of the events which took place during Sudhana's visit to Vesthila, as described in the text, is demonstrated on the next panel.

II-45 Sudhana and Vesthila at the *Tathāgata Caitya* (XVII Continued)

Inside a building crowned by a *stūpa* stands another *stūpa* to which the kneeling Vesthila and Sudhana pay homage together (Cleary 1989, 149-151). Both have been provided with a halo. In the Borobudur reliefs it is not always possible to draw a distinction between architectural



7. Sudhana visits Śiva Mahādeva (XXX) (II-48).

details, which reflect the description given in the text, and other decorative features, added spontaneously by the sculptors. Here the case is evident: both in II-45 and in II-98, which illustrates the same visit, the sculptors interpreted the “caitya” mentioned in the text as a *stūpa* installed inside another structure.

II-46 Sudhana travels in a Horse-Drawn Carriage

II-47 Sudhana visits the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (XXVIII)

Sudhana kneels in front of Avalokiteśvara, who raises his right hand in *vitarka-mudrā* (Cleary 1989, 151-156). The two chief protagonists have both been provided with a halo. The same Bodhisattva, clearly identifiable by the figure of Amitābha in the headdress, is also shown in the series devoted to the second pilgrimage on reliefs II-100 to II-102.

II-48 Sudhana visits the Hindu God Śiva Mahādeva (XXX) (fig. 7)

In spite of the extensive damage suffered by this relief, Śiva’s mount, the bull Nandin, lying in front of the building in which the deity is seated, definitely proves that Sudhana’s visit to

the Hindu god Śiva Mahādeva has been illustrated here (Cleary 1989, 157-159). This implies that the sculptors must have skipped the visit to the Bodhisattva Ananyagāmin (XXIX) who is shown later on II-103. Śiva appears for a second time on relief II-104.

Chihara (1996, 122) regards the portrayal of one of the principal Hindu deities, Śiva Mahādeva, on the reliefs of Borobudur as a sign of the peaceful co-existence in Central Java of the two great Indian religions. However, the long list of Sudhana's *kalyānamitras* consists of gods, goddesses, and persons from many different walks of life and includes an unusually large number of non-Buddhists. With the possible exception of only one, the Brahman Jayosmāyatana (see II-25), all of Sudhana's *kalyānamitras* have been shown at least once in the reliefs. If the sculptors had skipped the Hindu god Śiva, this would have been inconsistent with their inclusive treatment of all other non-Buddhist *kalyānamitras*. Śiva's inclusion among Sudhana's spiritual mentors in the *Gandavyūha* is undoubtedly of some significance, for on no other Javanese Buddhist monument has an image of the great Hindu deity been carved. Yet this image of Śiva, repeated on II-104, may only be the result of the sculptors' faithful adherence to their text.

II-49 Sudhana visits a Goddess (Vasantī XXXII?)

This is the first in a long series of reliefs (II-49-II-63) in which Sudhana can be seen paying visits to a succession of female *kalyānamitras*, including some or all of the Eight Night Goddesses as well as Gopā and Māyā, the spouse and mother of the Buddha Śākyamuni. The series is interrupted by two traveling scenes (II-54 and II-58) and by two narrative panels (II-55 and II-61) which probably illustrate stories told to Sudhana by some of these divine women.

If we follow the sequence of the visits given in the texts, the first panel showing one of these female *kalyānamitras* should represent the *prthivīdevatā*, or Earth Goddess, Sthāvarā (XXXI). However, there is little in the reliefs to distinguish this goddess from the following group of Eight Night Goddesses, and we have, therefore, no certainty at all that the Earth Goddess is represented here (see also the discussion of II-105). The treasure bags placed at the foot of the tree may perhaps be regarded as a visual reference to the jewels which the Earth Goddess puts on display for Sudhana (Cleary, 159-160). It should be pointed out that the same type of bags can also be seen on relief II-51. However, the identification of the next relief suggests the possibility that the sculptors may have skipped the Earth Goddess Sthāvarā, and that the first of the Eight Night Goddesses, Vasantī (XXXII), is represented here.

II-50 Vasantī in a Previous Rebirth as the Queen of a Just King (XXXII Continued)

The sculptors always scrupulously observed the rule of seating the *kalyānamitras* at a higher level than Sudhana. We must doubt, therefore, that this panel, which shows a couple seated at exactly the same level, should be regarded as an actual visiting scene. Perhaps this relief is an illustration of a story told by one of the goddesses, more specifically one told by Vasantī (XXXII), the first of the Eight Night Goddesses (*rātridevatā*). In response to a question by Sudhana as to when and how she has attained her present divine status, she shares with him an experience she had in one of her previous lives as Queen Dharmamaticandrā of King

Sudharmatīrtha. She describes how she is visited in the middle of the night by the Night Goddess Suviśuddhacandrābhā, who announces to her the Supreme Enlightenment of a Buddha and encourages her to go and worship him. The association of this relief with Vasantī would preclude the possibility that the story told by this Night Goddess (Cleary 1989, 160-171) could actually have been illustrated on relief II-68. There is, however, as we shall presently see, a preferable alternative identification for that relief (see below II-68).

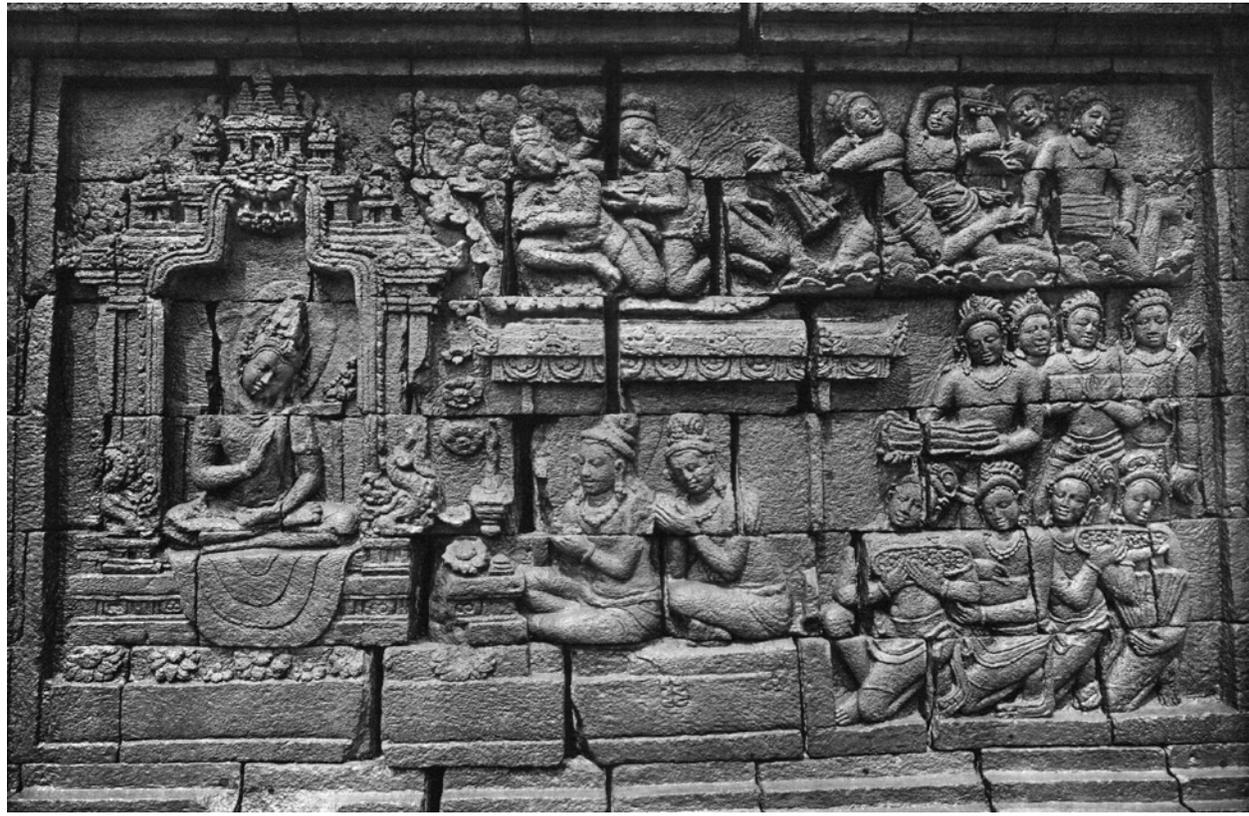
The reliefs II-49 and II-50 have a striking parallel in II-91 and II-92. There it is evident that the relief, which shows a man and a woman seated at the same level, represent a husband and wife. There Vasumitrā (XXVI), shown as Sudhana's *kalyānamitra* in II-91, tells a story from one of her precedent births, in which she was Sumatī, the wife of a *śresthin* (merchant, banker, or master of a guild), and it is this story which seems to be illustrated on II-92. By the same token we could imagine that relief II-49, instead of representing the Earth Goddess Sthāvarā, shows the Night Goddess Vasantī in conversation with Sudhana and that relief II-50 represents Vasantī in a previous life as Queen Dharmamaticandrā, one of the stories told to Sudhana by Vasantī (Cleary, 167-168).

The number of reliefs belonging to the first pilgrimage on which Sudhana is shown visiting a female *kalyānamitra* appears to be approximately the same as the number of female Good Friends that is given in the text. It soon becomes evident, however, that the order in which the visits to the Night Goddesses are shown on the reliefs differs somewhat from the sequence given in the texts. As none of these scenes appears to include any visual clue as to the precise identity of each female mentor, I have listed below the names of the eight Night Goddesses in the order in which they appear in all transmitted versions of the *Gandavyūha*, without, however, assigning a specific relief to most of them.

- Vasantī (XXXII)
- Samantagambhīraśrīvimalaprabhā (XXXIII)
- Pramuditāyanajāgadvīrocānā (XXXIV)
- Samantasattvatrānojahśrī (XXXV)
- Praśāntarutasāgaravatī (XXXVI)
- Sarvanagararaksāsambhavatejahśrī (XXXVII)
- Sarvavrksapraphullanasukhasamvāsā (XXXVIII)
- Sarvajagadraksāpranidhānavīryaprabhā (XXXIX)

II-51 Sudhana pays Homage to a Night Goddess (Samantasattvatranojahśrī XXXV?)

The relief shows Sudhana prostrating himself before the Night Goddess Samantasattvatranojahśrī. The goddess is seated in the shade of a magnificent tree, at the foot of which jars containing treasures have been placed. The Night Goddess emits a ray of light from the *ūrṇā* between her eyebrows, illuminating all the worlds, after which its rays enter the top of Sudhana's head and permeate his entire body. Having thus received the *samādhi* of the Night Goddess, Sudhana prostrates himself at her feet (Cleary, 1989, 189).



8. Homage to a King (?) (II-55).

II-52 Sudhana visits a Night Goddess

II-53 Sudhana visits a Night Goddess

II-54 Sudhana travels on an Elephant

II-55 Homage to a King (?) (fig. 8)

Krom describes this relief as “a conversation with a man”, while Hikata comments: “The preacher should be illustrated as a female”. It is obvious that the sequence of Sudhana’s visits to the goddesses is interrupted here by a single panel, which neither represents a female teacher nor conforms to the standard composition of the regular visiting scene. Krom was well aware of the differences: “Everywhere else, the person with a halo, dressed like people of high rank, whom we have looked upon as Sudhana, was the one who came as a visitor; he was placed on a lower seat to pay homage and sometimes sat outside the pavilion. Here it seems to be the other way around. The figure that should be Sudhana according to his costume is seated in the pavilion on the left side of the relief, receiving homage from two men sitting under a penthouse supported by pilasters, with an incensory before them. The front one wears a high tiara and a

halo, but with that exception they both look like persons of lower rank. Of course, it is quite possible that the difference is merely superficial and may be ascribed to the wish for variety so that the two men under the penthouse are Sudhana and an attendant, while the man in the pavilion is the one he comes to visit. The right hand of the relief is occupied by standing and sitting attendants bearing rich gifts, among which a bundle of clothes and a large rectangular package tied round with a string that may be a parcel of books or else a box. Angelic musicians with drum and cymbals drop flowers from the sky” (Krom 1927, 41-42).

In this section of the *Gandavyūha* all versions of the text describe a long sequence of visits to female teachers, never interrupted by a visit to a male *kalyānamitra*. It is, therefore, most likely that this unusual relief, obviously showing a visit to a man, does not represent one of Sudhana’s visits, but illustrates a story from a previous life, as told to Sudhana by one of the female *kalyānamitras*. The chief protagonist in several of these stories is a wise and just king, whose queen (identified as the Night Goddess in a previous life) witnessed the attainment of Enlightenment by a Tathāgata. It is quite possible, therefore, that the figure seated in the pavilion represents one of those kings. The similarity of these stories makes it impossible to identify with certainty which Night Goddess told the story that is illustrated here. Krom occasionally attributes the sculptors’ deviation from the usual formulaic visiting scene to “a wish for variety”. However, most reliefs which deviate from the usual monoscenic representation of Sudhana’s visits turn out to have a special meaning and are almost always narrative scenes.

II-56 Sudhana visits a Night Goddess

II-57 Sudhana visits a Night Goddess

II-58 Sudhana travels on Foot

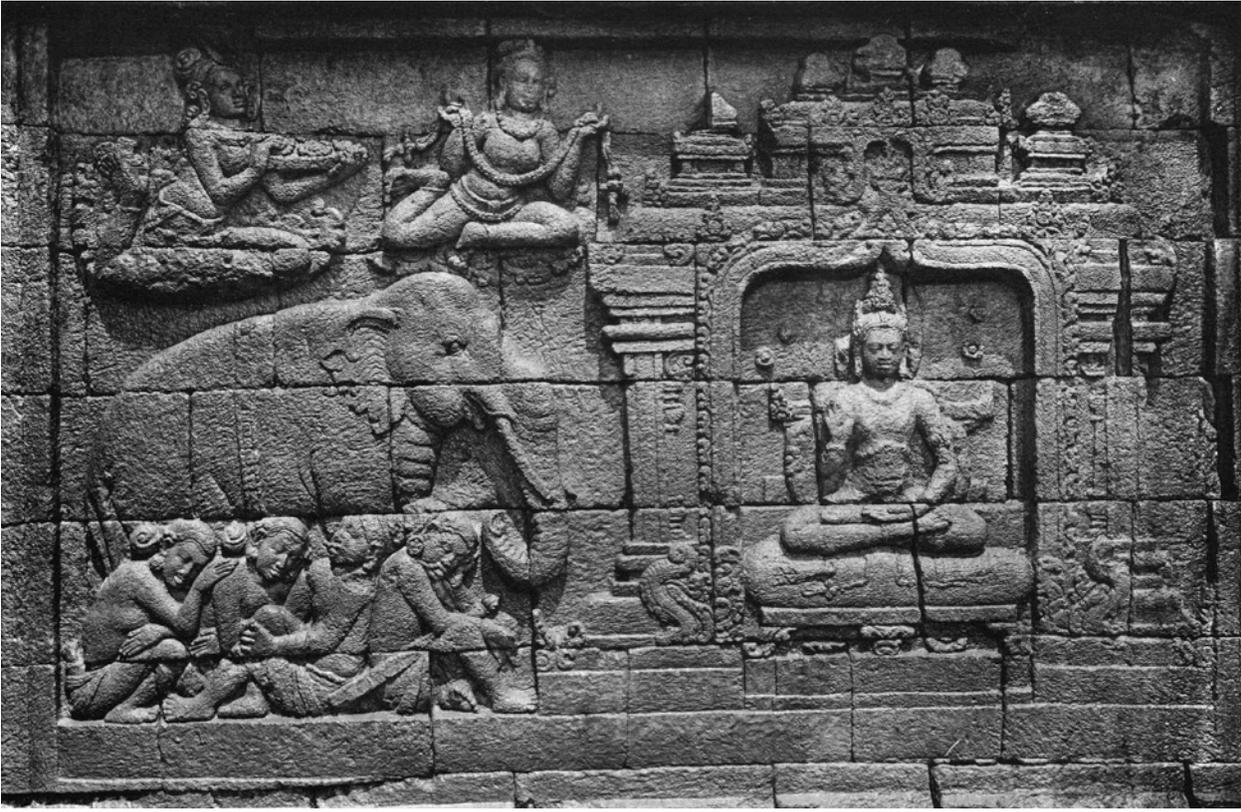
II-59 Sudhana visits a Night Goddess

II-60 Sudhana visits Gopā (XLI?)

As the next relief in all probability illustrates a story, which was told to Sudhana by Gopā, this relief could be an introductory panel which shows Sudhana first paying his respects to the Buddha’s spouse.

II-61 Nocturnal Scene (XLI Continued?) (**fig. 9**)

Krom (1927, 43) describes the relief as follows: “The right half is taken up by a pavilion in which is seated cross-legged alone, the figure of a man with a halo, facing us, the left hand resting in his lap, the right in a sort of *abhaya-mudrā*. On the left, four servants asleep, the one in front with a sword laid across his knees; behind them stands an elephant turned to the right and above, in the air, also turning towards the pavilion, two female angels, the first with a garland, the second with a dish of flowers.”



9. Nocturnal scene (XLI ?) (II-61).

The guard and the other sleeping servants are an indication that either a nocturnal event or a dream has been illustrated here (cf. Ia-53, Ia-61, Ia-63, and IBa- 103). As the events from their present and former lives, described by the Night Goddesses, Gopā and Māyā, invariably occurred at night, there can be little doubt that this relief illustrates one of these stories. The man, who is dressed in the attire of the elite, raises his right hand. It is possible, however, that the “sort of *abhaya-mudrā*” mentioned by Krom is in reality a damaged hand in *vitarka-mudrā*.

Gopā tells Sudhana a story from one of her previous lives, in which a virtuous young girl named Sualitaratiprabhāśārī and her royal courtesan mother Sudarśanā go out to a park (Cleary 1989, 273-305). There she sees the crown prince Tejodhipati and falls madly in love with him. She is intent on marrying him, saying to her mother that she would rather die than not get him as her husband. Her mother tries to dissuade her, saying:” You should not harbor such thoughts, look at him—he has all the marks of a future Universal Ruler [*cakravartin*], and soon he will ascend the throne. The women will come to him spontaneously, flying through the air.” Immediately afterwards, the girl falls asleep and in her dream she sees a Tathāgata who has attained Supreme Enlightenment in a nearby *bodhimanda* seven days earlier. Even though the relief does not match all the details of this story, it is possible that the sculptor took the protagonists from different parts of the story—the crown prince and the flying women—and

combined them into a single scene with the sleeping servants symbolizing the dream. Whatever the exact meaning of this relief may be, there is no need to accept Hikata's verdict of "no connection with the text".

II-62 Sudhana visits Gopā (XLI Concluded)

Sudhana's visits to Gopā and Māyā represent a first climax of devotional fervor in the narrative of the pilgrim's progress towards Enlightenment. It is perhaps because of their exalted status as the wife and mother of the Buddha Śākyamuni that the sculptors have devoted additional panels to these two visits.

II-63 Sudhana meets a City Goddess [XLII]

Before Sudhana finally comes face to face with Māyā, the Buddha's mother, he meets with two divinities. The first of these is a City Goddess (Cleary, 306-307). The *Gandavyūha* does not seem to elevate this deity to the status of a full-fledged *kalyānamitra*. This is suggested by the fact that the descriptions of the customary rituals of greeting, seeking guidance, and ceremonial departure have all been dispensed with. Nevertheless, the deity's explanations of her "City of the Mind" may have been substantial enough in the eyes of the sculptors to justify her inclusion among Sudhana's mentors. As in so many other panels, the sculptors provide no additional visual clue which could confirm the identity of the person to whom Sudhana pays his respects.

II-64 Sudhana meets with the Gatekeeper of the *Bodhimanda* (XLII Continued)

The different versions and translations of the *Gandavyūha* are in agreement that the long series of visits to female teachers is not interrupted by any visit to one of their male counterparts. Relief II-64, therefore, represents an exception: a visit to a male mentor. (Frédéric mistakes the male mentor for a female and identifies her as Māyā).

The key to the identification of this panel is, once again, provided by the text. Just prior to Sudhana's actual visit to Māyā, and just after his encounter with the City Goddess, he meets with a deity who is the gatekeeper of the site of Enlightenment, the *bodhimanda* (see Cleary 1989, 308-309). This deity, who is not counted among Sudhana's official *kalyānamitras*, has a conversation with Sudhana in which he encourages the pilgrim's quest for Enlightenment and shares with him his personal insight in the proper role of the *kalyānamitra*. Just as in Sudhana's previous visit to the City Goddess, this conversation is considerably longer than most of the other, similar brief encounters in the *Gandavyūha* in which Sudhana meets with secondary figures, who give him directions and who encourage him to continue his pilgrimage. In the eyes of the sculptors the meeting with the gatekeeper must have been of sufficient weight to warrant the inclusion of this deity in the pageant of the pilgrim's spiritual mentors.

II-65 Sudhana visits Queen Māyā (XLIII)

The mother of the Buddha is seated cross-legged on a lion throne. Sudhana is seated at a lower level in the same pavilion, while his attendants are waiting outside. In the narrative of Sudhana's visits to his *kalyānamitras* the seats on which his mentors are seated are often described in great detail. Eight times the *Gandavyūha* states that a *kalyānamitra* is seated on a lion throne (*simhāsana*). In the reliefs of the second main wall the lion throne is shown seven times, but never in reliefs that we can identify with certainty as representations of those *kalyānamitras* whose seat is described as a *simhāsana* in the text. On five other reliefs the bases of the pilasters of the architectural frame, representing the residence of the *kalyānamitra*, have been provided with a decoration of lions in relief. These two lions always face outward and flank the throne of the *kalyānamitra*. We may perhaps consider them a kind of architectural equivalent of the *simhāsana*. However, even if this supposition is correct, there is still only a single match (II-92) between the *kalyānamitras* represented on these five reliefs (II-30, II-83, II-85, II-90 and II-92) and those Good Friends who are provided with lion seats in the text.

From these discrepancies between text and image one could perhaps conclude that the decision to provide a *kalyānamitra* with a lion throne was left up to the sculptors, just as they seem to have been free in their choice of Sudhana's means of transportation in the traveling scenes. Yet, when we now turn to the reliefs on which the *kalyānamitra* is actually enthroned on a *simhāsana*, we discover that this type of seat was almost always reserved by the sculptors for very important persons. These are the Buddha Śākyamuni (II-1), the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (II-100, II-101, II-102), and, if our identification of this relief (II-65) is correct, the Buddha's mother Māyā.

Shastri regarded the Buddha's lion throne on II-1 as an indication that the Buddha had entered *Simhavijrmbhita samādhi*. There are, as we have previously seen, reasons to question this idea. The description of Sudhana's visit to the only nun among Sudhana's Good Friends, whose name is "Lion's Roar" (*Simhavijrmbhitā*) actually mentions that she is enthroned on a lion throne. Although such a throne is not shown in the corresponding relief of the first pilgrimage (II-43), the lions appear on the relief illustrating this visit in the second pilgrimage (II-90).

II-66 Sudhana visits the *Devakanyā* Surendrābhā (XLIII?)

After the detailed descriptions of Sudhana's visits to the Night Goddesses, Gopā and Māyā, and the lengthy stories they told him to account for their own gradual progress towards Enlightenment through aeons of successive rebirths, there is a marked change of pace in the *Gandavyūha*. In rapid, rather anticlimactic succession Sudhana now visits ten *kalyānamitras*. Most of them offer only a brief explanation of their personal *vimoksa* and the text provides no details of the settings of any of these brief encounters. One of these Good Friends, the young teacher (*dāraakārya*) Viśvāmītra (XLIV), even offers no instruction at all and simply refers Sudhana to another teacher, who is yet another boy. In the first Chinese translation by Buddhahadra (T.278), which is believed to represent the oldest version of the *Gandavyūha*, this entire sequence of visits may have been lacking. It was later inserted from another source (see introduction, p.13). It is unclear whether there is any connection between this change in the style of the narrative and the history of the transmission of the text.

Hikata identifies relief II-65 as a representation of the *devakanyā* or Princess Surendrābhā (XLIII), a daughter of the god-king Indra (Cleary 1989, 315-316), and relief II-66 as the visit to the *upāsikā* (lay woman) Bhadrattamā (XLVI). These identifications are not based upon clues provided by the sculptors. However, as Sudhana's visit to Surendrābhā takes place immediately after he leaves Māyā, she would seem to be the most likely candidate.

II-67 Sudhana visits the Boy Viśvāmitra (XLIV)

The boy does not provide Sudhana with any instruction. Instead he gives him the name of another boy, who will be his next *kalyānamitra*, but who is not shown in the reliefs illustrating the first pilgrimage (Cleary 1989, 316).

II-68 A Night Goddess announces the Coming of a Tathāgata to a Royal Couple (XXXIV?) (fig. 10)

Krom offers the following description of this relief: "This relief...appears to have no connection with the series of conversation scenes. The whole of the right side of it is taken up by a building in which a man of distinction with a halo, is sitting on a seat with a lady; his face has been knocked off. In front of the building sit a couple of servants, one of them hangs his head as if asleep. The whole is surrounded by a palisade that is shewn first going under the building, then upwards at right angles and so cutting off that whole piece of the scene. Just behind the servants is a gateway, evidently the entrance, and outside to the left is a tree, with an umbrella fixed up next to it and two servants under it, one a bearded man with a sword, of course the guards, sitting asleep. Above the servants within the palisade, a flying female with a halo approaches the couple in the pavilion. The palisade continuing on that side of the gateway, goes up to the top of the relief right through the clouds in the left top-corner" (Krom 1927, 45).

This is one of the few narrative reliefs of which the meaning is totally unambiguous. A building surrounded by a palisade invariably represents a royal palace, as can be seen on several other Borobudur reliefs. For example, such a palisade, rendered in the perspective that is typical of Borobudur, appears in relief Ia-53, where the episode of Hrīdeva's nocturnal appearance in the royal palace, as described in the *Lalitavistara*, has been illustrated. Additional evidence is provided by relief IIIB-88ab, where the representation of a similar building surrounded by a palisade matches the word *rājadhānī* in one of the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts.

Relief II-68 resembles Ia-53 in two other respects. The sleeping guards indicate that the events illustrated in both reliefs take place during the night. In both reliefs flying angels arrive at the palace. From these parallels we may conclude with confidence that the scene on II-68 depicts the nocturnal arrival of a night goddess at a royal palace to announce the Enlightenment of a Tathāgata. It is, therefore, in all likelihood, an illustration of an *avadāna*-type story told by one of the Night Goddesses.

In the *Gandavyūha* at least two stories match the scene on the relief. The first of these parallels is a story told by the Night Goddess Vasantī (XXXII). We have previously identified relief II-50 as a possible illustration of a story told by this Night Goddess. An almost identical story from a previous life, told by the Night Goddess Pramuditāyanajāgadvīrocanā (XXXIV)



10. A Night Goddess announces to a king and queen the coming of a Tathāgata (II-68).

would therefore seem to be the most likely source of inspiration for this highly attractive narrative panel (Cleary 1989, 175-187).

Apart from its effectiveness as text illustration, the relief is highly unusual in that it is preceded and followed by panels illustrating visits to male *kalyānamitras*. It looks almost as if the illustration is based upon a single stray page, lifted from a palm leaf manuscript and reinserted in the wrong place. This resembles the kind of mishap that has been recorded by the Chinese monks who checked the *Gandavyūha* translations (see introduction, p.13).

II-69 Sudhana visits the Householder (*Grhapati*) Ajitasena (XLIX)

In this first round of visits the sculptors followed what would seem to be the intent of the text, treating all visits after his departure from Māyā up to his arrival at Maitreya's palace in a cursory manner. The sculptors skipped several visits, giving us a choice of several possible identifications. Two consecutive visits mentioned in the text are to two householders, Sucandra (XLVIII) and Ajitasena (XLIX). The texts offer no descriptions of the venues of these visits and make only brief mention of the *vimoksa* of Sudhana's mentors (Cleary 1989, 319-320). Relief II-69, which could illustrate the visit to one of these secular mentors, resembles II-123, where



11. Sudhana visits the Brahman Śivarāgra (L) (II-70).

we see one of these householders enthroned in a very similar building. Unlike the buildings in II-45 and II-98, where the architecture clearly reflects the description in the text, the elaborate structures in II-69 and II-123 both appear to be inventions of the sculptors.

II-70 Sudhana visits the Brahman Śivarāgra (L) (**fig. 11**)

All versions of the *Gandavyūha* agree that only two of Sudhana's *kalyānamitras* are Brahmans. Brahmans are always clearly recognizable on the reliefs by the dress and beards indicative of their status. However, as we have previously seen, the Brahman Jayosmāyatana [X] is not represented at Borobudur at all. This suggests that this relief should be identified as a representation of the Brahman Śivarāgra, who is also represented on II-124 (Cleary 1989, 320).

II-71 Sudhana visits the Young Woman (*Dārikā*) Śrīmatī (LII)

On relief II-125 we see Śrīmatī seated together in the same building with her brother Śrīsambhava (Cleary 1989, 320-328). They are the two last *kalyānamitras* of Sudhana who are of lay status. At first I was inclined to reject Hikata's identification of this and the following

relief as separate illustrations of the visit to this brother and sister team of mentors. However, as relief II-73 is definitely part of the second pilgrimage, we may assume that the sculptors of reliefs II-71 and II-72 decided to separate the two siblings. We should bear in mind that the crucial number of fifty-five, and, therefore, one hundred and ten *kalyānamitras* assumes that we count brother and sister as two individual mentors.

II-72 Sudhana visits the Young Man (*Dāraka*) Śrīsambhava (LI)

It comes as somewhat of a surprise that the sculptors should have chosen a youthful mentor to be represented in the company of two women. Yet there seems to be no better alternative, for the next relief illustrates Sudhana's meeting with his fourth *kalyānamitra* and is, therefore, definitely part of the second pilgrimage. To make relief II-72 likewise part of the second pilgrimage, as I originally suggested, does nothing to solve this problem. The first three of Sudhana's Good Friends after his departure from Mañjuśrī are all *bhiksus*. It would have been highly inappropriate to show any of these three ecclesiastics in the dress of the elite and, even more inappropriate, in the company of two women.

SECOND GALLERY, MAIN WALL

THE PILGRIMAGE, SECOND SERIES (II-73—II-128)

II-73 A Procession of Divinities Walking in the Clouds (IV) (fig. 12)

This relief marks the beginning of the second pilgrimage. This time the balance between a cursory and detailed illustration of the visits has been reversed. Of the early visits now several seem to have been skipped, while more panels have been devoted to the later visits. The first relief of the series illustrates the visit to the *bhikṣu* Supratisthita (IV), earlier shown on relief II-18. Having arrived in the region of Lanka, called Sāgaratīra, Sudhana “saw the *bhikṣu* Supratisthita walking in the firmament, surrounded by hundreds of thousands of countless divinities. And he saw the firmament bestrewn with clouds of celestial flowers and resounding with countless heavenly musical instruments, adorned with countless strips and banners by the lords of the gods in acts of reverence for the *bhikṣu* Supratisthita” (Ehman, 186-187).

Although it contains numerous accounts of miraculous events, the *Gandavyūha* does not mention any other mid-air visit. The identification of this relief as an illustration of Sudhana’s



12. A procession of divinities walking in the clouds (IV) (II-73).

visit to Suprastisthita is, therefore, a virtual certainty. It should be noted, however, that Sudhana and his *kalyānamitra* are nowhere to be seen in this relief. They are also absent from the next relief. The two following reliefs can be identified as the apparition of a Buddha on a lotus rising from the sea, a miraculous vision, described only during Sudhana's visit to Sāgaramegha, Sudhana's third *kalyānamitra* (Cleary 1989, 58-62). It would appear, therefore, that in the version of the *Gandavyūha*, followed by the sculptors of Borobudur, Suprastisthita and Sāgaramegha may have traded places (see above, relief II-16). The switch of these two visits remained unnoticed earlier only because in the first series of illustrations of the pilgrimage reliefs II-18 and II-19 both illustrate visits to *bhiksus*. Neither of these panels contained any visual reference to the miraculous events described in the text (see above II-18 and II-19).

II-74 A Buddha and Four Bodhisattvas emerge from the Sea (III) (fig. 13)

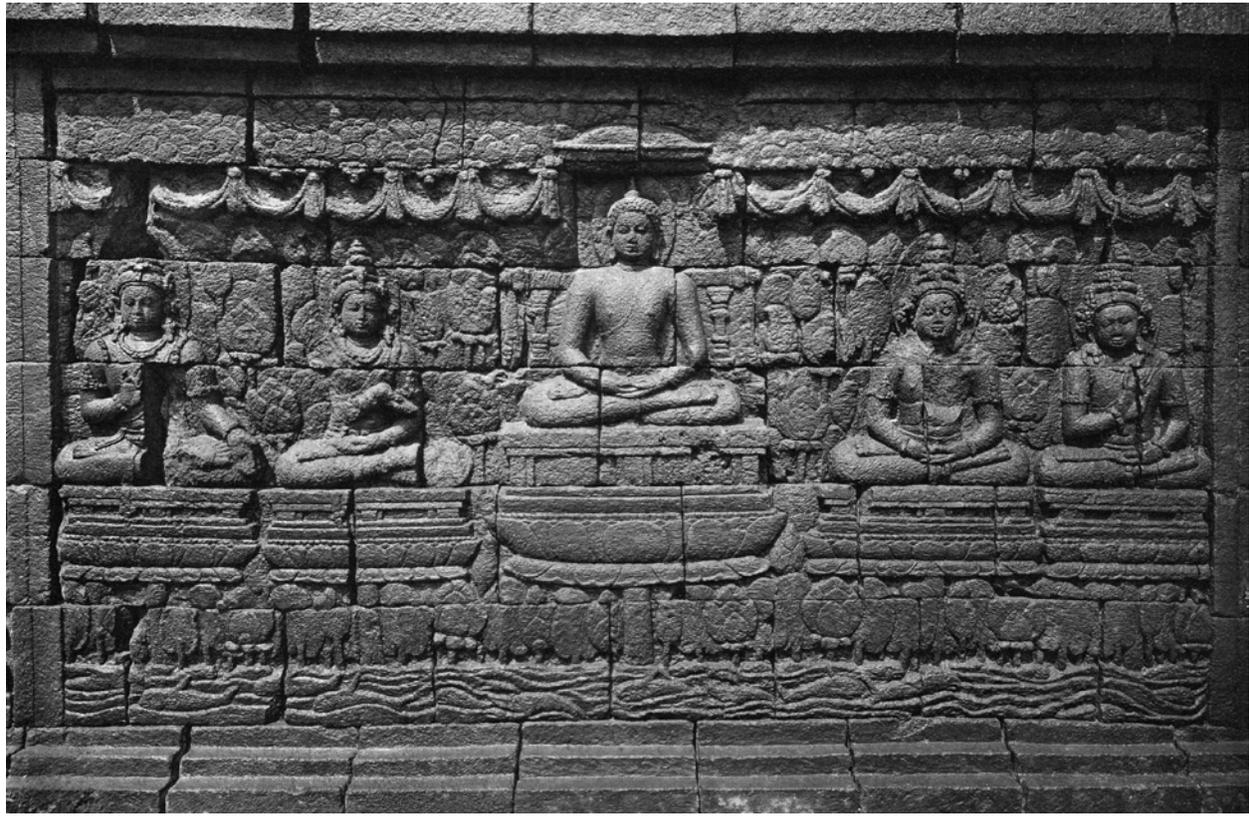
In the center, seated in a meditative pose on a lotus, a Buddha rises from the stylized waves of the sea. He is flanked on both sides by two Bodhisattvas, all seated on lotuses rising on their stalks from the sea.

This relief illustrates a miracle which is described only during Sudhana's visit to his third teacher, the *bhikṣu* Sāgaramegha (Cleary 1989, 58-62). Just as in the preceding relief, both Sudhana and his *kalyānamitra* are absent, but in this case their absence can be explained. Sudhana never actually witnessed this miracle. Instead, Sāgaramegha described this miracle to him as an event which had occurred in the past. Sāgaramegha explains: "I have dwelt here in this region of Sāgaratiga a full twelve years, have made the sea an object of attention....When I undertook this fundamental thought and mental concentration, a great lotus became manifest at the bottom of the great ocean...The great lotus was produced from the superworldly stock of merit of the Tathāgatas... and I see this great lotus filled, completely pervaded by the Tathāgata body in *paryanka* position" (Ehman, 180-181). It should be noted that here, once again, the sculptors ignored the *paryankāsana*, as called for in the text (cf. II-4).

II-75 The Tathāgata extends his Right Hand (III Continued)

"And the Tathāgata having extended his right hand to me, having touched my head, proclaims the religious device called *samantanetra* which is the sphere of all Tathāgatas" (Ehman, 181).

Here, once more, both Sudhana and Sāgaramegha are absent. Instead of touching the head of the *kalyānamitra*, the Tathāgata stretches out his hand and turns toward a group of five seated and two standing women who pay homage to him. They are separated from the Buddha by an elaborate tree-shaped lotus. From above the clouds heavenly beings shower the Buddha with a floral tribute. The texts mention the millions of heavenly and supernatural beings, who pay homage to this Buddha, but they offer no explanation for the fact that the sculptors chose to show only women. One would be inclined to think that this relief illustrates the next visit to the lay woman Āśā (VIII). What argues against this supposition is that the Buddha is seated on a lotus, which rises on its stalk from the water. This feature strongly suggests that this scene is a sequel to that of II-74.



13. A Buddha emerges from the sea (III) (II-74).

II-76 Women pay Homage to a Buddha (VIII?)

On the left side of the panel five seated and four standing women pay homage to the Buddha standing in front of them. Above the clouds divine beings come to make offerings to the Buddha.

Just as in the preceding scenes, both Sudhana and his *kalyānamitra* have been omitted by the sculptors. It is as if we step immediately into the mentor's lengthy explanation of her *vimoksa*, already in progress. The relief probably illustrates the story told by the lay woman (*upāsikā*) Āśā (Cleary 1989, 84-90). In response to Sudhana's query she explains how she paid homage in previous rebirths to many Buddhas, beginning with Dipankara. This primordial Buddha was succeeded by the Buddhas Vimala, Ketu, Meruśrī, Padmagarbha, Vairocana, Samantacaksu, Brahmaśuddha, Vajranābhi, and Varunadeva (Ijiri, 2005, 38-40). Although multiple representations of different figures are relatively rare in the reliefs of Borobudur, it is possible that the nine women paying homage to the Buddha represent the successive rebirths of Āśā who paid homage to these Buddhas. It is also possible that the preceding relief shows part of the same sequence of previous rebirths of Āśā.

Perhaps the fact that the first of these ten Tathāgatas was none other than the primordial Buddha Dipankara made the sculptors decide to move the image of this Buddha ahead of the

first scene in which Āśā makes her actual appearance (II-77). The following relief (II-78) is very similar in composition to II-76. The kneeling woman, who worships the Buddha, may represent Āśā in one of her precedent rebirths. The relief may therefore perhaps be seen as a continuation of II-76.

II-77 Sudhana visits the Lay Woman Āśā (VIII Continued)

The lay woman Āśā, here seen en face, is seated in a festooned building, surrounded by female attendants. It is often unclear why the sculptors of Borobudur sometimes elaborated certain stories, illustrating them on several consecutive reliefs, while elsewhere they compressed the contents of a long story into a single relief. On the main wall of the second gallery, however, their motivation for this seemingly arbitrary choice is sometimes evident. Whenever the sculptors added separate panels illustrating the explanations of the *kalyānamitras* to the customary introductory visiting scene, it is because a Buddha appears in the story. However, such apparitions usually do not actually occur during Sudhana's visit, but are described to him as having occurred in the past or in a previous rebirth of the *kalyānamitra*. These *avadāna*-like stories from the distant past are told by the *kalyānamitras* in response to a formulaic question posed by Sudhana. At the end of their discourse on their *vimoksa*, Sudhana asks some of his *kalyānamitras* how and when they first achieved their *vimoksa* and by what means they attained their present status. It is only then that the *kalyānamitras* tell stories from their past lives, explaining the merit which they accumulated by their worship of these Buddhas. In the reliefs of the first pilgrimage the panels illustrating this type of story are usually preceded by a formal visiting scene, as if the sculptors felt the need to first introduce the viewer to the new *kalyānamitra*.

In the second set of illustrations of Sudhana's pilgrimage the sculptors seem to have adopted a slightly different method. As we have seen already, they now occasionally omit an introductory visiting scene showing Sudhana in the company of his new *kalyānamitra*, in this case the lay woman Āśā. Perhaps they felt that this was now no longer required, as the viewer had already been introduced to this teacher on relief II-23. Instead, the reliefs now illustrate forthwith either the contents of the teacher's oral explanations, or events that took place during Sudhana's visit. Thus relief II-77 shows the *upāsikā* Āśā enthroned, surrounded by female attendants, while Sudhana, placed at an appropriate lower level, seeks her instruction. However, this panel now comes after, not before the relief which illustrates Āśā's acts of piety in precedent rebirths.

In this particular case, an alternative justification for this delayed re-introduction of the *kalyānamitra* may perhaps be found in the text. For there Āśā explains that she does not come within the visual range of all beings, who have not yet planted their roots of merit, who have not yet received the assistance of *kalyānamitras*, and who have not yet concentrated their mind on the attainment of Perfect Enlightenment (T.278, 698b; T. 279, 343c; Ijiri 2005, 35).

II-78 Homage to a Buddha (VIII Continued?)

Hikata explains this scene as a continuation of the story told by Āśā (VIII). The similarity between II-76 and II-78 argues in favor of this identification. It should be noted, however,

that in the extreme right of the panel, next to the standing Buddha, are a man in the dress of the elite (Sudhana?) and a monk. It is possible, therefore, that this relief represents Sudhana's visit to the *bhikṣu* Sāgaradhvaḥ (VII), who was also shown on II-22.

II-79 Unidentified Visit (Āśā VIII, Continued?)

II-80 Unidentified Visit (Āśā VIII Continued?)

The resemblance between II-77, II-79, and II-80 is so strong that one is led to suspect that they not only represent the same *kalyānamitra*, but may even have been carved by the same artist. The lengthy description of this visit offers no specific explanation for these multiple images of Āśā. Although similar multiple representations of other *kalyānamitras* do occur, they usually have been reserved for Great Bodhisattvas like Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī, Maitreya, or Samantabhadra.

II-81 The Seer (*Rṣi*) Bhīsmottaranirghosa and the Tathāgata (IX?)

On the left, next to Sudhana, is seated a man, whose appearance resembles that of a seer (*rṣi*). With his right hand he gestures toward the Buddha, who is seated in the center of the panel. The scene may illustrate Sudhana's visit to the *rṣi* Bhīsmottaranirghosa, who witnessed the appearance of the Tathāgatas of the Ten Directions (cf. II-24).

II-82 Sudhana visits Maitrāyanī, the Daughter of King Simhaketu (XI)

As was the case in the first round of visits, the sculptors have skipped the Brahman Jayosmāyatana (X). Cf. relief II-25, where the visit to the same princess is shown.

II-83 Sudhana visits the *Upāsikā* Prabhūtā (XIV)

The same *kalyānamitra* has been shown on relief II-28.

II-84 Sudhana visits a Male *Kalyānamitra* (XV-XIX)

Sudhana now visits five male *kalyānamitras* in succession (XV-XIX). They are all either of royal status or members of the elite, and they all wear a costume indicative of their high social status. Although we can make a choice out of five possibilities, the precise identity of this male *kalyānamitra* cannot be established with any degree of certainty.

II-85 Sudhana visits the Lay Woman (*Upāsikā*) Acalā (XX)

The visit to the same *upāsikā* has been shown on relief II-38. With relief II-85 the rather cursory treatment of the second pilgrimage, in which the sculptors skipped several *kalyānamitras*, who had previously been shown in the first series, comes to an end. From now on the second series provides a much more complete set of illustrations of Sudhana's visits than the first pilgrimage.

II-86 Sudhana visits the Itinerant Mendicant (*Parivrājaka*) Sarvagāmin (XXI)

Although the "cave dweller" (Krom) of this relief bears little resemblance to the *parivrājaka* (itinerant hermit) of relief II-39, there can be no doubt that both represent the same *kalyānamitra*.

II-87 Sudhana visits the *Gāndhikaśresthin* Utpalabhūti (XXII)

The first visit to the same *kalyānamitra* has been illustrated on relief II-40.

II-88 Sudhana visits the Ship's Captain and Slave Vaira (XXIII)

Contrary to relief II-41, where the first visit to the same *kalyānamitra* is shown, this time the sculptor has omitted any reference to the maritime profession of this Good Friend. He has even dressed him in the attire of the elite in spite of his humble social status as a slave.

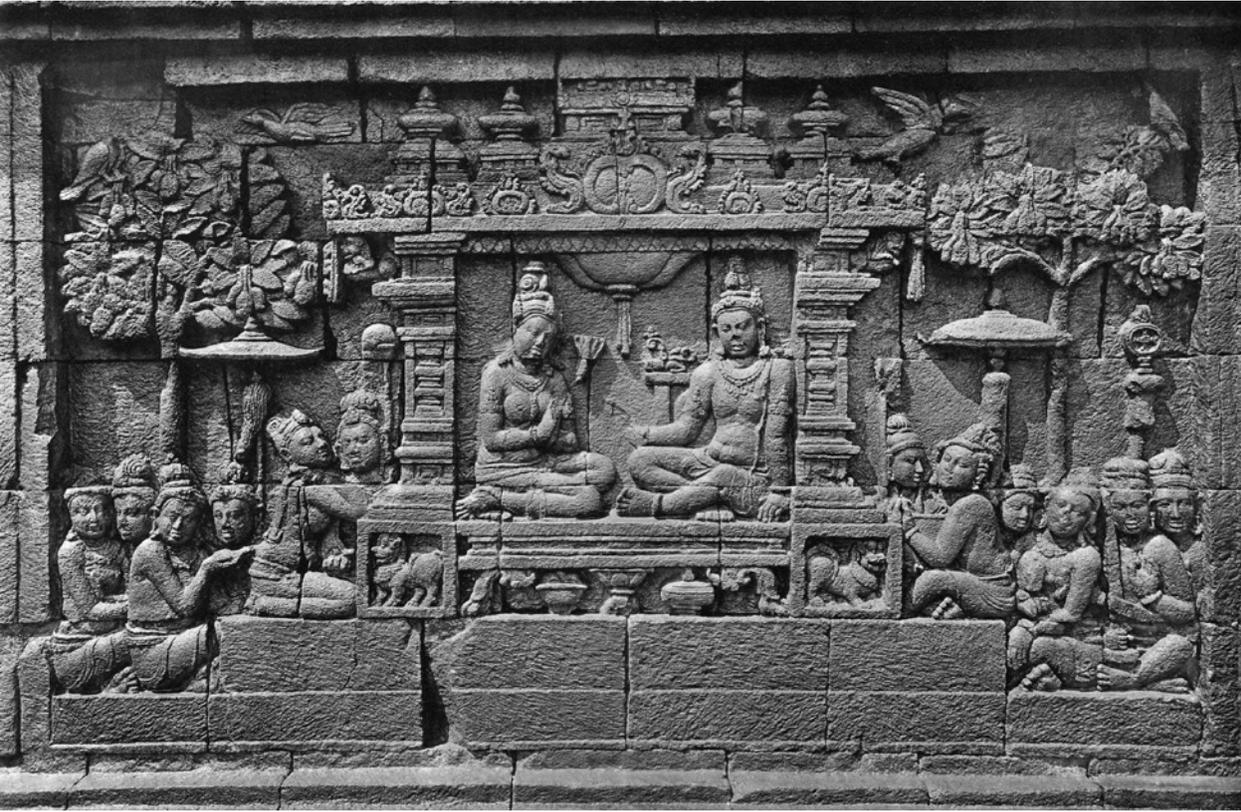
II-89 Sudhana visits the Banker (*Śresthin*) Jayottama (XXIV)

The banker (*śresthin*) Jayottama, who had been skipped by the sculptors of the first pilgrimage, now makes his first appearance in the second round of visits.

II-90 Sudhana visits the Nun (*Bhiksuni*) Simhavijrmbhitā (XXV)

Although Sudhana pays visits to a number of pious lay women (*upāsikās*), there is only a single Buddhist nun (*bhiksuni*) among his *kalyānamitras*. The identity of the Good Friend on this relief, as well as the one on the heavily damaged relief II-43 is, therefore, firmly established.

The *bhiksuni* is not shown enthroned on a regular lion throne, as indicated in the text, but her seat is flanked by pilasters with a base decorated with lions, a possible reference to her name (see the discussion of relief II-65).



14. Vasumitrā (XXVI), reborn as Sumatī, a banker's wife (II-92).

II-91 Sudhana visits the Royal Courtesan (*Bhāgavatī*) Vasumitrā (XXVI)

Sudhana is seated outside the teacher's pavilion at a lower level than her seat, as is appropriate for disciples. His hands are folded in *añjali*. The relief does not show even the most discreet reference to Vasumitrā's profession, which is that of a royal courtesan (Cleary 1989, 146-149).

II-92 Vasumitrā Reborn as Sumatī, a Banker's Wife (XXVI Continued) (fig. 14)

As the man and woman on this relief are seated at exactly the same level, the scene cannot represent Sudhana visiting one of his Good Friends. Instead it illustrates a story told to Sudhana by Vasumitrā in response to his question as to when and how she had attained her *vimoksa*. The *bhāgavatī* described an auspicious event, which occurred in one of her previous lives. At that time, Vasumitrā was Sumatī, the wife of a *śresthin*. When a Tathāgata appeared in the city where she lived, she and her husband went out to pay homage to him and presented him with a precious crown. Mañjuśrī was an attendant of that Buddha and it was this Bodhisattva who instructed her and made her evoke *bodhicitta* (Cleary 1989, 148).

II-93 Sumatī and her Husband go out to meet the Tathāgata (XXVI Continued?)

The relief shows a man in the attire of the elite, wearing an elaborate crown. He is standing underneath a parasol held up by a servant. He is obviously directing the distribution of various precious gifts. He either represents the *śresthin*, or the Buddha, who has just donned the crown offered to him. Even though the Buddha is shown without crown on the next relief, this does not necessarily invalidate the identification of the figure in II-93 as another representation of the Buddha. The sculptor's inclusive method of narration does not always require strict adherence to the exact chronological order of events.

Yet another possibility is that the standing figure represents Mañjuśrī in a previous life. This could explain the absence of his usual attributes, the crescents and a halo. It should also be noted that Sumatī, who tells this *avadāna*-like story, is herself absent from this relief.

II-94 Together Sumatī and her Husband pay Homage to the Tathāgata (XXVI Continued?)

The figure kneeling before the Tathāgata probably represents the *śresthin*. Standing behind him is his wife Sumatī.

II-95 Vasumitrā bids Farewell to Sudhana (XXVI Continued?)

That Mañjuśrī plays a role in this story may have added to the importance of this encounter. It may have prompted the sculptors to create this elaborate series of five illustrations. Apparently the sculptors intended to clearly mark the end of this visit by adding a second illustration of Sudhana and Vasumitrā, who sends him on his way to the next Good Friend, the householder Vesthila.

II-96 Sudhana is Referred to the Householder (*Grhapati*) Vesthila, who venerates a *Stūpa* (XXVII)

At first sight the sequential order of the reliefs II-95 through II-98 would appear to be somewhat unusual. The intention of the sculptors seems to have been to first show Sudhana taking leave of Vasumitrā (II-95). This scene is followed by an illustration of her parting message to Sudhana in which she announced the name and location of the pilgrim's next mentor, the *grhapati* Vesthila, who venerates a *caitya* (II-96). A similar prediction, given by Maitreya, is elaborately illustrated on the third main wall (III-8-III-19). After this prediction, the sculptors inserted a traveling scene of Sudhana with an elephant on his way to Vesthila's residence in Śubhapāramgama (II-97) before showing his actual visit to Vesthila's Tathāgatacaitya Candanapītha (II-98).

II-97 Sudhana travels to Śubhapāramgama (XXVII Continued)

II-98 Sudhana and Vesthila at the Tathāgatacaitya Candanapītha (XXVII Continued)

Exactly as in relief II-45, which illustrated the first visit to Vesthila, the *Tathāgatacaitya* Candanapītha of Vesthila takes the shape of a *stūpa* inside another structure.

II-99 Vesthila enters the *Samādhi* Called Aksayabuddhavamśavyūha (XXVII Continued)

Strictly speaking the sculptors deviated here from the text, for Vesthila only describes his *samādhi*, which makes him visualize all Buddhas of the past and future. He does not actually demonstrate its miraculous effect to the pilgrim (Cleary 1989, 149). However, like elsewhere on Borobudur (e.g. on relief II-3), the mere occurrence of the word *samādhi* may have prompted the sculptors to represent the teacher in a meditative pose.

II-100 Sudhana visits the Four-Armed Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (XXVIII)

II-101 Sudhana visits the Four-Armed Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (XXVIII Continued)

II-102 Sudhana visits the Six-Armed Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (XXVIII Continued)

Krom expressed the hope that the text of the *Gandavyūha* would provide an answer to the question why the sculptors represented the same *kalyānamitra* on three consecutive reliefs, but none of the texts or translations can account for this unusual feature. One wonders whether the sculptors were asked to compensate for Avalokiteśvara's subordinate role in the *Gandavyūha*, in which this important figure of the Buddhist pantheon is completely overshadowed by the Bodhisattvas Mañjuśrī, Maitreya, and Samantabhadra. This time the text does mention the lion's throne of Avalokiteśvara and all three reliefs show the Bodhisattva enthroned on a *simhāsana*.

II-103 Sudhana visits the Bodhisattva Ananyagāmin (XXIX)

The Bodhisattva Ananyagāmin, skipped by the sculptors of the first round of visits, now makes his only appearance at Borobudur in this relief (Cleary 1989, 156-157).

II-104 Sudhana visits Śiva Mahādeva (XXX)

The Hindu god is clearly identifiable by his mount Nandin and his attribute, the trident. This relief and relief II-48 are perhaps the only examples of the representation of one of the principal deities of Hinduism on a Central Javanese Buddhist monument. The sculptors were

obviously inspired by the inclusion of Śiva among Sudhana's *kalyānamitras* in the text of the *Gandavyūha* (see II-48).

II-105 Sudhana visits a Night Goddess

Now follows a series of eight consecutive reliefs, all of which represent Sudhana in the act of visiting a female *kalyānamitra*. According to the *Gandavyūha*, Sudhana visits eleven female *kalyānamitras* before he arrives at Māyā's residence. From the fact that relief II-113 illustrates a story told only by Māyā, the mother of the Buddha, we may assume that she herself is shown on the preceding panel. However, the reliefs of the first pilgrimage have already demonstrated that the order in which the visits to the eight Night Goddesses, Māyā, and Gopā occur on Borobudur deviates from that which is given in the available versions of the text. Moreover, none of the reliefs appears to yield any specific clue to the identity of these female Good Friends. With the exception of II-112 and II-113 we have therefore not associated any other relief with the name of anyone of these deities.

II-106 Sudhana visits a Night Goddess

II-107 Sudhana visits a Night Goddess

II-108 Sudhana visits a Night Goddess

II-109 Sudhana visits a Night Goddess

II-110 Sudhana visits a Night Goddess

II-111 Sudhana visits a Night Goddess

II-112 Sudhana visits Queen Māyā (XLII)

II-113 The Tathāgata Vimaladhvaṃja attains Enlightenment (XLII Continued) (fig. 15)

The scene shows a Buddha immersed in meditation, oblivious of the fierce battle between the forces of Light and Darkness that is being fought in his presence. It illustrates the story of Netraśrī, a Goddess of the *bodhimanda*, one of the previous rebirths of Māyā. Netraśrī is shown in the right corner of the relief, from where she pays homage to the newly enlightened Buddha Vimaladhvaṃja. As Sudhana hears this story directly from Māyā herself, we may assume that the female *kalyānamitra* shown on relief II-112 is indeed the mother of Śākyamuni.

It is often unclear why a particular episode in the previous life of a *kalyānamitra* was selected for illustration. In this instance, however, the probable reason for the selection of the assault on Vimaladhvaṃja is provided by the text. Māyā explains to Sudhana that the king, whose timely intervention frustrated the efforts of the demons to disturb the meditation of Vimaladhvaṃja, was none other than the Buddha Vairocana in one of his previous rebirths (Cleary 1989, 314).



15. The Buddha Vimaladhvaṃsa achieves Enlightenment (XLII) (II-113).

The thematic repetitiveness of the stories from their precedent births, as told by the female *kalyānamitras*, sometimes makes it difficult for us to associate a specific name with the narrative reliefs of this section. However, this story of an epic battle—a parallel to the more famous assault of Māra—is only told by Māyā. Relief II-113 is, therefore, one of the few narrative reliefs that demonstrably illustrates the oral message of a specific female *kalyānamitra*.

The next firm benchmark in the second pilgrimage is relief II-124, which represents the Brahman Śivarāgra (L), probably the only Brahman mentor mentioned in the version of the *Gandavyūha* followed by the sculptors of Borobudur. As all mentors of this part of the second pilgrimage seem to have been illustrated, their identity can be established with a reasonable degree of certainty, in spite of a general absence of specific visual clues.

In the reliefs of the first pilgrimage the narrative scene on II-68 provided clear evidence that a visit to one of the Night Goddesses occurred in the Borobudur text after Sudhana's visit to Māyā. When we now compare the reliefs illustrating the visits which Sudhana paid between those to Māyā and Śivarāgra, we notice that both pilgrimages include two additional visits. The first is a visit to a man, the second to a woman, who at first sight appear not to be accounted for in the text. However, we have seen earlier (II-63 and II-64) that these persons may not represent "official" *kalyānamitras*, but secondary figures, whose conversations with Sudhana were deemed of sufficient importance to justify a representation of these minor interlocutors in the reliefs.

II-114 Sudhana approaches a Temple Building

There is no entirely satisfactory explanation for this relief. Hikata suggests that it is a *kūtāgāra* in the Lumbini Forest. Frédéric thinks that it represents the palace of Surendrābhā (XLIII) in the Thirty-three-fold Heaven (of Indra). This last identification agrees better with the sequence of the visits. A problematic point is that as a rule no actual visit is ever shown without the presence of a *kalyānamitra*, unless it is a narrative scene. Moreover, not a word is said in the text about the heavenly palace of Surendrābhā.

Far more likely than these two possibilities would seem to be that the closed temple building represents the gateway to the *bodhimanda* and that the keeper of the gate is shown on II-115 (cf. II-64). It should be noted, however, that in the texts Sudhana's encounters with these two deities occur just prior to his meeting with Māyā, not afterwards.

II-115 Sudhana visits the Gatekeeper of the *Bodhimanda*?

Hikata assumes a "misillustration" by the sculptors. He identifies the *kalyānamitra* as Gopā (XLI). However, as the chief protagonist of this scene is unmistakably male, his identification as the anonymous gatekeeper would seem preferable.

II-116 Sudhana takes Leave of Queen Māyā (XLII?)

II-117 Sudhana visits Two Women (XLIII?)

The *Gandavyūha* does not seem to provide a clue to this visiting scene. Perhaps one of the two women is the *devakanyā* Surendrābhā (XLIII) while the second person represents her personal attendant.

II-118 Sudhana visits the Boy Viśvāmitra (XLIV)

The crescent-shaped ornaments behind the head, the usual attribute of youthful persons, have been omitted. Viśvāmitra is the only *kalyānamitra* who does not teach Sudhana anything. He simply refers him to the next teacher, another boy (Cleary 1989, 316).

II-119 Sudhana visits the Boy Śilpābhijña (XLV)

The boy, like Sudhana, a son of a merchant or master of a guild (*śresthidāraka*), is enthroned inside a building on the roof of which many small figures are shown—a possible reference to the youthful status of the *kalyānamitra*. He raises his right hand in *vitarka-mudrā*, which here symbolizes his discourse on different insights of transcendental wisdom which he has obtained by pronouncing various magic syllables (Cleary 1989, 316-318).

II-120 Sudhana visits the *Upāsikā* Bhadrōttamā (XLVI)

II-121 Sudhana visits the Goldsmith (Hairanyaka) Muktsāra (XLVII)

II-123 Sudhana visits a Householder (*Grhapati*) (XLVIII or XLIX)

The relief illustrates the visit to Sucandra or to Ajitasena, both householders (see above p.49).

II-124 Sudhana visits the Brahman Śivarāgra (L)

Of the two Brahmans who are mentioned among Sudhana's *kalyānamitras* in the text only Śivarāgra is shown in the reliefs (see II-70).

II-125 Sudhana visits the Boy Śrīsambhava and his Sister Śrīmatī (LI and LII)

This time brother and sister are seated in separate niches of the same building. Sudhana and his retinue are standing outside to the right. Unlike the sculptors of the first pilgrimage, who had separated the two siblings (II-71 and II-72) those creating the second series have reunited them on a single relief.

II-126 Sudhana prostrates himself before Maitreya's Palace (fig. 16)

Maitreya's miraculous edifice is shown here as a typical Central Javanese temple, flanked by two wishing trees (*kalpavṛkṣa*). Sudhana prostrates himself in front of the building. In the relief he is shown on his knees, his reclining body supported by his two arms. This is the posture he assumes just before or after he has lowered his head to the ground, the sculptors' usual way of illustrating the *pranāma* (Fontein 1989, 96). Even when Sudhana is performing this deeply respectful salutation, reserved for one's parents (O-54b) or a *stūpa* (II B-43), his attendant protects him against the sun by raising his parasol high above his head. Heavenly musicians high up in the sky mark this solemn occasion with a serenade (Cleary 1989, 329).

The reliefs adhere closely to the sequence of ceremonials described in the text (T. 293, 817c, 21-25). Sudhana first prostrates himself before Maitreya's *kūtāgāra*, after which he circumambulates the building in clockwise fashion, as is shown on the next relief.

II-127 Sudhana performs a *Pradaksinā* around the *Kūtāgāra*

This relief shows Sudhana raising his folded hands to the height of his face in the gesture called *añjaliputa*. This sign of profound respect is usually reserved for such solemn occasions as a meeting with an ascete, a Brahman, or another holy man or woman (Fontein 1989, 95). Sudhana then performs his clockwise circumambulation of the monument and recites *gāthās* in praise of Maitreya and his palace. The sculptors have not illustrated these verses.



16. Sudhana prostrates himself before Maitreya's *kūtāgāra* (LIII) (II-126).

II-128 Maitreya Enthroned amidst his Assembly (fig. 17)

When Sudhana has concluded his *pradaksinā* around the building and after he has recited his praise of the Bodhisattva Maitreya and his palace of miracles, he sees Maitreya “coming from somewhere outside the building” (T. 293, 820b, 25), surrounded by a host of *nāgas*, *yaksas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garudas* and *kinnaras*, as well as such worthy persons as Brahmins.

In the relief Maitreya is not shown in motion, approaching the *kūtāgāra*, as one would have expected. Instead he is already majestically enthroned on an elaborate *simhāsana*, supported not by two lions, as usual, but by four lions. Adopting the standard procedure for this type of representation, the sculptors have lined up the personages of Maitreya's entourage in three registers. The upper register and part of the second level are occupied by seated musicians, undoubtedly of the heavenly kind [*gandharvas*]. In the lower right corner there is a *yaksa* and a *garuda*, together representing the other supernatural beings in Maitreya's retinue.

With these last three reliefs of the second main wall the sculptors prepared the viewers for what they are about to see on the reliefs of the third gallery: the display of miracles in the interior of Maitreya's palace. By lifting a tip of the curtain in this manner the sculptors also ensured a smooth, seamless transition from the reliefs of the second to those of the third gallery.



17. Maitreya (LIII) enthroned amidst his assembly (II-128).

THIRD GALLERY, MAIN WALL

(III-1—III-88)

The last three reliefs of the main wall of the second gallery have allowed the viewer a brief glimpse of what lies ahead for the pilgrim on the main wall of the third gallery. This is Sudhana's visit to the palace of Maitreya, the *Vairocanavyūhālamkāragarbha Mahākūtāgāra*, or "Grand *Kūtāgāra* of the Repository of the Adornments of Vairocana", or "The *Kūtāgāra* that contained within it all of the manifestations of Vairocana" (Granoff 1998, 354; for a discussion of the term *kūtāgāra* see de Vreese 1947). On relief II-126, at exactly one hundred and ten reliefs after the beginning of Sudhana's pilgrimage, we witness Sudhana's arrival at Maitreya's palace of miracles, followed by his first encounter with Maitreya. Sudhana first sees Maitreya surrounded by a large host of heavenly beings (II-128).

Ten reliefs, the last three reliefs of the second main wall and the first seven of the third main wall, constitute an elaborate rendering of the few sentences which describe Sudhana's actual arrival at the *kūtāgāra*, his meeting with Maitreya, and his subsequent entrance into that edifice of visionary miracles. The elaborate treatment of this brief episode is the first indication of the great importance the builders of Borobudur accorded to Maitreya's *kūtāgāra* and the miracles performed in it.

As he embarks on his pilgrimage to Maitreya, Sudhana's thoughts linger on the wise instructions, received from his last two lay *kalyānamitras*, Śrīsambhava and his sister Śrīmatī. These thoughts and Sudhana's lengthy *gāthās* in praise of the *kūtāgāra*, as well as Maitreya's equally elaborate *gāthās* in praise of the pilgrim—all passages very nearly impossible to render intelligibly in stone—have been skipped by the sculptors in favor of the few words describing the actions of the two chief protagonists.

III-1 Sudhana respectfully greets Maitreya, who praises him

After having first ceremoniously paid homage to his new mentor's *kūtāgāra*, Sudhana now respectfully greets the Bodhisattva Maitreya. The raised right hand of Maitreya suggests that this relief could represent Maitreya's lengthy praise of Sudhana (T.293, 820c, 3 -.823b, 4; T.278,773c, 14-775b, 4; T.279, 425b, 17-428a, 10). For the raised right hand as a gesture of praise see, for example, the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs O-2b and O-6a.

III-2 Maitreya instructs Sudhana

In a building that closely resembles the one shown on the preceding panel Maitreya is seated with his right hand raised in *vitarka-mudrā*. This suggests that Maitreya is now instructing Sudhana, perhaps by his recital of the *gāthās* (T.293, 824c.26; T.278, 773b, 14; T.279, 428b, 17). Sudhana and his retinue are seated on the left. The elephant standing behind them is a

reminder of Sudhana's recent arrival. This relief could also illustrate the first paragraph of the next passage in the text, on which the next five reliefs are all based.

“At that time, the Bodhisattva Maitreya addressed Sudhana with these words: ‘.....Son of good family, you are [now] permitted to enter this Grand *Kūtāgāra* of the Repository of the Adornments of Vairocana. When you inspect its entire interior, you will be able to understand how all Bodhisattvas learn the Conduct of the Bodhisattva and the boundless merits those who have mastered this [conduct] will be able to achieve’.

At that time, Sudhana *kumāra* respectfully performed a circumambulation around the Great Bodhisattva Maitreya and said: ‘Great Saint, please open the gate of the *kūtāgāra* and grant me permission to enter’. At that time Maitreya stepped forward in front of the Grand *Kūtāgāra* of the Repository of the Adornments of Vairocana. He snapped the fingers of his right hand and produced a [snapping] sound, upon which the doors of the gate of the *kūtāgāra* swung open. He bade Sudhana to enter and Sudhana joyfully entered [the building], after which the doors closed again [behind him]” (T. 293, 831b, 23).

III-3 Maitreya grants Sudhana Permission to enter the *Kūtāgāra*

On the right Maitreya is seated in a pavilion, his right hand raised in *vara-mudrā*. The center of the relief is occupied by Sudhana and his retinue, still in the company of their elephant. On the left is a *candi*-like building, its doors firmly closed, presumably Maitreya's *kūtāgāra*. In the reliefs of Borobudur the boon-granting gesture, or *vara-mudrā*, is sometimes used to indicate the granting of permission. Here it suggests that the moment is illustrated when Maitreya grants Sudhana's request to be allowed to enter the building (T.293, 831b, 29; T.278, 780b; T.279, 434c). In both T.278 and T.279 Maitreya's invitation to enter the building is clearly implied, but not stated as explicitly.

III-4 Maitreya snaps his Fingers and the Palace Doors swing open (fig. 18)

The *kūtāgāra* occupies the left side of the panel. Sudhana and his entourage are on the right, still accompanied by the elephant. Maitreya stands in the center of the panel, facing the building, the doors of which are standing ajar. Bosch (1929, 195-196) makes Maitreya produce a long drawn-out sound with his fingers, but *acchataśabdham* means “snapping the fingers” (Edgerton 1953, 7). All three Chinese translations (T.293, 831b, 29; T.278, 780b, 12; T.279, p.435a, 2) confirm this.

III-5 Maitreya invites Sudhana to enter the *Kūtāgāra*

Maitreya, seated in the posture of royal ease inside a small pavilion on the right, stretches the right hand in *vara-mudrā*, while Sudhana, his head still turned towards Maitreya, begins to move towards the *kūtāgāra* on the left. T. 293 (831b, 29) mentions specifically that Maitreya now invites Sudhana to enter the *kūtāgāra*.



18. Maitreya snaps his fingers and the palace doors swing open (III-4).

III-6 Sudhana climbs the Stairs of the *Kūtāgāra* (fig. 19)

The text describes how an elated Sudhana enters the building. The obvious necessity to show the entire *kūtāgāra* on this small corner relief left little space for Sudhana on the right side of the panel. This lack of space combined with the sculptors' peculiar rendering of the perspective creates an unintended impression as if Sudhana were surreptitiously entering the building by way of a flight of steps leading to a side entrance.

III-7 Sudhana pays Homage to the *Kūtāgāra*

As we have previously seen, Sudhana's respectful homage to the *kūtāgāra* has already been illustrated on relief II-126, but the sculptors apparently felt the need to repeat this ceremony after Sudhana's entry into the building itself, thereby giving additional emphasis to this momentous occasion. This way the relief also creates an additional visual link between the reliefs of the second and third main wall.

Sudhana's entry into Maitreya's palace (III-7) is followed by a series of twelve reliefs (III-8 through III-19), for which the texts do not offer an entirely satisfactory explanation. We are confronted with what at first sight appears to be a substantial discrepancy between the texts of the Sanskrit *Gandavyūha* and the three Chinese translations on the one hand, and the version followed by the sculptors of Borobudur on the other.

Bosch interpreted the next series of reliefs as follows: "For the sequence of reliefs from III-8 to III-19 the version of the text represented in the Parisian manuscripts offers no explanation. Although we must conclude that the artists drew upon a version of the text that slightly differs from the one we know, it would nevertheless seem highly unlikely that a passage of considerable length is missing from the text, for it is exactly this part of the text that has been treated in great detail in the reliefs. We already saw this in the elaborate rendering of Sudhana's entry into the *kūtāgāra*, and it will be seen once again in the illustrations of the decorations of this



19. Sudhana enters the *kūtāgāra* (III-6).

edifice. The twelve reliefs (III-8-III-19) cannot have corresponded to more than a few lines of text. Their contents can be deduced with some degree of certainty from the reliefs themselves: a journey and visits by Sudhana to Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra. The possibility can be excluded that the text would have read that Sudhana, after having entered the *kūtāgāra* and prior to his witnessing the miracles performed in this palace, would have actually undertaken such a voyage and paid these two visits. No less appropriate moment could have been chosen for such an excursion. We tend to think, therefore, that only a few words or sentences, spoken by Maitreya, have been illustrated here. Maitreya, availing himself of the solemn occasion of Sudhana's entry into the *kūtāgāra*, instructs Sudhana (III-8-9: Maitreya enthroned, Sudhana respectfully listening) which path leading to Supreme Enlightenment he will have to follow after having witnessed the miracles performed in the *kūtāgāra*. He will embark upon a journey to Mañjuśrī (III-10-11) and will place himself under the guidance of Samantabhadra (III-16-19). The remaining panels (III-13-15), showing the worship of a building, the adoration of a Buddha, and a conversation with a Brahman, probably owe their creation to a few words, uttered by Maitreya, which further explain Sudhana's visit to Mañjuśrī" (Bosch 1929, 198). This passage, translated here in full from the Dutch original, may serve as an example of Bosch's insight in the often complex relationship between the text of the *Gandavyūha* and its illustrations. Strictly speaking a passage of exactly the same type as Bosch proposed does not occur in any of the versions of the *Gandavyūha* accessible to us. Bosch's explanation nevertheless turns out to have been very close to the mark. In the two Sanskrit editions by Suzuki and Vaidya, as well as in all three Chinese translations, a passage is found in which Maitreya actually predicts Sudhana's second visit to Mañjuśrī. In it is also prophesized that he will

be instructed in the Vows of Samantabhadra, although no actual visit to Samantabhadra is predicted. In T.278 (773b, 8-19) the entire prediction is contained in a separate prose paragraph: “You will go and pay a visit to Mañjuśrī; you will ask him about the state of wisdom, as practiced by Samantabhadra. He will explain this in detail.” After Maitreya has made his prediction, Mañjuśrī, from afar, stretches out his right arm towards Sudhana and gives him a precious necklace, after which Maitreya touches Sudhana’s forehead with his right hand, proclaiming: “Excellent, excellent, Son of Buddha, soon you will be one of us” (T.278, 773b,15).

This last miracle is not shown in the Borobudur reliefs. In T.279 (428a, 7-10) and T.293 (823b, 1-4) Maitreya’s prediction forms the conclusion of a long recitation of *gāthās*: “Excellent, you true Son of Buddha, who has piously worshiped all Buddhas. Soon you will accomplish all ways of conduct and you will reach the shore of the Buddha’s virtue. You will then proceed to acquire great wisdom in Mañjuśrī’s abode. He will make you obtain the profound and marvelous Conduct of Samantabhadra.”

Vetter (2005, 14-15) discusses the Sanskrit terms *bhadracaryā*, which occurs several times in the *Gandavyūha*, and the less frequent compounds *Samantabhadracaryā* and *Samantabhadrabodhisattvacaryā*. He finds no indication in the text that these compounds refer to the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, and thinks that they should be interpreted as “Universally Benevolent Conduct [of the Bodhisattva].” However, the fact that this Bodhisattva is shown on three consecutive reliefs on III-16-18 suggests the possibility that the sculptors interpreted these expressions as references to the Bodhisattva of that name. Later, we will see that the illustrations of the *Bhadracarī* seem to confirm this interpretation. It is also possible, however, that this type of personalizing of an abstract concept is an example of one of the sculptors’ methods of illustration. It may perhaps be compared to the sculptors’ steadfast interpretation of abstract concepts such as “benevolence” and “generosity” by a scene of the distribution of clothes or food.

A shorter but similar prediction of Sudhana’s future itinerary occurs in Vaidya’s Sanskrit text, p.392, 9-16, vs. 169-170 of ch.4. This passage seems to be lacking in the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts. If we accept Bosch’s idea of a slightly more elaborate passage than those quoted here, the only remaining problem is the exact place where this passage could have occurred in the Borobudur text. Bosch (1929, 195), misled by what he saw in the reliefs, makes Sudhana enter the *kūtāgāra* together with Maitreya, who acts as his guide. This assumption, which is not warranted by the text, made him unaware of a curious paradox. The Chinese translations (T.293, 820b, 25; T.278, 772a, 20; T.279, 425b, 10-11) state unanimously that when Sudhana meets Maitreya, the Bodhisattva does not emerge from his *kūtāgāra*, as we might perhaps have expected, but “comes from a different place outside the building” (see relief II-128). This clearly suggests that Maitreya does not actually reside inside the *kūtāgāra*. The texts also state clearly that the doors of the *kūtāgāra* swing open when Maitreya snaps his fingers, but close again as soon as Sudhana has entered the building (T. 293, 831a- 831b,2; T. 278,780b, 12; T.279, 435a, 2-3). It is evident, therefore, that, contrary to Bosch’s assertion, Maitreya does not accompany the pilgrim into the building, but instead remains outside.

From that moment on a long succession of miracles unfolds in which Maitreya appears as a vision without, however, being physically present. In other words, once inside the building, instruction by magical visual means takes the place of oral instruction. Only towards the end of Sudhana’s visit to the *kūtāgāra*, and only after Maitreya, by once again snapping his fingers, has broken the spell placed on Sudhana, the Bodhisattva finally enters the *kūtāgāra*

and resumes his conversation with the pilgrim (see relief IVB-38). It is only at this moment that both T.279 (437c, 17) and T.293 (835a, 21) mention specifically that Maitreya enters the *kūtāgāra*. In T. 278 (782a, 5) Maitreya's actual entry into the *kūtāgāra* is not even mentioned. In the preceding paragraph of that text Maitreya, after a long silence, suddenly addresses Sudhana once again as if he had never left his side and as if he had been physically present all the time.

A visitor to Borobudur, who sees Maitreya appear time and again on the bas-reliefs of the third and fourth galleries, will not immediately realize that the "real" Maitreya is supposed to be physically absent most of the time. For obvious reasons the sculptors were unable to draw a clear distinction between the "real" Maitreya, who orally instructs Sudhana, and the apparitions or reflections of Maitreya which Sudhana sees during the miracles, performed inside the *kūtāgāra* due to Maitreya's spiritual power. All texts except T.278 seem to agree that as long as Sudhana is inside the *kūtāgāra*, no exchange of words between Maitreya and Sudhana occurs. Not only is Sudhana unlikely to have traveled to the residences of the Bodhisattvas Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra, as Bosch has pointed out, strictly speaking even Maitreya's oral prediction of Sudhana's future itinerary could not have been made after Sudhana entered the *kūtāgāra* and the gate closed behind him.

On relief III-4 the doors of the building stand ajar, but, as Bosch had already noticed, in the following reliefs (III-5 and III-6) the doors appear to be firmly closed once again. Bosch assumed that the sculptors allowed themselves a degree of artistic licence. It would seem much more likely, however, that the sculptors wanted to emphasize that the doors closed again as soon as Sudhana had entered. As happens not infrequently on Borobudur, the sculptors' inclusive method of narration does not always adhere rigidly to the precise chronology of events.

Maitreya does not address Sudhana again until much later, after all the visionary miracles produced by the Bodhisattva's awesome spiritual power have been performed. The prediction of the visits to Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra can therefore only have occurred prior to Sudhana's entry into the *kūtāgāra*. If Bosch was right and the hypothetically more elaborate passage that he proposed did indeed occur in the Borobudur version of the *Gandavyūha*, this passage was probably more elaborate than the brief prediction that is now mentioned in some of the transmitted texts. It could have had the length of a single page of palm leaf manuscript. Such a page may even have been accidentally misplaced, as some pages in other manuscripts of the *Gandavyūha* appear to have been (see introduction p.13). However, in all likelihood the sculptors' typical method of treating the chronological sequence of events resulted in what would appear to us—and probably only to viewers like us—to be an inconsistency.

Another possibility is that even though most texts seem to exclude the physical presence of Maitreya inside the *kūtāgāra* at this point in the story, the sculptors may have opted for a slightly different approach. The long succession of miracles that unfolds inside the *kūtāgāra* is produced exclusively by the immense spiritual power of Maitreya. This fact alone probably made the question of the actual physical presence or absence of Maitreya at best a matter of secondary importance to the sculptors and their principals.

A discussion of the reliefs III-8—III-19 would be incomplete without mentioning an entirely different explanation, proposed by Hikata Ryūshō in his table of identifications of the reliefs (Hikata 1980, 125-126). Hikata believes that the duplication of Sudhana's pilgrimage that we have seen on the main wall of the second gallery continues without interruption on the main wall of the third gallery. He interprets the reliefs II-126 through II-128 and III-1 through

III-39 all as illustrations of Sudhana's first round of visits to Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, and Samantabhadra. Hikata considers the series of panels beginning with III-40 part of the illustrations of Sudhana's second pilgrimage.

As we shall presently see, the reliefs III-20 through III-39 definitely represent a word-for-word illustration in stone of Sudhana's first visual impressions of the interior of Maitreya's miraculous palace. If we accept Hikata's interpretation, it is difficult to see where the first pilgrimage is supposed to end and where the second should begin. His explanation of the reliefs III-8 through III-19 does not provide explanations for any of the reliefs that we have been unable to identify. Especially the transition from what Hikata considers to be Sudhana's first visit to Samantabhadra (III-19) to his initial visual impressions of the interior of Maitreya's *kūtāgāra* would seem to be not only rather abrupt, but potentially confusing. In conclusion it would seem preferable, therefore, to assume that the duplication of the pilgrimage, as illustrated on the second main wall, does not continue on the third main wall, but ends after 110 reliefs with relief II-126. Bosch's original idea that the Borobudur text contained a prediction by Maitreya would appear to be far more likely and less complicated than the rather convoluted explanation proposed by Hikata.

III-8 Maitreya instructs Sudhana

Maitreya is shown with his hands in *dharmacakra-mudrā*, the gesture symbolizing the Turning of the Wheel of the Law. Sudhana, his hands folded in *añjali*, is the principal member of Maitreya's audience. Frédéric, probably misled by the *mudrā*, seems to think that the figure represents Vairocana. However, the *stūpa* in Maitreya's headdress, the principal attribute of this Bodhisattva, is clearly visible in the relief.

As we have previously seen (II-7), the representation of a Buddha or Bodhisattva in *dharmacakra-mudrā*, does not always appear to carry the same meaning. Here, one suspects, it serves to emphasize the momentous importance of Maitreya's prophetic message.

III-9 Maitreya predicts Sudhana's Future Travels

Maitreya is seated on the right inside a building, while Sudhana and his retinue are seated on the left. The presence of an elephant usually suggests that the chief protagonist is traveling or about to depart on a voyage. This relief therefore probably illustrates the first words of Maitreya's prediction: "You shall go and visit Mañjuśrī."

III-10 Sudhana travels in a Palanquin

This time, Sudhana, surrounded by a large retinue, is shown traveling by palanquin, while his elephant trails behind. The same means of transportation was seen on II-42.

III-11 Sudhana meets again with Mañjuśrī

Krom describes this scene as “a conversation in a courtyard.” Sudhana respectfully greets the person who is sitting in a posture of royal ease inside the building. The close resemblance of this figure to the Bodhisattva in III-12 makes it likely that Mañjuśrī is represented here. The elaborate architectural setting and the garden with a servant harvesting coconuts are probably picturesque additions of the sculptor and do not reflect the contents of the text.

The chief protagonists in this and the next relief strike an identical pose. It is, therefore, entirely possible that both personages represent Mañjuśrī, but that the sculptors of III-11 merely omitted the Bodhisattva’s customary attribute, as they have done on other occasions.

III-12 Sudhana meets again with Mañjuśrī *Kumārabhūta*

The youthful Mañjuśrī, now clearly identifiable by the crescent-shaped ornaments behind his head, is enthroned on a lion throne. This is yet another indication of the importance attached to this type of throne.

III-13 Sudhana pays Homage to a *Bodhimanda* (Site of Enlightenment)

Later, when Maitreya’s prophecy has been fulfilled and Sudhana actually visits Mañjuśrī for a second time, T.278 (783c, 14) and T.279 (439b, 22) mention that Mañjuśrī made Sudhana “enter into the *bodhimanda* of the Conduct of Samantabhadra.” A similar phrase may have prompted the sculptor to represent a temple building here. In relief II-114, another building of this type can also be associated with the word *bodhimanda*.

III-14 Samantabhadra and Sudhana pay Homage to a Buddha?

The Buddha is seated in a building occupying the center of the relief. The floral stem has flowers instead of the buds of Samantabhadra’s usual attribute. This suggests the possibility that the figure seated on the left represents Samantabhadra, but the identification is not certain. Sudhana is seated on the right, his hands respectfully folded in *añjali*.

III-15 A Brahman visits a Royal Couple (Unidentified)

The relief seems to represent a visit by a Brahman and four men to a royal couple seated inside a palace. As usual, the King and Queen are seated at the same level.

III-16 Sudhana respectfully greets Samantabhadra

On this and the following two reliefs Samantabhadra is clearly identifiable by his attribute, the floral stem with buds. The texts offer no explanation of the three-fold representation of the

Bodhisattva. It may perhaps serve to emphasize the importance of the future visit. A similar three-fold repetition, likewise not explained by the text, occurred earlier, when Avalokiteśvara was shown on three consecutive reliefs (II-100-II-102).

III-17 Sudhana meets Samantabhadra

III-18 Sudhana meets Samantabhadra

III-19 A visit to a Bodhisattva (Unidentified)

The Bodhisattva, seated on a lion throne, does not display the attributes of Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, or Samantabhadra. As we have already seen on III-11, there are precedents for an iconographically unspecific portrayal of these Bodhisattvas. To judge from the context of the adjacent panels, the Bodhisattva on this relief in all probability represents Samantabhadra.

This relief concludes the interlude of the prediction of Sudhana's travels to his two future *kalyānamitras*. We now plunge *in medias res* with the description of the beautiful and miraculous sights and scenes witnessed by Sudhana inside Maitreya's *kūtāgāra*.

“As Sudhana entered the *kūtāgāra*, he saw that it was as immeasurably vast and wide as the sky; it was paved with countless precious jewels, decorated with countless palatial mansions and countless gateways, windows, staircases, balustrades and countless roads, made of the seven precious substances; adorned with countless banners, standards and canopies, lined up all around in circles; with countless necklaces of precious stones, of white pearls, of red pearls and lion pearls suspended everywhere; adorned with countless crescents and full moons, colorful ribbons, nets of lion standards, nets of *mani* jewels, splendid netting of gold and nets of gold wire, suspended like bunting between them and covering them with a canopy of nets above; with countless precious bells and jeweled tinkling bells producing sweet sounds when moved by the wind; rained upon by the scattering of countless heavenly flowers; bedecked with countless precious celestial garlands; decorated with countless precious incense burners; rained upon by countless clouds of scented powder; bedecked with countless precious mirrors; illuminated by countless precious lamps; covered by countless clouds of jeweled clothes; planted with countless precious pillars; furnished with countless jeweled thrones with precious, colorful covers; countless statues of maidens, made of Jambū River gold, countless assorted statues made of jewels and countless statues of bodhisattvas made of marvelous jewels, placed everywhere in a magnificent display of majestic virtue; countless flocks of singing birds, singing sweet songs in harmony; adorned with countless *utpala*, *padma*, *kumuda* and *pundarika* lotus flowers; planted with countless rows of jeweled trees and splendidly decorated with countless jeweled banana trees; with countless jeweled walkways marked off with golden ropes; with countless precious ponds filled with scented water, crossed by countless precious bridges soaring high into the clouds; with countless jeweled floors of reflecting pavement, countless *mani* jewels giving off a brilliant light; with marvelous sounds everywhere, praising the great virtues—these were all the boundless, countless splendors that decorated the *kūtāgāra*. And inside this great *kūtāgāra* Sudhana saw hundreds of thousands of other *kūtāgāras*, all in similar fashion; all were vast and beautiful, vast like the void, yet all clearly distinct from one another, each with its own shape and profile, each reflecting in the other without any obstruction, yet never blending or in disarray” (T.293, 831c, 1- 832a, 3).

The passage quoted above has been translated here from Prajñā's Chinese *Gandavyūha* translation (T.293) because it is slightly more elaborate than any of the other versions. All texts differ in the number and types of adornments of the *kūtāgāra* and in the order in which these are mentioned. None of the texts follows the exact sequence adopted by the sculptors of Borobudur and none gives all of the types of decorations depicted on the reliefs. However, by supplementing Prajñā's extensive list with a few of the additional decorations, mentioned in the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts, a satisfactory explanation can be given for almost all of the reliefs devoted to this passage

Before we turn to the identification of these twenty reliefs, it should be noted that beginning with this section of the third main wall the sculptors opted for an entirely new mode of illustration. The sculptors who created the reliefs of the second main wall usually reduced the sometimes lengthy description of a visit to a single scene. Only in a few instances did they devote the space of two, three, or four consecutive panels to illustrate a single visit. On the third main wall and balustrade, where only the visit to Maitreya's palace is shown, often a single word or phrase, lifted from the text, determines the content of an entire relief. This new mode of illustration was forced upon the sculptors by the sharp contrast between the relatively short length of the text describing Sudhana's last visits and the large amount of wall space allotted to them (see introduction, pp.9-11). Under these circumstances the sculptors seem to have decided not to make a limited selection from a large number of possibilities, but to focus instead on those sentences and words that could be illustrated in an intelligible manner. Thus an enumeration of tangible substantives, such as the decorations of the *kūtāgāra*, provided the inspiration for a series of as many as twenty reliefs.

The original intent of the text seems to be that all of these decorations were to be found in one and the same *kūtāgāra*. However, the text, with its penchant for instant infinite multiplication that is typical of the *Gandavyūha*, also speaks of "hundreds of thousands of other *kūtāgāras*, all decorated in similar fashion". The sculptors may therefore have felt justified in showing one building at a time on almost every relief. They provided each one of these fantastic edifices with one of the typical ornaments of the *kūtāgāra* singled out in the text.

It should be noted that in this series of reliefs Sudhana and his entourage are almost always shown on the right side of the panel, exactly as we have seen in the visiting scenes on the main wall of the second gallery. The beholder of the reliefs always sees Sudhana first. By adopting this device the sculptors strove to have the prospective viewers of their creations, who would be following in Sudhana's footsteps, witness the marvels of the *kūtāgāra* through the eyes of the original pilgrim.

III-20 A *Kūtāgāra* Decorated with Standards (*Dhvaja*)

The decorative feature which distinguishes this building from the structures on the following reliefs are two pairs of standards, crowned by a trident and a winged conch, flanked by smaller standards, decorated with pennants. Krom and van Erp had initially called such objects *stambhas*, but Bosch convincingly demonstrated (see IV B 6-7) that they should be called *dhvaja*, i.e. "standards", mentioned as one of the first decorative features of the *kūtāgāra* in all texts.

III-21 A *Kūtāgāra* Decorated with Tinkling Bells

In the doors, windows and niches of the building small bells have been suspended, a clear reference to the “countless precious bells and jeweled tinkling bells, producing sweet sounds when moved by the wind”, the words illustrated on this and the following relief. The texts use two different words for bells, suggesting that there were two different types of bells decorating the *kūtāgāra*. And that is exactly what we see on III-21 and III-22.

One detail of this relief demonstrates the sculptors’ close adherence to the text. The relief shows a number of relatively small hanging bells, all of which have a decorative appendage suspended from the clapper in order to move it when the wind blows. This corresponds to the wording of the text, which suggests tinkling bells of the type still often seen in Chinese and Japanese temples, where they are now called “wind bells”.

III-22 A *Kūtāgāra* Decorated with a Large Temple Bell (*Ghantā*)

A relief on the hidden base (O-131a), showing a similar bell, carries the inscription “*ghantā*”.

III-23 Countless Celestial Garlands

This is one of the few reliefs in this series that does not show a building. The upper part of the relief shows a decoration of garlands, probably a reference to the “countless celestial garlands” of the text. It is possible that the sculptors’ deviation from the standard treatment of this passage was inspired by words in their text similar to “suspended like bunting between them and covering them with a canopy of nets above”.

Underneath this festive bunting Sudhana is seated, immersed in conversation with a Brahman. This is one of several examples where the sculptors have populated their reliefs with people engaged in conversation, while the key to the real meaning of the relief is to be found in the details of the setting. This is the exact opposite of the method of illustration adopted for the reliefs of the second main wall, where the conversation is more important than the setting in which it took place.

III-24 A *Kūtāgāra* Decorated with Lotuses

“Jeweled lotuses” occur twice in the list of decorations of the *kūtāgāra*, but as they also occur twice on the reliefs (cf. III-36), text and illustration appear to be perfectly matched here.

III-25 A *Kūtāgāra* with Incense Burners

An incense burner is the *pièce de résistance* of this scene. It stands in a spacious niche inside a building. Together with several other similar incense burners, carried by flying heavenly beings, it illustrates the “countless precious incense burners” of the text. It should be noted

that the sculptor must have thought of Sudhana as still traveling, for on the left side are the elephant and the two horses which usually signify Sudhana's arrival or departure.

III-26 A *Kūtāgāra* Decorated with Dishes Filled with Flowers

Dishes filled with flowers constitute the principal decorative feature of this building. Similar dishes can also be seen floating in the air. The object in the central niche of the building is a conch filled with flowers. The sculptors may have illustrated the words "rained upon by the scattering of countless heavenly flowers", but a rain of flowers is usually not shown on the reliefs by flowers placed on plates or dishes. Only a minor textual variant, perhaps merely consisting of a single word or compound, may be responsible for this discrepancy. While most of the *kūtāgāras* created by the sculptors are fantastic buildings, the structure shown in this relief resembles the two-storied *vihāras* of Candi Sari and Candi Plaosan in the Plain of Prambanan.

III-27 A *Kūtāgāra* Decorated with Mirrors

Here, once again, image and text match perfectly. Mirrors of oblong and round shape are suspended everywhere from the building, and similar objects are floating in the air.

III-28 A *Kūtāgāra* with a Jeweled Altar

Immediately following after the mirrors the Parisian Sanskrit texts mention *ratnestikānicita*, i.e. "piled-up jeweled altar stones" (Bosch) or "heaps of brick made of jewels" (Granoff, 353) and, somewhat later, *ratnavedika*, i.e. "jeweled altars", among the types of decoration of the *kūtāgāra*. T. 293 and T. 279 mention "countless jeweled seats" in the corresponding place in the list of ornaments. It is quite possible, therefore, that the Chinese compound *baozuo* ("jeweled seats" or "jeweled pedestals") should be interpreted as a translation for *ratnavedika*. Bosch points out that damage to the relief may now create the misleading impression that the stone block with a tortoise sitting on top of it is floating in the air. He suggests that the sculptors, at a loss how to represent a Vedic altar, decided to show clearly its most essential component, the tortoise.

The sculptor of this relief allowed himself an inconspicuous, playful aside of a type occasionally seen in the margins of mediaeval illuminated manuscripts. The narrow, vertical decorative border to the right of the relief consists of a floral scroll in low relief originating from the tail of a dog-like creature at the bottom of the relief. Although the relief has suffered considerable erosion, it is clear that the dog, baring its teeth, glares at one of the members of Sudhana's entourage, who returns the animal's unfriendly stare.

III-29 Countless Clouds of Jeweled Clothes

On this and the following relief the sculptors have again chosen not to represent the *kūtāgāra*. Instead we see clouds from which precious clothes rain down upon the earth. Krom was sur-

prised that the persons shown in the reliefs appear to take no notice at all of such an astounding miracle. However, it seems that at this juncture, when almost every word of the text ended up being illustrated, the sculptors stuck to their ingrained habit of populating the reliefs with people, without necessarily having them participate in the action (cf. III-23).

III-30 The Jeweled Tree (*Ratnavrksa*)

With the exception of the shorter T. 278, all texts consulted include, albeit at slightly different places, the “countless jeweled trees”.

III-31 A *Kūtāgāra* Decorated with Banners

At Borobudur the “banners”, mentioned in the opening line of the long list of ornaments, seem to have become separated from the “countless standards and canopies”, but here the sculptor’s intention is clear, for banners are the most conspicuous decorative feature of this relief.

III-32 A *Kūtāgāra* Decorated with Lion Standards (fig. 20)

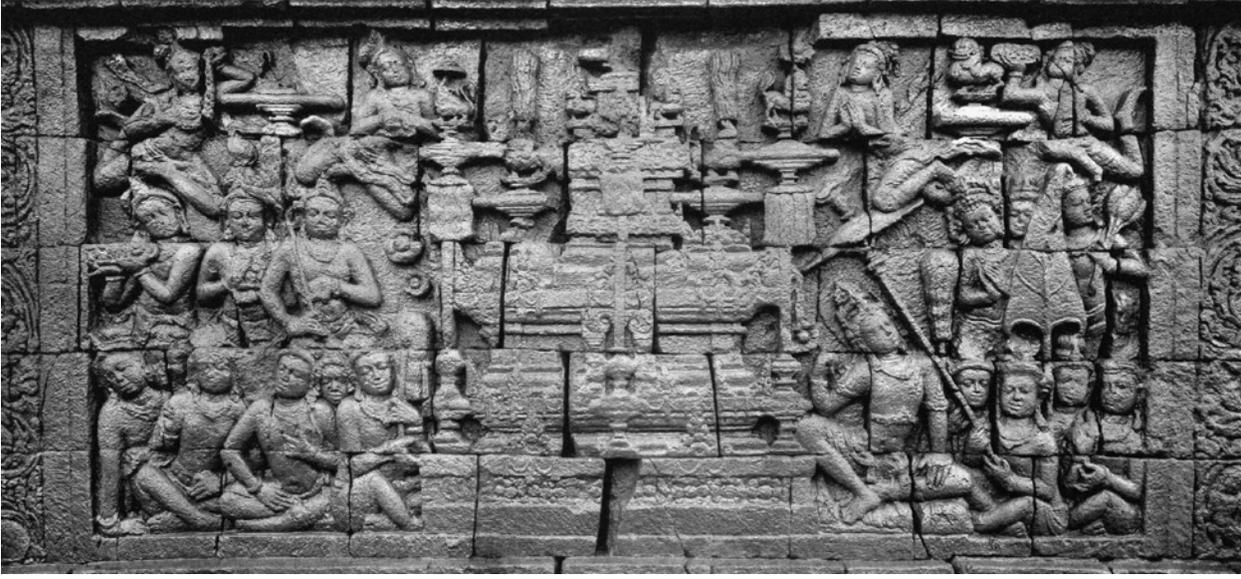
T. 293 mentions “nets of lion standards”, imaginary objects of a shape that is difficult to visualize. T. 278 simply gives “lion standards”. This is the obvious equivalent of the *simhadhvaja* of the Sanskrit texts. In this relief the sculptors show us what such a *simhadhvaja* may have looked like or, at least, how the sculptors imagined it to be. For they may well have made up these objects from their own fertile imagination, as no object resembling this type of standard has ever been found in Java. In the *Lotus Sūtra* Simhadhvaja is mentioned as the name of a Buddha (Karashima 1998, 401).

III-33 A *Kūtāgāra* Decorated with Banana Trees

The relief shows a building on which banana trees seem to grow. Old photographs sometimes show and Old Javanese *kakawin* texts often describe abandoned ruins of temples with trees and shrubbery growing all over them. The gigantic *Randu alas* or Wild Capok tree rising from the ruined cella of Candi Pawon before its restoration is perhaps the most dramatic photographic example (Bernet Kempers 1978, 50). However, such buildings are never shown in the reliefs of Borobudur. The *Karmavibhanga* teaches that the neglect of temples was a crime and that the cleaning of temples produced good karma. Moreover, the banana trees seen on this relief are not an invasive botanical species, but the “countless jeweled banana trees” of the text.

III-34 Countless Assorted Statues Made of Jewels

There is nothing that distinguishes the seven figures, seated in a pavilion, from statues, but in the list of adornments in T. 293 “countless statues of maidens, made of Jambū River gold,



20. A *kūtāgāra* decorated with lion standards (III-32).

countless assorted statues made of jewels and countless statues of Bodhisattvas made of marvelous jewels, placed everywhere in a magnificent display of majestic virtue” immediately precede the singing birds shown in the next relief.

There are two possibilities. The first is that the “statues made of jewels” are represented by the solitary small statue of a seated figure installed in the roof of the building which is shown in the relief. It is also possible, however, that the seven seated figures inside the building represent statues instead of living persons. The almost inevitable lack of distinction in the reliefs between living beings and sculpture portraying them can also be observed on relief IVB-34, where it is obvious that the sculptors were unable to draw a clear visual distinction in stone sculpture between a living Buddha and his likeness sculpted in stone.

III-35 A *Kūtāgāra* with Singing Birds

The “countless flocks of singing birds, singing sweet songs in harmony” found in all texts have found their perfect illustration in this relief. It shows flocks of birds flying among the clouds or roosting on top of the building.

III-36 A *Kūtāgāra* Decorated with Lotuses

In the Sanskrit texts and all three Chinese translations decorations consisting of “jeweled lotuses” or *utpala* (blue), *padma* (white), *kumuda* (red) and *pundarika* (white) flowers, follow immediately after the singing birds. The profusion of lotuses in this building is a sign that this part of the Borobudur text must have been close to the transmitted versions of this passage.



21. A *kūtāgāra* decorated with lotus ponds (III-38).

III-37 A *Kūtāgāra* Decorated with Pearls

Krom expressed some uncertainty as to the defining characteristic of this building, but he noted the decoration of pearls. As all sorts of pearls, including even “lion pearls”, are mentioned in all of the consulted texts, one of these is likely to have been depicted here.

III-38 A *Kūtāgāra* Decorated with Lotus Ponds (fig. 21)

The Sanskrit texts and T. 293 mention “countless precious ponds” and the sculptors of Borobudur seem to have taken their text literally. They made these ponds not part of the splendid setting of the building, as one would perhaps have expected, but an element of the decoration covering its walls. No building with such a decoration is likely to have ever existed in ancient Central Java. What we see in the relief is merely a monument to the sculptors' faithful adherence to the letter of their text.

This relief demonstrates (as did II-36) the hazards of extracting factual information on ancient Javanese architecture from the illustrations of buildings in the narrative reliefs of Borobudur. This panel clearly demonstrates that whenever their text called for fantastic buildings—as often happens in the *Gandavyūha*—the sculptors did not hesitate to create them. Although their artistic imagination may have ultimately been rooted in their own visual experience of actual architecture, their sculptural creations do not necessarily provide a reliable guide to actual architecture as it existed in Java during their lifetime.

III-39 A *Kūtāgāra* in a Rain of Flowers (?)

The interpretation of this relief is uncertain. There are some flowers falling from the clouds above, but if the relief had been meant to illustrate the passage “rained upon by the scattering of countless heavenly flowers” one would have expected to see more of them.

The long description of the adornments of Maitreya’s palace concludes with the paragraph “and inside this great *kūtāgāra* Sudhana saw hundreds of thousands of other *kūtāgāras*, all decorated in similar fashion...” We should, therefore, leave open the possibility that the sculptors decided to conclude the series with the representation of one of these countless *kūtāgāras*.

We now leave the description of the adornments of the *kūtāgāra* behind us to begin a new chapter. The next passage in the texts describes Sudhana’s impressions of the *kūtāgāra*. Perhaps because of the poor state of preservation of the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts at his disposal, Bosch seems to have misinterpreted Sudhana’s state of mind. The passage, translated below from T. 293, shows that, rather than being confused by this miraculous splendor, as Bosch thought, Sudhana’s vision begins to penetrate the miracles and to grasp their profound meaning.

This brief passage is followed by a lengthy one, in which Sudhana sees himself in each and every *kūtāgāra*, where he witnesses all kinds of meritorious acts and miracles being performed by Maitreya. In this lengthy description each new miracle or vision is introduced in the Sanskrit texts with the word *kvacit*, i.e. “somewhere” or “in another *kūtāgāra*”, and in the Chinese translations with the words *huo jian*, i.e. “here he saw ... there he saw”. This rigid structure keeps each miracle separated from the next in a text that could otherwise have created some confusion.

“Then Sudhana, witnessing this miraculous manifestation of the inconceivable realm of the ‘Grand *Kūtāgāra* that is the Repository of the Adornments of Vairocana’, became filled with great love and profound respect, overwhelmed by boundless joy, his body and mind soft and pliable; immersed in delight, his mind had left all other thoughts behind. Eliminating all obstructions and obliterating all doubts, he retained all he saw and remembered all he heard; his thoughts were no longer confused as he entered into a state of unobstructed detachment; unimpeded thoughts pervaded his mind and he performed all kinds of acts of homage; with his eyes unobstructed he saw even the smallest detail of these manifestations; with an unfettered body he bowed in all directions and paid his respects” (T.293, 832a, 4-10).

“Due to the majestic power of Maitreya Sudhana now saw himself in each and every *kūtāgāra* and inside these *kūtāgāras* he saw all kinds of inconceivably miraculous manifestations. In one he saw how Maitreya first evoked the spirit of Supreme Enlightenment; how he received his name; who were the members of his family; who were the *kalyānamitras* who opened his eyes to Enlightenment; how he planted and nurtured the roots of goodness; how long he lived and in which *kalpa*; who were the Buddhas whom he encountered; of which land he became an adornment; which conduct he practiced and which vows he pledged. Of all these *Tathāgatas* he saw their assemblies, he perceived their lifespan and how much time had elapsed; he paid homage to them in person—he saw all this clearly.” (T.293, 832a, 10-18).

“In one *kūtāgāra* he saw how Maitreya first attained the ‘*Samādhi* of Compassion’, which from then on gave him the name the Compassionate One; in another *kūtāgāra* he saw how Maitreya carried out arduous and marvelous spiritual practices, achieving all [Ten] Perfections; in another how he obtained endurance; in another how he resided in the [Ten] *Bhūmis*;

in another how he became an adornment of different Buddha lands; in another he saw how he upheld all teachings of the Buddha and became a Grand Master of Dharma, obtaining the patient rest in the belief in non-rebirth; in another how at a certain time, in a certain place at the residence of a certain Tathāgata, his attainment of Supreme Enlightenment had been predicted” (T. 293, 832a, 18-23).

“In another *kūtāgāra* Sudhana saw how Maitreya as a Universal Monarch [*Cakravartin*] made all beings abide by the Ten Good Paths; elsewhere how he, as a Guardian of the World, brought well-being and happiness to all living beings; elsewhere, how he as Śakra criticized the Five Desires; elsewhere, how he as King of the Yāmaloka praised for all gods the virtue of concentrating the mind on the good; elsewhere, how he as King of the Tusita heaven praised the accumulated merits of the Bodhisattva; elsewhere, how he as King of the Nirmānarati heaven, revealed the splendor of the transformations of the Bodhisattvas; elsewhere, how he as King of the Paranirmitavaśavartin heaven expounded the Dharma of the freedom from all illusions of all Buddhas; elsewhere, how he as King Māra taught the impermanence of all Dharmas; elsewhere, how he as Brahmā explained the boundless joys of meditation; elsewhere, how he as King of the Asuras explained to their assembly how to eliminate arrogance, pride and insolence, enter the Ocean of Knowledge and understand the illusory character of all dharmas; and, again, elsewhere, how he in the Yāmaloka released a bright radiance that saved those suffering in hell; elsewhere, how he distributed food and drink in the realm of the hungry ghosts (*preta*), helping those suffering from hunger and thirst; elsewhere, how in the realm of animals he provided different forms of expedience (*upāya*), moderating all sentient beings” (T. 293, 832a, 23–832b, 5).

“Elsewhere, he saw how Maitreya expounded the Dharma to the assembly of the Lokapālas; elsewhere, how he expounded the Dharma to the assembly of the King of the gods of the Trayastrimśa heaven; elsewhere, how he expounded the Dharma to the assembly of the King of the Yāma heaven; elsewhere, how he expounded the Dharma to the assembly of the King of the Tusita heaven; elsewhere, how he expounded the Dharma to the assembly of the King of the Nirmānarati heaven; elsewhere, how he expounded the Dharma to the assembly of the King of the Paranirmitavaśavartin heaven; elsewhere, how he expounded the Dharma to the assembly of King Māra; elsewhere, how he expounded the Dharma to the assembly of Brahmā, to the King of the Nāgas, the King of the Yaksas, the King of the Gandharvas, the King of the Kinnaras, the King of the Asuras and Danavas, the King of the Garudas and Mahoragas; elsewhere he saw Maitreya expounding the Dharma to the assembly of all other beings, human and non-human, to the assemblies of all *śrāvakas*, all Pratyeka Buddhas and all those Bodhisattvas who have just reached [the stage of spiritual] resolve; elsewhere he saw Maitreya expounding the Dharma to the assemblies of all those Bodhisattvas who practice the [ten degrees of] diversion, who attained endurance and who reside in the stage of non-regression; elsewhere he saw Maitreya expound the Law to the assemblies of all those who had attained [the stage of] anointment and will become Bodhisattvas in their next rebirth; elsewhere he saw how Maitreya expounded the Dharma to all those Bodhisattvas who have all the supreme virtues of having progressed from the first to the tenth Bodhisattva Stage” (T. 293, 832b, 5-22).

Relief III-75 represents Maitreya preaching to an audience of *nāgas*, *yaksas*, *garudas*, etc., and the reliefs preceding it show Maitreya in hell (III-69), Maitreya distributing food to the *pretas* (III-70) and Maitreya preaching to the animals (III-71). As these are all clearly recognizable scenes, we may assume that a version closely resembling the passage translated above

from the elaborate rendering in T. 293 provided the substance for a series of no less than thirty-six consecutive reliefs, beginning with III-40 and ending with III-75.

Bosch attributed the problems of identification of this series of reliefs to some extent to the imperfect condition of the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts to which he had access. However, even a casual perusal of this segment of the text in a version relatively free from *lacunae* and with all of its countless repetitions in place, will suffice to convince us that the sculptors did not have an easy assignment. They must have sometimes found themselves at a loss how to convert the passage assigned to them into stone reliefs that were intelligible to contemporary viewers (even if not always to the scholars of our time). The only practical method available to us is to follow Bosch's example and to search for definitely identifiable scenes and use them as benchmarks from where we can start our efforts to identify the less easily recognizable scenes that separate them.

Before we try to do that, however, it is perhaps useful to observe that the text which has been translated above consists of four different sections, all slightly different in structure, even though each sentence of the last three is introduced by the words *kvacit* or *huojian*, as mentioned earlier. The first describes Sudhana's impressions of the miraculous events taking place inside the *kūtāgāra*. The second, consisting of two paragraphs, deals with the biography of Maitreya, describing his progress towards Bodhisattvahood through numerous rebirths in successive *kalpas*. These visions of Maitreya make Sudhana witness Maitreya's personal history from aeons past to his present state of Bodhisattvahood.

These two paragraphs are followed by two different, consecutive and partially overlapping and repetitive sections. In the first of these Maitreya assumes successively the roles of a Universal Monarch, of Brahmā, Māra, and of the kings presiding over the gods of the different heavens of the Sphere of Desire (*Kāmadhātu*), and instructs their assemblies. The text states the themes of the sermons he delivers in each of these roles. In the second section he appears as himself in assemblies mostly presided over by the same figures he has just impersonated, but this time the topics of the sermons he delivers are not specified, for the text merely repeats, time and again, that he "expounded the Dharma".

If the text of the sculptors contained the passage which describes Sudhana's state of mind, they may have illustrated it on III-39. However, this relief can also be taken as a possible illustration of the preceding sentences, unless the sculptors skipped this passage altogether.

Beginning with III-40 Maitreya makes an appearance on almost all reliefs. This clearly suggests that the lengthy description of the miracles, which Sudhana witnesses being performed by Maitreya, begins to be illustrated here. In the series III-20 to III-39 it could perhaps be said of the sculptors that they had taken the liberty of assuming—even if only for obvious practical reasons—that each of the decorations, described in their text, adorned a different *kūtāgāra*. In the series that follows, no such liberties needed to be taken, for the text now unequivocally states that each of the successive miracles was performed by Maitreya in a different *kūtāgāra*.

Only a few lines of text, but no less than twenty reliefs later (III-59), one of the most convincing identifications of the entire series can be made. As can be seen on several other Borobudur reliefs, the horse, the elephant, and the standards topped by a *cakra* and a jewel together represent the regalia heralding the presence of a *Cakravartin*, or Universal Monarch. All four regal attributes, which are usually shown in the reliefs of Borobudur, can be seen on relief III-59. This proves that it illustrates the sentence: "In another *kūtāgāra* Sudhana saw how Maitreya as a Universal Monarch made all sentient beings abide by the Ten Good Paths" (T.278, 780c, 8; T.279, 435b, 14; T.293, 832a, 24).

The identification of other reliefs in the immediate vicinity of III-59 which one would suspect to be representations of Maitreya in some of the other roles that he adopted, is more problematical. Perhaps in order to avoid confusion the sculptors appear to have decided to represent Maitreya—or, more precisely, a visionary image of Maitreya—in his own role as a Bodhisattva instead of in the various roles or disguises that he had assumed earlier according to the text. However, while transformation or disguise is easily dealt with by the author of a text passage, it poses almost insurmountable problems for the sculptor trying to illustrate it. If the sculptor shows the deity or Bodhisattva in the disguise or transformation which he or she has assumed, he risks not being understood by his viewers. If, on the other hand, he chooses to show the person's real identity, the viewer may miss an essential element in the point of the story, i.e. the disguise. This dilemma is one that the sculptors of Borobudur faced whenever they were required to illustrate a text passage in which a Bodhisattva or a deity appears in the guise of another person. This happens in the *jātakas*, for example, when Śakra assumes a disguise in order to test the spiritual resolve of the generous king Śibi, the chief protagonist of several birth stories.

The long sequence of appearances of Maitreya, mentioned above, in reality consists of three separate parts in which Maitreya performs three different functions. It is only in the illustrations of the last section of the text, when Maitreya expounds the Dharma to a number of different assemblies, that he appears—both in the text and in its illustrations—as himself and not in some other guise. In the reliefs illustrating this particular section the beings that make up his audience can sometimes be identified by their dress or appearance. These visual clues alone permit us to establish which part of the text has been illustrated.

All texts consulted agree that Maitreya's appearance as the Universal Monarch (III-59) follows immediately after two paragraphs which describe the long trail of spiritual progress followed by this Bodhisattva, as it is miraculously witnessed by the pilgrim Sudhana. This implies that those two paragraphs must have been illustrated in the reliefs III-40 through III-58. However, the reader of these two paragraphs will sympathize with the sculptors, who were obliged to interpret a passage singularly lacking in illustrative potential. The result is a series of highly attractive reliefs, the meaning of which is often difficult, in some cases even impossible, to establish.

Although two reliefs (III-44 and III-47) can be identified with some degree of certainty, several other reliefs present insurmountable problems of identification. In the series from III-41 through III-58 Maitreya appears seated in a building eleven times. Of these reliefs five show the Bodhisattva in a meditative pose, four times with the right hand raised in *vitarka-mudrā*, once with the right hand in *abhaya-mudrā*, and once holding a book. In addition there are three scenes in which Maitreya is shown standing. Then there are four reliefs in which a Buddha takes Maitreya's place inside the building. In at least three of these scenes the principal person paying homage to this Buddha can be identified with certainty as Maitreya. The textual content of these reliefs, rich in decorative detail and all superbly carved, but often lacking almost any clue to their meaning, can sometimes be guessed, especially when they are placed in close proximity to reliefs that can be identified with a greater degree of certainty.

III-40 Maitreya and Sudhana in a *Kūtāgāra*

After all the adornments of the *kūtāgāra* have been illustrated in the series III-20 through III-39, this relief shows, for the first time, the two chief protagonists, the Bodhisattva Maitreya and the pilgrim Sudhana, seated together in a *kūtāgāra*. This scene, therefore, should mark either the conclusion of that series or, more likely, the beginning of the next series, in which Sudhana witnesses Maitreya perform his manifold miracles.

It comes as somewhat of a surprise to see Maitreya and Sudhana seated together in a *kūtāgāra*. As we have previously seen, most texts clearly suggest that Maitreya does not accompany Sudhana into the *kūtāgāra*, and that its doors closed as soon as Sudhana had entered the building. The explanation for their at first sight inconsistent joint appearance may perhaps be found in the following passage: “Due to the majestic spiritual power of Maitreya Sudhana saw himself in each and all of these *kūtāgāras*” (T. 293, 832a,10). The sculptors have included Maitreya not because they believed him to be physically present, but in order to let the viewers know that all of the miracles that Sudhana will witness from now on and all the new visions he will receive emanate from Maitreya’s awesome spiritual presence.

III-41 Maitreya Seated in Meditation

One is tempted to connect this relief with the opening phrase: “How Maitreya first produced the Thought of Supreme Enlightenment” (T.293, 832a, 12). We should mention, however, that elsewhere on Borobudur, notably in relief O-42a, the word *bodhicitta* is rendered symbolically not by the *dhyāna-mudrā*, but by the gesture called *sankalpa-mudrā* in which the palms of both hands are pressed together (Fontein 1989, 96).

III-42 One of Maitreya’s *Kalyānamitras*

Some of the often highly decorative visiting scenes leave a rather nondescript and stereotypical impression. There are, however, occasional indications which lead one to suspect that even in those scenes the sculptors adhered to certain rules. This relief is a case in point. Krom had already noticed that in spite of its resemblance to several other reliefs of this series, there is nothing here to suggest that the person seated in the cella of the building, his right hand raised in *vitarka-mudrā*, is Maitreya, for the figure does not show any of the usual attributes of this Bodhisattva. It would seem more likely, therefore, that the relief illustrates the words: “who were the *kalyānamitras* who opened his eyes to Enlightenment” (T.293, 832a, 14), and that the person inside the building is indeed not Maitreya, but one of Maitreya’s *kalyānamitras*. The texts do not identify Maitreya’s *kalyānamitras* by name. He is shown, as is usual, instructing a person who greets him with his hands folded in *añjali*. It is not clear whether the artist simply adopted the standard formula for a visit to a *kalyānamitra*, showing him with a pilgrim—presumably Sudhana—in the attire of royalty and the elite, as is frequently seen on the second gallery. Instead, he may have intended the recipient of the instruction to be Maitreya in a previous life. As he has not yet reached the Bodhisattva Stage, he is shown without the regular attributes of this Bodhisattva.

III-43 Maitreya Entering the Samādhi of Compassion

The Bodhisattva is shown in a meditative pose with his hands in *dhyāna-mudrā*. This is the sculptors' way of illustrating the word *samādhi* (see e.g. II-4). This relief illustrates the passage: "In one *kūtāgāra* he saw how Maitreya first achieved the *samādhi* of Compassion".

III-44 Maitreya the Compassionate Distributing Gifts

Bosch (1929, 202) plausibly connected this relief, which illustrates Maitreya's display of generosity, with the word *samādāpana*, i.e. "causing gifts to be distributed" of the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts. As he singled out this word in a part of the text which he paraphrased, we do not know the exact context in which it occurred in the Parisian Sanskrit text. The three Chinese translations provide no equivalent for this compound. It should be noted, however, that elsewhere on Borobudur distributions of gifts sometimes illustrate such words as "generosity" or "compassion" (see e.g. IIIB-7). The relief, therefore, could also illustrate the words "which from then on gave him [Maitreya] the name of the Compassionate One".

III-45 Maitreya Paying Homage to a Buddha

The relief shows three persons paying homage to a Buddha. As in III-42, the first of these three may represent Maitreya in one of his previous rebirths. This scene probably illustrates the words "who the Buddhas were whom he encountered" (T.293, 832a, 16 -17).

III-46 Maitreya Entering *Samādhi*

This relief does not seem to match any passage in our versions of the text. However, as the next words in T. 293 are definitely illustrated on the following relief, we may perhaps leave open the possibility that this relief, and not relief III-43, illustrates Maitreya entering *samādhi*.

III-47 Maitreya Carrying out Arduous Practices (fig. 22)

Maitreya, standing on one leg in typical yoga fashion, illustrates the words: "he saw how Maitreya carried out arduous practices." This passage seems to occur only in Prajñā's Chinese translation (T.293, 832a, 19).

It should be noted, however, that Bosch (1929, p.208) has drawn attention to a passage, occurring slightly later in the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts, in which Bodhisattvas "stand rigidly erect". On p.210 he remarks: "regrettably, relief no. IIIB-10, showing Bodhisattvas who stand "rigidly straight" (*nikhatah*), is missing. We would have liked to know how the sculptors represented figures in such a pose." That the Borobudur text actually contained a similar phrase, but that this phrase occurred there in a slightly different place, is a distinct possibility. See also III-50, where a similar discrepancy occurs.



22. Maitreya carrying out arduous practices (III-47).

III-48 Maitreya Carrying out Marvelous Practices

There are two reasons for connecting this relief with the words “marvelous practices.” One is the fact that it immediately follows the relief illustrating the “arduous practices”, the preceding words in the text. The other is the close similarity in composition between the two reliefs, something that can perhaps be expected of panels illustrating two words of the same sentence. Some of the following reliefs, although obviously all illustrating parts of the same text passage, do not seem to provide any clue as to their exact meaning.

III-49 Maitreya Preaching

Krom (1920, 552) gives the following description: “On the left side four men dressed in the attire of the elite; two of them hold loose palm leaves in their hands. Their purpose, apparently, is to record the words of the Bodhisattva”. This relief may actually illustrate the sentence: “Then he [Sudhana] saw how he [Maitreya], at a certain time in a certain place at the residence of a certain Tathāgata, was given the prediction of his future Supreme Enlightenment” (T.279, 435b, 14; T.293, 832a, 23).

III-50 Maitreya Following a Procession (fig. 23)

Krom (1920, 552) describes this relief as follows: “In the extreme right of this relief the spectator (Sudhana, J.F.) and his escort watch how Maitreya and an attendant holding his parasol walk behind a group of people surrounding an elephant. Among them are people bearing flags



23. Maitreya following a procession (III-50).

and banners and people with drums and cymbals and, possibly, a monochord. One person raises a branch with flowers, another puts a round object to his mouth. It is not clear whether he is blowing it or drinking from it.”

The text offers no explanation for this scene in the paragraph that is believed to have been illustrated in this series of reliefs, but on one of the next pages of the Parisian manuscripts, as well as in Buddhabhadra’s translation, one passage seems to provide the perfect match to what is seen in this relief. Bosch (1929, 207), paraphrasing and quoting the Sanskrit text, writes: “Suddenly a new figure appears on the scene, the Bodhisattva Amuka, an eager proponent of the Buddhist Law. Sudhana saw how he “distributed the gifts of the Dharma, made the offering of the Dharma, *raised the banner of the Dharma, beat the drum of the Dharma, blew the conch of the Dharma* (italics J.F.), made the rain of the Dharma fall, carried the teachings of the Dharma, protected the *caitya* of the Tathāgatas, waged the battles for the Dharma, and protected the Treasure of the Dharma.”

In the Chinese translations (T.278, 781b, 19-20 and T.293, 833b, 5-6) the Bodhisattva Amuka has become an anonymous Grand Master of Dharma, but otherwise the text is largely the same. The words “protected the *caitya* of the Tathāgatas” also occurs later in the Parisian manuscripts. In both cases the Chinese translations interpret: “erecting temples and shrines” (cf. IVB-33). Given the striking parallel between relief IVB-50, which shows Maitreya building a *stūpa*, and the passage quoted above, one cannot help wondering whether in the Borobudur manuscript some sentences could have been transferred to a different place (see also III-47). On the other hand, the repetition of practically the same phrase is also quite common in this

part of the *Gandavyūha* and the possibility of a duplication of a sentence can, therefore, not be excluded

III-51 Maitreya Honoring a Buddha

III-52 Maitreya Immersed in Meditation

III-53 Maitreya Preaching

III-54 Maitreya Preaching

III-55 Maitreya Honoring a Buddha

This relief possibly illustrates the words “how he [Maitreya] became an adornment of different Buddha fields” (T 293, 832a, 21).

III-56 Maitreya as the Grand Master of Dharma

Before the textual source of this series of reliefs had been discovered, Krom (1920, 535) suggested that this relief might possibly represent Asanga and that the book that he holds in his lap is the *Yogacāryabhūmiśāstra*. We now realize, that the relief, which shows Maitreya seated in a building, holding a large book in his lap, does not represent Asanga, but that Krom’s suggestion was not far from the real meaning of the relief. The text suggests a similar content, namely the words: “how he upheld the teachings of the Buddha and became the Grand Master of Dharma” (T.293, 832a, 21).

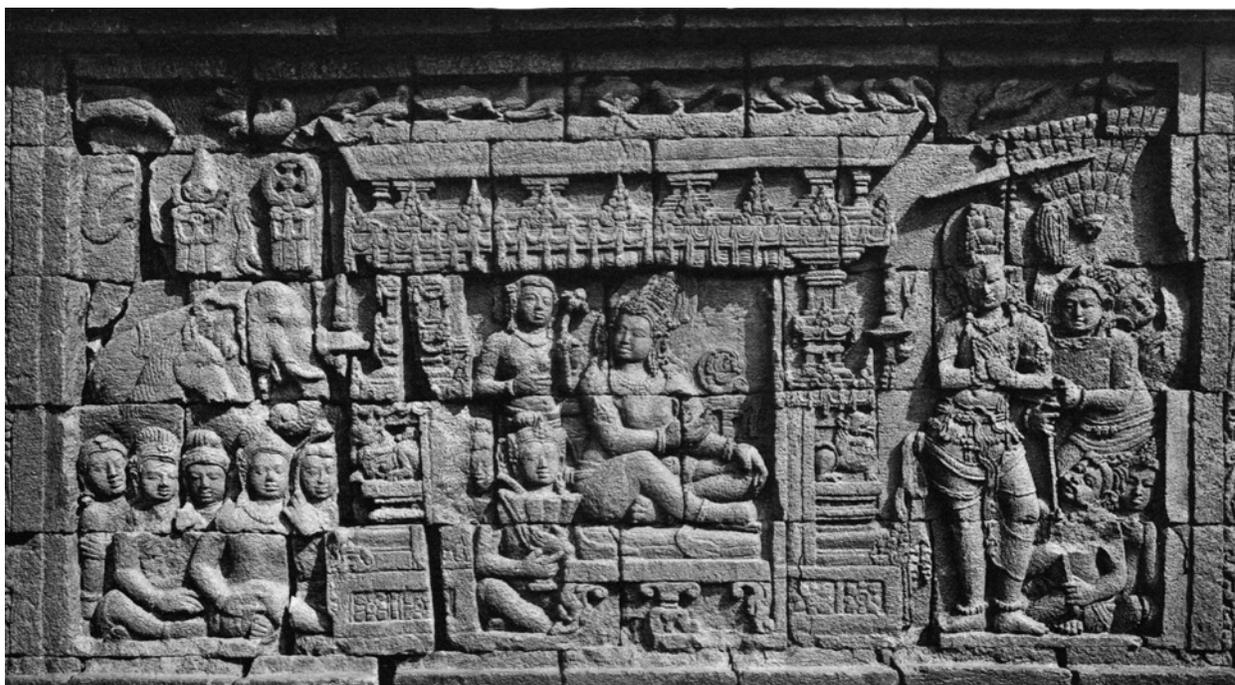
III-57 Maitreya Preaching

III-58 Maitreya pays Homage to a Buddha

III-59 Maitreya Appearing as a Universal Monarch (**fig. 24**)

As explained earlier (p.86), the figure in regal dress, seated in the hall of his palace, can be identified with certainty as a Universal Monarch (*Cakravartin*) by his four customary regalia. The relief illustrates the passage in the text: “In another *kūtāgāra* he saw how Maitreya as a Universal Monarch made all beings abide by the Ten Good Paths” (T.293, 832a, 23).

Relief III-59, in which Maitreya appears as *Cakravartin*, is the first in a series of eight consecutive reliefs (with the possible exception of III-62) from which Maitreya remains absent. We may assume, therefore, that these reliefs illustrate the passage in the text in which Maitreya assumes the identity of various deities in order to instruct them and their assemblies in different aspects of the Dharma. The sculptors’ habit of not differentiating between anonymous Bodhisattvas, various deities, kings and even the pilgrim Sudhana, dressing all of them indiscriminately in the attire of the elite, makes it difficult, if not impossible to identify most



24. Maitreya appearing as a Cakravartin (III-59).

of these reliefs with any degree of certainty. However, the number of these reliefs corresponds exactly to that of the successive impersonations by Maitreya mentioned in the texts. We may, therefore, as Bosch has done, provisionally assign the name of a deity to each of these reliefs by assuming that the Borobudur text and those transmitted to us mention these deities in the same order. The order in which the Six Heavens (*devalokas*) of the *Kāmadhātu*, or Sphere of Desire, are given in the texts is invariably the same, but the reliefs appear to contain no visual clues to the specific identity of the chief protagonist in any of them.

There is, however, one other crucial clue to the identification of these scenes. Most of the assemblies in which Maitreya appears in disguise reside in the heavens of the Sphere of Desire. Six consecutive reliefs (III-60 through III-65) all show ornamental trees, *kalpavrksa*, often associated with the heavens. The frequency with which such trees appear in other reliefs of Borobudur suggests that their presence need not always signify that a scene is laid in heaven. However, on the hidden base several reliefs representing *kalpavrksa* can be identified with certainty as representations of the heavens because inscriptions in the upper margin of the panels label them “Heaven” (*svargga*). Of the panels inscribed “*svargga*” some show the *kalpavrksa* with jars filled with treasure placed at their feet and guarded by a pair of kinnaras (O-130, O-137, O-147, and O-153). However, that the presence of these faithful avian guardians was not absolutely required to make the tree one of a heavenly kind, is evident from four other reliefs, all similarly inscribed with the word “Heaven” (O-134, O-140, O-153, and O-154). These last four reliefs all show the trees, but omit the treasure jars and their avian guardians. In the series of reliefs under discussion both III-65 and III-66 do include birds of this hybrid mythological species. As the text passage following the appearance of a Cakravartin makes

Maitreya appear successively in all six of the heavens of the Sphere of Desire, reliefs III-60 through III-65 may be identified with confidence as illustrations of that passage.

III-60 Maitreya appears as a *Lokapāla* in the Assembly of the Caturmahārājikāyika (?)

As relief Ia-104 in the series of the Life of the Buddha according to the *Lalitavistara* clearly suggests, Javanese rules of iconography did not require the sculptors to provide Lokapālas with any distinctive attributes. Instead they showed them in the same type of royal attire as is worn by other deities. However, if the intent of the sculptor of this relief was to represent Lokapālas, one would have expected that at least all four of them would have been shown. Here only one of them makes his appearance.

III-61 Maitreya appears as Śakra in the Trāyastrimśa Heaven (?)

At Borobudur the god Śakra (Indra) is often accompanied by his elephant Airāvata, represented as a human with an elephant hood or elephants' ears. One of the attendants standing behind Śakra may be Airāvata, for he seems to have elephants' ears. The identification is supported by the sequential order of the various transformations of Maitreya, as given in the *Gandavyūha*, and upon the fixed sequence of the heavens of the Sphere of Desire in most Buddhist texts (Nattier 2009, 103).

III-62 Maitreya appears as Brahmā in the Yāma Heaven (?)

The sculptor has given no indication that the Bodhisattva-like figure with his right hand raised in *vitarka-mudrā*, and the *stūpa* of Maitreya in the headdress, should be identified as Brahmā, who told the assembly of “the infinite joy of the state of meditation” (T.293, 832b). On relief Ia-106 both Brahmā and Śakra are indistinguishable from the other deities. This suggests the possibility that the absence of any iconographic characteristics need not necessarily invalidate the identification of the chief protagonist of this relief as Brahmā.

The sculptors faced the insuperable problem how to convey to the viewer that the chief personage shown in this series of reliefs is none other than Maitreya himself. They decided, therefore, to show here the real Maitreya in order to remind the viewer of the true identity of the chief protagonist of this series of reliefs.

III-63 Maitreya appears as King of the Tusita Heaven (?)

III-64 Maitreya appears as King of the Nirmānarati Heaven (?)

III-65 Maitreya appears in the Guise of Māra (?)

It is possible that Māra and one of the Kings of the Heavens have traded places and that it is indeed the Evil One who is represented on III-65, while the King of the Parinirmitavaśavartin

Heaven (in which Māra resides) appears on III-66. The chief protagonist of this relief is seated on a throne in an elaborate building with Sudhana listening to his discourse. Two dancing girls on the left side of the panel could well represent Māra's seductive daughters. According to Indian iconographical texts Māra can appear in four different manifestations, as a hermit, as the God of Love (Kāmadeva), as a demon (*rāksasa*) and "as himself", i.e. in human guise, as divine royalty (*devaputra*). On this relief and on the *Lalitavistara* relief illustrating Māra's defeat by the Buddha (Ia-94) Māra is shown in his human guise (see Zinn & Schlingloff 2007, 145-148, and also IV-39).

III-66 Maitreya appears as King of the Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven (?)

III-67 Maitreya preaches in the *Brahmaloka* (?)

After we cross the stairway to continue our *pradaksinā*, the next relief now shows Maitreya once again in his true appearance, residing in the *Brahmaloka*, the first of the heavens of the *Rūpadhātu*, the Sphere of Form. The series of impersonations now seems to have come to an end. From now on Maitreya is shown as preaching or performing good deeds. Perhaps because of its location on a corner, the relief reverses the order in which Maitreya and Sudhana are to be seen. It shows Maitreya on the right and Sudhana on the left. The text says: "How he [Maitreya] in the *Brahmaloka* explained the boundless joys of meditation"

III-68 Maitreya preaches to the Asuras

"As King of the Asuras he [Maitreya] made them enter the Ocean of Great Knowledge and explained to their assembly the illusory character of all dharmas." The audience consists of a group of bearded demons, obviously the Asuras. However, once again, Maitreya is clearly shown as Maitreya, not as a King of the Asuras (T.293, 832b, 1; T.278, 780c, 14; T.279, 435b, 23)

III-69 Maitreya brings Relief to those Born in Hell

"And again, he saw elsewhere how he [Maitreya] released a bright radiance in the sphere of the *Yāmaloka*, saving those who are suffering in hell" (T.293, 832b, 3; T. 278, 780c, 15; T.279, 835b, 23). This relief clearly demonstrates that the sculptors of Borobudur represented the miserable fate of those reborn in the hells whenever the text required them to show such a scene, irrespective of its location on the monument.

III-70 Maitreya is Dispensing Food and Drink to the Hungry Ghosts

"And he saw him [Maitreya] in the Realm of the Hungry Ghosts [*pretas*], where he distributed food and drink, providing relief for those suffering from hunger and thirst" (T.293, 832b, 4; T.278, 780c, 16; T.279, 835b, 24).

III-71 Maitreya preaches to the Animal World

“And he saw him [Maitreya] in the realm of rebirth of the animals, to whom he preached expedient doctrine, moderating all sentient beings” (T.293, 832b, 5; T.278, 780c, 17; T. 279, 835b, 25). It should be noted that the animals are shown in pairs, but that the Javanese sculptor, unfamiliar with real lions, represented both the lion and the lioness with a collar-like mane.

III-72 Maitreya preaches to the *Lokapālas* {?}

Maitreya appears successively in the Assembly of the Asuras (III-68), in the Hells (III-69), in the Realm of the Hungry Ghosts (III-70), and in the Animal World (III-71). From this we may conclude that the Bodhisattva is addressing all the various inhabitants of the *Kāmadhātu*, the Sphere of Desire. According to Buddhist cosmology, the Asuras inhabit the lower slopes of Mt. Sumeru and the *Lokapālas* guard the Four Quarters of the upper slopes, while the palace of Śakra lies on top of Mt. Sumeru. Śakra can be identified with certainty on III-73. As the different regions of Mt. Sumeru and the heavens above are usually mentioned in the same order, we would expect the *Lokapālas* to make their appearance on III-72. However, as we have noticed before (III-60), the sculptors of Borobudur did not draw clear iconographic distinctions between gods, kings, and persons belonging to the elite, dressing all of them, including the *Lokapālas*, in the attire of royalty and the elite. The identity of the figures in the audience of Maitreya in this relief can, therefore, not be established with certainty.

In the center of III-72 Maitreya is seated in a pillared hall (*pēndapa*). The entire relief is divided into two registers. On the right in the upper register, seated at the same level as Maitreya, is Sudhana. His attendant carrying the parasol is behind him. On the left side are two men in royal attire. On the left in the lower register are two men folding their hands in respectful *añjali*; on the lower right are two men carrying swords. To judge from their attire, the men in the lower register do not represent *Lokapālas*; they probably belong to the class of servants or body guards.

The only explanation that could justify the identification of this relief as one representing Maitreya preaching to the *Lokapālas* is that the sculptors opted, once again, for representing only two of the four guardians (cf. III-60). For reasons that remain unexplained Frédéric identifies this relief as “They ask him [Maitreya] to bring rain” (see also III-73).

III-73 Maitreya appears as Śakra

We can only identify the person seated in the pillared hall (*pēndapa*) with certainty as Śakra because he is accompanied here by his elephant-hooded attendant Airāvata, holding an elephant goad.

Once again Frédéric identifies this relief as: “Maitreya asks Śakra for rain.” The texts offer no support for this explanation. Śakra is obviously the appropriate deity to whom prayers for rain should be addressed. However, it would seem rather unlikely that either Sudhana or Maitreya would at this point still harbor such earthly meteorological concerns after having attained their present advanced level of detachment from worldly bonds.

III-74 Maitreya preaches to the *Nāgas*

The number of five hundred is often used in Buddhist scriptures, especially in the *jātakas*, as the equivalent of “many”. When the sculptors of Borobudurt represented a crowd or an assembly, they often reduced this number to five (cf. II-16). Here Maitreya is seen with his right hand raised in *vitarka-mudrā*, addressing a group of five seated *nāgas*, clearly recognizable by their snake hoods.

III-75 Maitreya preaches to the Assembled Demigods

To conclude this lengthy sequence of Maitreya’s appearance in different guises and before assemblies of different beings of (semi-)divine status, the sculptors have created a gathering of all of these different types of beings in one single assembly. We recognize demons (*yaksas* and *rāksasas*), *gandharvas*, *kinnaras*, and *mahoragas*. T. 293, 832b, 12 and T. 279, 435c, 3 conclude this section of the text in somewhat similar fashion with a large gathering of different beings. There is no need, therefore, to accept Bosch’s suggestion (1929, 206) that the sculptors resorted to “cheating” by combining all these different meetings into one single assembly. Relief III-75 definitely marks the conclusion of the series of Maitreya’s meetings in various disguises with audiences of different inhabitants of the *Kāmadhātu*, its heavens and its hells.

The final section of the main wall of the third gallery consists of twelve reliefs (III-76—III-88), almost all of which represent Maitreya as the chief protagonist, seated in a building, in the center or the left of the relief and Sudhana with his retinue on the right side of the relief. On the left side of the building are persons paying homage or bringing offerings to the Bodhisattva. The number of worshipers varies from three to eight. Most of them are shown in royal attire and wear tiaras, while some of them have been provided with haloes. Therefore, most of them probably represent the Bodhisattvas mentioned in the text. Due to damage to the reliefs the *mudrā* of Maitreya can be established with certainty in only a few cases.

Bosch (1929, 208) only had access to the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts in which this part of the text showed many *lacunae*. He doubted whether even a perfectly preserved text could have provided him with an explanation for this series of reliefs. These doubts seem justified, for even with our wider choice of better preserved scriptural resources, this series continues to defy an entirely satisfactory explanation. It often remains uncertain which passages of the *Gandavyūha* have been illustrated in these reliefs.

III-76 Maitreya preaches to Humans and Non-Humans

Immediately after the description of the various assemblies of demi-gods, the text continues: “And then he [Sudhana] saw how he [Maitreya] expounded the Dharma to all other beings, humans and non-humans” (T. 293, 832b, 16; T. 279, 435c, 6).

The relief shows Maitreya enthroned in a pavilion in the center of the relief. Sudhana and his retinue, including the bearer of his parasol and an armed bodyguard, are on the right. Due to damage to the relief Maitreya’s *mudrā* can no longer be ascertained. On the left is a group of six seated persons, all paying homage to the Bodhisattva. In the clouds above two beautifully

stylized trees, clearly separated from the worshipers below, are four flying figures bringing offerings. They probably represent the divine, non-human part of the assembly.

III-77 Maitreya instructs the Bodhisattvas

The sculptors seem to have skipped the Śrāvakas and the Pratyeka Buddhas of the text and gone on to the next assembly: “And then he [Sudhana] saw how he [Maitreya] expounded the Law to all Bodhisattvas who had just resolved to achieve Enlightenment in this life” (T.293, 832b, 17).

III-78 Maitreya praises the Bodhisattvas

“And then he [Sudhana] saw how he [Maitreya] praised the merits of those going through the Ten Stages of Bodhisattvahood (*daśabhūmi*); and then he [Sudhana] saw how he [Maitreya] praised all who had fulfilled all [Ten] Perfections (*pāramitās*, T.293, 832b, 21).

Maitreya, seen en face, is seated in a pavilion in the center of the relief. To the right sits Sudhana, accompanied by his retinue. On the left are four seated and four standing figures in royal attire, obviously the Bodhisattvas of the text. To the right, high up in the clouds, are three heavenly beings.

III-79 Maitreya praises the Bodhisattvas

Maitreya turns away from Sudhana towards a group of six seated and one standing person in royal attire. He raises his right hand in *abhaya-mudrā*. Sometimes this *mudrā* indicates praise, as, for example, in the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs O-2b and O-6a. Krom already noticed Maitreya’s turned-away posture which makes it look as if Sudhana is a mere spectator. Perhaps the gesture and body language of Maitreya may be the sculptor’s way to indicate “tolerance” or “endurance”. The next sentence in the text reads: “And then he [Sudhana] saw how he [Maitreya] praised those who have entered the gate of endurance” (T.293, 832b, 23).

III-80 Maitreya instructs the Bodhisattvas

Maitreya, seen en face, is seated in a pavilion in the center of the relief. He raises his right hand in *vitarka-mudrā*. On the left are five persons in royal attire paying homage to him. Above the pavilion and a tree on the left are heavenly beings and *kinnaras*. The next sentence reads: “And he [Sudhana] saw how he [Maitreya] praised the gates of concentration [*samādhi*]” (T.293, 832b, 24).

III-81 Maitreya praises the Bodhisattvas

This time the pavilion has been shifted to the left side of the panel. Maitreya turns towards his audience of four bodhisattvas. Behind them are Sudhana and his retinue. In the clouds above hover two heavenly beings. The corresponding sentence reads: “And he [Sudhana] saw how he [Maitreya] praised the depth of the gate of deliverance” (T.293, 832b, 24).

III-82 Maitreya and Three Worshipers

The three worshipers are seated on an extension of the platform of Maitreya’s pavilion. However, this relief differs from all the other panels in this series in that here alone the worshipers are seated at the same level as Maitreya. Elsewhere on Borobudur the level at which Sudhana and all other worshipers are sitting or standing is invariably lower than that of the *kalyānamitras*. A possible explanation for this highly unusual feature may perhaps be found in the passage in the text that now follows: “And then he [Sudhana] saw how he [Maitreya] praised the realm of supernatural power of all meditation and concentration; and then, how he [Sudhana] saw how he [Maitreya] praised the expedience (*upāya*) and aptitude of the conduct of all Bodhisattvas” (T.293, 832b, 25). The sculptors seem to have availed themselves of the rare opportunity, provided by this passage in the text, to illustrate its abstract content. They equalized the level at which Maitreya and his worshipers are seated in order to visually express *upāya*, i.e. the teacher’s skillful adjustment of his spiritual message to the level of perception of his audience.

III-83 Maitreya instructs Worshipers

Maitreya is seated in a pavilion on the left side of the relief. Turning towards his audience he raises his right hand in *vitarka-mudrā*. Lack of space has forced the sculptors to crowd five worshipers and Sudhana together in the right corner of the panel. The bearer of Sudhana’s parasol, obviously the lowest ranking person, has been squeezed in on the edge of the relief. The next sentence of the text reads: “And then he [Sudhana] saw how he [Maitreya] praised the different ways to pledge great oaths and make great vows.”

III-84 Maitreya instructs Bodhisattvas in Acts of Generosity

Maitreya is shown en face, seated in a pavilion in the center of the relief, his right hand raised in *vitarka-mudrā*. To the right are Sudhana and his retinue, including an armed guard. To the left are seven figures in royal attire, probably Bodhisattvas, three standing and four seated, all bringing different offerings. In the clouds above are jars filled with jewels; they have been turned over and dispense their treasures upon those seated below.

The number of Bodhisattvas, once again increased, and the gifts they bring suggest a possible connection with the following sentence: “And then he [Sudhana] saw how he [Maitreya], together with a gathering of Bodhisattvas performing the same practices, praised providing

for the prosperity of the world through the arts and sciences” (T.293, 832b, 25). Once again the sculptors have created an emblematic scene, which materializes an abstract expression of generosity (“for the prosperity of the world”) by a scene representing an actual distribution of gifts (Cf. III-44 and IIIB-7).

III-85 Maitreya instructs the Bodhisattvas

Maitreya, seated in a pavilion in the center of the relief, raises his right hand, probably in *vitarka-mudrā*, and turns towards an audience of seven respectfully listening worshippers in royal attire, probably representing Bodhisattvas. To the right sits Sudhana, accompanied by his retinue, which includes two men riding an elephant. The text continues: “And then he [Sudhana] saw how he [Maitreya] deliberated everywhere different supreme expedients and moderated to bring to spiritual maturity all living beings” (T.293, 832b, 28).

III-86 Maitreya addresses an Audience of Bodhisattvas

Maitreya is enthroned in a pavilion on the left side of the panel. He turns towards the right, where four Bodhisattvas are seated in a pillared hall (*pēndapa*). Sudhana and his retinue occupy the right side of the panel. They remain outside the hall. This relief may perhaps illustrate the last part of the sentence quoted under no.III-85.

III-87 Maitreya sets in Motion the Wheel of the Law (fig. 25)

Relief III-86 seems to mark the end of the illustrations of this passage in the text. The sculptors probably skipped the following passage, beginning with T.293, 832c, 26, because it was difficult to illustrate. Inside the *Kūtāgāra* of the Adornments of Vairocana Sudhana now sees another *kūtāgāra*, larger than all other buildings and inside this edifice appear hundreds of millions of continents, in each of which he sees how Maitreya was born, how he took the Seven Steps, etc. From this biography of Maitreya, which mirrors in every respect the Life of the Buddha, the sculptors have selected only a single sentence: “He saw how Brahmā requested Maitreya to turn the Wheel of the Law” (T.293, 833a, 6).

The preceding passage of the text never explicitly mentioned Maitreya by name. The sculptors of Borobudur obviously believed the text to mean that all of these pious and miraculous acts were performed by Maitreya. From here on, however, the text again states unequivocally the name of the chief protagonist. Maitreya, seated in his pavilion on the left side of the panel, solemnly raises both hands in *dharmacakra-mudrā*. His audience, consisting of six Bodhisattvas, is seated in a pillared hall. Sudhana and his retinue, again accompanied by an elephant, remain outside the hall.



25. Maitreya sets in motion the Wheel of the Law (III-87).

III-88 Maitreya and Sudhana

This narrow corner relief is the last relief of the main wall of the third gallery. Krom gives the following description: “Large and small trees surround the Bodhisattva, who is standing on the left side of the relief, his hands folded in *sēmbah* (i.e. *añjali*, J.F.), and turning towards the staircase leading to the fourth gallery. Perhaps this gesture of devotion is intended for what is represented at the beginning of that gallery. At the same time he draws the attention of the viewer to what is in store for him.”

At the time when Krom wrote these lines, he already realized—even without knowing the text—that the illustrations of the narrative continue not on the main wall of the fourth gallery, as one might perhaps have expected, but on the balustrade of the third gallery. The idea of representing a person in a pose or gesture pointing the viewer into a specific direction is not unknown in the early art of Central Java. By far the most elegant example is the relief on the base to the left of the staircase of Candi Mendut. There we see a flying figure, whose gracious gesture invites the viewer to mount the steps of the monument.

In this relief the gesture is not as emphatic. Maitreya steps forward, but looks and turns slightly sideways; his gaze is, therefore, directed not towards the stairway, but rather towards the balustrade, where the narrative continues. Several other Borobudur reliefs demonstrate that Javanese tradition permitted the use of the *añjali-mudrā*, to politely invite a person to be seated by pointing the folded hands in the direction of the chair (e.g. O-57a, Fontein 1989, 30). If the poses and gestures of the two chief protagonists are indeed intended to make the relief function as a directional sign, there may not be a direct connection between this relief and a text passage. As it may not have been immediately evident to the prospective pilgrims where the narrative continues, such a directional sign would seem to be an appropriate conclusion of this series of panels. In the last two reliefs of the third main wall (III-87 and III-88), the first showing Maitreya in *dharmacakra-mudrā*, and the second indicating the direction the pilgrim should take, the sculptors clearly demonstrate once more the care with which they integrated text, sculpture, and architecture of the monument.

THIRD GALLERY, BALUSTRADE

(IIIB-1—IIIB-88)

The reliefs of the third balustrade differ in several respects from those of the third main wall. The difference of the greatest artistic consequence is that the height of the space on the balustrade which is reserved for the reliefs is considerably less than that on the main wall. The height of the reliefs has been reduced from five to a little over three courses of stones. Consequently, the sculptors, who consistently avoided having a seam cut through the faces of their figures, were left with only two registers of stones to use for the heads of the figures. The upper row was reserved for the heads of all standing figures and those figures seated on high thrones, whereas the middle row is for those of most seated figures. In spite of these limitations of space the sculptors did not change their habit of populating the reliefs with many extras, who are usually not involved in the activities of the chief protagonists (Foucher 1909, 40-41). The result is that the reliefs sometimes look overcrowded. Some of the standing figures appear stocky and occasionally even stunted. The limited space also left little room for the sculptors to add such decorative details as fantastic buildings or luxurious wishing trees, which constitute such an attractive feature of the reliefs on the main walls. The prospective pilgrim, performing a *pradaksinā*, was now expected to view the panels of the balustrade on his left. Sudhana's place in the reliefs, almost always on the right in the reliefs of the third main wall, now switches to the left side of the panels of the balustrade.

Another feature that is typical of the reliefs of the balustrades of the third and fourth gallery is the treatment of the space separating the narrative reliefs. Instead of vertical floral scrolls and pilasters, which clearly demarcate the vertical borders of the narrative reliefs on the main walls, those of the third and fourth balustrade are separated by a recessed panel with a decorative relief, one layer of stones (approximately 7 in.) less than the narrative reliefs. These recessed panels expand to a width varying from 44 to 48 inches. All have the same type of decoration, which consists of three components. A tree, usually in the center of the panel, separates two groups of standing or sitting men. Those on the left side of the tree turn their heads towards the narrative relief on the left, while those on the right turn towards that on the right. The insertion of such reliefs has sometimes been omitted at the corners of the gallery.

These decorative panels have usually not been integrated into the overall design of the narrative reliefs. Sometimes, however, the seated or standing men of the decorative panels constitute a natural extension of the audience shown on the adjacent narrative reliefs. The men on these decorative panels have thus been made into spectators, who observe from a distance what little action takes place on the narrative reliefs, without ever participating in that action. They add, therefore, little to the content of the reliefs. The Javanese sculptors, asked to create such a repetitive pattern of images, never aimed for strict symmetry or uniformity. Almost always they managed to reduce the repetitive monotony by introducing subtle variations in the pose, dress, and hairdo of these spectators. That so much space was devoted to these inactive participants suggests that one of the reasons for which these decorative reliefs have been created is to fill the vast space that had been set aside for the illustrations of Sudhana's visit to Maitreya.

Krom gives the following description of the composition of the majority of the narrative reliefs of the third balustrade: “In their composition these reliefs reveal a remarkable resemblance. The right side of the relief is where the action of each scene takes place, each time different depending on the events which are being illustrated. The left side of the relief, on the other hand, is always of the same type. To the extreme left we find a person, dressed in the attire of the elite (Sudhana J.F.). He is usually provided with a halo and is surrounded by his retinue. Towards the center of the panel we see Maitreya, sometimes followed by a retinue of his own” (Krom 1920, 561).

Commenting on the first series of reliefs of the third balustrade (IIIB-3-IIIB-27) Krom continues: “As to the persons represented on the right side, there, too, the series shows a great similarity. In brief, this similarity in the appearance of the great majority of the reliefs is the result of the presence of a number of male figures in identical dress. There are six, sometimes five, occasionally even more persons. They look different on each relief; sometimes they have a halo, sometimes not. To sum up, there are all kinds of variations, and we should not assume, and we even consider it unlikely, that they represent the same persons” (Krom 1920, 566-567).

After quoting this passage from Krom, Bosch adds: “As to the figures on the right side, we notice a difference between those on the bas-reliefs nos. 3-15 and those on nos. 16-27. Those of the first series are standing or sitting in a respectful pose, their hands folded in *añjali-mudrā* or resting in their lap. Only one person on no. 7 and two on no. 8 and no. 9 carry books in their hands. Beginning with no. 16 a change occurs. The members of the groups on the right now ostentatiously carry various types of objects” (Bosch 1929, 209).

In the texts now follows a series of apparitions reflected in mirrors. Sudhana sees reflections of assemblies of Tathāgatas, Bodhisattvas, *śrāvakas*, and Pratyeka Buddhas, followed by a series of reflections of different Buddha worlds. In these worlds he sees “countless Great Bodhisattvas, who walk or sit, conducting various activities; some practice meditation, others practice wisdom; some evoke great compassion, having pity on all living beings, others compose *śāstras* for the benefit of the world; some teach their disciples, others study and uphold [the teachings]; some write, others recite, some ask questions, others respond” (T.293, 833b, 25-29; T.278, 781c; T. 279, 436b).

This brief passage seems to have provided the inspiration for the reliefs IIIB-3 through IIIB-15. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that on three consecutive reliefs (IIIB-7-9) the objects which some of these persons hold in their hands are books. This definitely matches with the passage quoted above, even though we do not always know which relief illustrates exactly which word(s). The texts clearly state that all of these persons are Great Bodhisattvas, but the sculptors have nevertheless rendered many of them as persons who are, to judge by their dress and hair style, definitely of lesser social or spiritual standing.

IIIB-1 Unidentified

Bosch does not discuss this relief; he seems to have inadvertently skipped it. Krom, on the other hand, pays close attention to it without succeeding in identifying the scene. He gives the following description: “On the extreme left stands Maitreya, accompanied by an attendant holding up his parasol. Maitreya appears not to be an active participant, for the three women who are seated in a pavilion in the center of the relief turn their backs towards him

and pay only attention to a Brahman (?) on the right, who turns around to look at them. He stands underneath a tree, laden with fruit, carrying a stick. He is accompanied by a bull. After a second fruit tree the right side of the panel shows a member of the elite, accompanied by two attendants. He kneels in front of another Brahman, seated underneath a lean-to roof, and gestures towards the scene underneath the fruit tree. The lower left and upper right of the relief are missing”. Elsewhere Krom (1920, 565) wonders whether this scene could have any connection with the following series of panels. This still remains unclear, for the available texts and translations do not seem to offer a clue to the meaning of this scene.

The entire passage of the *Gandavyūha* quoted on p.104 is preceded in all texts by the sentences which have been illustrated earlier on relief III-50. It is quite possible, therefore, that a paragraph was transposed in the Borobudur text, creating an additional obstacle for the identification of this relief.

IIIB-2 Unidentified

Since Krom wrote his *Archaeologische Beschrijving* [Archaeological Description], in which he listed this corner relief as missing, part of it has been reconstructed. The left side now shows four seated and one standing figure, the side around the corner shows two seated and five standing figures meeting with a seated Brahman. It is unclear whether this relief is a continuation of the preceding panel, as the presence of the Brahman on both reliefs suggests, or the beginning of the new series of reliefs, extending from IIIB-3 to IIIB-27.

IIIB-3 Walking Bodhisattvas

Here we are, once again, on firmer ground. The right side of the relief shows a procession of eight men, walking towards the right, obviously illustrating the words: “countless Bodhisattvas who walk” (T.293, 833b, 26).

IIIB-4 Seated Bodhisattvas

On the right side of the relief are shown seven men, sitting with their hands resting in their lap. They illustrate the “countless Bodhisattvas who are seated” (T.293, 833b, 26).

IIIB-5 A Bodhisattva “Practicing Wisdom”

The relief shows five men, seated in an open hall, in conversation with their teacher, who is obviously practicing wisdom (T.293, 833b, 26-27).

IIIB-6 A Bodhisattva “Practicing Meditation”

Five men are seated in a pillared and festooned hall. They look at a sixth man, who is deeply immersed in meditation (T.293, 833b, 26).

IIIB-7 A Bodhisattva “Practicing Compassion”

A distribution of gifts of the type shown here is one of the ways the sculptors of Borobudur illustrate words like “benevolence”, “compassion” and “for the benefit of mankind” (T.293, 833b, 27).

IIIB-8 A Bodhisattva “acts as a Teacher”

A teacher instructs three disciples who are holding books. The teacher’s own textbook has been placed on a stand in front of him (T.293, 833b, 28).

IIIB-9 A Bodhisattva “recites a Holy Scripture”

Five persons are sitting in a pillared hall, or *pěndapa*, two of them holding books. The stand in front of the teacher suggests that he is either teaching or reciting (T.293, 833b, 28].

IIIB-10 Missing**IIIB-11** A Heavily Damaged Relief (Unidentified)**IIIB-12** Conversation of a Teacher with Five Pupils

This relief probably illustrates the phrase “asking questions, providing answers” of the text (T.293, 833b, 28-29). For the following three reliefs the texts do not offer a satisfactory explanation.

IIIB-13 Maitreya Worshipped by Seven Men

Seven men, seated on the right side of the relief, their hands folded in *añjali*, respectfully greet Maitreya.

IIIB-14 Maitreya Worshipped by Seven Bodhisattvas

Seven haloed men in royal attire are seated inside a festooned *pēndapa*, surrounded by a fence decorated with flowers. As always in this series, Maitreya is standing in the center of the panel. The man closest to him folds his hands in *añjali*.

IIIB-15 Maitreya receives Four Men

Against the backdrop of a forest of banana trees four men are seated facing Maitreya. They wear the broad sashes of the elite, but their hairstyle suggests a subordinate status.

After describing the reflections of these miraculous scenes in the mirrors the text now mentions their colors. Obviously unable to represent colors, the sculptors elected to skip this section. Then follow the apparitions of other “countless” Bodhisattvas. This time each one of them carries a different object: “And then he [Sudhana] saw statues of girls made of gold from the Jambū River and statues made of jewels; some were holding reflections of flowers, others reflections of clothes; some holding standards and banners, others garlands and canopies; some holding all sorts of fragrant unguents and incense powders, others nets of magnificent *mani* jewels; some holding chains of gold, others necklaces of gems; some raised their arms to hold up ornaments, others bent their heads lowering their jeweled crowns” (T.293, 833c, 4-7).

The key to the meaning of the reliefs IIIB-16 through IIIB-27 is provided by the objects carried in the hands of the persons on the right side of each panel. The passage illustrated in these reliefs occurs, with minor variations, in the Parisian Sanskrit mss. (Bosch 1929, 208), in T.279, 436c, 4-9 and T.293, 833c, 3, but is lacking in T. 278. The principal difference between the Sanskrit texts and the Chinese translations is that in the latter the objects are held by statues, whereas in the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts they are all carried by Bodhisattvas. As we have seen elsewhere on the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries of Borobudur, the sculptors did not succeed in capturing the differences between living beings and statues portraying them.

IIIB-16 Six Figures Holding Jars

Bosch believed the jars to be money bags, but neither money bags nor jars are mentioned in any of the texts. It is possible that the jars held by the figures on the right contain the “fragrant unguents” mentioned in the text.

IIIB-17 Six Figures Holding Flowers

The Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts mention flowers. T. 279 and T. 293 give “clouds of flowers”.

IIIB-18 Standing Figures Holding Stems of Flowers

The right side of the relief has suffered considerable damage, but one of the figures can be seen holding the stem of a flower.

IIIB-19 Six Standing Figures Holding Ribbons (?)

This relief deviates from the typical compositional formula of the series in that the two sides are separated by a Heavenly Tree [*kalpavrkṣa*] underneath which moneybags have been placed, guarded by two *kinnaras*. A heavenly tree and its avian guardians usually indicate that the scene is laid in heaven. Krom identified the objects carried by the persons on the right as ribbons. The closest correspondence is with the “clouds (i.e. reflections) of garments”, mentioned in T. 279 and T. 293.

IIIB-20 Eight Figures Seated under Parasols

The Parisian manuscripts, T. 279, and T. 293 all mention “parasols”, or “garlands and parasols.”

IIIB-21 Five Figures Holding Stems with Flowers and Jewels

The texts mention a variety of jewels, but it is unclear which type of jewelry has been represented here.

IIIB-22 A Crowned Figure pays Homage to Maitreya

To the right of Maitreya, seated on a lotus throne, are three seated figures carrying flowers on trident-shaped stems. The man in front is wearing an elaborate crown. This may be a reference to a passage contained in all texts: “They lowered their *mani*-crowned heads, their hands folded in *añjali*.”

IIIB-23 Five Figures Holding Bells

Krom identifies the objects held in the hands of the five persons on the right as “prayer bells”. None of the available texts makes mention of such objects. Although the other bells are no longer clearly visible, the first of the seated figures definitely holds up a bell.

IIIB-24 Figures Holding Incense Burners

Of the four seated figures two hold incense burners, obviously the “incense” mentioned in all consulted texts.

IIIB-25 Nine Seated Figures Wearing Jewelry

This relief and the two following panels all show people displaying jewelry. The texts mention at least three different types of jewelry. The sculptors obviously followed a text quite similar to that of the transmitted versions. However, as the sculptors were unable to create a distinction between precious metals, pearls, and precious stones, it is not possible to specify which relief represents which type of jewelry. On this relief the men in royal attire appear to wear a string of jewels as a sacred thread.

IIIB-26 Seven Standing Figures Holding Strings of Jewelry or Pearls**IIIB-27** Seven Seated Figures Holding Strings of Jewelry or Pearls

After these apparitions the text continues: “Then he [Sudhana] saw in these lotus ponds *utpala*, *padma*, *kumuda*, and *pundarika* lotuses, each one of them producing countless flowers, some as large as a hand, some as long as a thumb, and some as large as the wheel of a chariot. In each of these flowers all kinds of colorful images appeared which served as their decoration. Images of men, images of women, images of boys, images of girls, of Śakra, Brahmā, the Four Lokapālas, Gods, *nāgas* and *yaksas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garudas*, *kinnaras*, *mahoragas*, *śrāvakas*, Pratyeka Buddhas, and all Bodhisattvas, marvelous colorful images in the shape of all living beings, all folding their hands in *añjali* and bowing respectfully. He also saw Tathāgatas seated cross-legged, the thirty-three physical marks (*lakṣanas*) adorning their bodies” (T. 293, 833c, 12-20).

This is one of the rare instances where all consulted versions of the texts, with the sole exception of Buddhahadra’s Chinese translation (T. 278), seem to be in almost perfect accordance with the text that guided the sculptors of Borobudur. The few remaining uncertainties are merely the result of badly damaged or missing reliefs. Some of those have been partially reconstructed since Krom first recorded their absence. In one instance just enough stones of the relief have been reassembled to permit a tentative identification. It thus becomes evident that only the few lines of text that I have translated in the preceding paragraph provided the illustrative material for no less than twenty consecutive reliefs (IIIB-31—IIIB-50).

IIIB-28-32 Fragmentary or Missing Reliefs

The long series of reliefs illustrating the passage quoted above probably started with the four missing reliefs IIIB-28 through 32, on one of which the men, mentioned at the beginning of the long list of images, must have been represented. IIIB-33 is now the first of this series and



26. Images of Śakra and Airāvata appear in a lotus pond (IIB-35).

sets the compositional formula for the entire sequence. The right side of each relief shows a lotus pond with the ripples in the water of the pond sometimes indicated. From each pond rise two, three or four large lotuses on which the reflections of the various figures make their appearance. Maitreya is shown in the center or on the left side of each relief. Behind him on the extreme left is Sudhana.

IIB-33 Images of Women

Three women (and not one woman and two men, as Krom maintained) are seated on lotuses rising from the pond. Maitreya, usually seen standing in this series of reliefs, is here shown seated in a pavilion.

IIB-34 Images of Boys

The relief shows four boys, recognizable by their crescent-shaped attributes and the crossed sacred threads traditionally worn by boys. They are standing on the lotuses, separated from Maitreya on the left by another large lotus, which rises from the water to the top of the relief.

IIB-35 Images of Śakra and Airāvata (fig. 26)

Śakra and the trunk-hooded Airāvata with his elephant goad [*ankusa*] emerge from among the lotuses in the pond.

IIIB-36 Images of the Four *Lokapālas*

Brahmā, mentioned in the texts, seems to have been skipped in favor of the Four *Lokapālas*. Without having the text to provide us with a clue, we would never have guessed that these four seated figures represent the *Lokapālas*, for they carry no recognizable attributes. This undifferentiated representation of the *Lokapālas* without any of their usual attributes appears to be typical for Borobudur (Cf. III-60 and III-72).

IIIB-37 Images of *Devas*

The three heavenly beings are not shown seated, but flying across the lotus pond.

IIIB-38 Images of *Nāgas*

Three seated *nāgas*. As always on Borobudur, the *nāgas* are represented as humans wearing a hood of multiple-headed snakes.

IIIB-39 Images of *Yaksas*

The four bloodthirsty demons are shown with the usual curly hairdo. In recognition of the elevated spiritual level of the miracles of the *kūtāgāra* the demons seem to have now discarded their swords, holding a more benign offering of flowers instead.

IIIB-40 Images of *Gandharvas*

Six or seven heavenly musicians (*gandharvas*) perform music seated on their lotuses. .

IIIB-41 Images of *Asuras*

The relief, in badly damaged condition, shows three bearded figures with the curly hairdo of demons, seated on the lotuses: undoubtedly the *asuras* of the text.

IIIB-42 Images of *Garudas*

When van Erp reconstructed this damaged section of the balustrade, he installed the fragmentarily preserved relief representing the *kinnaras* as “no. 42 [?]”. The rare instance of the close correspondence between text and image justified restoring the order indicated in the text. The three *garudas* have now been installed as no.42 in the place of the *kinnaras*.

IIIB-43 Images of *Kinnaras* and a *Kinnarī*

The damaged relief shows three *kinnaras* and one (female) *kinnarī*.

IIIB-44 Missing (Originally: Images of *Mahoragas*?)

The relief is missing, but Bosch reported that a large fragment of the body of a snake, presumably of a *mahoraga*, was originally lying on the balustrade. It is no longer there.

IIIB-45 Missing**IIIB-46** Images of *Śrāvakas*

Separated from Maitreya by a rain of flowers are seated two monks and three laymen. The texts indicate that *śrāvakas* should be illustrated here.

IIIB-47 Images of Pratyeka Buddhas

Of three Buddhas, seen en face, the one in the middle raises his right hand in *vitarka-mudrā*, whereas the Buddhas flanking him hold their hands in their laps in *dhyāna-mudrā*. While the sculptors seem to have drawn no distinction between Buddhas and Pratyeka Buddhas, it is somewhat surprising to see a Pratyeka Buddha raising his right hand in *vitarka-mudrā*. One of the defining characteristics of Pratyeka Buddhas is that they do not share their wisdom with others.

IIIB-48 Partially Missing Relief (Unidentified)

Since Krom recorded this relief as missing nine of its stones have been reassembled, but as almost the entire right half of the relief is still missing, the recovered stones do not enable us to identify the scene.

IIIB-49 Unidentified

This is the only complete relief of this series for which the available texts do not seem to offer an adequate explanation. It represents five crowned figures, and one would think, therefore, that they represent Bodhisattvas. What argues against this supposition is that the Bodhisattvas have already been shown on IIIB-54. Also, one of the figures in this relief, the second from the right, appears to be a *nāga*. The apparition of *nāgas* has already been shown on IIIB-38. A possible explanation is that one of the few remaining items in this list of apparitions on lotus flowers in the text that have not yet been illustrated is: “And a host of similar images like this.”

IIIB-50 Images of the Tathāgatas

This relief represents the Tathāgatas, displaying the thirty-two *lakṣanas*. Bosch, translating from the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts, makes them sit on palanquins, but I suppose that this is a mistranslation, perhaps caused by the poor condition of this part of the Parisian manuscripts. The three Chinese translations make no mention of palanquins.

The apparitions now continue, but at a different venue: “He also saw on that lapis lazuli floor of the *kūtāgāra* in all directions all kinds of inconceivable material images of worlds, of Bodhisattvas, of Tathāgatas and the ornaments of all *kūtāgāras*. He also saw reflected in each of the jewelled trees, leaves, branches, flowers and fruits all sorts of material images of busts of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, *devas*, *nāgas*, *yaksas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garudas*, *kinnaras*, *mahoragas*, Śakra, Brahmā, the Lokapālas, a Cakravartin, lesser kings and princes, chief ministers and officials, householders and devotees, boys and girls, and four kinds of other busts in all colors. Some held flowers and garlands, others held necklaces or all kinds of other ornaments, some bowed their heads, their hands folded in *añjali*, all of one mind looking up steadily in reverence. Some were chanting praise, others entered *samādhi*” (T. 293, 833c, 20—834a, 1). This list of images and busts is followed by a passage describing their various colors.

The passage quoted above suggests an unexpected change of venue. In all the texts available to us, the long list of apparitions continues, but this time these are material images. They do no longer appear as reflections on lotuses, as before, but instead are now being reflected in the lapis lazuli floor of the *kūtāgāra* and in the jewelled trees rising from it. At Borobudur, however, the sculptors do not seem to have noticed this change of scene, for on the right side of each relief the apparitions on the lotuses continue without interruption. The most likely explanation for this discrepancy is that the text that guided the sculptors of Borobudur must have lacked the brief introductory sentence, quoted above, in which this new series of reflections in the floor are mentioned. (For a discussion of jewels, visions, and reflections in the *Gandavyūha* see Granoff 1998)

If this short sentence was indeed lacking in the Borobudur manuscript, this could also account for another minor discrepancy between text and image. In the texts many of the previous apparitions of all sorts of beings are now repeated, albeit this time not as reflections, but as material images and as busts. The sculptors seem to have ignored the change of venue of the miracles as well as the change from full-length figures to half-length busts. They also disregarded most of the repetitive examples of apparitions. Skipping them would seem to be at variance with their at this point well-established practice of the word-for-word conversion of text into stone images that is characteristic of most reliefs of the third gallery. Here skipping makes perfect sense only if, according to the text that guided the sculptors, the images were supposed to continue to appear on the lotuses in the pond. For only in that case could the repetition of the apparitions have been considered to be truly redundant.

For even more obvious reasons the passage, which described the colors of the apparitions, was also skipped by the sculptors, as had been their previous practice. For one of the aspects the sculptors were, of course, unable to express in their reliefs was color. The text now continues: “He also saw reflected in all of the crescents of the *kūtāgāra* the radiance of countless suns, moons, stars, and constellations illuminating the Ten Directions. He also saw all of the marvelous *kūtāgāras* and palaces, their four walls covered with all kinds of jewels, at every step, all decorated with precious objects” (T.293, 834a, 6).

Although most of the reliefs in the series that now follows can be matched with passages in the *Gandavyūha*, the sequence in which these various apparitions are illustrated in the reliefs differs considerably from that adopted in the transmitted texts.

IIIB-51 The Sun and Two Moons

A sun and two crescent moons rise on lotuses emerging from the pond.

IIIB-52 The Stars

On the right side of the relief five women are seated on lotuses. The two figures on the right and left hold stems of flowers upon which rest round objects: the stars. The women represent Tārās, the goddesses associated with the stars.

IIIB-53 The Constellations (*naksatras*)

From the lotus pond rise five lotus flowers carrying round objects. Above these flowers float two rows of clouds also carrying round objects. The clouds are connected by garlands. It was this last feature that prompted Bosch to identify this scene as a possible representation of the constellations.

IIIB-54 The Bodhisattvas

Four persons in royal attire, most probably the Bodhisattvas, are seated on lotuses.

IIIB-55 The Tathāgatas

Three Buddhas are seated on lotus flowers emerging from the pond.

IIIB-56 Unidentified

The few remaining stones of this heavily damaged relief show just enough of the bottom of the lotus pond to prove that the series of apparitions on lotuses continued here, but the identity of the figures appearing on the lotuses cannot be established.

IIIB-57 Missing

Only fragments of this relief have been preserved. The description given by Krom under no.IIIB- 57 is actually that of the fragmentary relief that is now numbered IIIB-56.

IIIB-58 The Universal Monarch (Cakravartin)

This relief shows that, far from skipping the entire second sequence of apparitions, the sculptors chose to leave out only what may be called exact duplications. After showing the Bodhisattvas and the Tathāgatas, the Cakravartin, absent from the first sequence of apparitions, now makes his appearance. He is shown with his four traditional Javanese regalia, the elephant, the horse, the jewel and the wheel.

IIIB-59 Unidentified (The Lesser Kings?)

The “lesser kings and princes” of the text, following immediately after the Cakravartin, could have been represented here. Although a few more stones of this poorly preserved relief have been found since van Erp photographed and Krom described it, these new additions still do not yield a definite clue to the identification of the scene.

IIIB-60 Boys Seated on Lotus Flowers

Three boys are seated cross-legged on lotuses, their hands folded in their lap. All three wear the crossed sacred threads of boys. The boy on the right shows the customary crescent shaped ornaments behind the head.

IIIB-61 A Master of the Guild (*Śresthin*)

The Parisian texts make the next apparition that of a *śresthin*, a banker or master of a guild. Like elsewhere on Borobudur, this member of the elite is virtually indistinguishable from the *grhapati* or householder on the next relief.

IIIB-62 A Householder (*Grhapati*)**IIIB-63** Three Boys

The three boys can be identified by their crossed sacred threads. If the three boys on IIIB-60 represent the *kumāras*, these three boys probably represent the *dāraḥas* of the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts. Perhaps the sentence “some entered into *samādhi*” (T. 293, 834a, 1) may have prompted the sculptors to represent these boys in *dhyāna-mudrā*.

IIIB-64 A Jewelled Tree (*Ratnavrksa*)

This scene, dominated by a large tree of striking appearance, proves that the jewelled trees rising from the precious lapis lazuli grounds were mentioned in the Borobudur text, as they are in T.293, 833c, 23.

We have previously seen that in the reliefs illustrating the *Karmavibhanga* the *kalpavrksa* with its moneybags and avian guardians stand for Heaven, as is indicated by several inscriptions. That we are not in Heaven here, but definitely earthbound, and that *ratnavrksa*, the name used in the Sanskrit texts, are trees of a different species is suggested by the fact that here the money bags are not guarded by *kinnaras*, but by two men carrying swords.

IIIB-65 Four Children

On the right side four boys, wearing the crossed children's sacred thread, stand on top of lotuses rising from the pond. Even if we make allowances for the frequent repetitions and redundancies in the text, the supply of boys has now definitely been exhausted, leaving this relief unmatched by a passage in the text as we know it.

IIIB-66 Unidentified

The right upper part of the relief that could have yielded the clue to the identity of the figures of this apparition is missing.

IIIB-67 A Palace or *Kūtāgāra*

The right side of this two-fold corner relief shows three figures making offerings to a building resembling a *candī* while flowers rain from the sky.

IIIB-68 Fragmentary Relief

Of the two-fold corner relief IIIB-68 only a headless figure, seated on a lotus, has been preserved. The fragmentary state of the relief does not permit a definite identification.

IIIB-69-70 Missing

The long list of apparitions in the lotus pond and reflections in the jeweled pavement has now finally come to an end. However, without interruption a new series of miraculous visions begins to unfold: "In each and everyone of these jewels he [Sudhana] saw how in aeons past Maitreya had practiced the Conduct of the Bodhisattva; giving away his head and eyes; his hands and feet; his lips and tongue; his teeth, ears and nose; his blood and flesh; his skin, his bones and marrow and even his nails and hair. All this he was able to give away: his wife and concubines; men and women; slave girls and men servants; his singing and dancing girls; his entire household; cities, markets and hamlets; palaces and parks; Jambudvīpa and the Four Continents; riches and delights of all sorts; honors and titles; large and small royal seats; all kinds of property; food and drink, according to the season; marvelous couches and resting

places; marvelous precious objects and horse carriages. According to everyone's needs he donated it all" (T.293, 834a, 10-18).

The passage quoted above has been translated from T. 293 as it presents, once again, by far the most elaborate version of this passage in any of the three Chinese translations. T. 279 gives an abbreviated version, while T. 278 entirely omits the passage in which Maitreya gives away parts of his body. The version in the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts, especially in the manuscript designated as ms. B, mentions several additional gifts, most of which have been illustrated in the reliefs. The entire passage has provided the inspiration for a long sequence of 35 reliefs from IIIB-71 to IVB-17.

Without knowing the text which these reliefs illustrate, Krom had already accurately guessed their meaning: a long series of reliefs in which the gestures and body language of the protagonists clearly suggest the presentation of gifts. The identity of the recipients of these gifts is not mentioned in the text. Bosch suggested that the inclusion of Śakra as one of the frequent recipients may have been the result of the sculptors' familiarity with the *jātakas* in which Śakra appears as *deus ex machina*, after having tested to the limit the resolve of King Śibi to give away parts of his body. However, left without specific guidance by the text, the sculptors may have simply made their own selection of such obviously worthy beneficiaries of Maitreya's boundless generosity as Śakra, Brahmans, holy men, and monks

The sculptors faced no easy task when they were commissioned to illustrate in a meaningful and recognizable manner the passage dealing with Maitreya's *dāna-pāramitā* or *Mahātīdāna*, the ultimate generosity in which the donor gives away parts of his own body. (Schoterman and Teeuw 1985, 206). This is the same type of generosity as was practiced by the future Buddha Śākyamuni in his rebirths as King Śibi, as told in the *jātakas*. Although on several reliefs it remains unclear exactly which part of the body is being given away, enough of these scenes can be identified with certainty to demonstrate that the sculptors must have been guided by a text which closely resembled the transmitted versions.

IIIB-71 Maitreya donates his Head (fig. 27)

This relief, the opening scene of the new series, definitely illustrates the donation of Maitreya's head. On the right side of the relief is Maitreya. Next to him we see a seated figure, obviously the prospective donor, i.e. Maitreya in a previous rebirth. He touches his head with his left hand while the first of two Brahmans sitting opposite him holds up his right hand to receive the gift. As we have seen in the relief illustrating Sudhana's visit to King Anala (II-35), one person covering his eyes and another grasping his upper arm illustrate the gruesome, but illusory scene, created by King Anala, in which the victim's eyes are gauged out and their arms cut off. In other Borobudur reliefs, the sculptors represented pain or discomfort by having the victims touch the part of the body affected by the pain. For example, in O-119 persons suffering from halitosis (the karmic retribution for having slandered other persons in a previous life) cover their mouths. Here, the touching of the head clearly, but discreetly suggests that it is about to be given away.

In this relief the sculptor has exerted himself to open this series with a scene that could easily be understood by the prospective viewer. By seating the two Maitreyas, one in the present and the other in a previous rebirth, on similar pedestals, and by having them share the parasol



27. Maitreya donates his head (IIB-71).

standing between them, exactly in the middle, the karmic bond between these two figures has been established in a visually convincing manner.

We have seen how the scene of Anala's imaginary cruelty (II-35) included the figure of an armed *yaksa*, a notoriously bloodthirsty demon, as a clear sign that a gruesome act was about to be committed. IIB-80 shows four *yaksas*, suggesting that the representation of donations of bodily parts continues at least until that relief.

IIB-72 Maitreya donates Part of his Body (Continued)

The recipient of an unidentified oblong object, presumably a part of the body (perhaps an arm?), is a Brahman. Maitreya, seated on a throne in the center of the relief, appropriately displays the boon-granting *vara-mudrā*.

IIB-73 Maitreya donates Part of his Body (Continued)

In this corner relief the recipient of the unidentifiable gift is Śakra, as is indicated by the presence of his elephant-hooded attendant Airāvata, shown here with elephant ears.

IIB-74 Maitreya donates Part of his Body (Continued)

On the left is the person making the donation (Maitreya in a former rebirth) to a bearded Brahman, or, perhaps a *rsi*, or hermit. He seems to hold an object resembling a shaving brush (according to Krom) against his face. This suggests that a part of the face is being given away, but we are left in the dark as to which of the several parts of the body that are mentioned in the text is being donated here.

IIIB-75 Maitreya donates Part of his Body (Continued)

This time the donor holds his left hand against his mouth and hands a small tray to its distinguished recipient. An elephant goad behind the recipient suggests that Śakra and Airāvata have, yet once more, become the beneficiaries of Maitreya's munificence, but the damage to the relief does not permit us to identify Airāvata with certainty. The gesture made by the donor suggests that the gift consists of the donor's teeth or tongue, both of which are mentioned as donations in the text.

IIIB-76 Maitreya donates Part of his Body (Continued)

Just as in the preceding relief, the donor, whose head has suffered considerable damage, offers a small tray, this time to a group of four Brahmans. His left hand rests upon his leg, but it is not clear whether the sculptor intended to illustrate here the donation of a leg, as mentioned in the text.

IIIB-77 Maitreya donates Part of his Body (Continued)

Once again a gift is placed in a small receptacle, this time offered to four hermits. The foremost of the prospective recipients holds up both hands to receive the gift.

IIIB-78 Right Half of Relief missing (Unidentified)**IIIB-79** Maitreya donates Part of his Body (Continued)

Although the relief suffered considerable damage and part of it is missing, enough remains of the lower rows of stones to indicate that another gift, placed in a receptacle, is being made to three kneeling persons.

IIIB-80 Maitreya and Four *Yaksas*

Maitreya is seated in a meditative pose, surrounded by four *yaksas*. There is no donation to be seen on this relief, but the presence of the bloodthirsty *yaksas* probably serves as a reminder to the viewer that the donations of parts of the body continue.

IIIB-81 Maitreya donates Part of his Body (Continued)

In this and the following relief the donations of small body parts continue. They are presented in small containers of varying shapes. The texts enumerate a sufficient number of donations of small-size bodily parts to warrant the supposition that the illustrations of this type of donations still continues on III-81 and III-82.

IIIB-82 Maitreya donates Part of his Body (Continued)

In this two-fold corner relief an oblong receptacle, presumably containing some unidentified parts of the body, is handed over to a Brahman, who is seated on a low rattan seat.

IIIB-83 Maitreya makes a Gift

This time the compositional formula differs somewhat from that of the preceding reliefs. The donor is now shown kneeling next to the recipient, a seated person of divine or royal status, to whom he presents a gift.

IIIB-84 Maitreya makes a Gift of a Boy

With this relief the series of donations of Maitreya's bodily parts has definitely come to an end. The Chinese translations offer no clue to this scene, unless we take this relief and the following to illustrate the gifts of a man and a woman. The Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts, on the other hand, list as the first gift of this new series "son and daughter." The small size of the figure and the presence of the two crescents behind his head—the usual Central Javanese attribute of a youthful person—identify this figure as a young boy, perhaps the "son" mentioned in the Sanskrit texts. He is being presented to a Brahman seated on a low rattan seat.

IIIB-85 Maitreya makes a Gift of a Young Woman

The second gift of a member of the household, as mentioned in the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts, is the gift of a young woman, the "daughter" of the texts. She is being presented to Śakra, who is accompanied by his elephant-hooded attendant Airāvata.

IIIB-86 Maitreya makes a Gift of Jewels (?)

After the "son and daughter", the Parisian manuscripts give "a housewife" and, then, "an accumulation of jewels". These jewels may well be the gift distributed here among the five recipients on the right side of the relief.

IIIB-87ab Maitreya makes a Gift of a Beautiful City (?)

Of this two-fold corner relief several stones of the middle level are missing. Of the house on 87a only the lower part remains. It shows several small figures, probably not children, as has sometimes been presumed, but adults, reduced to a size proportionate to the dimensions of the building. It would seem that some sort of building is being offered as a gift. Bosch (1929, 214) connects this relief with the word "rāmanagara", or "beautiful city", in one of the Parisian manuscripts. However, on 87b the figure kneeling in front of the Brahman, who acts as the

recipient of the donation, folds both hands in his lap, a gesture that is inconsistent with the act of giving or receiving a gift.

IIIB-88ab Śakra accepts Maitreya's Gift of a Palace

At Borobudur a building surrounded by a palisade, as shown in this relief, invariably represents a palace. T. 293 mentions “palaces and parks”, while the Parisian manuscripts mentions a royal residence (*rājadhānī*). The donor makes a gesture in the direction of the building. The recipient of this gift is, once again, Śakra. However, this time his trusted attendant is not shown in the relief itself, but, by way of exception, as the third person from the left in the adjacent decorative panel.

FOURTH GALLERY, BALUSTRADE

(IVB-1—IVB-84)

One would perhaps have expected the illustrations of the *Gandavyūha* to continue on the main wall of the fourth gallery, but instead the story shifts without interruption from the third to the fourth balustrade.

IVB-1 Maitreya makes a Gift of Jambudvīpa and the Four Continents

The Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts mention a “gift of the rule over all kingdoms”, a possible equivalent of the “Jambudvīpa and the Four Continents” of T. 293. The representation of a *Cakravartin*, or Universal Monarch, identified by his usual regalia, is an appropriate illustration of this passage in the text.

IVB-2 Maitreya makes a Gift of a Throne

Three monks accept the gift of a royal throne, illustrating the *bhadrarājāsana* of the Parisian manuscripts.

IVB-3 Maitreya makes a Gift of a Woman

Almost all of the now following gifts shown in the reliefs can be associated with those mentioned in the texts. However, the exact order in which the various gifts made by Maitreya are mentioned in them often deviates from that of the gifts that are actually shown in the reliefs. Earlier in this enumeration “wife and concubines” were mentioned as gifts. This relief represents one of the several women given away by Maitreya. Śakra is, once again, the recipient. Whether this woman represents a wife, a concubine, or a dancing girl, the gift is obviously gratefully received by Śakra, accompanied by his attendant Airāvata.

IVB-4 Maitreya makes a Gift of a Women’s Residence

The Parisian manuscripts make mention of the gift of an *antahpura* or women’s quarters. The building, surrounded by a palisade, is being ceremoniously offered by the donor, who, with folded hands, turns towards the building. Almost exactly the same gesture and pose can be seen in O-57, where the gesture illustrates the words: “to respectfully welcome one’s elders and invite them to be seated. (For the use of the *añjali-mudrā* as a polite directional gesture see also III-88).

IVB-5 Maitreya makes a Gift of Parasols

Towards the end of the long list of Maitreya's generous donations the Parisian manuscripts add several gifts that are not mentioned in any of the Chinese translations. The Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts list "parasols, standards, and banners, garlands of flowers, incense and ointments". The six parasols in the background of this presentation scene suggest that the first of the final list of donations, the *chattrapradāna*, has been illustrated here. The recipients of the parasols are three holy men, respectfully greeted by the donor with a *pranāma*.

IVB-6&7 Maitreya makes a Gift of Standards to a *Stūpa*

One would have expected this two-fold corner relief to represent the donation of a *stūpa*, the most conspicuous object in the relief. Instead it is the group of standards in the background behind the *stūpa* which offer the clue to the meaning of this relief: the "donation of standards" (*dhvajapradāna*) of the texts.

IVB-8 Maitreya makes a Gift of Banners

The banners carried by the attendant and the donor indicate that the donation of banners (*patākāpradāna*) has been illustrated here. Three monks are the recipients of this donation. On the adjacent decorative panel three more monks are shown with a banner.

IVB-9 Maitreya makes a Gift of Garlands

Only one manuscript of the Bibliothèque Nationale adds "garlands, incense, and ointments" to the list of donations. In this relief the donor distributes garlands to a group of six recipients, seated in an open pavilion. Behind him sits an attendant holding a small box. Bosch speculated that it may contain the ointments which are also mentioned in the text.

IVB-10 Maitreya offers Food to Three Brahmins

The "food and drink", mentioned towards the end of the enumeration in T. 293 and in one manuscript in Paris is illustrated in several consecutive reliefs. Here the donor, armed with a plate and spoon, offers food to three Brahmins.

IVB-11 Maitreya offers Food to Four Beggars

The Brahmins of the preceding relief were ceremoniously seated in an open *peṇḍapa* with curtains, but the four down-and-out beggars, who are being fed here, are clad only in a loin cloth and have been denied the protection from the sun enjoyed by the obviously more worthy

recipients of the preceding panel. The repetition of the distribution of food may perhaps result from such words as the added phrase in T. 293: “according to the season”.

IVB-12 Maitreya offers a Beverage to the Thirsty (?)

The *Gandavyūha* and the *Karmavibhanga* always mention food and beverage in the same breath. The sculptors of the Borobudur reliefs usually follow the same rule that there can be no food without drink or vice versa. This corner relief has suffered much damage, especially in the section where the generous donor and the recipients of his largesse were portrayed. We can only assume that the various vessels, held by the attendants of the donor, and the covered bowls held by the recipients, are meant to serve as containers for some kind of beverage.

IVB-13 Damaged Relief (Unidentified)

This relief, listed by Krom as missing, has been partially reconstructed since Krom wrote his monograph. Although still fragmentary, enough of the panel has been pieced together again to permit the tentative conclusion that the distribution of food continued on this relief.

IVB-14 Maitreya makes a Gift of a Granary

The building stands on tall pillars to protect it from floods and the top of the pillars are covered by large flat stones to guard the building against rodents. These are both features typical of granaries and can still be seen in the storage houses for rice in Tanah Toraja on the island of Sulawesi. However, none of the transmitted texts lists this type of donation.

IVB-15-16 Maitreya makes a Donation

This two-fold corner relief (counted by Krom as two separate reliefs) illustrates the donation of large round objects. The object is given to the first of three monks, one of whom already has received a similar gift. As the transmitted lists of donations have been exhausted, the precise type of donation cannot be identified.

IVB-17ab Maitreya gives away a Horse Carriage

In this corner relief Śakra is, once again, the recipient of Maitreya’s boundless generosity. Bosch (1929, 216-217) speculated that this relief might represent the gift of a park, but here a Chinese translation that has been of no help in finding the clue to the preceding reliefs, comes to the rescue. T. 293, 834a, 17 mentions the gift of a carriage. It is shown prominently in the relief. This gift is not found in any of the other texts. The polite gesture made by the donor is a variant of that shown in the donation of a palace (IVB-4).

IBVB-18 Maitreya sets Free Prisoners

With this relief the donation of various gifts comes to an end. Maitreya now saves people from all kinds of peril. The text continues: “For those who landed in jail, where they suffered all sorts of distress and dangers, he [Maitreya] obtained their freedom. Those who were shackled and about to be put to death, he caused them to be released” (T.293, 834a, 18).

The building with its closed ground floor and its second floor windows protected by trellis work, or bars, obviously represents a jail, although it shows a close resemblance to the women’s residence of IVB-4. The benefactor stands outside, holding an oblong object in his hand, probably the bolt of the lock of the gate of the jail. The second sentence has apparently not been illustrated, for there is no trace of shackles or a noose of the type held by a henchman’s assistant in relief O-4.

IVB-19 Maitreya dispenses Medicine to the Sick

“For those stricken by illness he seeks healing, graciously providing them with medicine” (T. 293, 834a, 19-20 and T.279, 437a, 11; not in T. 278). The worthy recipients of Maitreya’s medical assistance are a group of five monks seated in a festooned building. The facial expression of the foremost recipient reveals the depth of his distress.

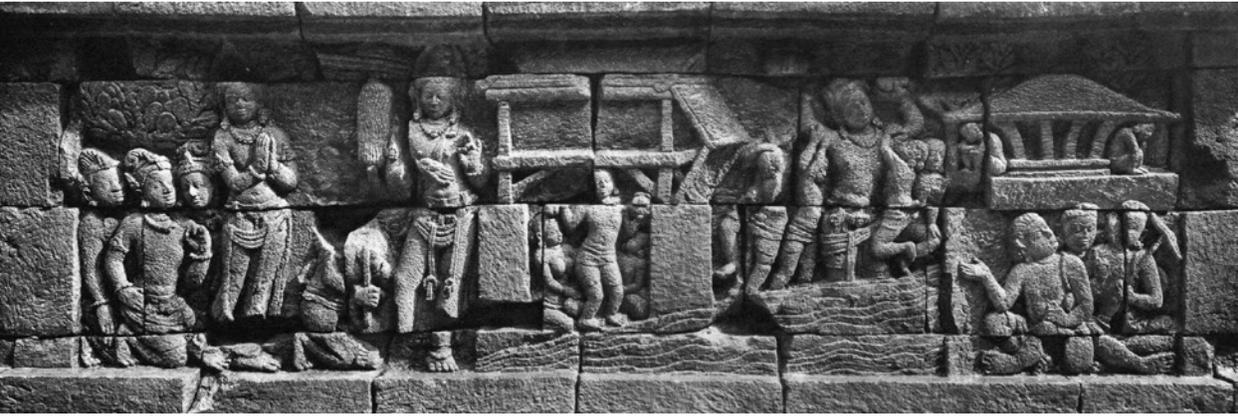
IVB-20 Maitreya shows the Right Way to the Errant

“To those who have lost the right way and follow the path of evil, he [Maitreya in a previous rebirth] pointed out the right way” (T. 293, 834a, 20-21; T. 278, 781c, 23-24; T. 279, 437a, 11). Pointing with the left hand suggests that the persons for whom that gesture is intended are involved in negative activities (see e.g. O-60). The Maitreya of the present, as if echoing the act of benevolence of his precedent rebirth, raises his right hand in *vitarka-mudrā*.

IVB-21 Maitreya saves People from Drowning while Crossing a River (**fig. 28**)

Both Krom and Bosch described this fascinating relief in great detail. They thought it represented people being saved from a flood. There is no sentence in the texts that fits every aspect of the scene. According to Bosch the Parisian manuscripts only contain the following passage: “Someone who carries along to the ship those who have become slaves.”

The Parisian manuscripts seem to omit the introductory passage, which clarifies that all these acts of generosity are being performed by Maitreya in previous rebirths in aeons past [T. 293, 834, 11]. All three Chinese translations are in full agreement that it is none other than Maitreya who performs these acts of charity. The words “ship” and “river” also occur in the Chinese translations, but there the meaning of the sentence is quite different. T. 278 (781c, 24) gives: “How he [Maitreya] was a great ship’s captain who guided people to the Island of Treasures.” T. 293 (834a, 21-22) gives a different version, which may actually provide the clue to the meaning of the relief: “How he [Maitreya] was a great ship’s captain, who made the



28. Maitreya saves people from drowning while crossing a river (IVB-21).

people cross the ocean and who saw to it that they did not get lost in the ford.” This suggests that instead of representing people threatened by a flood, as Krom and Bosch believed, the relief may actually show people trying to ford a stream. In all likelihood, only a minor *varia lectio*, amounting to no more than a few words, accounts for the discrepancy between the text and this unusually vivid scene from daily life in ancient Java.

IVB-22 Maitreya, as the Horse Valāha, saves the Shipwrecked Merchants

“How he [Maitreya] became the King of Horses and saved all beings, causing them to escape from the evil terror of the *rāksasīs*” (T. 293, 834a, 22).

Although the Chinese texts refer only to an anonymous King of Horses, the Sanskrit texts specifically mention the name of Valāha. This relief must, therefore, illustrate the well-known legend of the horse Valāha, who helped five hundred shipwrecked merchants escape from the anthropophagous demonesses on the island where they were stranded. This legend is told in the *Valāhassa-jātaka* (Cowell 1895, no. 196), where Valāha is identified as an incarnation of the future Buddha. It also occurs in the *Karandavyūha* (Goloubew 1927). The men clinging to the back of the horse closely resemble those other shipwrecked sailors in another *jātaka*, who were saved by the Bodhisattva in his rebirth as a giant sea turtle (shown in relief IBa-194). Dōi [440] mistranslates T. 278, 781c, 25 (“How he as King of the Horses carried them all on his back to escape from the evil of the demons”) as: “wie Bodhisattva Maitreya ein Pferd wird und viele Waren hinüberträgt” (how the Bodhisattva Maitreya is transformed into a horse and transports many goods)

Accepting a tentative identification by Hikata (1981, 114), Louis Frédéric (1994, 240) identifies two other Borobudur reliefs (Ib-53 and Ib-54) as illustrations of the *Valāhassa jātaka*. However, apart from the landing by ship on an island and a kind of long house crowded with people—presumably the bloodthirsty *rāksasīs*—there is little to connect these two reliefs with the story of the *jātaka*. The chief protagonist, the flying horse, does not even appear in these reliefs, making Hikata’s identification highly doubtful. The best known example of a stone sculpture representing Valāha and the shipwrecked merchants has been preserved in the

sacred lake Neak Pean in Angkor (Goloubew 1927 and Roveda 1997, 65). An ancient (early 10th century) Javanese gold pectoral (*A Divine Art*, Spink: London, 1997, no. 28) is decorated with figurative scenes in which women and a flying horse play a prominent role. This pectoral could well represent the only other known Central Javanese illustration of the Valāha legend.

IVB-23 Unidentified

Bosch suggested that the *Cakravartin*, or Universal Monarch, may have traded places with the Great Sage, who is definitely represented in the next relief. However, relief IVB-23 displays none of the regalia of the *Cakravartin*. In the numerous reliefs representing *Cakravartin* at Borobudur the four regalia are almost always shown. Their absence in this relief renders Bosch's identification doubtful.

IVB-24 Maitreya as the Great Sage

"As a Great Sage, skilled in all sorts of knowledge, he excelled in teaching the treatises to benefit all creatures" (T.293, 834a, 23). The sculptors have rendered the Great Sage of the text as an ascete, seated in front of a large vase filled with flowers, instructing four of his fellow ascetes.

IVB-25 Through IVB-27 Fragmentary or Missing

IVB-28 Maitreya as a *Śrāvaka* (?)

Of this corner relief only the right side has been preserved. It shows a seated monk, instructing a (now headless) person, seated in front of him, who respectfully greets him with his hands folded in *añjali*. Behind the monk, at shoulder level, stands a water vessel, or *kundikā*. It is possible, that this relief illustrates the passage in which Maitreya plays the role of a *śrāvaka*, as Bosch has suggested.

IVB-29 Maitreya as a Pratyeka Buddha (?)

According to the texts we should now expect to see a Pratyeka Buddha, but the persons shown here are in no way different from the *śrāvakas* of the preceding relief. Bosch quite correctly points out that, as far as is known, on Borobudur Pratyeka Buddhas are represented as Buddhas, not as monks (see e.g. IIIB-47). The identification of this relief remains, therefore, uncertain.

IVB-30 Maitreya in the Role of a Bodhisattva

The most remarkable feature of this relief is that Maitreya appears twice. The standard composition adopted for this series of reliefs illustrates the acts, which are being performed by

Maitreya as another person in another life on the right side of the panel. Maitreya himself is shown among the audience on the left side. Once again, Krom shows his grasp of the sculptors' language. Without knowing the contents of the text illustrated here, he interprets the fact that Maitreya appears twice in this relief as an indication that Maitreya here plays the role of himself. And, indeed, that is exactly what is meant to be illustrated here: Maitreya is shown assuming the role of a Bodhisattva.

IVB-31 Unidentified

On this relief we would have expected to see a Tathāgata, the next impersonation of Maitreya in this series of reliefs. Instead it represents a man of high status, accompanied by his wife. The texts offer no explanation for this scene.

IVB-32 Maitreya as a Master of Dharma

That the *bhikṣu*, who is being respectfully greeted by a man of high status, followed by his retinue, is a Master of Dharma, is evident only from the text: "How he [Maitreya] as a Master of Dharma, received the teachings of the Tathāgatas" (T.293, 834a, 28-29).

IVB-33 Maitreya builds a *Stūpa*

The Parisian manuscripts read: "protecting the *caitya* of the Tathāgatas." However, T. 278, 781c-782a gives: "to build *stūpas* and shrines and to erect marvelous statuary and pay homage to them with scented garlands of flowers."

IVB-34 Maitreya makes Buddhist Images

T. 293, 834b, 1 reads: "to build a Buddha *caitya* and to make Buddhist images, each one of them decorated with all sorts of precious ornaments."

The sculptors were unable to draw a distinction between a living Buddha and a statue representing him. Only the corresponding text passage makes clear that the Buddha seated in the pillared pavilion is a statue, not the Buddha himself (cf. relief III-34). One of the attendants carries a tray with jewelry, as indicated in the text.

IVB-35 Maitreya expounds the Dharma

Following Maitreya's creation of statues, Sudhana sees him [Maitreya] seated on a lion throne, expounding the Dharma (T. 293, 834b, 4; T.279, 437a, 19-20). The text does not specify in which guise Maitreya should appear, but it is obvious that he could not be shown here as a Bodhisattva. The sculptors, therefore, chose to show Maitreya as a *bhikṣu* with an audience of

five *bhiksus*. In this particular case the lion throne may have been deliberately omitted as this type of seat must have been considered inappropriate for a *bhiksu*.

IVB-36 The *Kūtāgāra*

Having come to the end of the succession of miracles, performed inside the *kūtāgāra*, the long series of reliefs devoted to this topic ends as it began: with a *kūtāgāra*. The relief probably corresponds to the closing words: “In this *kūtāgāra* he [Sudhana] saw, due to the majestic power of Maitreya, without impediment all of these unprecedented miracles.” (T. 278, 782b, 9-10).

This relief concludes the lengthy series of illustrations of Maitreya’s visionary miracles. It is, therefore, the first relief in which Maitreya and Sudhana no longer occupy their assigned places. The person of high status (with a halo) on the second half of the relief probably represents Sudhana. If it is indeed the pilgrim who is being represented here, the sculptors show him outside the *kūtāgāra*, even though all texts agree that he is still inside the building while the gate remains closed.

IVB-37 Unidentified

Between the conclusion of the description of the miracles performed by Maitreya, illustrated on IVB-36, and Maitreya’s entrance into the *kūtāgāra*, illustrated on IVB-38, all texts contain a lengthy passage, couched in metaphors, describing the indelible, yet trancelike impression that these visionary miracles have left on Sudhana’s mind.

Like IVB-36, IVB-37 is a corner panel half the width of a full-size relief. The two probably belong together. It shows the usual visiting scene of a conversation between two haloed persons. If indeed only a single, narrow-width relief illustrates that entire section of the text, the sculptors certainly passed up an opportunity to illustrate a passage containing a wealth of potential illustrative material. Bosch explains this omission as follows (1929, 222): “There is no doubt that the passages have, once again, been omitted because they do not represent actions taken by Sudhana himself, but consist only of unreal, dreamlike visions.” Considering the large space allotted to the miracles, as well as the fact that Maitreya, in the next few lines of text, declares all of them to be unreal, illusory, dreamlike reflections, Bosch’s explanation does not seem convincing. Later we will review the different methods of illustration which the sculptors have applied throughout the entire series of *Gandavyūha* reliefs. At that time it will become evident that the sculptors cannot have based their selection of the material, which they deemed appropriate for illustration, on criteria as narrowly defined as Bosch believed them to be.

IVB-38 Maitreya enters the *Kūtāgāra*

The extensive damage inflicted upon this relief includes the loss of the head of the panel’s chief protagonist. This loss eliminates any possibility of confirming the identification of this now headless figure as Maitreya. He is walking towards a small temple building, the gate of which is still closed. However, the personage who is about to enter the building cannot be anyone

else but Maitreya, for the text states clearly that the Great Bodhisattva Maitreya now entered the *kūtāgāra* and withdrew his divine power. He snapped the fingers of his right hand and awoke Sudhana from his *samādhi*, saying: “Arise from your meditation” (T.293, 835a, 22). At the beginning of Sudhana’s visit to Maitreya, just before the Bodhisattva had given Sudhana permission to enter the *kūtāgāra*, Maitreya had snapped his fingers for the first time. This was duly shown on relief III-4. As Maitreya’s right hand is shown here resting upon his hip, it is evident that this time the symbolically highly significant gesture of snapping the fingers has been ignored or omitted by the sculptor.

IVB-39 Sudhana emerges from his Meditation

The relief shows a person of high status, seated cross-legged inside a pavilion. In all probability this person represents Sudhana, who emerges from his trance-like state, his hands folded in *añjali*, as soon as he hears Maitreya snapping his fingers (T.293, 835a, 25).

IVB-40 Maitreya addresses Sudhana

Maitreya, now seated on a lotus cushion, asks Sudhana: “Son of good family, did you witness the majestic power of the *vimoksa* of the Bodhisattva?” (T.293, 835a, 26). On the relief Maitreya, addressing Sudhana directly for the first time after the long interval of the pilgrim’s visit inside the *kūtāgāra*, now raises his right hand in *vitarka-mudrā*. In respectful response Sudhana folds his hands in *añjali*.

IVB-41 The *Grhapati* Gopālakā (?)

From Maitreya’s lengthy farewell speech to Sudhana the sculptors seem to have selected the only passage they could illustrate. Sudhana asks Maitreya: “Great Saint, whence did you come?” Maitreya at first responds by saying that Bodhisattvas do not have a place from which they come or in which they reside. Later he is more specific: “My place of birth is the village of Kūtigrāmaka (or: Kūtagrāmaka) in the country of Malada. There once lived a house holder (*grhapati*) named Gopālakā, who taught the Dharma and made me seek Enlightenment. He taught all the people of my native place according to their abilities and firmly established my parents and siblings in the Great Vehicle” (T.278, 782c, 11-15; T.293, 835c, 9-13).

The peaceful scene of a large family seated in two adjacent pillared halls, shown on IVB-41, offers no definite clue to the identity of these persons. However, in Maitreya’s final address the description of the Bodhisattva’s own origins is the only passage that matches the scene on the relief. It would seem quite appropriate for Maitreya to finally reveal to the pilgrim, at the solemn conclusion of Sudhana’s visit to the Bodhisattva, his personal ultimate origin (*janmabhūmi*).

IVB-42 Sudhana takes Leave from Maitreya

With this relief the long sequence of illustrations of Sudhana's visit to Maitreya comes to an end. Sudhana, seated on the left side of the relief, now takes leave of his *kalyānamitra*.

A pilgrim viewing the reliefs has now reached the halfway mark on the fourth gallery. After having crossed the stairway, he will stand in front of IVB-43, the first relief devoted to Sudhana's second visit to the youthful Mañjuśrī *kumārabhūta*. It will be evident that the location of the first relief devoted to Sudhana's second visit to Mañjuśrī, exactly halfway the balustrade, must have been chosen deliberately. The choice was undoubtedly part of a plan to clearly demarcate architecturally the areas dedicated to Maitreya on one side and Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra on the other.

None of the transmitted texts offer a fully satisfactory explanation for the presence of an orchestra and dancers on the right side of panel IVB-42. A sentence in the text of Maitreya's lengthy farewell speech reads: "I was born in all *dharmadhātus*, in all the different manifestations of all beings, in all the different tongues and sounds of all beings" (T. 293, 836a, 25-26). Perhaps the only way the sculptors could illustrate such abstractions was to show an orchestra or musical instruments (see also IVB-73 to IVB-75 for a similar interpretation).

As we shall presently see, the second meeting of Sudhana with Mañjuśrī is illustrated on reliefs IVB-50 and -51. The three-fold repetition of the meeting on IVB-43-45 probably does not yet represent the actual visit, but instead illustrates Maitreya's earlier elaborate words of praise for Mañjuśrī which follow right after his instruction: "You should now go and visit Mañjuśrī in his residence, and ask him how a Bodhisattva can learn the Conduct of the Bodhisattva and how he can enter the gate of the Conduct of Samantabhadra" (T.279, 439a, 15).

After the lengthy visit to Maitreya and the dramatic display of miracles inside his *kūtāgāra*, Sudhana's second and surprisingly brief visit to Mañjuśrī is rather anticlimactic. The *Gandavyūha* describes the visit in only one or two short paragraphs. Moreover, Mañjuśrī's sermon is largely cast in a negative mode, telling the pilgrim under which conditions he will be unable to achieve his final destination. The Sanskrit text, as translated by Bosch (1929, 221) and Ehman (101-102) is slightly more concise than the Chinese translations, one of which reads:

"Following the Great Bodhisattva Maitreya's instruction, Sudhana proceeded [on his pilgrimage]. Having passed through more than 110 cities, he arrived in Sumanamukha. There he stood at the gate, all the time wondering where he could find Mañjuśrī and filled with an ardent desire to see him. Then Mañjuśrī from afar extended his right hand more than 110 *yojanas* and touched Sudhana's head. He then spoke the following words: 'Excellent, excellent, Son of good family! Those who leave the roots of faith will suffer distress and see their efforts frustrated; their exertion will diminish; their heart will be set on a single root of goodness; they will consider minor merit sufficient; they will not be skilled in making the Vow of the Conduct of the Bodhisattva; they will not be assisted and protected by *kalyānamitras*; they will not be kept in mind by the Tathāgatas. All this they will not be able to comprehend: this Dharma nature, this destiny, this deliverance, this conduct, this abode, this sphere—they cannot fully grasp them, in detail, exhaustively, thoroughly, orderly, in liberated or discerning fashion or by establishing proof—all this they will be unable to obtain'. When Mañjuśrī had concluded this discourse, Sudhana was filled with boundless joy. The Bodhisattva made him obtain innumerable *vimokṣas* and made him witness countless great manifestations, made him obtain boundless Bodhisattva *dhāranīs*, countless great vows, countless *samādhis*, boundless understanding,

unlimited knowledge and wisdom—all this he achieved. And he gained permission to enter the interior of the *Bodhimanda* of the Conduct of Samantabhadra. Mañjuśrī placed him in his own residence. After this Mañjuśrī withdrew and was not seen again” (T.279, 439b, 6-23).

Earlier in the *Gandavyūha*, when Maitreya first predicted the second visit to Mañjuśrī, only Buddhahadra’s translation described how Mañjuśrī extended his right hand from a distance of 110 *yojanas* to touch the pilgrim’s head (T.278, 773b, 12). This time, all three Chinese translations agree on the reprise of this miracle. They all have Mañjuśrī touch Sudhana’s head (T.293, 836c, 20; T.278, 783c, 1-2; T.279, 439b, 10). The sculptors of Borobudur appear to have been unaware of this second magic feat, for the reliefs show Mañjuśrī seated on his throne no less than five times (IVB-43-44-45-50 and 51), each time making only the customary conversational gestures.

However, there may be a reason for at least not showing this miracle on the first three of these reliefs. IVB-48 and -49 represent Sudhana traveling. They can, therefore, only be explained as illustrations of the phrase: “Following the great Bodhisattva Maitreya’s instructions, Sudhana proceeded to the South...” It is evident, as Bosch has pointed out, that the reliefs preceding these traveling scenes cannot represent the actual visit, but must reflect the words of praise spoken by Maitreya as he instructs Sudhana to go and visit Mañjuśrī.

IVB-43 Sudhana visits Mañjuśrī *Kumārabhūta* (1)

IVB-44 Sudhana visits Mañjuśrī *Kumārabhūta* (2)

IVB-45 Sudhana visits Mañjuśrī *Kumārabhūta* (3)

On all three reliefs Mañjuśrī *kumārabhūta* is clearly recognizable by the attributes of his youthful appearance, the crescent-shaped ornaments behind his head and the boys’ crossed sacred thread. The sculptors seem to have limited themselves to the customary compositional formula of Sudhana’s visits to his *kalyānamitras*. There are no signs that they tried to include any visual reference to Maitreya’s words of praise, unless we may consider the three-fold repetition of the Bodhisattva on three consecutive panels a reflection of the frequent invocation of his name in the text. That a Bodhisattva is shown on three consecutive visiting scenes is a distinctive honor. In the reliefs is almost exclusively accorded to Great Bodhisattvas: Avalokiteśvara (II-100—II-102), Mañjuśrī (IVB-43—IVB-45), and Samantabhadra (III-16—III-18).

IVB-46 Sudhana pays Homage to Four Tathāgatas

Four Buddhas are seated in a festooned open hall. Later, in the reliefs illustrating the *Bhadracarī*, we will see that the presence of four or sometimes even six Buddhas on a relief suggests that the sculptors tried to illustrate the words “all Buddhas” of the text. From the lengthy praise of Mañjuśrī by Maitreya they may have lifted a single phrase such as “He is the great teacher of the Dharma, and is praised by all Buddhas” (T.278, 783b, 16-17).

IVB-47 A Visit to a *Kalyānamitra* (?)

At Borobudur almost all reliefs constitute single, separate units, clearly defined by their bordering frames. However, the decorative panels which flank the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries, have been filled with attendants, who sometimes seem to constitute an extension beyond the actual frame of the composition of the persons shown on the adjacent narrative reliefs. Reliefs IVB-47 and IVB-48 seem to differ from most other reliefs in that the figures on them blend perfectly into the composition of the adjacent decorative reliefs. The left side of relief no.IV-47 shows a group of *bhiksus* turning towards the left. They seem to be part of the composition of IVB-46. The right side shows a visiting scene of the usual type. Perhaps because Mañjuśrī is praised as the *kalyānamitra par excellence* (T.293, 836c, 9-15) the sculptors may have felt justified in depicting a visit to such a Good Friend.

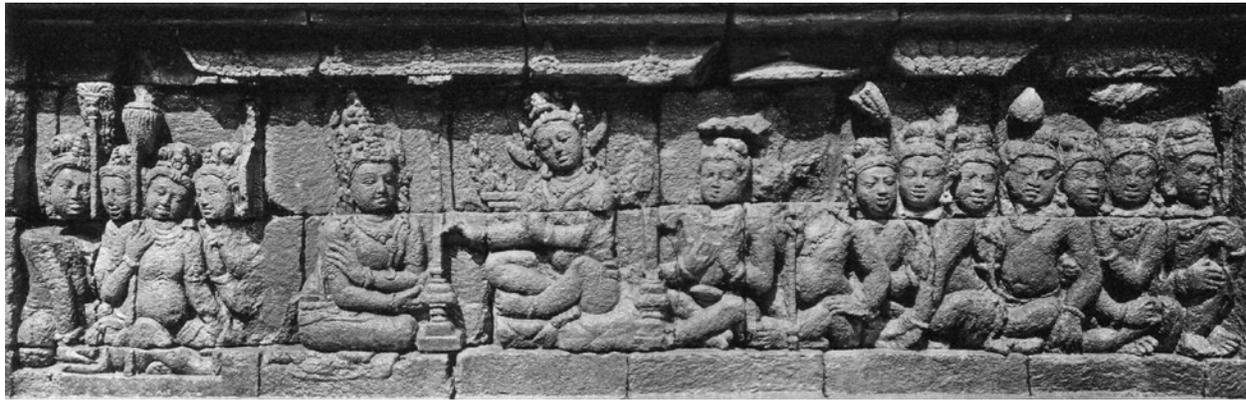
Bosch (1929, 223) provides another, perhaps more likely explanation for this relief. He argues that one is almost inclined to believe that the sculptors sometimes took the viewers' familiarity with the story for granted. They sometimes neglected to provide Bodhisattvas, kings, or other persons of high rank with the attributes that distinguish them from each other. Fully cognizant of what he describes as "this habitual carelessness" of the sculptors Bosch noticed that their representation of Maitreya sometimes omitted either the *stūpa* in the crown, or the halo, or both. The scene on IVB-47, which Krom describes as "a conversation between two men in rich attire" Bosch interprets as Sudhana taking his ceremonial leave of Maitreya. This interpretation, if correct, would only strengthen the identification of the first three reliefs featuring Mañjuśrī (IVB-43-45) as illustrations of Maitreya's words of praise for Mañjuśrī in his farewell speech to Sudhana.

IVB-48 Unidentified

In this relief the sculptors have gone one step further than they did on the preceding panel. The four seated men on the left side, carrying stems of flowers, turn towards the left and seem to be part of relief no.IVB-47. The four men on the other side, however, turn their backs toward them to join the procession on the following relief. Although Krom, who did not know the contents of the text, gave this relief a number reserved for narrative panels, the composition of the relief suggests that IVB-48 is more likely to be a decorative panel than a narrative relief.

IVB-49 Sudhana on his Way to Mañjuśrī

This relief probably illustrates the set of stock phrases of the *Gandavyūha* describing how Sudhana takes his leave of one teacher and proceeds on his search for the next. Bosch (1929, 223, n.1) has suggested that the number of eleven persons, who are shown following the pilgrim on this relief, may allude to the 110 towns mentioned in the text.



29. Sudhana pays a second visit to Mañjuśrī (IVB-51).

IVB-50 Sudhana visits Mañjuśrī *Kumārabhūta* (4)

IVB-51 Sudhana visits Mañjuśrī *Kumārabhūta* (5) (fig. 29)

The triple visiting scene on IVB-43-45 could be explained as an effort to illustrate the frequent invocation of the Bodhisattva's name by Maitreya, but the motive for the duplication of the scene of the actual visit remains unclear. The details of the setting do not seem to contain any visual references to the contents of the texts.

On the following reliefs Bosch (1929, 223-224) offers these comments: "After Sudhana has taken leave of Mañjuśrī, the action is transported into a visionary realm in which miraculous apparitions greatly increase in number, monotony, and unimportance. In illustrating this section of the text, the sculptors seem to have lost the thread of the narrative and were obliged to make a relatively small selection from the overwhelming abundance of material. We have, therefore, abandoned the idea of following the text to the end, focusing only on those episodes that can be identified with certainty or with a high degree of probability."

Bosch then continues: "A large part of this series of reliefs is filled with the all-too familiar scenes of worship of and homage paid to unspecific Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. These are representations that can be associated with any number of passages in the concluding part of the text, which features a superabundance of heavenly apparitions. It is of great importance for the identification of the entire series that one set of ten consecutive reliefs in the middle section of this sequence can be identified with certainty. We can take these ten as starting points from which we can begin to try to identify the reliefs preceding or following them" (Bosch 1929, 225).

Bosch's remarks concern the series IVB-62 through IVB-71, which he identifies as illustrations of the Ten Great Apparitions (see below). Although it will be demonstrated that not all of these identifications are as certain as Bosch believed them to be, the unquestionable identification of IVB-68 as the sixth of the Ten Great Apparitions allows us to choose this relief as a benchmark from which we can try to work our way back through the texts in search of possible matches with the reliefs IVB-52 to -67.

The first question that has to be resolved is at which point the visit to Mañjuśrī comes to an end and where the illustrations of the visit to Samantabhadra begin. In the rarified atmosphere of sanctity into which the pilgrim has now entered, only Great Bodhisattvas can serve as Sudhana's *kalyānamitras*. They no longer refer Sudhana to his next teacher by merely stating, by means of a few formulaic sentences, the next mentor's name and place of residence, as they did throughout most of his pilgrimage. Both Maitreya and Mañjuśrī now couch their referrals in lengthy, ornate laudatory phrases. Also, Sudhana's reaction to the instructions, which he just received and on which he ponders while traveling from one *kalyānamitra* to the next, tends to become lengthier and more detailed as the pilgrim progresses. When Sudhana finally arrives at the residence of Samantabhadra, he first has to witness two series of ten-fold miracles before he can meet face-to-face with his last *kalyānamitra*. All of this is part of the gradual progress towards a spiritual climax. It tends to blur the transition from one visit to the other, not only in the texts, but even more in the reliefs illustrating this final section of the *Gandavyūha*.

One possible reason for Bosch's impression that the sculptors had lost the thread of the narrative is his decision to interpret relief IVB-60 not as Sudhana's first encounter with Samantabhadra, but as part of Mañjuśrī's farewell speech to Sudhana, in which he refers the pilgrim to Samantabhadra. This may have caused him to look for an explanation of the preceding reliefs in a different part of the text, albeit one of somewhat similar content.

There is, however, another reason for doubting the possibility of some sort of mistake or carelessness on the part of the sculptors. For it is here for the first time, in this part of the text, that Prajñā's translation (T.293) deviates substantially not only from the other Chinese translations, but also from the Sanskrit texts, consulted by Bosch. It inserts a lengthy conversation between Mañjuśrī and Sudhana. In an appendix to Cleary's translation of the *Gandavyūha* (Cleary 1989, 395-401) he adds translations of some additional passages, which occur only in Prajñā's translation and which have no parallel in either the other Chinese translations or in the published Sanskrit texts. Cleary adds the following remark: "It is probably fair to assume, therefore, that these are additions by Prajñā or his committee of assistants. Indeed, some of them appear to be of the nature of explanations of or amplifications on the text; some seem to go off a bit excessively on tangents" (Cleary 1989, 395).

It has now been demonstrated by Vetter (2004) and Ijiri (2005) that the Sanskrit text editions by Suzuki and Vaidya represent an early version of the *Gandavyūha*, the second oldest after the first Chinese translation by Buddhahadra (T.278). A more detailed comparison of Suzuki and Vaidya with the more elaborate Parisian Sanskrit texts is needed before we can accept Cleary's thesis that the expanded sections of Prajñā's translation are Chinese additions and elaborations, not based upon a Sanskrit text. For example, if any of these elaborations would be matched by a Borobudur relief, this would constitute proof that Prajñā's "amplifications" could date from early times and might even have existed in an Indian version of the *Gandavyūha*. As we shall presently see, at this point the connection between the reliefs and the text is far too tenuous to warrant such a far-reaching conclusion.

For reasons stated above Bosch offered no explanation for the series of reliefs IVB-52 through -59. The first two of these reliefs show the pilgrim and a host of other persons of high status paying homage to meditating Bodhisattvas. In IVB-54 the focus of worship is a triad of Buddhas; in IVB-55 a Buddha in *vitarka-mudrā*, and in IVB-56 a meditating Bodhisattva. IVB-58 represents a procession, probably a traveling scene. After a relief showing an enthroned Bodhisattva or king, Samantabhadra finally makes his first appearance on relief IVB-60.

Because of their place in the narrative sequence, one of two passages is most likely to provide the key to this series of reliefs. One is the expanded version of Mañjuśrī's instruction of Sudhana, as found only in Prajñā's translation, or the passage which describes Sudhana's exalted state of mind after Mañjuśrī has left the scene at the conclusion of his oral instruction. Cleary's suggestion, although unproven, that such an elaborate passage could well have been inserted by the translator, renders the possibility that this passage could have provided the source of inspiration for this series of reliefs at best doubtful. Moreover, its contents, such as an explanation of the Ten Methods of the Bodhisattva, give an impression of being an elaboration, merely preparing the pilgrim for several new series of ten-fold miracles, about to be performed by Samantabhadra. Instead of what Bosch called "an overabundance of material", there does not seem to be a single sentence or even a word in this sermon that could have possibly been selected for illustration by the sculptors.

The second possibility, i.e. the passage describing Sudhana's state of mind after leaving Mañjuśrī (T.293, 838a-b), offers a slightly better chance. It contains the sentence: "He [Sudhana] knew well all Tathāgatas of the Three Ages [past, present, and future], who succeed each other without interruption, and he deeply entered the Ocean of the teachings of all Buddhas". The number of three Buddhas in IVB-54 and the *vitarka-mudrā* of the Buddha in IVB-55 seem to support this identification. The fact that two references to "all Bodhisattvas" precede the mention of the Three Buddhas provides some additional evidence in favor of this identification. Later, when discussing the reliefs illustrating the *Bhadracarī*, we will see that recurring sentences or words, lifted from the text, are consistently illustrated by the same or similar images. This is a shared characteristic of the illustrations of the concluding chapters of the *Gandavyūha* and the entire *Bhadracarī*.

IVB-52 Meditating Bodhisattva (1)

The Bodhisattva is seated underneath a tree, his hands in his lap in *dhyāna-mudrā*. A group of eight people on the right side of the panel pay homage to him. The scene was probably inspired by the words: "His [Sudhana's] heart always abiding in the unimpeded deliverance of all Bodhisattvas" (T. 293, 838a, 25). The group on the left includes Sudhana and his attendants.

IVB-53 Meditating Bodhisattva (2)

Just as we have seen in the preceding relief, this Bodhisattva is seated, hands in *dhyāna-mudrā*, underneath a tree. He is being worshiped by a large group of men, some carrying swords, others carrying flowers. This scene could have been inspired by the sentence: "His [Sudhana's] skillful ability to practice the [Ten Degrees of] Diversion of the pure and profound thoughts of all Bodhisattvas" (T.293, 838a, 28-29).

IVB-54 Sudhana worships a Triad of Buddhas

A haloed figure, clearly meant to represent Sudhana, kneels in front of three Buddhas. The Buddha in the middle is seated in *dhyāna-mudrā* on a lotus. The other two raise their right hand in *vitarka-mudrā*. The trinity reflects the words in the text “He [Sudhana] is well acquainted with all Tathāgatas of the Three Ages” (past, present, and future) (T.293, 838a, 29).

IVB-55 Sudhana worships a Buddha

Sudhana, accompanied by a group of *bhiksus*, pays homage to a Buddha seated on a lotus cushion. Although the relief has suffered considerable damage, it is clear that the Buddha raised his right hand, probably in *vitarka-mudrā*. This gesture matches with the contents of the sentence immediately following “all Tathāgatas of the Three Ages”. It reads: “He [Sudhana] deeply penetrated into the Ocean of the Teaching of the Dharma” (T. 293, 838b, 1).

IVB-56 Meditating Bodhisattva (3)

This relief, similar to IVB-52 and -53, shows another Bodhisattva meditating underneath a tree. The relief probably illustrates the sentence: “He [Sudhana] deeply penetrated in the Ocean of the Vows of the Bodhisattva” (T. 293, 838b, 2).

IVB-57 Unidentified (Decorative Panel)

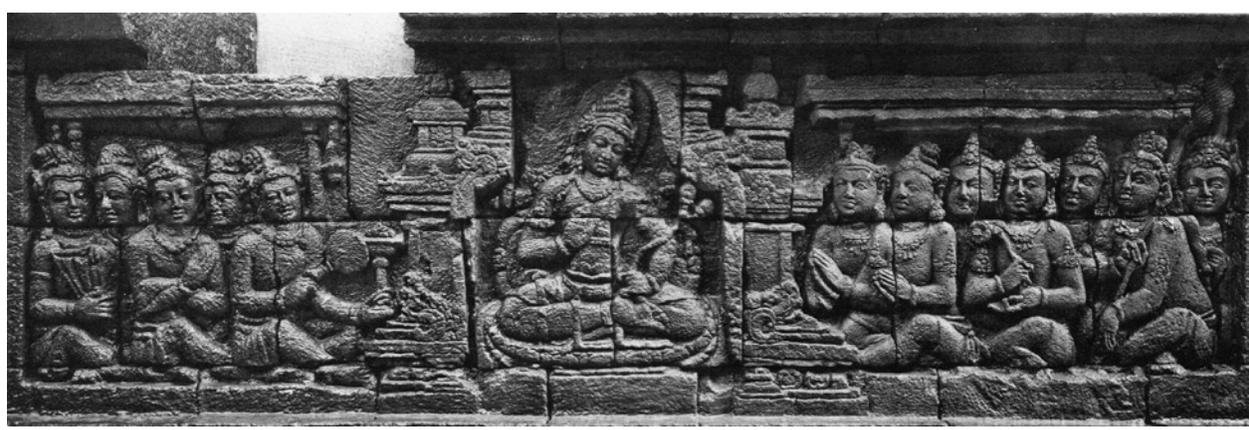
Krom notes that the group of persons on the left side of this panel turns towards the left and seems to belong to the preceding relief. He concludes: “The composition of this scene is more like that of the decorative panels [flanking most reliefs] than that of the narrative reliefs” (Cf. IVB-47 and -48 for a similar type of relief). The relief is actually a decorative panel, mistakenly counted by Krom as a narrative relief.

IVB-58 Sudhana Traveling (?)

This is one of the rare instances in which a traveling scene does not seem to correspond to one of the standard phrases used for the pilgrim’s progress in the text. However, we do know that Sudhana is on his way to Samantabhadra and is about to come face-to-face with the Bodhisattva. The traveling scene may serve the purpose of reminding the viewer of the rapidly approaching moment of Sudhana’s final encounter with his ultimate *kalyānamitra*.

IVB-59 Sudhana in a State of Mind as Vast as the Realm of the Void

The last relief before Samantabhadra assumes center stage confirms in an unexpected manner that the preceding reliefs, no matter how tenuous or even doubtful their connection with the



30. Sudhana sees Samantabhadra enthroned (IVB-60).

text may sometimes seem to be, were indeed based upon the passage of the text quoted here. At the very end of Sudhana's contemplations, just before the ten-fold miracles, produced by Samantabhadra, are to begin, Sudhana enters into ten different states of mind. The first of these is called "A mind as vast as the realm of the Void". Śikṣānanda and Prajñā have Sudhana evoke this state of mind seated on all "Jeweled Lotus Flower Repository seats" in front of the Tathāgata's throne in the "*Bodhimanda* of the Repository of the Diamond Ocean" (T.279, 439c, 11-12; T. 293, 838b, 16). Buddhābhadrā seems to make the throne part of the name of Sudhana's state of mind (T.278, 784a, 1-2).

The scene on relief IVB-59 has a throne as its center piece. Krom describes it as follows: "On the left side of the panel stands a pillared hall (*pēndapa*). In it has been installed a throne of which the seat is shown as if it had been turned down and the person sitting on it can slide off any moment". From the fact that a person with a halo—obviously none other than Sudhana—is seated on the throne, we may perhaps conclude that the Borobudur text was in this respect similar to T. 279 and T. 293, both of which take the throne literally, and not as part of the name of a state of mind.

IVB-60 Sudhana sees Samantabhadra Enthroned (fig. 30)

This is the first of many reliefs which show Sudhana and Samantabhadra together. The Bodhisattva is here clearly recognizable by the stems with buds or flowers that constitute his regular attribute. At first glance the meaning of the scene is therefore evident: Sudhana meets his ultimate *kalyānamitra*.

Bosch rejected the idea that this relief illustrates the first face-to-face meeting of Sudhana with Samantabhadra (see relief IVB-72). He points out that the text describes how Sudhana finally gets to see the great Bodhisattva only *after* having first witnessed a long sequence of all sorts of miracles. The first series of miracles is called "The Ten Auspicious Portents" in the Chinese translations, and in the Parisian manuscripts *Daśapūrvanimitāni*, or, "The Ten Previous Causes" (Bosch). The second series is called *Daśamahāvabhasa*, or "The Ten Great Manifestations" (Bosch). Immediately after Sudhana first sees Samantabhadra, yet another, even longer

sequence of miracles occurs, this time consisting of all sorts of apparitions emanating from the pores of Samantabhadra's skin. As Samantabhadra makes his first appearance on relief IVB-60, well before the illustrations of these miracles begin in the reliefs, Bosch assumed that this relief, instead of representing the actual visit, merely illustrates the words of Mañjuśrī's referral of Sudhana to Samantabhadra. This is a reasonable assumption, for we have seen, that the first appearance of Mañjuśrī (IVB-43-45) did not represent his actual encounter with Sudhana either, but only Maitreya's oral prediction of this future meeting. Bosch's idea is also consistent with the treatment of Maitreya's first prediction of Sudhana's final visits (III-8—III-19).

Rather than attributing what would seem to be a premature appearance of Samantabhadra to a textual variant—one of the possibilities suggested by Bosch—we should perhaps consider another explanation. In the earlier illustrations of the miracles produced by Maitreya this Bodhisattva is often present, even though most texts definitely place Maitreya outside the *kūtāgāra* in which the miracles are said to occur. Maitreya's frequent, but seemingly contradictory presence in the illustrations of the miracles performed by him may have merely served as a constant reminder to the viewer that these miracles are produced solely by the magic of Maitreya's spiritual power. Following this precedent, the sculptors seem to have opted this time for the introduction of Samantabhadra at a slightly earlier point in time in order to emphasize that the next series of miracles is produced solely by Samantabhadra's vast spiritual power. For all versions of the text are in agreement that Samantabhadra now is the sole creator of all of these new miracles and visions.

If the reliefs IVB-60 and IVB-61 do indeed represent Sudhana appearing before Samantabhadra, the throne on which the Bodhisattva is shown in the first relief, supposedly a lion throne, lacks the supports in the shape of lions, the distinguishing feature of the *simhāsana*. This confirms, once again, a habit of the sculptors that we have already observed on the main wall of the second gallery. There the sculptors sometimes represent a *kalyānamitra* seated on a lion throne even though the text does not mention such a seat, while they at other times omit the *simhāsana*, even when one is prescribed by the text (see also relief II-65).

However, of much greater significance than the absence of a lion throne, it would seem, is the absence of Vairocana, in front of whom Samantabhadra is enthroned according to the texts. There is one possible explanation for this remarkable omission. We have previously noted examples of reliefs which hint at what lies ahead for the pilgrim when he is about to cross a stairway or before he climbs to a higher level of the monument (see e.g. II-128). Here we now see a different type of veiled reference to coming events. At the moment when Sudhana first sees Samantabhadra enthroned (IVB-60), apparently without Vairocana being present there, he is only a few steps away from the 72 latticed *stūpas* with their statues of Buddhas in *dharmacakra-mudrā* on the near-circular terraces which constitute the next level of the monument. It would seem quite possible, therefore, that Vairocana is not shown on this relief only because his close proximity is already felt, even though he is not yet visibly present.

IVB-61 Samantabhadra leaves his Throne (?)

The texts do not seem to offer an entirely satisfactory explanation for this relief. On the next relief (IVB-62) we are in the midst of the series of visionary miracles performed by Samantabhadra for Sudhana's edification. The texts contain no suggestion that Samantabhadra leaves his throne at this time. On the contrary, on relief IVB-82, at the conclusion of the long series

of miracles, Samantabhadra is still shown seated on his lotus throne, extending his right hand to touch Sudhana's head. (For another interpretation of an empty throne see IV-41).

There is another possibility, which, while obviously speculative, may at least offer an explanation of this puzzling relief. In the prologue of the *Gandavyūha* it is described how many of those attending the Buddha's assembly were incapable of witnessing the miracles performed by the Buddha (II-3). An empty throne symbolized this inability. The empty throne on IVB-61 may perhaps constitute a visual reminder that Sudhana was not (yet) able to see Vairocana.

IVB-62 The Sixth of the Ten Great Apparitions

The series of miracles called the Ten Auspicious Portents were apparently skipped by the sculptors, probably because they defied any recognizable rendering in stone. Next Sudhana witnesses the Ten Great Manifestations [*Daśamahāvabhasa*]. At least one of these apparitions is illustrated in relief IVB-62, which definitely matches the sixth of these manifestations: "He [Sudhana] saw how in each and every particle of dust as manifold as the minute particles of dust in all worlds there appeared all kinds of suns, moons, stars, and constellations" (T.293, 838c, 22). In both T. 278, 784a, 14 and T.279, 440a, 11, these heavenly bodies "all radiated the glory of Samantabhadra, their light illuminating the entire *Dharmadhātu*". As we will presently see, the miraculous apparition of these heavenly bodies is repeated on IVB-66. This gives us a possible indication of the procedure adopted by the sculptors. From the Ten Great Apparitions they selected the heavenly bodies, not only because they are by far the easiest to illustrate, but also because they are an appropriate subject to suggest the vast expanse of time and space (see also the *Bhadracarī* reliefs IV-53, IV-57, and IV-70). When a similar miracle occurred later on the same page of their manuscript, they did not hesitate to illustrate the same theme again. Just as in the text of the *Gandavyūha* frequent repetition seems to be a virtue, instead of a vice, the sculptors seem to have sometimes, though not always as consistently, been guided by the same principle.

IVB-63 A Miraculous Apparition of Jewels

This scene, already correctly identified by Krom, has no single, obvious equivalent in the text. It may illustrate a miracle from this or the following series. For pieces of jewelry of varying shapes, raining from the sky, are mentioned often enough to give us the certainty that the sculptors selected one such phrase in their text for illustration. Jewels raining from the sky are specifically mentioned in T.293, 839b, 18 and T.279, 440b, 16.

IVB-64 A Miraculous Rain of Flowers

In the preceding panels the connection between text and relief was somewhat uncertain, but this relief reveals that the sculptors must have skipped the other Great Manifestations and moved on immediately to the next series of miracles. In the texts these two series of miracles are separated by a short passage describing Sudhana's encounter with Samantabhadra. As we have seen earlier, the illustration of this passage was moved up to the reliefs IVB-60 and -61.

Immediately after meeting Sudhana, Samantabhadra produces a second set of miracles, this time consisting of apparitions emanating from the pores of the Bodhisattva's body and limbs.

Krom already noticed the rain of flowers, a new miracle mentioned in all three Chinese translations (T.293, 839b, 4-5; T.278, 784b, 19; T.279, 440b, 10). This last text reads: "He [Sudhana] saw how from each and every pore of Samantabhadra's body came forth clouds of flowers, spreading all over the *bodhimandas* of all Buddha assemblies in the *Dharmadhātu* and the Sphere of the Void...." As we will see later in several other reliefs, especially those illustrating the *Bhadracarī*, the "all Buddhas" of the text have often been reduced—undoubtedly for lack of space—to two or three Buddha figures. Here two Buddhas occupy the center of the relief.

IVB-65 An Offering of Flowers

At this point the texts mention an apparition of "clouds of flowers" and a "rain of marvelous blossoms" (T.293, 839b, 4-5; T.278, 784b, 19; T.279, .440b, 10). The relief shows seven kneeling figures making an offering of flowers to a standing Bodhisattva. The sculptors lifted the word "flowers" from the text to create a panel depicting an offering of flowers instead of the miraculous manifestations pouring forth from Samantabhadra's body.

IVB-66 The Second Apparition of the Sun, the Moon and the Stars

As mentioned above, this is an example of a second illustration of the same type of miracle. Only Prajñā's translation (T.293, 839b, 16-17) mentions this second miracle, but even in that most elaborate version only the stars and constellations, not the sun and the moon, make a second appearance.

IVB-67 The Apparition of the Heavens of the Rūpadhātu (?)

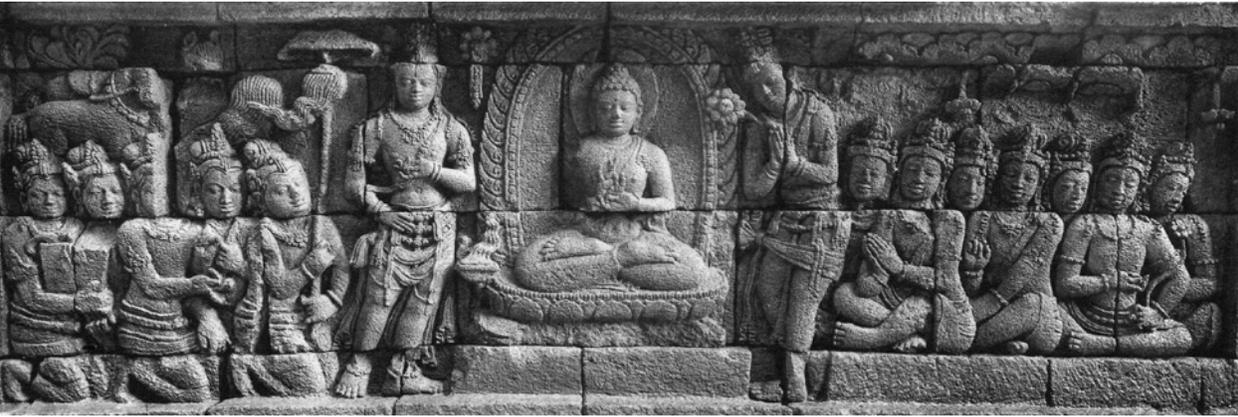
The sequence in which these various miracles are performed by Samantabhadra is approximately the same in all of the transmitted texts, but the visual evidence offered by the reliefs suggests that the order in the Borobudur version is slightly different. What all texts and translations do have in common is that at a certain point they shift from the apparition of tangible objects like flowers and jewelry to such intangible properties as smells and sounds, then to the apparition of gods and Bodhisattvas, and, finally, from there to the appearance of different types of Buddha lands. The reliefs IVB-67 to IVB-72 (IVB-68 and IVB-69 are missing) have probably been inspired by these passages, but the identification of the individual reliefs becomes certain again only with IVB-72.

The texts (T.293, 839b, 23; T.278, 784c, 24; T. 279, 440c, 25) now call for the representation of the Heavens of the *Kāmadhātu*, the *Rūpadhātu*, and the *Arūpadhātu*. However, unlike the illustrations of the Heavens on III-60—III-66, there is nothing in these reliefs that even hints at the fact that the following scenes are indeed all laid in the heavens.

IVB-68-69 Missing

IVB-70 Homage to a Buddha (?)

Of this fragmentarily preserved panel only the image of a Buddha remains.



31. The Gods implore the Buddha to turn the Wheel of the Law (IVB-72).

IVB-71 Homage to a Meditating Bodhisattva (?)

Only the right side of this relief has been preserved. In its center a Bodhisattva is seated in meditative pose in a pavilion. To the right stands a group of persons who have come to worship him. T.278, 784c, 9-10 reads: “He [Sudhana] saw how from each and every pore bodies of Bodhisattvas appeared in number equal to that of the particles of dust in all worlds, praising all Buddhas and nurturing the roots of goodness in all beings”.

IVB-72 The Gods implore the Buddhas to turn the Wheel of the Law (fig. 31)

Krom (1920, 598) describes the scene as follows: “In the center a Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā* is seated on a lotus throne with a throne back bordered by flames. He is being worshiped by a standing man in the attire of the elite (i.e. Sudhana, J.F.). He wears a sash and holds a lotus in his raised hands, which are joined in *sēmbah*. It is not clear whether he has a halo. Behind him are seven persons, some of them wearing sashes, all seated beneath a bank of clouds from which a rain of flowers falls. The pose of the distinguished person standing on the other side of the Buddha is quite different, for he pays no attention to the Buddha. In the background are his kneeling escort and two horses.”

Bosch (1929, 227) makes the following comment: “Relief IVB-72 is located between the series of the Ten Great Manifestations (IVB-62-71) and the apparition of the magic trees (IVB-73-75). According to the text Sudhana’s meeting with Samantabhadra in the presence of Vairocana takes place between the two series of miracles mentioned above. It seems highly likely, therefore, that this important event is represented on relief no. 72. The *dharmacakra-mudrā*, usually associated with Vairocana, argues in favor of this identification. The horses behind Sudhana point in the same direction, for their presence usually indicates that the pilgrim has been traveling prior to his meeting with an important personage. A matter of uncertainty is that the figure on the right lacks Samantabhadra’s usual floral attribute and is not seated on a lion throne, as mentioned in the text. However, this does not present a serious problem, for other Bodhisattvas, especially Maitreya, are often represented without their customary attri-

butes. This deviation can be attributed to the free interpretation, bordering on carelessness, in which the sculptors indulge time and again. The sum of these arguments is that this relief must represent the meeting of Sudhana and Samantabhadra”.

Bosch then continues: “The reason for dealing with this relief in such detail is that earlier, on the reliefs IVB-60 and -61, Samantabhadra has already made his appearance, first seated on a throne and then standing next to an empty throne. These reliefs are preceded by IVB-58, which shows a person from the elite—obviously Sudhana—while traveling. It stands to reason to suppose, therefore, that these reliefs represent Sudhana’s pilgrimage to and his meeting with Samantabhadra. However, since the series that we have identified as the Ten Great Manifestations follows after these three reliefs, we have to relinquish this idea and continue to identify IVB-72 as the illustration of their meeting. Unless we assume that the text used by the sculptors differed substantially from the manuscripts that I have consulted.”

As has been suggested earlier (see IVB-62), it now appears likely that instead of all of the Ten Great Manifestations only one or at most two of them have been illustrated, and that the first appearance of Samantabhadra has been moved up a few panels. However, if we reject Bosch’s identification, the question arises how we should explain the Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā* on IVB-72. The answer to that question turns out to be surprisingly simple. Among the many miraculous apparitions pouring forth from the pores of Samantabhadra’s skin, almost simultaneously with the appearance of the miraculous jewelled trees illustrated on IVB-73-75, the following miracle occurs: “He [Sudhana] saw how from each and every pore of Samantabhadra’s skin there appeared manifestations of divinities of the Brahmaloaka, their number equal to that of the specks of dust in all Buddha lands (*Buddhaksetras*). They implored all Tathāgatas to turn the Wheel of the Marvelous Law” (T.293, 839b, 21; T.278, 784b, 27-28; T.279, 440b, 18-19). It is not the presence of Vairocana, but the reference to the Turning of the Wheel of the Law which prompted the sculptors to represent a Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā*. There is, therefore, no compelling reason to assume any “free interpretation, bordering on carelessness”, as suggested by Bosch.

IVB-73 The Apparition of Magic Trees (1)

In the texts the apparition of the gods, shown on IVB-72, follows that of a number of miraculous trees, whereas in the Borobudur reliefs it precedes them. The first of these trees produces a rain of incense, the fumes of which “pervade all Buddha assemblies” (T.293, 839b, 6; T.278, 784b, 20; T.279, 440b, 10-11). Bosch (1929, 226) notes that no mention is made of any incense burners (*dhūpa*) in the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts. It turns out, however, that the sculptors chose the only possible way this miracle of scents could be made visually recognizable: they simply placed incense burners among the branches of the tree. (For a discussion of *kalpavrkṣa* and the rituals of decorating such trees see van Erp 1931, 173).

IVB-74 The Apparition of Magic Trees (2)

Immediately following the magic trees that dispense incense, Prajñā (T.293, p.839b, 9) mentions a rain of garments. Bosch notes the discrepancy that the text makes the garments fall



32. The apparition of a musical tree (IVB-75).

from the clouds and not from trees, as we see in the relief (Bosch 1929, 226). At first sight a slight liberty taken by the sculptors or a minor variant in the Borobudur text would seem to be responsible for what appears to be only a minor deviation from the transmitted texts. However, all three Chinese translations agree with the Parisian Sanskrit text and make no mention at all of a magic tree with garments. However, the next relief suggests that in this instance the sculptors of Borobudur may not have taken any liberty with their text at all.

IVB-75 The Apparition of Magic Trees (3) (fig. 32)

The relief shows a tree decorated with all sorts of musical instruments. As Bosch (1929, 226) pointed out, the texts make no mention of such instruments. However, as we have already seen, the only way the sculptors could visually render the smell of incense was to place incense burners in a magic tree. It is not surprising, then, that they would represent the sound of music by means of musical instruments.

My suspicion that this magic tree may indeed have been intended to bring forth music was first aroused by a brief footnote. In T.278 (784b, 20) immediately after the first, a second type of incense-dispensing tree is mentioned. Such duplications are not uncommon in our texts. However, according to a footnote (no.4) to the sentence “producing all kinds of marvelous incense to adorn the *Dharmadhātu*”, one edition of the Chinese text replaces *xiang* (incense) with *yin* (music). This confirms, once again, the importance of the search for variant readings for the exact identification of Borobudur reliefs.

The pattern of repetition of phrases is a consistent characteristic of the *Gandavyūha*. An argument in favor of the explanation of the reliefs illustrating the apparition of magic trees can be found elsewhere in the text. When Sudhana visits the upāsikā Āśā in the splendid Samantavyūha park, the text mentions trees spreading an all-pervading scent, trees from which garments of various colors are suspended, and trees producing sweet sounds of heavenly musical instruments in exactly the same order as they appear in the reliefs IVB-73—IVB-75 (Vaidya, p.79, 9-12; T. 278, 697c; T. 279, 343a; see Ijiri 2005, 8).

IVB-76 A Visit to a Noble Lady (Unidentified)

On the right side of the relief stands a small pavilion in which a woman is seated. Her head-dress and jewelry identify her as a member of the elite. In the center stands a visitor, who has just arrived at her residence. His two horses can be seen in the background. The visitor respectfully greets a group of five men, all in the dress of the elite. To the left his servants are seated. In the text only a short passage separates the apparition of the magic trees, illustrated on IVB-72-75, from the hells, the hungry ghosts and the animals (illustrated on IVB-78 and -79). However, it turns out to be difficult to match the visiting scene of IVB-76 with an appropriate passage in that part of the text. In all likelihood the relief is meant to illustrate a phrase such as “the quest for Enlightenment” or “the resolve to seek Enlightenment”. This is one of the few scenes in this series of reliefs in which a woman seems to play a prominent role, but its connection with the text remains unclear.

IVB-77 The Miraculous Apparition of the *Buddhaksetras*

Immediately following the passage describing the apparition of the gods of the Brahmaloaka, urging the Buddhas to turn the Wheel of the Law, there appear by magic innumerable *Buddhaksetras* of the past, present, and future. It is difficult to decide which of these miracles was chosen to be illustrated here. The presence of eleven men in royal attire, possibly representing Bodhisattvas, could perhaps point to the *Buddhaksetras* “filled with congregations of Bodhisattvas” of the text (T. 293, 839bc).

IVB-78 The Realms of Rebirth: The Hells

After describing Sudhana’s elation at having witnessed these miracles, the text continues with new examples of Samantabhadra’s magic. Sudhana saw that “from every part of [Samantabhadra’s] body, from every limb and from every pore appear myriads of worlds with their [rings of] earth, water, fire, and wind; their oceans, their four continents, their Mount Sumeru, and their iron enclosure; their mountains of treasure, their lands, cities, and towns, their palaces and parks, including their hells, their realm of the Hungry Ghosts, and their realm of the rebirth in the animal world, and their realm of King Yāma” (T.293, 840a, 11).

For the second time (the first being relief III-19), the sculptors did not hesitate, even in this rarified atmosphere of multiple magic apparitions, to show the horror of the cauldrons of hell in which sinners are being boiled. It is evident that the sculptors showed such scenes whenever the text called for them, irrespective of any cosmological notions concerning the location of the hells. At the same time, however, they always tried to avoid distracting the pilgrim from his by now elevated state of spiritual detachment by displays of horror. As a concession to the sculptors’ wish to avoid scenes of stark violence, those reborn in hell are shown here stepping out of the boiling cauldron. In a similar relief illustrating a passage in the *Karmavibhanga* (O-110), this posture of the inmates of hell signals to the viewer that the persons reborn in hell have been sentenced to only a brief sojourn in that infernal abode.

IVB-79 The Realms of Rebirth: Hungry Ghosts and Animals

Just as the texts mention the realms of rebirth as a Hungry Ghost (*preta*) and as an animal in the same breath, the sculptors have chosen to combine the two realms on one relief, but to separate them by a fence.

IVB-80 The Apparition of a Buddha

In the center of the relief a Buddha is seated in a pavilion. To the right are four worshipers, to the left two persons bringing offerings. Immediately following the long passage illustrated on the two preceding reliefs, the text continues: “In all past aeons [he saw] all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas teach and transform all beings” (T. 278, 784c, 25). Perhaps a phrase similar in content to this quotation inspired this and the following relief in which the pilgrim is seen first paying homage to a Buddha and then to a Bodhisattva.

IVB-81 The Apparition of a Bodhisattva

The Bodhisattva is seated in meditative pose on a throne in the center of the relief. He is flanked on both sides by worshipers. As the text quoted above mentions both Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, this is probably a sequel to the preceding relief.

IVB-82 Samantabhadra lays his Right Hand on Sudhana’s Head (**fig. 33**)

Samantabhadra is seated in an open pavilion on the right. He raises his right hand to touch Sudhana’s forehead. Sudhana’s retinue is seated to the left. Just before the dramatic event occurs that is so vividly represented here, Sudhana receives a series of *jñāna-pāramitās* (knowledge of the correct definition of all *dharma*s, Eimer 2006, 111). Like the Ten Auspicious Portents earlier, these *pāramitās* have been skipped by the sculptors. Then follows the solemn moment in which Samantabhadra touches Sudhana’s head, an episode mentioned in all texts (T.293, 840b, 21-22; T.278, 785a, 14; T.279, 441a, 27-28). In the next paragraph “all Samantabhadras of all myriad worlds” follow this example in one gigantic, simultaneously multiplied ceremony, which the sculptors of Borobudur must have deemed impossible to replicate in stone.

Frédéric (1994, p.130) apparently considers the next two reliefs as no longer being part of the illustrations of the *Gandavyūha*, for he takes this as the final relief illustrating the text.

IVB-83 Two Tathāgatas

This and the following relief are similar in composition and obviously belong together. Here two Buddhas, one in *vitarka-mudrā*, the other in *bhūmiśparśa-mudrā*, are seated in separate pavilions, flanked by worshipers.



33. Samantabhadra lays his right hand on Sudhana's head (IVB-82).

IVB-84 Two Tathāgatas

In this relief the two Buddhas are shown in *dhyāna-mudrā* and *vitarka-mudrā*, but in every other respect it is very similar to the preceding relief.

After Samantabhadra asked Sudhana whether he witnessed the miracles he had just performed for his benefit, Sudhana confirms that he saw them, admitting at the same time that he did not comprehend them as fully as only a Buddha can do. Samantabhadra then proceeds to sketch his own progress through the aeons towards Enlightenment. In many ways this account parallels the earlier description of Maitreya's path to Bodhisattvahood. It even includes an almost identical passage describing how Samantabhadra gave away his limbs and other parts of his body. But while as many as twelve reliefs (IIIB-71—IIIB-83) have been devoted to Maitreya's acts of physical self sacrifice, the sculptors have skipped the entire passage dealing with Samantabhadra's similar acts of generosity.

Thus the final pages of the *Gandavyūha* have been compressed rather anticlimactically into two reliefs, both showing two Buddhas. Together they may represent the large "assembly of all Buddhas" of the text. This, then, marks the somewhat abrupt end of the illustrations of the *Gandavyūha* proper, for, as we shall see, the entire main wall of the fourth gallery has been reserved for illustrations of the *Bhadracarī*.

Another possibility is that the two reliefs represent a preview of things to come, just as the final reliefs of the main wall of the second gallery (II 126-128) prepared the viewer for Sudhana's visit to the *kūtāgāra* of Maitreya. The first strophe of the *Bhadracarī* reads: "As many lions of humanity as there are throughout past, present, and future." The presence of two Buddhas on each of these two reliefs could, therefore, represent a transition to the final series of reliefs and may be seen as reflecting the all-encompassing statement in the opening lines of the *Bhadracarī*.

THE GANDAVYŪHA: TEXT AND IMAGE AT BOROBUDUR

More than eighty-five years ago, Alfred Foucher wrote in his “Letter from Ajantā”: “You will agree with me, I believe, that in order to better appreciate the works of art, it would be useful to understand them; and that the first thing we have to do, after having duly admired their beauty, is to identify the subject they represent” (Foucher 1921, 201, transl. J.F.).

This remark by the distinguished French scholar was invoked by Dieter Schlingloff in his *Studies in the Ajanta Paintings, Identifications and Interpretations* (Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1987). In this collection of essays, Schlingloff identifies many *jātakas* and other Buddhist legends which have been illustrated in the murals of the caves of Ajantā. By comparing the often fragmentarily preserved visual evidence of the murals with the numerous literary versions of these stories, which have been transmitted in Sanskrit, Pali, and Chinese Buddhist literature, he succeeded in identifying the source of inspiration of many more murals, which had defied earlier efforts at identification. He sometimes was even able to correct previous identifications by other scholars. Schlingloff’s disciple and collaborator Monika Zin recently stated categorically that “the methods for the identification of Indian Buddhist narrative reliefs and paintings are not suitable for the identification of the reliefs of Borobudur” (Zin 2006, 265). The validity of this statement requires further consideration, but falls outside the scope of the present study. Following Schlingloff’s example of using a wider range of literary sources, I was able to track down many variant readings of the text of the *Gandavyūha*. These enabled me to add new identifications to those previously made by Krom and Bosch. Added to theirs, these identifications sometimes provide new insights into the methods of illustration adopted by the sculptors.

Now that we have accomplished Foucher’s primary objective, at least to the extent possible at the present time, we should ask ourselves which conclusions we may draw from those *Gandavyūha* bas-reliefs of the second gallery that have now been identified. Perhaps the first question a philologist would like to see resolved concerns the place, which the Borobudur version of the *Gandavyūha*, preserved only visually in the bas-reliefs, occupies in the history of the evolution of the text. The extremely detailed illustration on the third and fourth galleries of certain passages of the text holds out the tantalizing promise that this question may one day be satisfactorily resolved. However, a definitive answer will have to wait until a more thorough and comprehensive philological analysis of all text versions in Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan has been undertaken. It would nevertheless seem useful to make here a few preliminary observations regarding this question, based upon the results of the present study.

Vetter has pointed out that the nucleus of the *Gandavyūha*, i.e. the story of Sudhana’s pilgrimage, expanded over time into the text as we know it today (2004). He suggested that the prologue may have been added to give the core tale of Sudhana’s pilgrimage the weight and prestige of a *sūtra*. This is a reasonable assumption, even though the prologue differs from those of other *sūtras* in that the Buddha himself remains silent throughout the entire session of the assembly (see pp.19-20). That the somewhat anticlimactic second visit of Sudhana to Mañjuśrī and his final visit to Samantabhadra could also be later additions, as Vetter suggests, is equally plausible. Finally, most scholars seem to agree that the concluding stanzas of the

Bhadracarī, which sing the praise of Amitābha, are another later addition. The evolution of the text of the *Gandavyūha* does not seem to differ radically from that of other scriptures illustrated on Borobudur. For example, the *Karmavibhanga*, which at first sight might appear to be a rigidly structured, homogeneous text, on closer inspection turns out to represent a composite of several different texts, all dealing with the operating principles of karma (Marrison 1991). Philological and buddhological studies can throw new light on the evolution of these texts and have already substantially contributed to our understanding of them. However, this kind of research turns out to be of only limited practical value for the interpretation of those bas-reliefs of Borobudur in which these texts have been illustrated.

Our knowledge of the contents of the palm leaf manuscripts of the scriptures upon which the sculptors of Borobudur based their illustrations is limited to those passages, which the monks, who handed the sculptors their assignments, deemed worthy of being illustrated. Their selective approach alone determines the strict limitations of our knowledge of the text, as it was read by the monks of Borobudur. We have, with only very few exceptions, no means at all to establish the contents of those passages in their palm leaf manuscripts which the sculptors decided to skip entirely. However, from those parts of the text that have actually been illustrated, we can draw at least one important, definite conclusion. The texts of the *Karmavibhanga*, the *Lalitavistara*, and the *Gandavyūha* all had already largely assumed their definitive overall shape before Borobudur was built. The only expansion of the text of major significance that may have been lacking in the manuscript of the *Gandavyūha* which guided the sculptors of Borobudur consists of the concluding stanzas of the *Bhadracarī* in praise of Amitābha. Although he is one of the Five Jinas, this Buddha does not play a prominent role in the *Gandavyūha*. The verses of the *Bhadracarī* dedicated to him are generally believed to be a later addition to the hymn. His absence from the narrative reliefs of Borobudur should, therefore, not come as a surprise.

There seems to be a general agreement among scholars that Buddhahadra's Chinese translation (T.278) represents the earliest known version of the complete *Gandavyūha*. Only a fragmentary Chinese translation (T.294) may be slightly older. The Sanskrit editions of Suzuki and Vaidya are both thought to represent a somewhat later version (Vetter 2004; Ijiri 2005). When we tried to match the text of the *Gandavyūha* with the reliefs of Borobudur, Buddhahadra's early translation was usually the least helpful in providing clues to the meaning of the reliefs. This may in part be due to the brevity and compactness of this translation. It could also be an indication that the Borobudur version represents a later, more elaborate phase in the evolution of the text than the manuscript upon which Buddhahadra based his translation.

By contrast, the last of the three Chinese versions (T.293), translated by Prajñā, is of much greater help in identifying the reliefs. This increased convergence of text and image may at least in part be due to the fact that Prajñā's text is by far the most extensive of the three Chinese translations. Cleary assumes that the additions or amplifications, not occurring in what he calls "the Sanskrit original" (presumably the Suzuki and Vaidya text editions, J.F.), or in the two earlier Chinese translations, were made by Prajñā, the translator himself, or by his committee of assistants (Cleary 1989, 395). It would seem advisable, however, to defer judgment on this question until more elaborate versions of the Sanskrit text have been thoroughly investigated. Among these should definitely be considered the two Sanskrit manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris which were first studied by Bosch (1929). The closest resemblance to the text illustrated by the sculptors of Borobudur is provided by these two Parisian manuscripts, used

by Bosch, and by Prajñā's third Chinese translation. This resemblance is especially strong in such passages as the long lists of ornaments of Maitreya's *kūtāgāra*, and in the enumeration of gifts and apparitions by Maitreya illustrated on the third and fourth galleries of Borobudur.

When all transmitted versions of the text contain a particular passage, but no Borobudur relief matches that passage, it would seem reasonable to assume that the sculptors skipped that passage. An example is Sudhana's tenth *kalyānamitra*, the Brahman Jayosmāyatana, who appears not to have been represented on Borobudur at all. As he is absent from both pilgrimages on the second main wall, but present in all known versions of the text, it would seem likely that the sculptors skipped him altogether. In that case he would be the only one of Sudhana's fifty-three Good Friends to have suffered this fate. It is possible, however, that a missing leaf in the Borobudur manuscript is the cause of his absence. Another possibility is that Jayosmāyatana's place was taken by another, anonymous interlocutor of lesser standing (see e.g. II-31 and II-115). It may not be a coincidence, however, that the visit to Jayosmāyatana is marked by an incident of a type that is of rare occurrence in the *Gandavyūha*. The meeting with this Brahman takes place on a razor-sharp crest of a mountain range, completely engulfed in flames. Sudhana is invited to dive down into the raging fire in order to "purify his actions". Initially, in a rare moment of flagging spiritual resolve, Sudhana hesitates to follow Jayosmāyatana's exhortations. After divine intervention by the gods of the Brahmaloka Sudhana is finally persuaded to take the plunge—and survives the fiery test unscathed (Cleary, 93-98). It is possible that Sudhana's baptism of fire, which has been vividly depicted in Chinese and Japanese works of art, was deemed too graphic to be illustrated on Borobudur. However, this does not seem to be a sufficient reason for the sculptors to skip the entire visit. As they did in several other cases, the sculptors could easily have ignored the incident and simply created an unspecific visit to a Brahman, as can be seen elsewhere on the walls and balustrades of Borobudur.

The ways the sculptors dealt with the illustration of such violent events are usually discreet, but not always entirely consistent. The low-key, unobtrusive treatment of themes of violence and cruelty was probably inspired by the wish not to distract the intended audience from their tranquil state of high spiritual awareness. In the case of Sudhana's visit to King Anala, who displays an unprecedented degree of cruelty (Cleary, 118-121), the sculptors did not hesitate to depict such an excess of violence (II-35). They may have felt free to do so because the entire torture scene turned out in the end to be a mere illusory apparition. On the other hand, a very likely example of actual skipping of a description of inappropriate behavior occurs in the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs. There the sentence "To evoke the Thought of Enlightenment and to commission Buddhist icons (or: "to decorate temples") has been illustrated, but its exact opposite: "To withdraw from the Thought of Enlightenment and to destroy Buddhist icons" has been skipped (Fontein 1989, 25). In view of the rigidly antithetical structure of the first part of the *Karmavibhanga*, the fact that decorating temples has been illustrated makes it highly likely that the Borobudur version of the text also contained its exact opposite. A final example of the sculptors' inconsistent treatment of gruesome scenes is that they devoted no less than a dozen (tastefully understated) reliefs to Maitreya's sacrifice of various parts of his body (IIIB-71—IIIB-82), but that they skipped the entire passage in which Samantabhadra performs exactly the same acts of boundless generosity.

In the present state of our knowledge of the text we cannot give a definitive answer to the question of the affiliation of the Borobudur version of the *Gandavyūha*. Based upon the reliefs

that have been identified with certainty to date, our first impression is that the Borobudur text represented a version that is posterior to Buddhahadra's Chinese translation (T. 278) and the Sanskrit texts of Suzuki and Vaidya, and closer to both Prajñā's later translation (T.293) and the Parisian Sanskrit manuscripts. The chronology of the translations and the 9th century date for Borobudur suggest the likelihood that a relatively recent, already expanded version of the *Gandavyūha*, in circulation in the Buddhist world during the 9th century, served as the source of inspiration for the sculptors of Borobudur.

COMMENTS ON THE RELIEFS OF THE SECOND GALLERY, MAIN WALL

The methods of illustration adopted by the sculptors on the second main wall differ in several respects from the treatment of the final sections of the *Gandavyūha* on the third and fourth galleries. It would seem useful, therefore, to first try to define the methods adopted by the sculptors of the main wall of the second gallery. Later we will consider how these methods differ from those adopted by the sculptors of the panels of the third and fourth galleries which illustrate the concluding sections of the text.

The overall planning of the themes for the bas-reliefs of the second main wall reveals the care with which the themes of the text were tailored to the available wall space. After devoting the first fifteen panels to illustrations of the prologue of the *Gandavyūha*, exactly one hundred and ten panels were reserved for two consecutive sets of illustrations of the pilgrimage, beginning with Sudhana's departure from Mañjuśrī (II-16) and ending with his arrival at the *kūtāgāra* of Maitreya (II-126). The procession of divinities walking in the clouds (II-73) is an unmistakable reference to Sudhana's visit to the *bhikṣu* Supratisthita (IV), the first *kalyānamitra* he meets on his second round of visits. The scene appears exactly halfway between II-16 and II-126. This suggests that it must have been from the very beginning the intention to divide the space on the second main wall equally between the two consecutive pilgrimages.

The earliest reliefs of the monument, those of the hidden base, reveal no evidence of similar planning. In the first half of the *Karmavibhanga* the paragraphs dealing with positive and negative karma alternate rigidly and are treated with strict evenhandedness. However, in their selection of actual examples from the ten offered in each paragraph the sculptors display a definite bias in favor of cases of positive karma (Fontein 1989, 70). The beginning or end of the set of bas-reliefs, devoted to a single paragraph of the *Karmavibhanga*, rarely seems to coincide with such architectural features of the monument as corners or stairways. Some of the brief instructions to the sculptors, inscribed in the margins of the reliefs of the hidden base, do not even correspond to the themes that are actually represented on the panels on which they were carved. Even in a relatively late phase of the construction and the sculptural decoration of the monument, minor adjustments and changes were apparently still being made in the assignment of themes to individual reliefs. All this tinkering gives the impression that the planning of the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs was still somewhat more improvised and less strictly coordinated with the architectural features than that of the later *Gandavyūha* reliefs. This is not surprising if we bear in mind that the *Gandavyūha* reliefs must have been carved after at least one or perhaps even two generations of architects and sculptors had already gained considerable experience in dealing with the many technical challenges of a sculptural program of such unprecedented scope. A recent detailed study of the photographs of the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs (Reichle 2009) reveals evidence which may be interpreted as an indication of a similar gradual refinement in the sculptors' varied working methods as the carving the reliefs progressed.

In the first gallery the illustrations of the *Life of the Buddha* according to the *Lalitavistara* are shown in the upper register, above those of various *avadānas* and *jātakas*, many of which have yet to be identified. As van Erp was the first to point out, the *jātaka* reliefs on the opposite wall of the first balustrade, likewise arranged in two registers, are a later addition that was

not part of the original building plan. There the occasional repetition of the same *jātaka*, and especially the insertion between them of illustrations of the entire Garland of Birth Stories, or *Jātakamālā*, strongly suggests that more than one collection of this genre of stories provided the themes for these additional panels. It should be noted, however, that many other collections of *jātakas* contain very similar duplications, which were apparently not considered redundant. Even the possibility that the monks of Borobudur freely composed their own anthology of *jātakas* to guide the sculptors cannot be excluded. Unfortunately, due to their often poor state of preservation, many of the *jātaka* reliefs of the first balustrade, especially those in the lower register, still remain unidentified. We do not even know where the illustrations of one collection of *jātakas* end and those of another begin. Any conclusion concerning the type of planning of these series of reliefs remains, at least for now, entirely speculative. However, the fact that the two additional series of reliefs illustrating *jātakas* on the first balustrade together add up to exactly five hundred panels clearly suggests a close coordination between the thematic decoration and the modified, expanded architecture. The *jātakas* and *avadānas* illustrated on the lower register of the first main wall and those of the second balustrade together constitute the originally planned illustrations. These two series together add up to 220 panels, i.e. double the number of 110 or four times 55. This demonstrates that the planning of the allotment of space based upon the number 55 or 110, which continues on the higher galleries, must have been part of the original design. This can only have been planned prior to the covering of the base.

The overall planning of the *Gandavyūha* reliefs of the second main wall reveals a carefully thought-out scheme. However, within the broad outlines of what may be called the master plan no systematic pattern can be discerned in the choice of themes for the individual panels. If the sculptors of Borobudur had really wanted to give strictly equal treatment to the two consecutive pilgrimages which they were asked to illustrate on the main wall of the second gallery, nothing would have prevented them from twice assigning one single relief to each visit. However, they did not opt for such an even-handed, but rather obvious monoscopic approach. By assigning instead more than one relief to a select number of Sudhana's visits and by inserting, from time to time, a traveling scene they eliminated any possibility to represent each visit twice. At first sight, therefore, the assignment of themes to the individual panels appears to have been less methodical than the overall planning of the entire series.

On closer inspection, however, it appears that the planning did at least preserve the general principle of the equal treatment of the two consecutive pilgrimages, albeit in a different, less strictly numerical way. In the first pilgrimage (II-16—II-72) the first half of Sudhana's pilgrimage has been illustrated almost completely, followed by a more cursory treatment of the second half. In the second series (II-73—II-128) this imbalance was corrected by representing the second half of the visits more completely than the first. By adopting this method, all of Sudhana's *kalyānamitras* came to be represented at least once and most of them twice. As mentioned earlier, the only exception is the Brahman Jayosmāyatana [X], who is missing from both series (see reliefs II-25 and II-37).

The duplication of the pilgrimage is by far the most important deviation from the contents of all transmitted texts, and requires further investigation. Sudhana asks each of his successive *kalyānamitras* for instruction in the Conduct of the Bodhisattva. They answer him by describing their own *vimoksa*, implying that this is the extent of their knowledge and that they are not in possession of the whole truth concerning the Conduct of the Bodhisattva. They then refer

him to the next Good Friend for further instruction. By learning during each of his many visits one more segment of the truth, as it was perceived by these Good Friends, Sudhana gradually acquires perfect insight in the Conduct of the Bodhisattva. The thought that Sudhana directly profits from the experience of each Good Friend, and that one of his visits can be associated with the quest for Enlightenment by the *kalyānamitra* and the other with Sudhana's personal progress on that same path, may have inspired the idea for the duplication of the visits (see introduction, pp.5-7).

The text often conveys a general sense of the spiritual progress made by our pilgrim in the course of these visits. However, the heightened awareness of the pilgrim seems to be more an accumulative effect of the wise words of his *kalyānamitras* than the result of a consistent, step-by-step pattern of spiritual progress in the characteristics of each *kalyānamitra*'s individual *vimoksa*. One of the authoritative Chinese commentaries, taking into account the contents of the entire Chinese *Avatamsaka sūtra*, divides the first fifty *kalyānamitras* after Mañjuśrī into groups of ten and associates each group with a specific chapter of the *sūtra* which teaches a set of ten-fold stages. Thus each individual *kalyānamitra* came to be associated with one specific step of the fifty-three steps on the path towards the Conduct of the Bodhisattva (see Rahder 1929; Fontein 1966, appendix). However, as Thomas Cleary's translation of the Chinese commentary by Li Tongxuan (Cleary 1989b) clearly demonstrates, the connection between the *vimoksas* of the successive *kalyānamitras* and the particular stage of spiritual progress assigned to each of them in a system of stages often seems rather tenuous or artificial. For example, Li Tongxuan offers as an explanation for the rather puzzling silence of the youth Viśvāmītra (XLIV) that the perfect teacher offers no instruction, but leaves this task to his assistant, in this case another youthful *kalyānamitra*, the boy Śilpābhijña (Cleary 1989b, 74). The last word on the question of the inner cohesion of the successive visits is best left to the buddhologists. However, for the practical purpose of the identification of the reliefs the bonds linking the successive Good Friends may be of some significance.

The order in which the successive Good Friends of Sudhana appear in the *Gandavyūha* is determined exclusively by the referrals, which each of the Good Friends extends to the pilgrim. However, the inner, spiritual connection between one Good Friend and the next is not always evident, except in the obvious instances of family ties such as Gopā (XLI) and Māyā (XLII), or the youth Śrisambhava and his sister Śrīmatī (LI). The first Western scholar to suggest, albeit somewhat hesitatingly, that there may be some sort of inner connection between one Good Friend and the next is Diana Paul (Paul 1985, 138 and 145). For reasons which are not always entirely clear, she considers the lay woman Āśā (VIII) the "prototypical wife" and the next mentor, Bhismottaranirghosa (IX), the "prototypical father". She also regards Prabhūtā (XIV) as the "ideal wife" and the next Good Friend, Vidvān (XV), as the "ideal householder". However, she later seems to retract these suggestions in a footnote, when she writes: "A specific relationship between Prabhūtā and Vidvān is not asserted" (Paul 1985, 165, n.38). Recently Douglas Osto (2008, 169, n.69) has pointed out a number of "meaningful pairs" of *kalyānamitras* who either complement or contrast with each other. These are Megha with Mukta (V-VI), King Anala with King Mahāprabha (XVIII-XIX), the nun Simhavijrmbhitā with the courtesan Vasumitrā (XXV-XXVI), and the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara with the Bodhisattva Ananyagāmin (XXVIII-XXIX). There is no evidence that the order in which these particular visits have been portrayed by the sculptors of Borobudur deviates from the sequence in the transmitted texts.

We should not take for granted that the ideas advanced in the Chinese commentaries of Fazang, Li Tongxuan and others, were known to the builders and sculptors of Borobudur. Too little is known about the Indian roots of Avatamsaka Buddhism to reach any definite conclusion on this question. However, the possibility exists that somewhat similar interpretations of the *Gandavyūha* were taught or discussed in the monastery of Nālandā or in one of the other thriving centers of Buddhist learning in Central Asia. From there pilgrims could have carried these ideas to both the Far East and to Southeast Asia. It is highly likely that at least an idea resembling Fazang's concept of a two-fold pilgrimage was known at Borobudur. The expansion of Sudhana's pilgrimage to 110 panels by duplicating the fifty-five visits and the large number of Sudhana's Good Friends portrayed twice on Borobudur definitely points in that direction. Sylvain Lévi's suggestion that the sculptors duplicated the series of visits "seulement pour remplir le nombre" seems to underestimate a more complex symbolic intention of the sculptors and their principals.

When we consult the Chinese commentaries and the extensive Japanese literature on the *Kegon-kyō* (*Avatamsaka-sūtra*), we often find Sudhana's successive encounters with his *kalyānamitras* interpreted as a concatenation of visits, all interdependently related and assigned their place in a hierarchy of gradually increasing consciousness and heightened detachment. If this were indeed the original intent of the text, as interpreted at Borobudur, changes made by the sculptors in the sequence of the visits could have disrupted the regular flow of the narrative of the progress on the path towards Enlightenment. Moreover, all transmitted versions of the text, in Sanskrit or in translation, describe Sudhana's visits in exactly the same order. That makes it rather unlikely, although not entirely impossible, that the palm leaf manuscript of the *Gandavyūha* that guided the monks of Borobudur described the visits in a slightly different order. But even if the sculptors, for reasons unclear to us, saw fit to make slight changes in the sequence of the visits, the flow of the story of Sudhana's pilgrimage need not have been substantially affected. The structure of the narrative would have remained intact.

Not counting the prologue and the narrative scenes, which illustrate *avadāna*-type stories told by Sudhana's *kalyānamitras*, or specific events that took place in the course of Sudhana's visits, and also deducting the occasional traveling scene, there remain on the second main wall a total of eighty-nine panels. Each of these is dedicated to a particular visit of the pilgrim and almost all show Sudhana in the act of visiting one of his *kalyānamitras*. Eighty-three of these visiting scenes show Sudhana seated, kneeling, or standing on the right side of the panel, directly facing his *kalyānamitra*. As in all other series of Borobudur reliefs, the order in which the themes depicted on the panels were to be viewed was dictated by the movements of an audience performing the ritual clockwise circumambulation of a sanctuary (*pradaksinā*). Not just the sequential order of the reliefs, even the composition of each individual relief anticipated the clockwise direction of the viewers' movements. As the pilgrims visiting Borobudur walked past the reliefs of the second main wall, the first figure they would see on most of these panels was that of Sudhana. This arrangement fostered the living pilgrim's identification with the legendary pilgrim Sudhana of the reliefs. It is as if the pilgrims saw the pageant of *kalyānamitras* and the fantastic settings of the visits through Sudhana's eyes. It is probably no coincidence that of the six panels on which Sudhana is shown on the left side of the panel, three (II-29, II-67, and II-107) are corner panels. These exceptions to the rule for the positioning of the chief protagonists may have been made deliberately because of the more limited

space on the corner reliefs or in order to compensate for the different angle from which these reliefs were to be viewed by the prospective pilgrims.

The *kalyānamitras* make their appearance in the center or on the left side of the panel. In portraying Sudhana and his *kalyānamitras*, the sculptors depicted types of persons, representatives of a certain class, or persons of a clearly defined divine or human status, instead of individuals. As a result, no two portraits of the same person look exactly alike. Stutterheim once tried to explain these frequent variations in the representation of the same protagonists. He suggested that the viewer meditated in front of each individual relief. This made it unnecessary to have either the chief protagonists or any other figure represented in a consistent, uniform fashion, as each panel was an independent self-contained unit, a separate object of meditation all by itself (Stutterheim 1956, 45-46). Whatever the truth of that explanation may be, a comparison of the two consecutive pilgrimages demonstrates time and again that the sculptors did not make the slightest effort to make the two portraits of the same *kalyānamitra* look alike.

Professor Bosch used to tell his students that Martha Muusses, a Dutch scholar active in Indonesia during the 1920s, claimed that she was able to recognize the hands of several different individual sculptors in the Borobudur reliefs. Unfortunately, she never published the specifics of her idea and we have therefore no possibility to test its veracity. Although I have often walked the galleries of the monument trying to confirm it, I was never able to do so. As we walk past the reliefs, our eyes often catch fascinating picturesque details which immediately recall similar, sometimes even almost identical scenes on another relief. One suspects, however, that such repetitions need not necessarily represent the signature of the same artist. It seems more likely that they are the result of the habit of the sculptors to look over each other's shoulders.

When different artists were asked to portray identical or comparable events or situations, the results are sometimes very similar. For example, this is the case with Hrīdeva's nocturnal visit to the palace of Siddhārtha (Ia-53) and the appearance in a dream of a Night Goddess, who announces the coming of a Tathāgata (II-68). However, the sculptors of the reliefs of the second main wall made no effort whatsoever to copy the other representation of the same *kalyānamitra*. In the rare case where there is a certain similarity in the setting of two panels, as, for example, between II-69 and II-123, we do not have definite proof that the same Good Friend has been portrayed.

Gods, royal personages, persons of great wealth, as well as Sudhana himself are all shown in the attire of royalty or of the elite. Although it is therefore sometimes unclear who is who, especially when Sudhana meets with a Good Friend of the same or higher social status, there is one important rule to which there are no exceptions. The *kalyānamitras* are always seated at a higher level than Sudhana. That seating arrangements were an important part of Javanese protocol is also evident from inscriptions (Barrett Jones 1984, 35). The height at which persons are seated was symbolically as important as the shape of the conference table in some international negotiations in modern times. In the rare case where we believe to see Sudhana seated at the same level as a female teacher (e.g. II-92), it turns out that the panel does not illustrate a visit, but a story from an earlier life of the *kalyānamitra*, when she was the wife of a *śresthin*, a banker or a master of a guild. Husband and wife or King and Queen are invariably seated at the same level. Sudhana, a *śresthidāraka* (son of a *śresthin*) and the banker (*śresthin*), obviously members of the same social class, are both shown in the same attire of the elite. This can sometimes lead to confusion, but the fact that the man and woman in relief II-92 are shown seated at the same level definitely identifies them as husband and wife instead of teacher and

pupil. This relief also provides visual support for the notion that there existed a certain degree of equality between husband and wife in the ancient society of Central Java, as some inscriptions seem to suggest (Barrett Jones 1984, 97).

An indication that at Borobudur wisdom took precedence over social status is provided by a scene in which Sudhana meets with a Good Friend, who is obviously socially inferior to him. This is the case with the slave and sea captain Vaira (II-41). The sculptor still places this mariner at a level higher than that of the pilgrim—but only slightly higher. That the strict adherence to the protocol honoring teachers even extends to the animal world can be seen in several *jātakas*. There such animals as a peacock (IIB-66) and a giant sea turtle (IBa-195), usually identified in the story as the Bodhisattva in a precedent birth, are invited to lecture at court on the topic of non-violence. They are invariably seated on a high seat or raised pedestal, and are obviously treated with the same respect as was due to human teachers. Such treatment by the sculptors would also seem to accord well with the belief in the universal capacity of all sentient beings for evoking the Thought of Enlightenment (*bodhicitta*).

Some *kalyānamitras* are shown dressed in monk's garb, as a nun, as a lay woman, or in any other type of dress that text and tradition required. While the sculptors usually took great pains to correctly represent the gender, status, headdress, and attire of the *kalyānamitras*, the venue of Sudhana's encounter with them only rarely reflects the descriptions of the setting of the visit given in the text. Teachers whom Sudhana is supposed to have met in the open air are sometimes shown seated in a profusely decorated mansion. It would almost seem that as long as the gender of the *kalyānamitra* was represented correctly, and as long as he or she was dressed in a costume and shown with a headdress indicative of his or her status, the minimum requirements for the correct portrayal of the Good Friend had been met. The sculptors usually portrayed the *kalyānamitras* seated inside elaborate pavilions. These are never complete buildings, and rarely of realistic architectural proportions. Instead they act more like a luxurious, elaborate frame of a portrait.

Hikata has suggested that the sculptors from time to time erred in rendering the gender of certain *kalyānamitras*. That seems to be more a convenient way of solving problems of identification than a characteristic example of the actual working methods of the Javanese sculptors. The gender and social or religious status of the *kalyānamitra* often provide the only clues to the identification of a visiting scene. Therefore, any change we propose to make in these crucial clues, by assuming that a "mistake" was made by the sculptors in the portrayal of the gender of the Good Friend, or that a "misarrangement of reliefs" (Hikata) occurred, renders such proposed identifications questionable. Moreover, the method by which the reliefs have been constructed and embedded in the architecture of the second main wall definitely excludes the possibility of any inadvertent "misarrangement" of the reliefs at the time of van Erp's first restoration. It was—because of obvious financial constraints—largely limited to the leveling of the floors of the galleries and the reconstruction of the circular terraces.

Scholars, who wish to compare the Javanese methods of sculptural narration with those of Indian narrative sculpture, should perhaps focus first on the reliefs illustrating *jātakas* and *avadānas*, where the narrative genius of the sculptors is on full display. By contrast, there is a very limited amount of real visual narration in the reliefs of the second main wall. This aspect accurately reflects the secondary role of the narrative in the *Gandavyūha*. The importance of the Good Friends' oral descriptions of their particular *vimoksa*—and, later, their instruction by visual means—by far exceeds that of the visible actions of the chief protagonists. The

sculptors reduced most of Sudhana's visits to a monoscenic, usually rather static illustration, capturing a moment of the visit, as if frozen in time. Those *kalyānamitras*, who give Sudhana a lengthy lecture on their personal *vimoksa*, or who regale Sudhana with detailed accounts of their precedent lives, would seem to have been shortchanged. For the more voluble Good Friends usually receive the same amount of coverage by the sculptors as those, who dismiss our pilgrim after having spoken barely a few sentences, or even after having taught him nothing at all. On the other hand, even some very brief encounters of Sudhana with minor interlocutors seem to have been considered worthy of inclusion (e.g. II-37). The lengthy instructions given by the Night Goddesses and other female *kalyānamitras*, if illustrated at all, have been reduced to one or at most to two reliefs. The decision that almost the entire pilgrimage had to be illustrated twice drastically reduced the space available for multiple illustrations of a single visit.

When Krom first identified some of the reliefs with the help of the two abstracts available to him, he noticed many discrepancies between the brief descriptions of the settings of the visits that he found in the summaries of Mitra and Sastri and the scenes that he actually saw on the reliefs. He concluded from these differences that the sculptors must have been ignorant of the actual contents of the *Gandavyūha*. He believed to have found support for this view in the brief instructions to the sculptors that were carved in the margins of some of the unfinished reliefs of the hidden base. He regarded these as the sculptors' only scraps of information on the themes they were commissioned to illustrate (Krom, 1926).

It would seem rather improbable that sculptors who spent a lifetime carving these beautiful bas-reliefs could have remained unaware of the stories they were asked to illustrate. It is not surprising, therefore, that additional identifications of several narrative scenes and other visual clues that can be traced directly to passages in the text have made Krom's hypothesis of the sculptors' ignorance of the contents of the *Gandavyūha* untenable. Nevertheless, now that in many cases the connection between text and image has been established, it cannot be denied that some of the most strikingly picturesque settings and some of the most eye-catching scenes turn out to be the creation of the sculptors' artistic imagination. They rarely have any immediate connection with the descriptions of the actual visit or the particulars of its setting. On the other hand, some of the other Good Friends are shown against the backdrop of a rocky landscape or a splendid forest, exactly as required by the text.

When reading the *Gandavyūha*, we cannot escape the impression that the settings of the teachers' residences rarely play a role of crucial importance in the events that took place during Sudhana's visit. Taken together, the descriptions of the venues of Sudhana's visits and his travels from one destination to the next seem to provide first of all a convenient structural narrative framework for the story of Sudhana's pilgrimage. Except for the opulence of the residences of some of the *kalyānamitras*—the product of their accumulated positive karma—the settings seldom seem to have an evident, immediate connection with the symbolism of the particular *vimoksa*, which each of Sudhana's *kalyānamitras* has achieved. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that in many cases those who gave the sculptors their assignments seem to have allowed them to use their own artistic imagination in creating the settings of the visits. On the other hand, whenever the setting is indeed an essential part of the story, the sculptors faithfully adhered to the script of the *Gandavyūha* (see e.g. II-31, II-45, and II-98).

The sculptors' familiarity with the contents of the *Gandavyūha* is revealed when the artist actually included a visual reference to the *kalyānamitra*'s profession or status or to an event that took place in the course of Sudhana's visit. Thus the identification of Sudhana's visit to

the mariner Vaira (II-41) is confirmed by the presence in the relief of his outrigger vessel. The panel of Sudhana's visit to King Anala (II-35) is the only example in the entire series of reliefs in which the illustration of an important event that took place during Sudhana's visit is not shown on a separate follow-up panel. Instead it has been incorporated into the same panel which depicts the visit itself. Surprisingly, this exception was not made for what could have been regarded as a "real" event, but for the entirely illusory phantasmagoria of the torturing of the king's subjects, a scene which Sudhana initially had mistaken for horrifying reality.

Sometimes events, which occurred during Sudhana's visit, are illustrated on the panel immediately following the one which shows an introductory visiting scene. Thus, the dharma merchant Ratnacūda (XVI) is first shown receiving Sudhana in his splendid residence, even though the two are supposed to have met "in the middle of the market of Simhapota" (II-30). In the next relief Ratnacūda leads Sudhana by the hand to his magnificent ten-storied residence and in the following relief appears a Tathāgata whom Ratnacūda encountered in a previous life.

The sculptors almost always drew a clear distinction between two types of events. These are events that actually took place during Sudhana's visit and those which had occurred earlier, usually during a previous life of the *kalyānamitra*. The latter he or she merely recounted for Sudhana's edification. In the former scenes, Sudhana and his teacher are usually present. From the illustrations of tales told by the *kalyānamitras*, both Sudhana and his teacher are invariably absent. Later, when the sculptors illustrated the visionary miracles performed by Maitreya, no clear distinction was made any longer between the actual physical presence of the Bodhisattva and his presence in spirit.

Besides the setting of the visits, there is at least one other area in which the sculptors apparently were allowed to give free rein to their own imagination. More than fifty times the *Gandavyūha* describes in a repetitive string of stock phrases how Sudhana took leave of his *kalyānamitra*, performed countless respectful circumambulations and proceeded, in accordance with the directions just received, in a southerly direction in search of his next Good Friend. Although the text invariably omits any specifics of the means of transportation, we are left with the definite impression that Sudhana traveled on foot, like most Buddhist pilgrims do to this very day. From time to time the sculptors have inserted a scene that shows our pilgrim traveling. Sometimes he travels indeed on foot, but in spite of the frequent repetition of the same stock phrases in the text, the sculptors decided to introduce a little variety in their illustration. Thus we see Sudhana traveling on an elephant, by horse-drawn carriage or in a palanquin, even though the text invariably remains silent on the type of Sudhana's conveyance.

Sudhana's sometimes luxurious means of transportation point to yet another discrepancy between the text of the *Gandavyūha* and the reliefs of Borobudur. It is what may perhaps be called a matter of cultural differences and of protocol between ancient India and ancient Java. In the *Gandavyūha*, as well as in the Far Eastern iconography of Sudhana's pilgrimage, Sudhana is invariably portrayed as a solitary youthful figure, traveling on foot all by himself in his determined search for instruction in the Conduct of the Bodhisattva. As he proceeds from one visit to the next, Sudhana usually spends his time on the road contemplating the wise words of his last *kalyānamitra*. However, in ancient Java it must have been considered unthinkable for a "son of good family", as Sudhana is often called by his *kalyānamitras*, to travel without servants. A young man of his status could not possibly have done without at least one servant to hold his parasol. The Borobudur reliefs clearly suggest that the parasol was already at that

time an important status symbol, an emblem of rank, or a badge of high office (Ghautama 1986). When Sudhana meets his Good Friends, followed by his retinue of at least three or four servants, these teachers, too, as persons of consequence, are often surrounded by their own entourage. The requirements of Javanese protocol thus populated the visiting scenes with a multitude of persons who merely act as silent extras and who do not seem to participate at all in what little action the often static visiting scenes provide. Moreover, as the sculptors scrupulously avoided having the seams of the stones cut through human faces, the heads of the entire entourage of the two chief protagonists are aligned in one course of stones for standing and another for seated persons. The result is a stereotypical visiting scene, in which the sculptors sometimes sought to introduce some variety by representing the non-participating extras in different poses. Sometimes they even showed them involved in various activities entirely unrelated to either the account of the visit in the text or the *kalyānamitra*'s explanation of his personal *vimoksa*. As we look at these reliefs across the centuries and the cultural distance that separate us from them, we are often distracted by fascinating, eye-catching scenes. Although these scenes immediately draw our attention, they often turn out to be of little or no significance for the precise meaning of the relief once its textual source of inspiration has been identified.

The decisions of the sculptors to include or exclude visual clues to events or to words spoken during Sudhana's visit appear to have been taken haphazardly, or, at least, they do not seem to reveal any discernible pattern. Likewise, there is often no indication as to what made the sculptors decide to devote more than one panel to certain visits and limit the illustration of other visits to a single scene. Initially I was inclined to believe that stories, in which the *kalyānamitra* describes the appearance of a Buddha, were singled out for more extensive treatment (Fontein 2000, 13). The accounts of almost all visits to which more than one panel has been assigned on the second main wall do indeed contain such tales. It should be noted, however, that almost all other stories, told by any of the other *kalyānamitras*, describe very similar events. The moral of each of these frequently repetitive stories appears to be that Sudhana's *kalyānamitras* attained their present highly advanced state of consciousness and detachment—their *vimoksa*—by accumulating positive karma in the course of many previous rebirths during which they witnessed the coming of numerous Tathāgatas, to all of whom they devoutly paid homage.

The above seems to warrant the conclusion that on the main wall of the second gallery the total number of panels assigned to each of the two consecutive pilgrimages was planned in advance, but that the assignment of themes to the individual panels does not reveal any obvious underlying method or pattern. Although, as we will presently see, the overall planning of the reliefs of the main walls and balustrades of the third and fourth galleries seems to have followed the same general principles as those adopted for the second main wall, a noticeable change occurs in the methods of illustration. These changes in the reliefs of the higher galleries are, as we shall presently see, the immediate consequence of earlier decisions regarding the overall planning.

COMMENTS ON THE RELIEFS OF THE THIRD GALLERY AND THE FOURTH BALUSTRADE

We have seen that at Borobudur the prologue of the *Gandavyūha* and the tale of Sudhana's pilgrimage to his first fifty-two *kalyānamitras* up to his arrival at the palace of Maitreya have been illustrated on 125 reliefs. The three final visits to the Bodhisattvas Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, and Samantabhadra together have been illustrated on 335 reliefs. The illustrations of the contents of approximately 82% of the text of the *Gandavyūha* have been compressed into 28% of the available wall space, whereas illustrations of the contents of 18% of the text had to be spread over the remaining 72% of the wall space.

As a result of this lopsided allocation of themes, the description of Sudhana's visit to Maitreya and his palace of miracles alone came to be illustrated on approximately 220 panels. In spite of the drastic change in the ratio between the length of text and the space devoted to its illustration, the general planning of the reliefs nevertheless still shows certain similarities with that of the various previously carved series of Borobudur reliefs. For example, when the sculptors illustrated the first half of the *Karmavibhanga*, they gave preference to themes concerning positive karma, even though positive and negative karma are more evenly balanced in the text. The sculptors of the reliefs of the higher galleries now gave a similar, obviously preferential treatment to Sudhana's visit to Maitreya at the expense of the visits paid to all other *kalyānamitras*.

The last three reliefs of the second main wall show Sudhana arriving at Maitreya's *kūtāgāra*, where he sees the Bodhisattva "coming from a distance" (II-125—II-128). These panels introduce the viewers to what they are about to witness *in extenso* on the main wall and balustrade of the third gallery. By affording the viewer a brief glimpse of what was to come, the sculptors created a seamless transition from the second to the third gallery. This arrangement may also have facilitated the performance of a conducted *pradaksinā* of the monument, led by an officiating priest or other person reciting the *sūtra*. The entire wall space of the third gallery, of both main wall and balustrade, was set aside for illustrations of the visionary miracles performed by Maitreya. The panels devoted to the illustration of Sudhana's visit to Maitreya then continue without interruption to the middle of the fourth balustrade.

When the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs of the hidden base were carved, the beginning and end of the series of illustrations devoted to each paragraph of the text were never made to coincide with such architectural features as stairways or corners. The reliefs of the fourth gallery now for the first time reveal the planners' tailoring of the themes of the reliefs to the architectural features of the monument. It is exactly halfway through the fourth balustrade that the story of Sudhana's visit to Maitreya comes to an end. Clearly separated from the last Maitreya relief by a stairway, Mañjuśrī now makes a brief second appearance on relief IVB-43. The precise location of this relief halfway the gallery can only have been the result of meticulous overall planning. The large number of reliefs and the complex structure of the galleries into which they had to be fitted required a close coordination of the themes of the reliefs with the architectural features of the monument.

The monks, who were in charge of the assignment of the themes to the reliefs, may have had an additional reason for choosing relief IVB-43 to mark the beginning of the second visit to Mañjuśrī. If we add up all panels which illustrate Sudhana's visit to Maitreya, we arrive at almost exactly two hundred and twenty, i.e. twice the number of panels dedicated to the two pilgrimages on the second main wall. However, it is not always clear to which of these visits certain reliefs belong and how the two-fold corner reliefs should be counted. In some places where the reliefs have been only partially preserved, it is sometimes difficult to establish with certainty whether a panel represents one of the narrative reliefs or part of one of the figurative decorative panels, which separate the narrative scenes. Counting the reliefs devoted to the visit to Samantabhadra and adding the number of reliefs illustrating the *Bhadracarī*, the hymn in praise of this Bodhisattva, we arrive at the number of 110. This count assumes that some of the reliefs illustrating Maitreya's oral prediction of Sudhana's visits to Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra (III-8-19) and Maitreya's words of praise for Mañjuśrī should be added to the number of reliefs devoted to the actual visits to each of the Bodhisattvas. The total numbers then amount to 220 for Maitreya, 110 for Samantabhadra and 5 for Mañjuśrī. Considering the scope and the complexity of this huge project, and the fact that, once it got underway, corrections probably could no longer be easily made, minor numerical discrepancies do not seem to be of crucial importance.

These numbers must have already been decided upon early in the planning stage of the entire program of reliefs. This is suggested by the fact that if we exclude the 500 panels of the first balustrade which are known to have been added later, the total number of panels illustrating *avadānas* and *jātakas* in the lower register of the first main wall and on the balustrade of the second gallery is also exactly 220. This proves that the magic number 110, derived from the text of the *Gandavyūha*, was already the standard for the *avadāna* and *jātaka* reliefs of the first main wall and the second balustrade. This numerical approach to the assignment of themes to the available wall space may perhaps be seen as an equivalent in relief sculpture of the iconometric treatment of Buddha statues and their architectural setting seen elsewhere in the Buddhist world.

The extensive treatment of these last three visits to prominent Bodhisattvas faithfully reflects the importance accorded to these Bodhisattvas in the *Gandavyūha*. Perhaps one could argue that this imbalance was achieved at the expense of the visits illustrated on the second main wall. There the vast majority of the *kalyānamitras* were given less than their fair share of the available wall space although most of them are represented twice and some visits were even illustrated on three or four consecutive panels. The modest space reserved for Mañjuśrī is in keeping with the brevity of his second appearance in the text. Most noticeable, however, is the huge amount of wall space allotted to Sudhana's visit to Maitreya. The wall space devoted to the visionary miracles, produced in the *kūtāgāra* by Maitreya's awesome spiritual power, may perhaps seem excessive. It cannot be denied, however, that it faithfully reflects not only the length of text devoted to this topic, but even more the great symbolic importance that was so obviously accorded to this visit in the *Gandavyūha*.

The planning of panels devoted to Sudhana's last three teachers clearly respects the original intent of the *Gandavyūha*, but it cannot be denied that it created a huge challenge to the sculptors. Whatever the precise motives for the selection of the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī* as the scriptural source for the decoration of the higher galleries of Borobudur may have been, the potential of these scriptures for conversion into visually meaningful bas-reliefs is not likely

to have been the decisive factor. For it is evident that the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī*, notwithstanding the high esteem in which these scriptures were held in the Buddhist world, seldom lend themselves naturally to a dynamic narrative interpretation—and certainly not to one which at the same time does justice to the contents of the texts.

On the second main wall the sculptors skipped the explanations of the *vimokṣas*, given by Sudhana's successive *kalyānamitras*, in favor of visiting and traveling scenes. Only occasionally did the sculptors include illustrations of stories from precedent births, told by some of Sudhana's Good Friends. Instead, the sculptors seem to have focused primarily on what may perhaps be called the structural skeleton or the basic narrative framework of the *Gandavyūha*. However, once it was decided to devote two hundred and twenty reliefs to the illustration of Sudhana's visit to Maitreya and one hundred and ten to the visit to Samantabhadra, the sculptors were forced to drastically modify their methods of illustration. They could no longer apply the same selective illustrative methods as those which they had adopted with considerable success for the decoration of the second main wall.

When Bosch discovered that the number of decorations, gifts, and apparitions which are listed in various passages of the text sometimes exceed that of the reliefs illustrating these passages, he assumed that the sculptors selected their themes from longer lists of potential topics provided by their text. The selective manner in which some of these lengthy passages have been treated by the sculptors suggests that this may indeed have been one of the methods they sometimes adopted. Such a selective procedure would be consistent with the treatment chosen earlier by the sculptors of the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs, who never illustrated all of the Ten Causes or Ten Effects that are enumerated in each paragraph of that text (Fontein 1989, 76).

In the Sanskrit texts each type of decoration of Maitreya's *kūtāgāra* is preceded by the word *asamkhyeya* ("countless") and followed by the word "*alamkāram*" ("decorated"). One of the Parisian manuscripts consulted by Bosch lists thirty-six types of such decorations, all preceded and followed by these same words. The most elaborate version is Prajñā's Chinese translation (T.293) in which the Chinese phonetic rendering of *asamkhyeya* precedes each type of decoration. The total number of types of decoration mentioned in this translation amounts to thirty-eight. However, at Borobudur only twenty reliefs illustrate this passage. Bosch believed, that the sculptors selected for illustration only almost half of the number of decorations mentioned in their text. However, if we now turn to Buddhahadra's earlier translation (T.278), which is believed to be the oldest transmitted version of the complete *Gandavyūha*, we find that only a dozen types of decoration are mentioned there. This clearly suggests that the list of decorations expanded over time, and that the twenty types of decoration that are shown in the reliefs may not represent a limited selection, but in fact the total number of decorations listed in the Borobudur manuscript. When we try to match text and image, numerous additions and amplifications, which may have crept into the transmitted text long after Borobudur was built, may now sometimes create the mistaken impression that the sculptors were much more selective and much less faithful to the letter of their text than they actually were.

In addition to the imbalance between the length of text and that of the wall space reserved for its illustration, the sculptors of Borobudur faced yet another formidable obstacle. A large part of the text of Sudhana's visit to Maitreya, (and almost the entire text of the *Bhadracarī*), is of a highly abstract content. We can hardly blame the sculptors for having sometimes been at a loss how to create scenes that do justice to the complex and profound philosophical thoughts underlying the numerous abstractions of the text. Instead, the sculptors relied on several dif-

ferent methods to deal with the challenge of illustrating the many abstractions in such widely popular, but often abstruse texts as the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī*.

One method, which the fathers (or perhaps even the grandfathers) of the sculptors had already applied with considerable success to the creation of their earlier illustrations of the *Karmavibhanga*, was an emblematic interpretation of the abstractions they were asked to illustrate. We have seen that whenever words like “generosity” and “charity” or “for the benefit of all mankind” appeared in the *Gandavyūha*, these words prompted the sculptors to fill an entire panel with a lively scene of the distribution of food to the hungry or of clothes to the destitute. As the contents of the *Gandavyūha* become increasingly abstract in the course of the pilgrim’s progress, the sculptors resorted more often to the use of similar devices.

In the *Gandavyūha* smell and sound play a key role in the various visions and miracles which Sudhana’s *kalyānamitras* bring forth. A simple, straightforward method of the sculptors to represent these non-visual experiences of the pilgrim was to materialize them. The sculptors, who had to illustrate a magic tree, which produces “a rain of incense, the fumes of which pervade all Buddha assemblies”, conveyed this idea to the viewers by simply arranging an array of incense burners on the branches of their tree (IVB-73). The beautiful music produced by another magic tree was made visible by suspending musical instruments from the branches of the tree in the same manner as we decorate our Christmas tree (IVB-75, fig.32).

Just as their fathers or grandfathers had been unable to illustrate in a convincing, easily intelligible manner the various types of heretic thought that are singled out for stern retribution in the *Karmavibhanga*, many of the abstractions in the text of the *Gandavyūha* simply defied any immediately recognizable visual interpretation. This time, the sculptors were often forced to skip such lengthy descriptions as, for example, that of Sudhana’s state of mind while he witnessed the miracles being performed by Maitreya and Samantabhadra. The inevitable result was that the sculptors’ selection of text passages that were to be illustrated tended to favor those words or passages that could be translated into easily recognizable images. Thus the long sequence of nineteen reliefs illustrating the various decorations of Maitreya’s *kūtāgāra* (III-20—III-39) turns out to be a translation into stone of the few lines of description of the decorative features of this palace. Even longer, originally totaling perhaps thirty-five reliefs, is the series illustrating the various images reflected in lotus flowers rising from a pond (IIIB-33 through IIIB-67).

A method of illustration, which focuses—even if only out of sheer necessity—on the tangible substantives in a highly fantastic and visionary text that is rich in symbolism, may be doomed from the start to remain superficial. However, especially in such cases as the long list of the decorations of the *kūtāgāra*, such a negative assessment is probably unjustified. The decorations of Maitreya’s palace of miracles are not simply adornments, but *alamkāra*, “decoration”, an integral, essential part of the building itself and obviously imbued with profound symbolic significance. The close attention paid by the sculptors to the various decorations of Maitreya’s *kūtāgāra* may perhaps also be regarded as another indication of the symbolic importance the sculptors attached to their own “decoration” of Borobudur—its fourteen hundred sixty narrative bas-reliefs—in the overall design and symbolism of the monument.

At Borobudur the reliefs of the lower galleries are separated from their adjacent panels by bands of vertical floral scrolls in low relief, emanating from an image of an animal or a human figure carved at their base. On the higher galleries recessed figurative reliefs have taken the place of these bands. At the same time the clear demarcation of the narrative panels now

sometimes seems to dissolve and the composition of the reliefs begins to extend beyond their original frame. Among the reliefs of the balustrade of the fourth gallery are several examples (e.g. IVB-57, IVB-47, and IVB-48) in which the sculptors of the narrative reliefs seem to have deliberately made their figures part of a larger composition that spills over and blends on both sides harmoniously into the adjacent decorative panels. These panels always show two groups of seated persons, facing opposite directions and separated—just as in the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs—by a tree in the center of the panel.

Another example of an incipient convergence of narrative and decorative panels is relief IIIB-88ab. It is part of an extended series of panels in which Śakra (Indra) is shown as the recipient of various generous gifts distributed by Maitreya. At Borobudur the chief of the gods himself, is shown, like all other gods or mortals of consequence, in the dress of royalty or the elite, but cannot be identified by any specific attribute. Śakra's presence on these reliefs can be established with certainty only when he is accompanied by Airāvata, his trusty attendant with elephant hood or ears. Airāvata is absent from IIIB-88ab, but the decorative panel right next to this relief shows him among the seated figures. It almost looks as if the sculptor added him as an afterthought after having forgotten to include him among the attendants on the narrative relief itself.

That the sequence of the reliefs of Borobudur is consistent with the movement of the *pradaksinā*, the traditional manner of the worship of *stūpas*, has generally been taken as a sign that the pilgrims who came to Borobudur were required to perform a series of clockwise circumambulations while viewing the reliefs. One can even go one step further. The instructions for the sculptors of the *Karmavibhanga* panels, discovered in the margins of the reliefs, were probably scheduled to be erased upon completion of the panel. The majority of the inscriptions that have been preserved are to be found on unfinished panels, most of which are located towards the end of the series. This suggests that not only the order in which the reliefs were viewed, but even the order in which the panels were carved may have been in harmony with the *pradaksinā*. This is not surprising if we consider that the carving of Buddhist statuary was believed to be a good work that resulted in the accumulation of positive karma.

When the textual source of the reliefs can be established with certainty, we find that the successive topics are almost always illustrated in exactly the same order. Minor discrepancies between text and image can sometimes be attributed to variant readings of the texts. Only occasionally did the sculptors deliberately deviate from the sequence of events that is given in the texts. This was usually done in order to emphasize an important point they wished to make, or to focus the viewer's attention on one of the chief protagonists. The clockwise sequence is strictly observed in all narrative reliefs illustrating Buddhist scriptures on Borobudur. It was even maintained in the illustrations of the Hindu epics *Rāmāyāna* and *Kṛṣṇayāna* on the balustrades of the shrines of Lara Jonggrang (Prambanan). This contrasts with the apparently less rigidly structured sequence of the narrative reliefs of some later East Javanese temples (Klokke 1994).

We do not know how the Borobudur functioned as a religious monument during the years after its completion and until it was abandoned by the Buddhist faithful. This topic of fundamental importance has received only scant attention from scholars of the monument. Some entertain a vision of monks, seated in contemplation in front of each successive panel and meditating on each of the many edifying tales that have been illustrated there (Stutterheim 1956). Others cherish a vision of a procession of monks performing the *pradaksinā*, recit-

ing the sacred scriptures or listening to an ecclesiastical guide, who recites and explains the contents of the texts that have been illustrated. It is possible, however, that many pilgrims for whom the monument was built did not need such explanations. The famous Chinese pilgrim Yijing notes in his account of his far-flung travels that the inhabitants of the Sumatran Buddhist kingdom of Śrīvijaya could recite by heart the entire *Jātakamālā*, one of the texts illustrated on Borobudur. We should, therefore, always keep in mind the possibility that the reliefs were made for and viewed by a highly knowledgeable audience, thoroughly familiar with the scriptures illustrated on Borobudur's walls.

Upon closer scrutiny the viewing sequence in accord with the *pradaksinā* raises some logistical questions. Perhaps the least of these problems is the uneven pace of the translation of text into image, the skipping of entire lengthy passages alternating with an elaborate, word-for-word illustration of a single paragraph. However, the hypothetical guide or officiating priest could have compensated for these sudden changes of pace in the sculpted narrative by adjusting his own recitation of the text and by skipping those passages that were not illustrated. Skipping passages in the recitation of *sūtras* is a well-established Buddhist practice. There is, however, a more fundamental problem that puts into question any vision of such a rigidly prescribed viewing sequence. However, as this question applies in particular to the *jātakas* of the second balustrade, it has been discussed separately in the appendix on pp.241-247.

Now that the textual content of most of the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries of Borobudur has been identified, at least one question has been definitely solved. It is the order in which the reliefs of those galleries should be read. As Krom had guessed correctly, this sequence is: 1) third gallery main wall, 2) third gallery balustrade, 3) fourth gallery balustrade, and 4) fourth gallery main wall. There was a reason for giving priority to the main wall on the third and to the balustrade on the fourth level. This arrangement brought the prospective pilgrim on his final *pradaksinā* as close as possible to his final destination, the summit and sacred center of the monument. Those, who had reached the end of the *Bhadracarī* reliefs on the fourth main wall, could now make a right turn and enter immediately into the transitional space on the way to the near-circular terraces with their latticed *stūpas* housing the Buddhas in *dharmacakra-mudrā*.

To conclude this chapter we should try to assess to which extent the sculptors succeeded in the challenging task of translating the text of the *Gandavyūha* into narrative bas-reliefs. Applying the high literary standards of classical Sanskrit literature, Bosch noted with disapproval the hyperbolic language of the *Gandavyūha*. He also singled out for criticism the occasionally mixed metaphors of the *Bhadracarī* (Bosch 1929 and 1938). Following in his footsteps, Krom (in van Erp 1931) pointed out at length what he considered to be the shortcomings of the sculptors' interpretation of the *Gandavyūha*. Although, as we shall presently see, their final verdict was somewhat less severe, expressions like "peep show of miracles" (Krom) and "stop-gap" (Bosch) clearly betray their genuine disappointment when they succeeded in establishing the precise connection between text and image.

The widespread fame of the *Gandavyūha* and the high esteem in which it was universally held in the Buddhist world must have justified in the eyes of the ecclesiastical community of Borobudur the place of honor the illustrations of this text were accorded on the monument. They did this in spite of the fact that this scripture often lacks the colorful narrative content and the picturesque detail that the sculptors had found in such abundance in the rich lore of the *jātakas* and *avadānas* and in the Life of the Buddha according to the *Lalitavistara*. How-

ever, instead of trying to pass judgment on the literary merits of the *Gandavyūha* we should recognize first of all its durable prestige throughout the Buddhist world through the ages to the present day. We should venture, therefore, beyond the *minutiae* of the exact sculptural interpretation, as we have tried to do in the preceding chapters. For we should not only investigate exactly which passages or words the sculptors illustrated but also to which degree they succeeded in capturing the true spirit and intent of their sacred scripture.

Krom's knowledge of the contents of the *Gandavyūha* was limited to what Mitra and Sastri had selected for inclusion in their abstracts. This may have made him overestimate the importance of the discrepancies between the descriptions of the venues of Sudhana's encounters with his Good Friends and the visual evidence of the reliefs. As we read the *Gandavyūha*, we soon begin to realize that the importance of the visits resides primarily in the Good Friends' explanations of their *vimokṣas*, not in the descriptions of their settings. By allowing the sculptors to use their own imagination to create these settings, those who guided the sculptors' work seem to have recognized the secondary importance of the descriptions of most of the venues where Sudhana's encounters with his teachers take place. Their illustrations often do not match the specific descriptions of each setting, as given in the text. Yet one has to give the sculptors credit for the admirable way in which they captured the essence of the fantastic, fairytale-like visionary environment in which many of the visits took place. In this important respect the sculptors displayed a better grasp of the true spirit of the *Gandavyūha* than they have been given credit for.

A similar conclusion can be drawn from the sculptors' treatment of one of the most typical characteristics of the *Gandavyūha*. When reading the text, and especially its Chinese commentaries, one would have expected Sudhana's progress towards Enlightenment to lead gradually, step by step, towards its ultimate climax. Instead there is what may perhaps be called an uneven pace in the narrative, in which Sudhana's advance seems to vary from a slow crawl to sudden surge, instead of a consistent, slow but sure progress. This is best demonstrated by the greatly varying length of the passages describing the visits which Sudhana pays to his *kalyānamitras*. We first begin to sense a heightened pace of progress towards Sudhana's final destination in the lengthy tales of their precedent births told by some of the Night Goddesses, Gopā and Māyā. The identification of the chief protagonists in these *avadāna*-type stories with precedent births of important Bodhisattvas and Buddhas adds to this aura of sanctity. However, immediately after the visits to Māyā and Gopā follows a puzzling, anticlimactic series of rapid, brief encounters, which the text treats in a most cursory fashion. In the descriptions of these visits the text offers no details of the venues at all and Sudhana's Good Friends divulge only the barest minimum of particulars of their personal *vimokṣa*. Among these visits is one to the almost totally silent boy Viśvāmītra, whose only words serve to immediately refer Sudhana to another boy-teacher. It is only with the visit to Maitreya that it becomes evident that Sudhana has now irreversibly embarked upon the road towards realizing the Conduct of the Bodhisattva. What follows, however is, once again, a somewhat anticlimactic second visit to Mañjuśrī. The text concludes with the visit to Samantabhadra with its plethora of miracles, followed by the recitation of the vows of that Bodhisattva. Even the scholars Brandes, Krom, and van Erp, who did not yet know the scripture upon which the illustrations of the higher galleries were based, sensed this heightened aura of sanctity. They already realized that the sculptors had succeeded in capturing an ever-increasing momentum in the search for Perfect Enlightenment, a momentum that the text itself does not always seem to convey.

FOURTH GALLERY, MAIN WALL: THE BHADRACARĪ RELIEFS

(IV-1—IV-88)

Bhadracaryā-pranidhāna, often abbreviated to *Bhadracarī*, is the title of a hymn, which enjoyed great popularity among the Buddhist faithful in widely separated parts of South, East and Southeast Asia, from India and Tibet to Java and from Khotan to China and Japan. The Sanskrit text of the *Bhadracarī* is one of the very few Sanskrit scriptures that were brought to Japan during the early years of the 9th century C.E. and that have been handed down in that country to the present day. Even today, the stanzas 8-12 of the hymn are still being recited during certain Japanese Buddhist rituals (Shiraishi 1962a, 440). The Sanskrit text was reprinted in Japan by the distinguished patriarch Jiun Sonja in 1783 C.E. In Korea the hymn enjoyed wide popularity during the tenth century, when the poet-priest Kyunyō (917-973 C.E.) composed a cycle of verses based upon the *Bhadracarī* (Lee 1957 and Kim Chikyōn 1977). Although a verse from the *Bhadracarī*, inscribed on a *stūpa* in Nālandā (Schopen 1989), is evidence of an early association of this hymn with a *stūpa*, the seventy-two *Bhadracarī* reliefs on Borobudur represent the only known effort to illustrate the entire hymn on a monument of that type.

In view of the long history of the hymn in Japan it is most appropriate that the first modern critical edition of the text should have been published by the distinguished Japanese scholar of Buddhism, Watanabe Kaikyoku (1912). He submitted this first critical edition of the *Bhadracarī* as his doctoral dissertation to what was then the Kaiser Wilhelm University of Strasbourg, as the French provinces of Alsace and Lorraine had been annexed by Germany after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71. Strasbourg and its university reverted to France after the First World War. I suspect that the scarcity of copies of Watanabe's dissertation may have been due in part to the sudden transition from a German to a French university soon after he obtained his doctorate. As mentioned earlier, the lack of availability of this dissertation made Bosch postpone his study of the *Bhadracarī* reliefs. Its rarity also caused Shiraishi to establish a new, independent edition of the Sanskrit text in 1962. By that time, an Indian text edition had already been prepared by Sushama Devi [1958].

There are three Chinese translations of the *Bhadracarī* by Buddhābhadda, Amoghavajra, and Prajñā, several into Tibetan, one into Khotanese (Asmussen 1961) and one fragmentarily preserved translation into Uigur (Ishihama 1950). There are at least seven translations into western languages: Leumann (1912) and Shiraishi (1962) into German; Bosch (1938) into Dutch; and Izumi (1929), Asmussen (1961), Tatz (1977) and Cleary (1989) into English.

The *Bhadracarī* can be divided into three parts, two of which appear to have been illustrated on the main wall of the fourth gallery of Borobudur. The first part of the text consists of the verses 1-15. It begins with the Six Supreme Tributes (*annuttarapūjā*); the encomium, or *vandanā*, of all Buddhas (vs. 1-4); the tribute, or *pūjanā*, to all Buddhas (vs. 5-7); the repudiation of sins, or *pāpadeśanā*, (vs.8); the joyful praise of the pious merits (of others), or *punyānumodanā*, (vs.9); the devout request, or *adhyesanā*, of favors from all Buddhas (vs. 10); the supplication, or *yajana*, of blessings for all beings (vs.11). These Six Supreme Tributes are followed by three verses eulogizing the Buddhas, the Buddha worlds, and all sentient beings.

Verse 16 marks the beginning of the second part, consisting of the *pranidhāna*, or solemn vows of the adept to accomplish the final stages of achieving Buddhahood, from which the full title of the *Bhadracarī-pranidhāna* derives. At Borobudur these vows constitute the final part of the text, as they do in Buddhahadra's translation.

The different manuscripts of the Sanskrit text of the *Bhadracarī* and the various Chinese translations have far fewer *variae lectiones* and other differences that could affect our interpretation of the reliefs than the text of the *Gandavyūha* proper. Given the large number of existing translations of the *Bhadracarī* by eminent scholars in Western languages, mentioned above, it would seem superfluous to add yet another new translation to this list. A few of the Borobudur reliefs may have been inspired by a version of the text that resembled the lost Sanskrit original of Prajñā's translation (T.298). However, a comparison of the reliefs with Cleary's translation suggests that there is no compelling need for yet another, undoubtedly less skillful translation of Prajñā's version of the hymn. As Bosch's Dutch translation is the only one that has not been accessible to most other scholars, I have translated his rendering of the *Bhadracarī* from Dutch into English as an accompaniment to my interpretation of the reliefs. In the following pages I offer, therefore, my translation of Bosch's rendering of those verses of the *Bhadracarī* that we believe to have been illustrated on the reliefs, to the extent possible followed by an identification of the relief or reliefs associated with each of these verses.

In discussing the *Bhadracarī* reliefs of the main wall of the fourth gallery, all quotations from Bosch have been translated from his publication in Dutch: "De Bhadracarī afgebeeld op den hoofdmuur der vierde gaanderij van den Baraboedoer" (The Bhadracarī illustrated on the main wall of the fourth gallery of Borobudur), in: *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, vol.97 (1938), no. 2, pp.241-293.

Verse 1: "As many lions of humanity as there are throughout the world in the Ten Directions and throughout the Three Ages [past, present and future], I respectfully salute them all without exception, joyful of body, speech and mind."

Verse 2: "With as many prostrations as there are particles of dust in all [Buddha] lands, I pay homage to all Jinās; with a mind directed towards all Jinās, with the strength produced by the Vow to follow the Benevolent Conduct of [Samanta]bhadrā."

Verse 3: "In full faith I dedicate myself to the Buddhas, as numerous as there are particles of dust on top of one particle of dust, who are seated amidst the Jina sons; and likewise to the whole Dharma world, entirely filled with Jinās."

Verse 4: "While I describe the oceans of the eternal characteristics and virtues of all Jinās with the ocean sounds of all sound producing instruments, I praise all these Sugatas."

Although the matching of text and image is not always perfect, we will presently see that relief IV-5 definitely illustrates verse 5. It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, that the first four verses have been illustrated on the first four reliefs.

IV-1 Sudhana pays Homage to Ten Buddhas

The ten Buddhas shown on this relief obviously correspond to the ten *narasimha*, or "lions of humanity," of verse 1. The unusual line-up of the Buddhas in three registers, two for seated

and one for standing Buddhas may have been inspired by the words “The Three Ages” (past, present, and future) in verse 1. On the left side Sudhana places a floral tribute at the feet of a standing Buddha.

IV-2 Samantabhadra pays Homage to Six Buddhas

The relief shows in the upper register six Buddhas, a most appropriate illustration of “all Jinās” of verse 2, especially if we bear in mind that the Borobudur system of Jinās may have consisted of six (instead of five) Buddhas. However, the symbolic gestures (*mudrā*) of the Buddhas shown on this relief do not correspond to those of the Borobudur pantheon of Buddhas. It should also be noted that in this relief it is Samantabhadra, not Sudhana, who is paying homage to the Buddhas (see below p.203).

IV-3 Buddhas and Bodhisattvas

The Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of this relief, lined up in two rows, probably represent the “Buddhas seated amidst the Jina sons” (Bodhisattvas) of verse 3. The word “amidst” probably prompted the sculptors to alternate the figures of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

IV-4 Samantabhadra Paying Homage to the Buddhas

Here it is once again Samantabhadra who pays homage to the Buddhas. The relief does not seem to contain any specific visual reference to the contents of verse 4.

Verse 5: “*With the finest flowers and the finest garlands, with the finest musical instruments, unguents and parasols; with all the finest specialties arrayed, I pay homage to these Jinās.*”

Verse 6: “*With the finest garments, the finest scents, and containers of aromatic powders, [tall] like Mount Meru, with the finest lamps and finest incense, I pay homage to these Jinās.*”

In the verses 5-6 I have rearranged the sequence of the half-verses in accordance with the version that both Watanabe and Shiraishi have called the Southern edition, represented by Jiun Sonja’s Sanskrit manuscript and the Chinese translations of Amoghavajra and Prajñā, in which these verses appear in the following order: 5a-6b-6a-5b. This order matches that of reliefs IV-5 through IV-15, with the exception of IV-10 (see below). Not surprisingly, the Khotanese *Bhadracāryadeśanā* follows the Northern tradition (Asmussen 1961, 10-11).

IV-5 Samantabhadra and Sudhana pay a Floral Tribute to a Buddha

While Sudhana pays homage to a Buddha, who is seated in a pavilion, *gandharvas*, hovering in the air, offer lotuses and other flowers. Even Sudhana holds a flower in his folded hands. This relief obviously illustrates the words “the finest flowers” of verse 5.

IV-6 A Buddha receives an Offering of Garlands

Garlands are shown below and above the Buddha in the center of the relief. Of the sixteen persons lined up in the lower register three hold up plates with garlands, illustrating “the finest garlands” of verse 5.

IV-7 A Buddha Serenaded by an Orchestra

A Buddha is seated in meditation in a pavilion in the center of the panel. All other men shown on this relief hold musical instruments: a conch, trumpets, flutes, drums, cymbals, and a bell. This relief illustrates the words “with the finest musical instruments” of verse 5.

IV-8 Samantabhadra and Sudhana offer Unguents to a Buddha

Samantabhadra and Sudhana pay homage to a Buddha, who is flanked by the Bodhisattvas Vajrapāni and Avalokiteśvara. Fumes rise from bowls placed on lotuses floating in the air, illustrating the words “the finest unguents” (*vilepana*) of verse 5. Bosch expresses surprise that fumes should waft up from unguents, but by showing these ligulate symbols for fragrance the sculptors may have adopted the only possible way to illustrate the invisible.

IV-9 Four Buddhas receive an Offering of Parasols

Sudhana, his hands folded in *añjali*, kneels in front of four Buddhas in the upper register of the panel. He is accompanied by Samantabhadra. Between the Buddhas we see a set of five superimposed parasols. This relief illustrates the words “the finest parasols” of verse 5.

IV-10 A Buddha receives an Offering of Standards and Pennants

This relief demonstrates the usefulness of gathering all known *variae lectiones*, even in a text as well established as the *Bhadracarī*. Bosch interprets the relief as the artist’s rendering of the generic description in verse 5: “all the finest specialties arrayed.”

However, Shiraishi mentions that a Nepalese manuscript of the *Bhadracarī*, dated in accordance with the year 1068 C.E., inserts three additional verses after verse 6. The third line of the first of these three verses reads “*sarva dhvajāgra patāka varebhiḥ*”, i.e. “with the finest standards and pennants” It would seem that the Borobudur text of the *Bhadracarī*, while usually following the Southern version, contained these words instead of the less specific “all the finest specialties arrayed” that we find in most texts. Devi also adds one similar verse after 6 and Tatz (1977, 457) calls this an interpolation. If this is indeed an interpolation, the visual evidence of the reliefs of Borobudur suggests that it is at least one of respectable age.

Krom’s description draws attention to the pedestal, decorated with garlands, standards, and pennants in the upper right corner of the relief (1920, 621). He calls these standards “*stam-*

bhas”, but we have seen that relief III-32, where a similar type of object is shown, corresponds to the word *dhvaja* in the text. This suggests that the Borobudur text of the *Bhadracarī* contained the verse included in the Nepalese manuscript quoted by Shiraiishi.

IV-11 Samantabhadra makes an Offering of Garments to a Buddha

In this relief it is again Samantabhadra who pays homage to a Buddha, seated in a pavilion, flanked by trees, in the center of the panel. A heavenly being arrives in flight at the pavilion, while among the clouds clothes can be seen floating in the air. The relief corresponds to “the finest garments” of verse 6.

IV-12 Samantabhadra makes an Offering of Incense to a Buddha

Samantabhadra pays homage to a Buddha, who raises his right hand in *vitarka-mudrā*. He is flanked by the Bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāni. The clue to the meaning of the relief is supplied by the bowls with covers, surmounted by a double lotus. They flank the seated Samantabhadra. From these bowls long trails of fumes escape. *Gandharvas*, hermits and some of the persons seated in the lower register carry similar bowls of a simpler design. The relief aptly illustrates the words: “the finest scents” of verse 6.

IV-13 Sudhana and Samantabhadra pay Homage to a Buddha in a *Stūpa* (fig. 34)

Sudhana, his hands folded in *añjali*, pays homage to a Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā*. He is accompanied by Samantabhadra. The Buddha is seated in a niche in a huge *stūpa*, which occupies the center of the relief. One is inclined to interpret this scene as yet another example of a visual prediction of things to come, providing a sneak preview of the circular terraces of Borobudur which the pilgrim is about to reach. It is only there that Buddhas in *dharmacakra-mudrā* can be seen seated inside a *stūpa*.

It comes, therefore, as somewhat of a surprise that the relief illustrates the words “containers of aromatic powders [tall] like Mount Meru”. We know that the sculptors of Borobudur considered the *stūpa* an equivalent of Mount Meru. As Bosch was to discover twenty years later, reliefs representing *yaksas*, who are reputed to inhabit the lower slopes of Mount Meru in a perennial state of inebriation, have been carved on the exterior wall of the first balustrade of Borobudur (Bosch 1959). Concerning the word “Meru” Bosch adds the following observation: “Considering the fact that the Meru in the verse is only mentioned in a comparative sense and that the spectator can be easily misled by the sight of this scene, we have here not a new, but certainly a most convincing example of the liberties that were often taken in the interpretation and illustration of the text.”



34. Sudhana and Samantabhadra pay homage to a Buddha in a *stūpa* (IV-13).

IV-14 Sudhana makes an Offering of Lamps to the Jinas

In the center a Buddha stands on a lotus cushion. Sudhana, in the company of Samantabhadra, is seated holding in his hands a simple lamp, probably made of clay or coconut shell. Other objects seen in this relief are a large lamp and two torches. The relief illustrates the words: “with the finest lamps” of verse 6. In the upper register of the relief are six Buddhas, who are the recipients of these offerings. They are seated on lotuses rising high on tall, straight stalks.

IV-15 Samantabhadra makes an Offering of Incense to a Buddha

A seated Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā* occupies the center of the relief. On the left side a large incense burner stands in front of a tree. Behind it we see Sudhana kneeling. Samantabhadra sits on the right side on a lotus cushion. This relief represents “the finest incense” of verse 6.

Verse 7: “Whatever unsurpassed, sublime [additional] offerings there may be, I offer them to all Jinas; by the power of devotion to [Samanta]bhadra’s benevolent conduct I honor all Jinas and make offerings to them.”

Verse 8: “Whatever sins I may have committed, out of passion, hatred, or by the power of delusion, with body, speech or mind, all of these I now reject [with repugnance].”

Verse 9: “Whatever merit may have been obtained in the Ten Directions by the world, by disciples, arhats, Pratyekabuddhas, Bodhisattvas, and by all Jinas, I rejoice in it with all my heart.”



35. Samantabhadra and six Buddhas (IV-16).

Verse 10: “Those who are the lamps of the world in the Ten Directions and who through their Enlightenment have attained the state of detachment, I entreat all those Lords to turn the most excellent Wheel [of the Law].”

IV-16 Samantabhadra and Six Buddhas (fig. 35)

For the first time in this series of reliefs it is Samantabhadra who now occupies the place of honor and seems to share in the homage paid to the Buddhas. Just as we saw in IV-2, the six Buddhas illustrate the words “all Jinas” (verse 7).

The prominence of the place accorded to Samantabhadra in this relief may be due to the occurrence in the verse of the word “*Bhadracarī*”, i.e. the Benevolent Conduct of [Samanta] bhadra. Vetter comments as follows on the interpretation of *bhadra* as a reference to Samantabhadra: “...in many chapters of the story of Sudhana the compound *bhadracaryā* occurs, which probably means ‘a conduct beneficial to others’. It is, as far as I can see, only awarded to Bodhisattvas who know *more* than one method and who are, therefore, highly developed. The term is associated with boundless compassion and with an ability to penetrate the *dharmadhātu*, the totality of all conditions. Besides *bhadracaryā* we also find *samantabhadracaryā*, an ‘in every respect benevolent conduct’; *Samantabhadrabodhisattvacaryā* also occurs. The *Gandavyūha* itself once (195.8) dissolves this last compound into ‘in every respect benevolent conduct of Bodhisattvas’ and also mentions ‘in every respect benevolent Bodhisattvas’ (332, 30). Nowhere did I find a pertinent comment indicating that this compound, as was later assumed, should be understood to mean ‘the conduct of the Bodhisattva who bears the name Benevolent in Every Respect’ (i.e. Samantabhadra, J.F.). Already in the chapters 36, 37, and 39 of the story

of Sudhana the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra appears and this makes it possible, at least in its immediate context, to take the compound as a reference to Samantabhadra. It seems more likely, however, that Samantabhadra owes his existence to this compound. He probably slowly crystallized into a symbol of a movement in which compassion unmistakably took precedence over radical insight” (Vetter 2004, 14-15, translation J.F.).

These variations of the compound *Bhadracaryā* occur nine times in the *Bhadracarī*. It is not always evident, however, which line of the verses, in which the compound occurs, has been illustrated in the corresponding relief. However, the omnipresence of Samantabhadra on the reliefs may perhaps be seen as an indication that the sculptors took this compound as a direct reference to the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. To portray the personification of these lofty abstractions rather than these ideals themselves, would seem to be in keeping with the sculptors’ personalizing and materializing treatment of other, similar abstract concepts (cf. III-4 and IIIB-7).

IV-17 Samantabhadra and Sudhana pay Homage to a Buddha

A meditating Buddha, seated in a festooned pavilion and flanked by two other Buddhas, receives homage from Samantabhadra and Sudhana. Bosch considers the trinity of Buddhas an allusion to the triple sins (corporeal, verbal, and in thought) to which the speaker confesses in verse 8.

IV-18 Samantabhadra, Seven Bodhisattvas, and Ten Buddhas

Here, once again, it is Samantabhadra, followed by Sudhana, who pays homage to seven Bodhisattvas, seated on lotus cushions, and to ten Buddhas, seated in a row in the upper register. These are obviously the Buddhas of the Ten Directions mentioned in verses 9-10. Bosch (1938, 262) comments: “From the fact that the Buddhas of the Ten Directions have been represented on IV-18, we may conclude that only two reliefs are available for the illustrations of verses 7,8, and 9. Therefore, either one verse has not been illustrated or two verses have been combined into one relief. The latter possibility is the likeliest, for not only verse 10, but also verse 9 mentions the Buddhas of the Ten Directions. The Buddha figures on IV-18 could, therefore, represent both”. We should note that Buddhahadra’s Chinese translation lacks the equivalent of verse 8 and contains only the equivalent of the first half of verse 9. It is possible, therefore, that the Borobudur text lacked at least one of these verses. One would not have expected the sculptors to miss an opportunity to represent a Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā*. The absence of this gesture on the relief suggests that it was probably vs.10 and not vs. 9 which was lacking in the text which guided the sculptors.

Verse 11: “*Those who wish to manifest their perfection [nirvāna], I entreat them with folded hands, that they may remain [in this world] during aeons as numerous as the particles of matter of the [Buddha] worlds, for the benefit and prosperity of all beings.*”

IV-19 Samantabhadra distributes Gifts

The Bodhisattva is seated in a pavilion, watching the distribution of various gifts to three lay persons, two bhiksus, and a Brahman. This relief probably illustrates the words “for the benefit and prosperity of all beings” of vs. 11. For the illustration of other abstract concepts, such as “compassion” or “generosity”, by a distribution of gifts see also III-44 and IIIB-7.

Verse 12: *“Whatever merit may have accrued to me through worship, offerings, and the rejection [of sins], through rejoicing in the merit [of others] and through supplication [to the Buddhas], all this merit [albeit small] I dedicate to the achievement of Enlightenment by all beings.”*

IV-20 Samantabhadra Meditating

Samantabhadra is seated, immersed in meditation, in a pavilion in the center of the relief. As usual Sudhana is shown with his retinue on the right. On the left are a seated Buddha, flanked by two Bodhisattvas and four bhiksus, gathered around a large vase with flowers. The entrance to Samantabhadra’s pavilion is flanked by a banner and a lamp. Bosch suggests that these ritual objects may illustrate the “offerings” (*pūjanā*) of vs. 12.

Verse 13: *“The Buddhas of the past and those, who [at present] reside in the Ten Directions, and the [Buddhas] of the future, may they all share in the homage and may they soon see their wishes fulfilled after having achieved Supreme Enlightenment.”*

Verse 14: *“As many Buddha worlds as exist in the Ten Directions, may they be perfectly pure and lofty, and may they be filled with Jinās and Buddha sons, who are seated underneath the miraculous Trees of Enlightenment.”*

Verse 15: *“As many beings as there are in the Ten Directions, may they always be happy and free from disease; may the [Buddhist] Law flourish in the entire world and may all their wishes be fulfilled.”*

Verse 16: *“As I follow the path leading towards Enlightenment, may I always remember all of my precedent births; in all of my [future] rebirths, as I die and am reborn, may I always be a person who renounces the world.”*

Verse 17: *“As a disciple imitating the [way of] all Buddhas, perfecting the Benevolent Conduct of [Samanta]bhadra; may I always follow the spotless, pure, perfect, and never failing path of virtue.”*

Bosch matched the scene on relief IV-18 with the verses 9-10 of the *Bhadracarī* and that on IV-20 with verse 12. He also determined that the contents of vs.18 begin to be illustrated on relief IV-30. These two benchmarks are separated by ten panels. The source of inspiration for the scenes carved on these panels should, therefore, be sought in the verses 11-17. However, these verses provide few, if any, themes or words which the sculptors could convert into easily recognizable images. An additional obstacle to their precise identification is that exactly at this point in the texts a number of variant readings occur. In the “southern” version the sequence of the half-verses differs as follows from that of the “northern” version: 11, 12, 13cd, 14ab, 14cd, 15ab, 15cd, 16ab, 16cd, 17ab, 17cd, 13ab. To complicate matters further, in the Chinese translations by Amoghavajra and Prajñā the first two lines of verse 13 precede vs. 17.

Bosch (1938, 264-267) experimented with several different solutions to the problems of matching the text and the reliefs of this section, finally opting for a hypothetical amendment of the text in which vs. 17 precedes vs.16. However, even after proposing this hypothetical amendment, for which none of the texts provide a precedent, Bosch admitted: “Our conclusion can only be that the reliefs IV-20 to IV-23 cannot be satisfactorily explained with the help of the text as we know it. Therefore, this part of the text followed on Borobudur probably was not the same as ours” (1938, 267).

IV-21 Samantabhadra and Sudhana Worshipping a Buddha (1)

The Buddha is enthroned on a tall pedestal, his right hand raised in *vitarka-mudrā*. Behind Samantabhadra, at a lower level, Sudhana is seated. Both he and the Bodhisattva respectfully fold their hands in *añjali*.

IV-22 Samantabhadra and Sudhana Worshipping a Buddha (2)

A Buddha is seated inside a temple building. He raises his right hand in *vitarka-mudrā*. Together Samantabhadra on the left side and Sudhana on the right pay homage to him.

IV-23 Samantabhadra and Sudhana Worshipping Four Buddhas

The Buddha, seated in the center, raises his hands in *dharmacakra-mudrā*. Both Samantabhadra and Sudhana are seated at a lower level. They pay homage to the Buddhas.

IV-24 Sudhana Paying Homage to Samantabhadra (1)

Samantabhadra is seated in a meditative pose in a building. On the right side Sudhana kneels down, offering a flower to the Bodhisattva. Bosch connects this and the following scene with the second line of vs. 17.

IV-25 Sudhana Paying Homage to Samantabhadra (2)

Samantabhadra occupies the center of the relief, seated under a tree. Bosch describes this relief as a “stopgap” for the second line of vs. 17

IV-26 Homage to a Meditating Buddha

The Buddha, immersed in meditation, is seated on a lion throne inside a temple building flanked by *stūpas*. It is not clear whether the persons standing on both sides of the building



36. Homage to Samantabhadra (IV-28).

paying homage to him represent Samantabhadra and Sudhana, together with their attendants. Although this is the most likely possibility, it should be noted that Samantabhadra is shown, once again, without his regular attribute. Bosch associates this relief with the first line of vs. 16: “As I follow the path leading towards Enlightenment”. The relief actually illustrates a combination of two of the illustrative devices most often used by the sculptors of this series of reliefs. Whenever words like “follow the path” or similar expressions occur in the text, the sculptors create a procession of people, as we see in this scene, where the attendants are all carrying flags and pennants. The word *bodhi* often results in a scene in which a Buddha occupies the center.

IV-27 Homage to Samantabhadra

This narrow corner relief shows Sudhana kneeling in front of a small building in which the Bodhisattva is seated. Bosch connects this relief with the second line of vs.16.

IV-28 Homage to Samantabhadra (fig. 36)

Samantabhadra is seated in meditative pose inside an ornate building. To the right Sudhana kneels, his hands folded in *añjali*. On the left stands a monk who holds an alms bowl in his left and a priest’s staff (*khakkhara*) in his right hand. Perhaps it is this monk who connects this relief with the following, where another monk occupies center stage.

IV-29 Homage to a Monk

In this relief our attention is focused on a monk, obviously an important ecclesiastic. He is seated in a structure resembling a gateway. He is in conversation with three other monks who are seated on the left side of the panel. On the right is Sudhana, appropriately seated at an intermediate level between the chief personage and the three other monks.

Bosch connects this relief with the fourth line of vs. 16, the only place in this part of the *Bhadracarī* in which a *pravrajita*, or monk, is mentioned. The repeated appearance of monks in IV-28 and IV-29 may perhaps reflect the repetition, implied in the vow: "may I, in all of my [future] rebirths always be reborn as one who renounces the world".

Verse 18: "In the voices of Gods, Nāgas, and Yaksas, in the voices of Kumbhāndhas and humans, and in as many voices as there are in the entire world, may I expound the Teachings [of the Buddha] in all of them."

IV-30 Samantabhadra Worshiped by Celestial Beings

This is the first of a series of ten reliefs of very similar composition. In all of them Samantabhadra occupies the center, seated in pavilions of varying shape. To the right Sudhana, seated or standing, and accompanied by his retinue, pays homage to the Bodhisattva. The variable component of these reliefs is to be found in the left side of the each relief, where creatures of different types and status are shown paying homage to Samantabhadra. In this relief the gathering is made up of the gods and goddesses mentioned in verse 18.

IV-31 Samantabhadra Worshiped by Nāgas and Nāginīs

Here the worshipers are four standing *Nāginīs* and five seated *Nāgas*, the beings mentioned in verse 18. They are all clearly recognizable by their hood of snakes.

IV-32 Samantabhadra Worshiped by Yaksas

Four demons pay homage to Samantabhadra. Verse 18 indicates that they represent *Yaksas*.

IV-33 Samantabhadra Worshiped by Kumbhāndas

The four bearded figures paying homage to Samantabhadra probably represent the *Kumbhāndas* of verse 18.

IV-34 Samantabhadra Worshiped by Lay Persons and *Bhiksus*

The "humans" of verse 18 here consist of monks, Brahmins, and lay persons.



37. Samantabhadra worshiped by demons, *nāgas*, *garudas*, and a *kinnara* (IV-35).

IV-35 Samantabhadra Worshiped by Demons, *Nāgas*, *Garudas*, and a *Kinnara* (fig. 37)

It seems that the sculptors availed themselves of the non-specific, but all-inclusive third line of verse 18, “and in as many voices as there are among all living creatures”, to create an additional series of five reliefs representing different types of human and supernatural beings paying homage to the Bodhisattva (IV-35 through IV-39). For a similarly all-inclusive gathering see relief III-75.

The possibility exists that the version of the *Bhadracarī* followed by the sculptors of Borobudur contained an additional verse after no. 18, and that the “voices”, mentioned in that verse, have been illustrated on the reliefs IV-35—IV-39. However, none of the transmitted texts show any trace of such an addition. A more likely possibility is that the five reliefs represent a rare departure from the usual procedure, an elaboration not based upon specific words in the text, but upon a free interpretation of a single line. At Borobudur the only other documented example of this type of elaboration can be found in the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs. There a single paragraph (no. XV), dealing with rebirth in hell, was illustrated in seven reliefs (O-86 through O-92), each one of which depicts the retribution for two specific sins, meted out in two separate principal or secondary hells (Fontein 1989, 34-43).

The representation of Samantabhadra on all of the reliefs of this series suggests that it is Samantabhadra whom the sculptors identified as the Bodhisattva who expounds the teachings of the Buddha. One would expect, therefore, that Samantabhadra would be represented on each of these reliefs in *vitarka-mudrā*, but this is not the case. Some of the best preserved reliefs do, indeed show Samantabhadra in *vitarka-mudrā* (IV-31, IV-33, and IV-35), but on other reliefs (IV-36, IV-38, and IV-39) the Bodhisattva is represented in a meditative pose.

IV-36 Deities and Humans pay Homage to Samantabhadra

Samantabhadra, seated in meditation inside a building, is being worshiped by four persons, whose exact status cannot be determined. Above the building hover celestial beings.

IV-37 Samantabhadra Worshiped by Women and Musicians

Here the sculptors have illustrated the sound of music. Samantabhadra is seated inside a building. He is holding a flower in his raised right hand. On the left is a group of musicians. One of them is blowing a conch, others are holding cymbals and drums.

IV-38 Samantabhadra Worshiped by Women

Bosch suggested that the four women, who are seated in the *pēndapa* on the left, may represent singers.

Verse 19: *Capable and skilled in the Perfections, may my resolve to [achieve] Enlightenment never become confused; whatever sins I may have committed as a result of obstacles, may they all be extinguished without exception."*

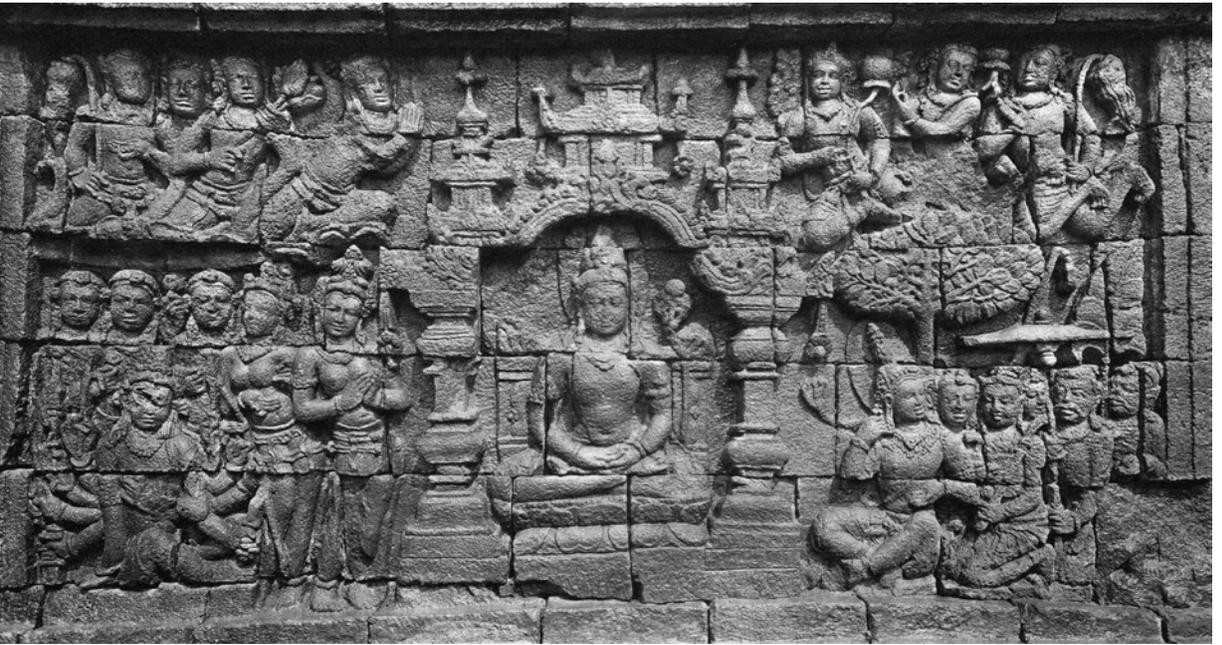
Verse 20: *"Liberated from [the effects of] negative karma, from defilements, and from Māra's [evil] path, may I proceed on my path through the world, like the lotus unaffected by the [muddy] water, like the sun and the moon detached from the heavens."*

Verse 21: *"To mitigate all death and misfortune and bringing happiness to the entire world; may I proceed, for the benefit of all beings, on as many paths in any of the Ten Directions as there are in the [Buddha] lands."*

IV-39 Samantabhadra in Meditation; Māra appears (fig. 38)

Krom (1920, p.616) offers a description of the ten-armed deity seated in the foreground on the left side of the panel. The gender of the deity cannot be established with absolute certainty. If the deity is female, Krom argues, he would tentatively identify her as Cundā, a goddess represented on the walls of Candi Mendut (and in several bronze statuettes from Central Java). He adds: "It is also quite possible that we may have to search for the name of this deity among the Brahmanic goddesses, as, for example, among the different types of Durgā. However, if the figure represents a male deity, the presence of women in his retinue suggests the possibility that the figure should be identified as Māra."

The best known Borobudur relief on which Māra is represented is the panel illustrating Māra's abortive attack on the meditating Buddha (Ia-94). There Māra is shown in human [two-armed] guise, mounted on an elephant and shooting an arrow at the Buddha. This suggests that Māra is represented there in his manifestation of Kāmadeva, the God of Love. In this guise he also appears in a fragmentarily preserved Wheel of *Samsāra* (*Samsāracakra*) in Ajantā (Zin & Schlingloff 2007, 146). However, on this same relief the meditating Buddha is



38. Samantabhadra meditates, Māra appears (IV-39).

attacked from both sides by two ten-armed demons, carried on the shoulders of two other demons. These could either represent Māra in his demonic aspect or two of his acolytes. Krom, who duly noted the rarity of multi-armed figures on the Borobudur reliefs, does not compare this example of the ten-armed deity on IV-39 with two similar beings on the celebrated relief, illustrating one of a most dramatic moments in the Life of the Buddha. One of these demonic figures reappears on one of a pair of sculpted wooden panels by Gauguin, entitled “War and Peace” in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Gauguin owned an early photograph of relief Ia-94, taken by the pioneer photographer and opera singer Isidore van Kinsbergen and incorporated elements of this relief in his wood carving. For Maitreya in the guise of Māra see relief III-65.

Bosch points out what he considers to be another remarkable coincidence: the name of Māra is actually mentioned in vs. 20 of the *Bhadracarī*. Reminding the reader of the deafening sound produced by Māra during his attack on the Buddha under the Bodhi Tree, Bosch suggests that the representation of Māra would seem to fit well in this series of sound producing beings. However, the possibility that relief IV-39 illustrates vs. 20 instead of vs. 18, would seem to be preferable to Bosch’s ingenious explanation.

IV-40 Samantabhadra Worshipping a Buddha

A Buddha is seated in meditative pose inside a pavilion surmounted by three *stūpas*. To the right Sudhana and his retinue, and on the left Samantabhadra, seated under a tree. An incense burner stands next to him.

Bosch identifies this relief of a Buddha as an illustration of the word *bodhi*, or “Enlightenment”, in the second line of verse 19. For other reliefs illustrating the same word, see IV-26, IV-27, and IV-61.

IV-41 Samantabhadra in a Cave; Worship of an Empty Throne

A large round pillow is placed on an empty lotus seat in a pavilion in the center of the relief. On the left stylized rocks suggest a mountain landscape. Samantabhadra is seated in meditation in a cave.

Bosch connects this relief with the word “liberated” of vs. 20, commenting: “The ‘liberation’ of the Bodhisattva has been rendered in very naive fashion by having him leave his regular seat and withdraw into the solitude of a hermitage”. One is reminded of the unexplained scene on relief IVB-61, in which Samantabhadra is seen leaving his throne. That panel may be an illustration of a similar expression.

IV-42 Samantabhadra leads a Procession to a Palace

Bosch concluded that a procession usually corresponds to the word *careyam* in the text (vs. 20, line 2). See also IV-26 for a similar interpretation.

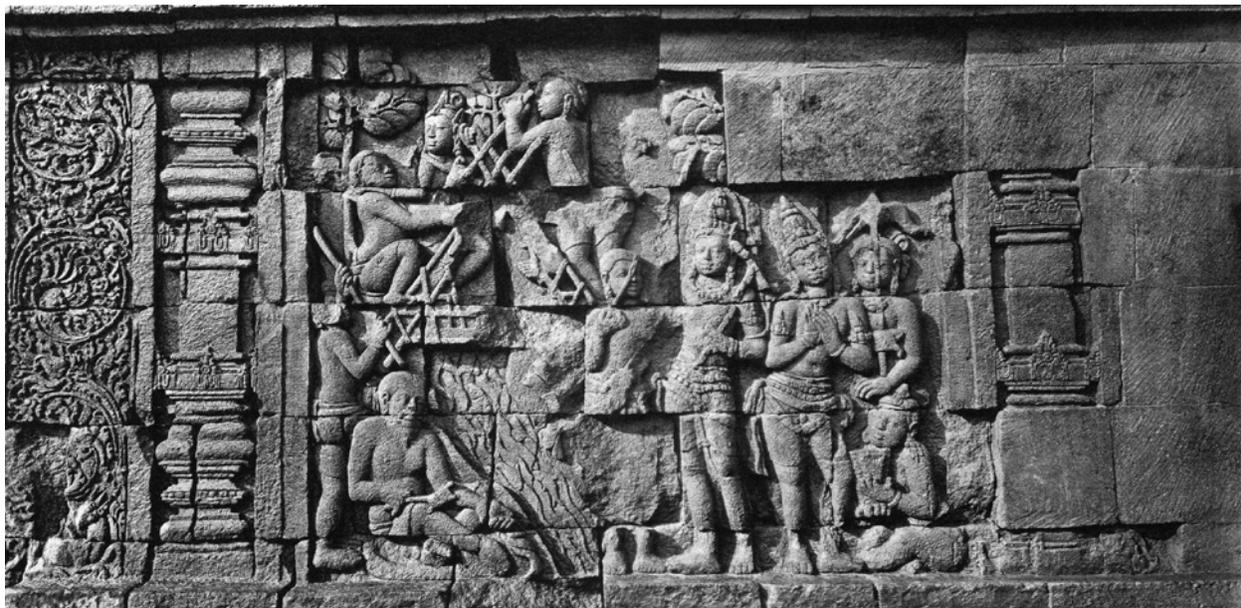
IV-43 Samantabhadra Setting Free Animals

As is usual in this series of reliefs, Samantabhadra is seated in a pavilion in the center of the relief. The bird on the palm of his raised right hand is about to be released and to take off and join a flock of other birds flying high above the scene. On the left side of the panel other persons release fishes into a pond.

Bosch connects this scene with the words “To mitigate death and all misfortune” of verse 21. Although this may at first seem a less than perfect match of text and image, there are possible precedents on Borobudur for this type of illustration. For example, in the series illustrating the *Karmavibhanga* relief O-9 also shows animals being set free. That relief either illustrates the words of paragraph II-6 of T. 81: “To set free animals about to be killed” or, as in T.80: “To comfort those who are in distress” (Fontein 1989, 17-18).

IV-44 Samantabhadra Distributing Food and Drink

Although this relief has suffered considerable damage, it is evident that it represents the distribution of gifts, probably food and drink, to Brahmans, *bhiksus* and lay people. Not only in the reliefs of the Third and Fourth Gallery, but also in the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs of the hidden base, such expressions as “acts of charity”, “practising good deeds” or “moved by compassion” which occur in the text are often illustrated by a distribution of gifts (see e.g. O-110a, O-111a,



39. Samantabhadra builds a bridge (IV-46).

O-113a, and IIIB-57). Here the scene probably illustrates “bringing happiness to all beings” of verse 21.

IV-45 Samantabhadra and Worshipers

This heavily damaged corner relief shows Samantabhadra seated in a pavilion. To the left the worshipers, one of whom holds a string of pearls in his hand. The fragmentary state of the relief does not offer any visual clue which would enable us to match it with any specific passage in the text. Bosch calls this relief a “stopgap” for the third line of vs. 21.

Verse 22: “Favoring the way of life of all living beings, practicing conduct resulting in the attainment of Enlightenment, and realizing the Benevolent Conduct of [Samanta]bhadra, may I proceed on this path in all future aeons.”

IV-46 Samantabhadra builds a Bridge (fig. 39)

On the right side of the relief stands Samantabhadra, carrying an adze over his left shoulder, and Sudhana, followed by two servants. On the left side workmen are busy constructing a bamboo bridge across a river teeming with fish.

As Krom points out (1920, p.695), this kind of scene can still be seen in the Javanese countryside today. This is one of those instances in which the sculptors demonstrate their creativity, their ability to rise above the contents of the text they were commissioned to illustrate.

Such scenes afford us the most fascinating glimpses of daily life in ancient Java, but they often turn out to be based upon a few words, lifted, almost at random it would seem, from the text.

Bosch (1938, 274) hesitated to choose between two lines of verse which may be associated with this relief. One is the fourth line of verse 21: “on as many paths in all directions as there are in all [Buddha] lands” and the first line of verse 22: “Favoring the way of life of all creatures”. Neither of these possibilities is fully satisfactory, although it would seem preferable to interpret the scene as a picturesque but free interpretation of Samantabhadra’s inspiring guidance.

IV-47 Worship of a Buddha and Two Bodhisattvas [1]

In the upper register of the relief is a Buddha in *varada-mudrā*, seated in a niche which is flanked by two Bodhisattvas. Avalokiteśvara is seated to the left, another Bodhisattva, identified as Vajrapāṇi by both Krom and Bosch, is seated on the right. On the left below are gathered a group of six *bhiksus*; to the right Samantabhadra and Sudhana, the first making an offering of incense and the second folding his hands in *añjali*.

As in IV-26, IV-40, and IV-61, the presence of the Buddha on the relief seems to be based upon the word “Enlightenment” (*bodhi*), in this instance in the second line of vs. 22.

Verse 23: “*And all who share my present destiny, may I always have them as my companions; may I be one with them in body, speech, and mind and may we proceed together on the path of the Vow of the Benevolent Conduct of [Samanta]bhadra.*”

IV-48 Samantabhadra and Procession [1]

While in some of the preceding reliefs the connection between the contents and intention of the verse and the often picturesque reliefs seemed to be rather tenuous, here the sculptors have succeeded admirably in capturing the spirit of verse 23. A procession is led by Samantabhadra, who holds the hand of another Bodhisattva. It includes a figure with his hands in *añjali*, standing between the two, as well as Sudhana, followed by a large retinue. As in IV-41, the word *careyam* in the fourth line of vs. 23 has provided the inspiration for the procession.

Holding hands is a gesture rarely seen in the reliefs of Borobudur. Such physical contact can be observed almost exclusively in the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs, and even there such limited physical intimacy is obviously often viewed with disapproval. This is evident from the fact that it is seen only in reliefs illustrating negative karma. Of course, whether the gesture is seen as inappropriate or appropriate depends entirely on the context in which it occurs. Meaningful gestures, especially when made by *kalyānamitras*, are a different matter. The few times that such gestures do occur on the reliefs of the higher galleries, they are invariably based upon the text. For example, in relief II-31 the dharma merchant Ratnacūda takes Sudhana by the hand to lead him to his magnificent ten-storied mansion, exactly as is described in the text.

In this and in the next relief Samantabhadra’s gesture is clearly meant to illustrate how all are united in their desire to proceed on the path of the Benevolent Conduct of Samantabhadra.

Verse 24: “*And also my Friends who intend the best for me, while instructing me in the Benevolent Conduct of [Samanta]bhadra, may I always have them as my companions and may my affection for them never diminish.*”

IV-49 Samantabhadra and a Procession [2]

The close resemblance between this and the preceding relief should not come as a surprise, for the verses 23 and 24 are very similar in content. The second line of vs.23 and the third line of vs. 24 are even identical. Here again the word *careyam* of the verse has resulted in a procession on the relief. This time the procession proceeds against a backdrop of rocks. Samantabhadra grasps both hands of a man who is kneeling before him. This time the sculptors have chosen to represent worshipers, who, to judge from their simple dress, belong to the less privileged social strata of Javanese society.

Verse 25: “*May I always come face-to-face with the Jinas and these sovereign lords, surrounded by their Buddha sons; may I never tire of bringing them fine offerings in all future aeons.*”

IV-50 Samantabhadra worships a Buddha and Two Bodhisattvas [2]

In a composition very similar to that of IV-47, the upper register of the relief shows a Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā*, flanked by two Bodhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara on the left and Vajrapāni on the right. In the lower register on the left, a group of six *bhiksus* appears. They face Samantabhadra, who is paying homage to the Buddha, his hands folded in *añjali*. Sudhana is seated behind him with crossed arms, his retinue of three servants behind him.

Once again, the word “Buddha” in the second line of vs. 25 appears to be the source for the illustration, together with the words “surrounded by their Buddha sons (Bodhisattvas)”.

Verse 26: “*Upholding the good teachings of the Jinas, illuminating the path leading towards Enlightenment, and purifying the Benevolent Conduct of [Samanta]bhadra, may I forever proceed on my way through all future aeons.*”

IV-51 Sudhana worships Samantabhadra

Samantabhadra is seated in a meditative pose inside a pavilion, receiving the homage of Sudhana, seated on the right with his hands folded in *añjali*. The flying deities above the clouds shower Samantabhadra with a rain of large flowers.

This relief, in which Samantabhadra, once again, switches roles from devout worshiper to that of the principal focus of worship, is similar to IV-24, where the same change occurs. Perhaps it is the word *Bhadracarim* in the third line of verse 26 that accounts for this switch. The same expression occurs in the second line of vs. 17, which may have been illustrated on IV-24.

Verse 27: “*Migrating through all states of being, accumulating merit and knowledge, may I obtain, through pious merit and wisdom, [the application of] good means, and by detachment*

[from the world] through meditation and application of all Perfections, an inexhaustible treasure.”

IV-52 Samantabhadra distributes Gifts

Samantabhadra is seated in a pavilion in a relaxed pose, his right leg supported by a strap (*gapatta*). To the right stands Sudhana, accompanied by three servants. To the left other servants are distributing all kinds of precious gifts to a group of simply dressed persons, obviously representing the less privileged strata of Javanese society. In the upper register to the left are three Brahmans overseeing the distribution of the gifts. However, as the grateful posture and gesture of one kneeling recipient clearly indicates, the benefactor of all this largesse is none other than Samantabhadra himself.

Bosch (1938, 277) assumes that the acquisition of merit (*punya*), mentioned in the second line of verse 27, is illustrated, here symbolized by the generous distribution of gifts. It is more likely, however, that the sculptor interpreted literally the words “may I obtain an inexhaustible treasure” of the last line of verse 27.

Verse 28: *“The [Buddha] worlds as numerous as the specks of dust on top of one speck of dust, and the inconceivable number of Buddhas present there, seated amidst the Buddha sons; may I get to see them all as I proceed on the path leading towards Enlightenment.”*

IV-53 Samantabhadra and Nine Buddhas

In the upper register nine Buddhas are seated in a row, their hands displaying different *mudrās*. They are flanked by two *bhiksus* (not Pratyeka Buddhas as Frédéric seems to think), as well as the sun on the right, and the moon on the left. In the lower register Samantabhadra occupies the center, seated on a lotus throne. Seated slightly lower on the right is Sudhana, his hands folded in *añjali*. A rain of flowers falls on the worshipers flanking the Bodhisattva.

Bosch (1938, 227) suggests that the sun and moon have probably been included in this relief as symbols of the infinity of time and space of verse 28 (see also IV-57 and IV-70). The nine Buddhas obviously represent the Buddhas “as numerous as the specks of dust on top of a speck of dust” of verse 28.

Verse 29: *“May I likewise immerse myself in all directions without exception, on paths [as numerous] as my hair, in oceans of Buddhas extending through the Three Ages, and in oceans of [Buddha] lands and oceans of aeons of pious conduct.”*

IV-54 Samantabhadra and Ten Buddhas

In the upper register seven seated Buddhas, separated by trees, are flanked by two standing Buddhas, shown in profile. In the lower register on the left is a tenth Buddha. He is welcomed by Samantabhadra, whose hands are folded in *añjali*. Behind the Bodhisattva are Sudhana and his retinue.

The *mudrās* displayed by the multitude of Buddhas who make their appearance on the main wall of the fourth gallery do not seem to conform to any strictly prescribed pattern or appear to represent any particular iconographic system. However, of the hundreds of times that Sudhana is shown on Borobudur, this is the only relief in which he is portrayed with his hands in *dharmacakra-mudrā*. This strongly suggests the possibility that the *mudrā* has a special significance here. It is possible, for instance, that instead of verse 29, the last line of verse 31, “while I constantly apply the doctrine of the Wheel of the Marvelous Law” (see below under IV-56) has been illustrated. We have seen earlier in relief IV-39, how Māra’s appearance seems to anticipate a mention of his name two verses later. Here we seem to have a similar case.

Verse 30: “*May I always embody, with the ocean sounds of a single musical instrument, the voice of clarity and purity, [like that] uttered by the musical instruments of all Jinās, the harmonious voice of the Buddhas addressing the wishes of the entire world.*”

IV-55 Samantabhadra expounds the Law to the Animals

In the center of the relief Samantabhadra is seated in a pavilion. On the right Sudhana raises his hands folded in *añjali*. The left side of the panel shows pairs of different animals and birds. Words like “all creatures” or “the entire world” may have inspired the sculptors to depict an audience of animals. Bosch notes the absence of fishes. Connecting the relief with the voices of verse 30, he attributes their omission to the fact that they were considered to be voiceless creatures.

Verse 31: “*In these voices of eternal clarity of all Jinās of the Three Ages, may I enter by the power of my knowledge, while I constantly apply the doctrine of the Wheel of the Marvelous Law.*”

IV-56 Samantabhadra, Three Buddhas and Four Bodhisattvas

In the center of the relief is Samantabhadra, seated on a lotus throne with his right hand raised in *vitarka-mudrā*. To the left, in the upper register, are three seated Buddhas; below them four Bodhisattvas. Like the Buddhas of IV-54, the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of this panel are separated by trees. The three Buddhas probably refer to the Three Ages of vs. 31.

Verse 32: “*May I gain, in a single instant, entrance to all future aeons; having entered as many aeons as there are in the Three Ages, in these tens of millions of moments, may I forever proceed, constantly abiding in Benevolent Conduct.*”

IV-57 Samantabhadra and a Meditating Buddha

A Buddha is meditating in a building crowned by the sun and the moon. A rain of flowers is showered on Samantabhadra, who is approaching the building, and on Sudhana with his retinue following the Bodhisattva.

As in IV-53 and IV-70 the sun and moon symbolize the infinity of time and space, as mentioned in verse 32.

Verse 33: *“As many lions of humanity as there are in the Three Ages [past, present, and future], may I see them all in one single moment; and may I always enter their domain by the power of detachment resulting from [the knowledge] of māyā .”*

IV-58 Samantabhadra, Three Buddhas, and Six Bodhisattvas

Samantabhadra, followed by Sudhana and his retinue, turns towards three Buddhas, seated on lotus thrones and, below them, six Bodhisattvas. Once again, the number of three Buddhas reflects the “Three Ages” of verse 33.

Verse 34: *“As many [Buddha] lands as may be arrayed in the three ages, may I see them all on the tip of a single particle of dust; may I likewise immerse myself in the arrays of Jina worlds in all directions without exception.”*

Verse 35: *“May all those [Buddhas], who are destined to become the lamps of the world in the future, attain Enlightenment, turn the Wheel of the Law, manifest their final extinction and their supreme peace; may I meet all these sovereign Lords.”*

IV-59 Samantabhadra makes an Offering to Three Buddhas

In the upper register of the relief are three seated Buddhas, once again separated from each other by trees. They obviously represent the “Three Ages” of verse 34. Samantabhadra pours water from a spouted vessel on a flowering tree standing in front of the Buddha in the center.

Bosch speculates (1938, 280) that relief IV-59 is either meant to illustrate the two verses 34 and 35 together or that vs. 35 was lacking in the Borobudur text. The main argument in favor of his suggestion is that the next verse is definitely illustrated on relief IV-60.

Verse 36: *“With limitless, swift psychic power, with the boundless impetus of the vehicle [of liberation], with the boundless and perfect power of the Benevolent Conduct of [Samanta]bhadra, with the boundless power of friendship.”*

IV-60 Samantabhadra’s Levitation (fig. 40)

Krom (1920, 632) describes this highly remarkable relief in part as follows: “The relief shows two temple-like buildings, similar in structure, but different in detail...On the extreme right Samantabhadra, the second protagonist (Sudhana, J.F.) and his retinue. The Bodhisattva appears a second time between the two buildings, but now he stands on a lotus cushion raised to some distance above the ground. Finally we see him a third time on the left, this time he is hovering in the air. A rain of flowers and garlands falls everywhere. Instead of three different manifestations of Samantabhadra, we see a representation of him taking to the air”.

Bosch associates this scene with the first line of verse 36: “with limitless, swift psychic power”. He supposes that the relief illustrates the supernatural power of levitation, acquired through yoga exercises. At the same time he expresses his disappointment that this magnificent relief, one of the finest of all *Bhadracarī* reliefs, could have been inspired merely by the



40. Samantabhadra's levitation (IV-60).

words “psychic power”. As the high artistic value of the relief is recognized by all, perhaps one may evaluate the illustrative quality of the relief differently. It could demonstrate, once again, the genius of the sculptors, who succeeded in transcending without distorting the contents of the hymn by their appropriate use of a visual metaphor.

Hikata (1981, 125) offers an entirely different explanation. He believes that IV-60 (his no. IV-A-60) illustrates verse 46 of the *Bhadracarī*, which he translates: “Up to the end of the sky, and until all sentient beings were out [sic], and all karmas and worldly passions themselves have ceased, my vows will know no end”. He follows up on this explanation, which at first glance is as plausible as Bosch’s, with a surprising interpretation of the relief, which he does not consider to be a representation of Samantabhadra taking to the air, but of exactly the opposite: “Bodhisattva Samantabhadra (holding lotus flowers growing from one root and bearing five—or three?—stems) is shown in the upper left flying in the upper sky, then in the middle sky, and finally on the ground (the place of sentient beings who have karmas and worldly passions).” Hikata fails to take into account the *pradaksinā*, performed by the viewer, and the right-to-left sequence in which the segments of the movements of Samantabhadra should be read.

Verse 37: “With the boundless beneficial power of pious merits, with the power of knowledge liberated [from worldly bonds], with the power of wisdom, expedience, and meditation, preparing for the power of Enlightenment....”

IV-61 Samantabhadra makes an Offering to a Buddha

A Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā* is seated in an elaborate pavilion, which occupies almost the entire left half of the relief. The base of the façade of this building is decorated with a row of five stylized trees. To the right Samantabhadra kneels before the Buddha, holding a fan to waft the incense in one, and an incense burner (heavily damaged) in the other hand. Sudhana kneels behind the Bodhisattva, his hands folded in *añjali*. The word “Enlightenment” [*bodhi*] in the last line of vs. 37 seems to have provided the inspiration for this scene.

Verse 38: “*Completely purifying the power of karma, completely destroying the power of defilements, disarming the power of Māra, may I see all power of [Samanta]bhadra’s Benevolent Conduct being fulfilled.*”

IV-62 Samantabhadra and a Buddha

Given the similarity between the verses 37 and 38, it is hardly surprising that this relief resembles the preceding panel. The Buddha, seated in a pavilion, raises his right hand in *abhaya-mudrā*. Samantabhadra, followed by Sudhana and his retinue, is walking from the right towards the building. Bosch (1938, 282) comments: “In my opinion, the reason why a Buddha has been represented here, while one would have expected Samantabhadra to be the chief protagonist of this panel, has to be sought in the third line of verse 38. The sculptors appear to have judged that the power of Māra could only be overcome by the Buddha himself, who, therefore, had to occupy the most important place on this relief”.

Verse 39: “*Purifying the Oceans of the [Buddha] lands, liberating the Oceans of all sentient beings, observing the Oceans of the Law, immersing myself in the Oceans of knowledge....*”

IV-63 Homage to Samantabhadra

This narrow corner relief shows Samantabhadra seated in a pavilion flanked by seated worshipers. On the right is Sudhana. Bosch (1938, 283) dismisses this relief as a “stopgap”, but there may be another explanation. In the preceding relief, where one would have expected Samantabhadra to be the chief protagonist, a Buddha had taken the Bodhisattva’s place. The possibility that relief IV-63 illustrates the fourth line of verse 38, instead of verse 39, would therefore seem to be much more likely.

Verse 40: “*Purifying the oceans of pious duties, fulfilling the oceans of pious vows, worshipping the oceans of Buddhas with offerings, may I without ever tiring proceed on my way through the oceans of aeons.*”

IV-64 Samantabhadra practices Generosity

Samantabhadra is seated in a relaxed posture, his raised knee supported by a strap (*gapatta*) and his right hand in *vara-mudrā*. On the left, underneath a roof of a *pēndapa*, stand two

Brahmans, holding out their hands in anticipation of a gift. Two servants of the Bodhisattva distribute gifts to the two Brahmans and three other gratefully kneeling recipients

Bosch, again, dismisses this relief as a “stopgap” (1938, 283). It would seem more likely, however, that the sculptors chose to lift the word “worshiping with offerings” (*prapūrayamānah*) from the hymn and changed the original beneficiaries, the “Oceans of Buddhas”, to such lesser but, nevertheless, worthy recipients of Samantabhadra’s generosity as the two Brahmans. In the series of reliefs illustrating Maitreya giving away parts of his body (IIIB-71—IIIB-83) we have seen that Brahmans were often considered worthy recipients of these gifts. They were sometimes chosen by the sculptors when no specific recipient was mentioned in the text.

Verse 41: “*Whatever may be the pious vows [that have been made] by the Jinās of the Three Ages to follow the path leading to Enlightenment, may I fulfill them all without exception and may I achieve Enlightenment by following [Samanta]bhadra’s Benevolent Conduct.*”

IV-65 Samantabhadra and Three Buddhas

To the left, in the upper register, are three seated Buddhas, separated by ornamental trees. To the right Samantabhadra is seated in *dhyāna-mudrā* in a pavilion. He receives the homage of Sudhana, kneeling respectfully, his hands raised in *añjali*. On the left a *bhikṣu* is offering a vase with flowers to a recipient in the dress of the elite.

Once again, the reference in verse 41 of the hymn to the Jinās of the Three Ages (past, present, and future), has resulted in yet another scene with three Buddhas.

Verse 42: “*The foremost son of all Jinās is the one whose name is Samantabhadra; may I dedicate all of these blessings in order to obtain the friendly association with this sage.*”

IV-66 Samantabhadra and Bodhisattvas

Samantabhadra is seated in a pavilion in the center of the relief. To the left seven seated haloed figures in royal attire represent Bodhisattvas. Sudhana and his retinue are on the right. This relief, of which Samantabhadra is the focus of attention, illustrates the contents of verse 42. It is also possible that it illustrates verse 43, for verse 44 is represented on the next relief.

Verse 43: “*The purity of body, speech, and mind, the purity of conduct and the purity of the [Buddha] lands, in whatever manner these belong to the sage whose name is [Samanta]bhadra, may they likewise be bestowed upon me.*”

Verse 44: “*Following [Samanta]bhadra’s Benevolent Conduct, may I without ever tiring in all future ages act in accordance with Mañjuśrī’s pious vows; may I perform without ever tiring all of these acts of piety without exception.*”

IV-67 Mañjuśrī and Three Buddhas

Without knowing the text, Krom had already correctly identified the Bodhisattva who is seated in the center of the relief as Mañjuśrī. The Bodhisattva folds his hands in *añjali* and holds the

blue lotus or *utpala*. The text of verse 44 now provides definite proof of the identification, even though both the book and the crescent-shaped ornaments which are the additional attributes of this Bodhisattva in the Buddhist art of Java are lacking here. Another Bodhisattva carrying an *utpala*, shown on IV-20, has likewise been identified by Krom as Mañjuśrī. Here Mañjuśrī is flanked by two Buddhas, while a third Buddha rises above his head. Above the clouds heavenly beings produce a rain of flowers. Below worshipers, seated beneath elaborate ornamental trees, flank the central Buddha scene.

IV-68 Samantabhadra and Sudhana worship a Buddha

The Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā* is seated in a pavilion on the left side of the relief. Samantabhadra, his hands folded in *añjali*, pays homage to the Buddha. To the right rises a tall building in which four women are seated.

Bosch discussed at length (1938, 285-286), the sequential order of the reliefs of this section. It appears not to match that of the verses of the hymn, but the transmitted texts all adopt the same sequence. After weighing the different possibilities, Bosch finally concluded that this relief illustrates the (*Buddha*) *ksetras* of verse 43 (The number 42, which he gives on p.286 is apparently a misprint).

Verse 45: “*May there be no limits to the Benevolent Conduct, may there be no limits to [the practice of] virtue; persisting infinitely in Benevolent Conduct, may I witness all miracles [performed by these two Bodhisattvas].*”

IV-69 The Miraculous Apparition of a *Stūpa*

In the upper register of the relief a *stūpa*, floating in the air, is flanked by three seated Buddhas on either side. In the center, beneath the *stūpa*, Samantabhadra is seated in *dhyāna-mudrā*, flanked by a host of Bodhisattvas and deities.

The relief illustrates the last line of verse 45: “May I witness all the miracles [performed by these two Bodhisattvas].” The sculptors chose to illustrate the word “miracles” by the apparition of a *stūpa*. This is a crucial theme in such Mahāyāna *sūtras* as the *Saddharma-pundarīka sūtra*, but it does not figure frequently in the *Gandavyūha*. A possible explanation for this choice of illustrating the word “miracles” may be that this relief is one of those which function as a preview of things to come. For the pilgrim has now reached a point only a few steps away from coming face to face with the *stūpas* of the circular terraces (cf. IV-13).

Verse 46: “*As far removed as the limits of outer space, and as far away as the end of [the number of] all creatures may be; and as far distant as the end of all karma and all defilements, may the end of my pious vows be equally remote.*”

IV-70 Samantabhadra pays Homage to a Buddha

The Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā* is seated in a pavilion in the center of the relief. The sun and moon, supported by lotus cushions, hover above the clouds, where flying divinities and a pair of *Kinnaras* appear. To the right Samantabhadra, on his knees, folds his hands in *añjali*. Right behind him are Sudhana and his retinue. On the left, in front of a small temple building, are three laymen and three *bhiksus*. The foremost of the *bhiksus* raises his hands in *añjali* towards the Buddha.

As in IV-53 and IV-57, the sun and moon here symbolize the infinity of time and space of the verse of the hymn. The inclusion of the *Kinnaras* and other flying heavenly beings may either suggest the proximity of heaven, the customary abode of these legendary birds, or an effort to illustrate the words “all creatures” of the second line of verse 46.

It has been noted earlier that Hikata connects another relief with the contents of this verse (see IV-60).

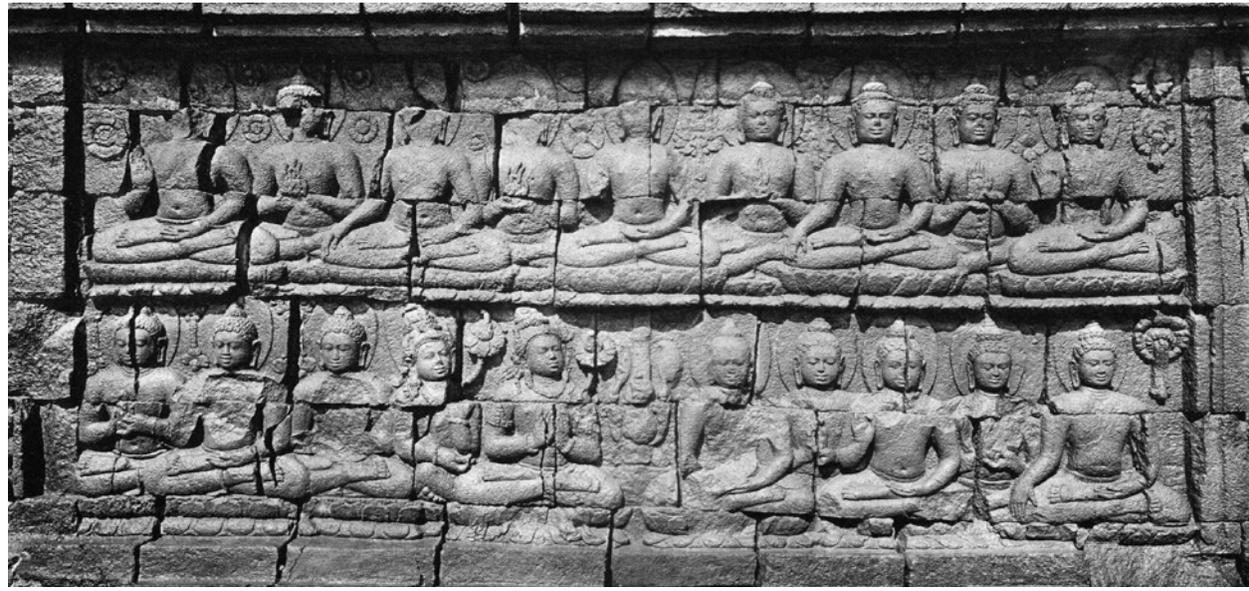
Verse 47: “Whatever boundless [Buddha] lands may extend into the Ten Directions, may I have them all adorned with jewels for the Jinās; and may I provide them with exquisitely divine and human joy during aeons equal in number to the particles of dust in all [Buddha] lands.”

Verse 48: “And whosoever, upon hearing once this royal dedication, shall develop the thought of turning [towards the Buddha], while seeking Supreme Enlightenment, may this be the highest and most excellent merit accorded to him.”

IV-71 Samantabhadra and Sudhana Worshipping Fifteen Buddhas

The last two reliefs of the main wall of the fourth gallery constitute a kind of apotheosis of the *Bhadracarī*. This relief shows fifteen Buddhas, two standing and thirteen seated, arranged in symmetrical fashion in two superimposed registers around the central Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā*. Below the central Buddha, on the lower level, Samantabhadra and Sudhana are kneeling, the first with hands folded in *añjali*.

The number of fifteen Buddhas is unique for Borobudur, but does not seem to have a particular significance in Buddhism. The explanation, first offered by Bosch (1938, 287) is that this relief belongs together with the next and final panel IV-72. It shows seventeen Buddhas, bringing the total number on the two reliefs together to thirty-two, an auspicious Buddhist number, equal to, for example, the primary bodily marks (*lakṣaṇa*) of the Buddha and the Universal Monarch, the Cakravartin.



41. Samantabhadra and Sudhana pay homage to seventeen Buddhas (IV-72).

IV-72 Samantabhadra and Sudhana pay Homage to Seventeen Buddhas (fig. 41)

Seated in rows on two superimposed registers, seventeen Buddhas receive the homage of Samantabhadra and Sudhana. To indicate the advanced state of consciousness and detachment (*vimoksa*) the *kalyānamitra* and his disciple Sudhana have acquired, they are now both shown seated on lotus cushions.

As we have mentioned above, Hikata, and, following in his footsteps, Frédéric, assumed that the entire *Bhadracarī* has been illustrated on Borobudur. The logical consequence of Hikata's theory is that the final reliefs of the fourth main wall (IV-71 and IV-72) should be identified as illustrations of Samantabhadra's and Sudhana's entry into the Paradise of Amitābha, as mentioned in vs. 57 of the hymn: "And on my dying day, after having removed all obstacles, may I then see Amitābha and may I then enter the land of Sukhāvati." To accept such an identification of these reliefs requires additional proof. We will later have an occasion to return to this topic, but for now it would seem preferable to accept Bosch's explanation that the last part of the *Bhadracarī* in which Amitābha makes a rather unexpected appearance, has not been illustrated in the reliefs of Borobudur.

COMMENTS ON THE BHADRACARĪ RELIEFS

In the preceding chapter the reliefs of the main wall of the fourth gallery of Borobudur have been matched, to the extent possible, with the strophes of the *Bhadracarī*. The abstract, non-visual characteristics of the hymn posed a formidable challenge to the sculptors, who made every effort to represent its contents in a meaningful manner. Even though a number of uncertainties remain, many matches between text and image can be made on reliefs that are widely scattered along the main wall of the fourth gallery. They no longer leave any room for doubt that it is indeed the *Bhadracarī* and no other text that has been illustrated there.

The only scholar, who has held an opposite view and who has rejected Bosch's original identification of the reliefs of the fourth main wall as illustrations of the *Bhadracarī*, is Luis Gómez. He first stated this opinion in his "Observations on the Role of the Gandavyūha in the Design of Borobudur", a paper read in 1974 and published seven years later (Gómez 1981). To his discussion of the question as to whether the architectural shape of Borobudur was inspired by the contents of the *Gandavyūha*, Gómez added the following comment: "The question of whether the *Gandavyūha* influenced the actual design of the monument is a very different problem. Perhaps this proposition will never be satisfactorily confirmed, for the simple reason that the artists evidently were not always faithful to the texts as we know them (they did not have to be). Even in those parts of the monument where we are certain of the identity of the texts used, the artist has often departed from the original in a variety of ways. A particularly significant example of these 'variations' is precisely the fourth wall, where supposedly the artists have sculpted their version of the *Bhadracarī*. Even Bosch, who first proposed the identification of the reliefs with the *Bhadracarī*, was prompt in recognizing how difficult it is to carry through the identification relief after relief. In the end he had to propose a different, and as yet undiscovered, recension of the *Bhadracarī*. In my view, the necessity of proposing such a recension could subtract much from the value of the identification" (Gómez 1981, 184). In a footnote Gómez adds: "Bosch's identifications are relatively strong only for the first seven stanzas (the first eighteen reliefs); after that his arguments become weaker at every step....I find his identifications weak throughout. At least eighty percent of his parallels are doubtful, if not altogether unfounded" (Gómez 1981, notes 49-50).

Further pursuing his rejection of Bosch's identifications, Gómez then proposed an alternative. He suggested that instead of the *Bhadracarī* the concluding stanzas of the *Gandavyūha*, as preserved in the Chinese translations by Buddhahadra and Śiksānanda, could have provided the inspiration for most of the reliefs on the walls of the fourth gallery (Gómez 1981, 184-185). By postponing to a later date an attempt to compare the reliefs with the contents of the final stanzas of these two Chinese translations, Gómez failed to discover what even a superficial preliminary investigation could have made him realize. There is no credible evidence that these stanzas have been illustrated on the reliefs of the fourth main wall.

The Sanskrit texts and the history of the different Chinese translations of the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī* suggest that the hymn was, at a certain point in time, appended to the *Gandavyūha*. Buddhahadra's *Gandavyūha* (T. 278), the first complete translation into Chinese, is not followed by the *Bhadracarī*. As this translator actually made a separate translation

of the *Bhadracarī* (T. 296) under a different title, this has generally been taken as an indication that the combination of the two texts must have occurred at a later date. Nevertheless, the evidence is not as unambiguous as it may perhaps appear to be at first sight. As has been mentioned in the introduction (p.13), the Sanskrit manuscript of the *Gandavyūha* upon which Buddhahadra based his translation appears to have been rather incomplete. It had at least one very large lacuna. This gap in the text was discovered by the monks Divākara and Dharmagupta and restored by them only in 680 C.E., when they supplied a translation of the missing section from another manuscript. The possibility cannot be ruled out entirely that in addition to this gap the appendix containing the *Bhadracarī* may have also been missing from the manuscript upon which Buddhahadra's original translation was based. This could actually have been the reason why Buddhahadra was unaware of the connection between the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī*. On the other hand, the two monks who repaired the lacuna in 680 C.E. did not complete their assignment by appending a translation of the *Bhadracarī* to Buddhahadra's amended *Gandavyūha* translation. This may be considered an indication that the two texts had not yet come to be combined at that time.

Not only the addition of the *Bhadracarī* to the *Gandavyūha*, but also the expansion of the *Bhadracarī* itself happened over time, as the dates of the successive translations into Chinese suggest. The chronology of the various Chinese translations may be briefly summed up as follows:

- 420 C.E.: Buddhahadra translated the *Gandavyūha* as the last part of his translation of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* in sixty fascicles without appending the *Bhadracarī* to it (T.278).
 420 C.E.: Buddhahadra made a separate translation of the *Bhadracarī* without its final stanzas (T.296)
 680 C.E.: Divākara and Dharmagupta inserted the missing passage in Buddhahadra's *Gandavyūha* translation, but did not add the *Bhadracarī* to it.
 695-699 C.E.: Śikṣānanda translated the *Gandavyūha* as the last chapter of his translation of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* in eighty fascicles, but without the *Bhadracarī* appended to it (T.279).
 754 C.E. [or later?]: Amoghavajra translated the *Bhadracarī* complete with its final stanzas (T.279) as a separate text..
 796-798 C.E.: Prajñā translated the *Gandavyūha* as a separate text in forty fascicles, appending to it his translation of the *Bhadracarī*, complete with its final stanzas (T. 293).

This chronological table suggests that both the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī* were expanded over time, the first before 796 C.E. and the second probably before 754 C.E. The various manuscripts came from widely separated parts of India and Central Asia and may have differed considerably in age. This should make us wary of trying to pinpoint the dates of these additions more precisely. For the identification of the reliefs it is of significance that Buddhahadra's separate translation consists of forty-four stanzas, approximately the same number of stanzas as appear to have been illustrated on Borobudur. There is, therefore, a definite precedent in the history of the transmission of the text for a shorter version of the *Bhadracarī*, which was similar in length to the text that was later illustrated by the sculptors of Borobudur.

Shiraishi considers Buddhahadra's text to be a translation of the original *Bhadracarī*. He also thinks that the last part of the *Bhadracarī*, written in praise of Amitābha, is a later addition. Both Bosch and Tatz hold the same view. When Bosch began to compare the text of

the *Bhadracarī* with the reliefs of Borobudur, he did not immediately realize that the reliefs illustrated only part of the transmitted text. Only gradually did it dawn upon him that the last part of the *Bhadracarī* was not illustrated on Borobudur at all. When he made this discovery, Bosch at first believed that the original plan of the sculptors had been to complete the series. He suggested that they may have planned to illustrate the last part of the *Bhadracarī* on the inside of the fifth balustrade, i.e. on the transitional level between the fourth gallery and the circular terraces, but he later abandoned this idea. His speculations had been inspired primarily by his identification of the final reliefs and by the panels on the transitional level which had been left undecorated.

Hikata Ryūshō's approach was the exact opposite of the one adopted by Bosch (Hikata 1981). Taking the text instead of the reliefs as his point of departure, Hikata appears to have assumed from the start that the entire *Bhadracarī* had been illustrated on Borobudur. He therefore proceeded to assign the reliefs more or less proportionately, sometimes even rather arbitrarily, to the successive stanzas of the hymn. Following in Hikata's footsteps, Frédéric adopted most of Hikata's identifications.

The suggestion by Gómez that Bosch proposed "a different, as yet undiscovered, recension of the *Bhadracarī*" as the textual source of the Borobudur reliefs is inexact. Instead of inventing a new version of the text, Bosch merely combined the two separate—and perhaps even entirely independent—developments in the transmission of the texts. These two developments are the attachment of the *Bhadracarī* to the *Gandavyūha*, and the addition of stanzas in praise of Amitābha to the original *Bhadracarī* of approximately forty-four verses. Bosch's conclusions are primarily based upon his observation of the reliefs. They are also largely in agreement with all that we know about the history of the transmission and translation of the text. He did not base his identifications on "a different, as yet undiscovered, recension of the *Bhadracarī*". Instead he demonstrated that the reliefs of the main wall of the fourth gallery of Borobudur provide sculptured and, therefore, unalterable evidence, that a shorter version of the *Bhadracarī* had already been appended to the *Gandavyūha* at the time when Borobudur was built. This version was not identical with, but in some respects similar to Buddhahadra's translation.

There is one other question regarding the text of the *Bhadracarī* that is of such fundamental importance that it should be addressed before we can turn to a discussion of the contents of the hymn and to an analysis of the manner in which its stanzas have been illustrated on Borobudur. Bosch, too, mentioned this problem at length in his introductory remarks (1938, 250-251): "From the contents of the *Bhadracarī* it is evident that the 'I', who recites the verses, is an (anonymous) disciple, who, while offering his highest praise (*annutara-pūjā*) and while making his pious vows, strives to emulate the conduct of Samantabhadra as the example for his personal *bodhicaryā*. Apart from the many strophes which mention the [*Samanta*] *bhadracarī*, this is evident from the verses 42 and 43, which contain an invocation of the Bodhisattva. Even though there is, therefore, little reason to doubt this interpretation, the author of the *Gandavyūha* actually embraces another view."

Bosch then paraphrases the brief prose introduction to the *Bhadracarī* that is contained in the so-called Northern version of the Sanskrit text and in Prajñā's Chinese translation. It reads as follows (as translated by Tatz, 1977, 158):

"Homage to Samantabhadra! Then the Bodhisattva, the great hero Samantabhadra, in order to enlighten as many ages as the indescribable [numbers of] atoms in the equally indescribable

[numbers of] Buddha-heavens in each of the unspeakably [numerous] realms of the universe, by reciting the [following] verses, made a vow”.

Bosch concludes: “Thus the words of the *Bhadracarī* are attributed to Samantabhadra, contradicting the contents of the poem itself, which has the anonymous disciple recite the verses. It is evident that one of these two sources misrepresents the actual state of affairs. Of course, it goes without saying that the mistake cannot have been committed by the author of the poem. If we assume that the author of the prose introduction committed this careless, thoughtless mistake, we realize that we can also no longer maintain the commonly accepted view that the *Bhadracarī* originally formed the concluding part of the *Gandavyūha* and that it later came to be separated from it, circulating as an independent poem, to be translated into Chinese and Tibetan. The origin of the prose introduction can only be explained if we assume that, on the contrary, the poem circulated as an independent scripture, and that it was only later, after having been provided with an introduction by an unauthorized writer, that it was attached to the *Gandavyūha* and that the anonymous disciple, who recites the poem, came to be identified with the pilgrim Sudhana.”

In the Khotanese *Bhadracaryādesana* the equivalent of this prose introduction is lacking. Instead it contains three introductory stanzas which precede the Khotanese version of verse 1 of the Sanskrit text. In these three introductory stanzas the person reciting the hymn praises Mañjuśrī (1), pays homage to Samantabhadra (2), and prays for protection by all Buddhas (3) “so that I may succeed in hearing the pure *Bhadracaryā*” (Asmussen 1961, 7-8).

When we now turn to Mark Tatz, one of several translators of the *Bhadracarī* (1977, 153-154), we find that this author holds a view quite different from that of Bosch. First of all he states: “Although it is generally treated as a separate text, Samantabhadra’s vow originates as part of the *Gandavyūha-sūtra*, to which it forms the conclusion”. As we have previously seen, this statement finds no support in the history of the Chinese translations of the texts. Tatz prefaces his remark with the following explanation: “Samantabhadra teaches the performance of good works and a broadly compassionate attitude. He personifies the benevolent side of bodhisattvahood. He is at the same time represented as an actual ‘bodhisattva great hero’, and this explains a certain ambiguity of the poem. Although he is the speaker, Samantabhadra sometimes refers to himself in the third person. He says, for example (vs. 55ab): ‘Learned like the hero Mañjuśrī, so is Samantabhadra’. He is likewise mentioned in the verses 42 and 43 as an exemplar. Mañjuśrī is the personification of the path of study and wisdom; there is another bodhisattva vow made by him (vs. 44). In the lines just quoted the author is stating that the practice of acquiring good merit by concern for others, as symbolized by Samantabhadra, results in wisdom which is the equivalent of that earned by study and meditation. I mention this here because it has confused some readers, who, like the very competent editor of our text (Sushama Devi; J.F.), miss this symbolic aspect of Samantabhadra, concluding that such references to him ‘ill accord’ with the fact that he is himself speaking the stanzas.”

It may come as a surprise to us that Samantabhadra refers to himself in the third person, singing his own praise. However, this unusual feature is not only found in the *Bhadracarī*, but also in the *Gandavyūha*. Dōi (1978, 457), translating the final pages of Buddhahadra’s translation of the *Gandavyūha*, noted the same there and commented: “Man betrachte die seltsame Tatsache, dass hier Bodhisattva ‘Allgemein-Weiser’ von sich selbst wie von einer anderen Person erzählt. Bodhisattva ‘Allgemein-Weiser’ hat den Doppelcharakter, den Charakter eines Eigennamens und den Charakter eines Gattungnamens”. (We should note the rare case that

Samantabhadra speaks here of himself as if it were of another person. The name Samantabhadra has a double character, that of a personal name and that of a generic term (translation, J.F.). Dōi probably refers to the double meaning of the term *samantabhadra*, also discussed by Vetter (see p.177).

To answer the question whether the contradiction, first noticed by Bosch, is the result of an imperfect fusion of the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī* (Bosch), a matter of semantics (Dōi), or the result of a misinterpretation and misunderstanding of the philosophical aspects of the hymn (Tatz), is a task best left to the buddhologists. I have limited myself here to quoting these different views. It is nevertheless of immediate relevance to the present topic to draw the reader's attention to this difference of opinion. Although it may perhaps be of primarily academic interest to compare the different views of modern scholars on this topic, it is of immediate historical relevance to establish how the sculptors of Borobudur dealt with this aspect of the text.

Did they share the modern scholars' view that there is a certain ambiguity or even a contradiction in the hymn as to the identity of the chief protagonist of the *Bhadracarī*? Or did the sculptors accept an interpretation of the text which made Samantabhadra the chief protagonist in the offerings? If the latter should be the case, did they regard this Bodhisattva as the person who pronounced these solemn vows? Or did they adhere to the text of the *Bhadracarī*, which seems to suggest that an anonymous disciple—like the pilgrim Sudhana—recited the verses and vows of the *Bhadracarī*?

When we study the overall composition and the iconographical details of the reliefs, we soon begin to realize that the sculptors of Borobudur, if they were at all aware of any possible contradiction, avoided taking sides or making a clear-cut choice. Instead they seem to have simultaneously embraced both interpretations. In spite of a number of minor variations, the first eighteen reliefs illustrating the *Bhadracarī*, exactly one fourth of the total number, are all of remarkably similar composition. Each relief shows at least one, sometimes four, and once even as many as ten Buddhas. To accommodate the larger number of Buddhas, the sculptors lined them up on the relief in two registers. In six of these eighteen reliefs Samantabhadra is shown with his hands folded in *añjali*, clearly indicating that he is paying homage to the Buddha(s). In some of the scenes in which Samantabhadra is not shown with his hands in *añjali*, he is seen making an offering of flowers (IV-1) or holding a conch (IV-7), thereby making himself a participant in the floral and musical tributes to the Buddhas shown in the reliefs. Only in two instances where Samantabhadra does not make a gesture honoring the Buddha(s), this task has been assumed by Sudhana, who is shown on these reliefs with his hands joined in *añjali*.

It seems reasonable to conclude from the composition of these scenes and the gestures of the chief protagonists that the sculptors of these first eighteen reliefs definitely intended to represent Samantabhadra in the act of paying homage to the Jinas represented on these reliefs. In other words: they considered the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra to be the person who recites the first ten verses of the *Bhadracarī*.

When we now cross the stairway to view the next series of *Bhadracarī* reliefs, we notice a sudden change in the places assigned to the chief protagonists. Relief IV-19 is the first of many in which Samantabhadra switches roles from a devout worshiper of the Jinas to a saintly personage who himself has now become a worthy focus of worship. Beginning with IV-19 there are altogether twenty-one reliefs on the main wall of the fourth gallery in which Samanta-

bhadra, usually seated in an ornate pavilion, is being worshiped by a host of different beings. Among them, seated invariably to the right, is always the pilgrim Sudhana.

We have previously observed that the sequential order of all reliefs indicates that the pilgrims who visited Borobudur performed a series of clockwise circumambulations (*pradaksinā*) of the monument. We also noticed that the composition of the reliefs of the fourth main wall follows the precedent provided by the reliefs of the second main wall. From this we may conclude that the pilgrims continued to view the reliefs from right to left. Proceeding in this manner along the fourth main wall, the first protagonist whose image they would see on each relief after IV-18 would be Sudhana. Sudhana has been placed on the right side, twenty-one times, in almost all of the reliefs showing variations on the theme of “Homage to Samantabhadra”. This strongly suggests that the sculptors now intended the viewers of their reliefs to identify with Sudhana. In these reliefs, therefore, it is now our pilgrim who has become the person who recites the solemn vows in honor of the Conduct of Samantabhadra.

We have previously seen that a similar connection exists between the placement of the chief protagonists and the viewer’s identification with them. In the reliefs of the main wall of the second gallery, where Sudhana’s visits most of his earlier *kalyānamitras*, this treatment of Sudhana is the exact opposite of that in the first eighteen *Bhadracarī* reliefs (IV-1—IV-18). In these reliefs Samantabhadra almost always occupies the right and Sudhana the left side of the panels. In that series the focus is, therefore, entirely on Samantabhadra.

Even if we do not agree with Gómez’s severe criticism of Bosch, it is difficult to disagree with his observation that Bosch’s (and—I should add- some of my own additional) identifications of the *Bhadracarī* reliefs are not nearly as firm and as convincing as we would have preferred them to be. However, this is not, as Gómez would like us to believe, because the text illustrated in these reliefs is not the *Bhadracarī*. It is much more likely that the problems of identification are the inevitable consequence of the choice of texts made by the Buddhist community of Borobudur. They commissioned the sculptors to illustrate a text, which they all held in the highest esteem, but which was often singularly unfit to be converted by the sculptors into clearly recognizable imagery in stone.

Another possibility, never considered by Gómez, is that the reliefs illustrated not a short version of the *Bhadracarī*, but the complete hymn of sixty-two verses. This is the view held by Hikata Ryūshō. Unfortunately, Hikata’s proposed matching of the stanzas with what he believed to be their sculptured illustrations did not result in any new matches more convincing than Bosch’s. The ultimate consequence of Hikata’s theory is that he identifies the two final *Bhadracarī* reliefs as illustrations of Samantabhadra’s and Sudhana’s entry into Amitābha’s paradise Sukhāvātī, as mentioned in vs. 57 of the hymn: “And on my dying day, after having removed all obstacles, may I then see Amitābha and may I then enter the land of Sukhāvātī.”

Hikata’s identification of the final reliefs of the fourth main wall (IV-71 and IV-72) as illustrations of Sukhāvātī raises some serious doubts. The sudden appearance on the scene of Amitābha is surprising, for except in the final verses of the *Bhadracarī*, Amitābha does not play a role of significance in either the *Gandavyūha* or the *Bhadracarī*. The desire for rebirth in Amitābha’s paradise Sukhāvātī is not mentioned anywhere else in these two texts.

At Borobudur there is ample evidence of a belief in rebirth in Heaven rather than in the Western Paradise of Sukhāvātī. For example, the paragraphs 55-74 of the *Karmavibhanga* deal with the ten-fold beneficial karmic effects of a number of different types of generosity. In each of these paragraphs the ninth effect reads: “upon death one will be reborn in Heaven.”

Each tenth effect reads: “one will soon enter *nirvāna*.” The reliefs which illustrate “rebirth in Heaven” usually show a pair of *Kinnaras* guarding pots filled with treasures, placed underneath a *kalpavṛkṣa*, or wishing tree. All of these heavenly scenes are followed immediately by a relief illustrating the next paragraph of the text. This proves beyond doubt that the sculptors consistently skipped the tenth beneficial karmic effect of various types of generosity, i.e. “a speedy entry into *nirvāna*” (Fontein 1989, 55-68).

For a *stūpa*, the symbol *par excellence* of final extinction and the triumph of *nirvāna* over *samsāra*, Borobudur is remarkably short on references to *nirvāna*. For example, the choice of the *Lalitavistara* as the text to guide the sculptors in their illustration of the life of the Buddha precluded any representation in stone of his life after having attained Enlightenment and prior to his entrance into *nirvāna*. The *Gandavyūha* and the first two parts of the *Bhadracarī* fit perfectly in the same mold, for both texts leave no doubt that it is a state of detachment and deliverance from all spiritual impediments, not entry into *nirvāna*, which is uppermost on the pilgrim’s mind. Rebirth in Amitābha’s paradise, only mentioned in what is clearly a later addition to the *Bhadracarī*, is at variance with the contents and spirit of the *Gandavyūha*.

Another way to evaluate Hikata’s identification of the last two reliefs of the fourth main wall (IV-71 and IV-72) is to consider the iconography of these reliefs. The two reliefs combined show a total of thirty-two Buddhas. Only one Buddha in these two reliefs stands out from this multitude of Buddhas. It is the figure in the center of the upper register of relief IV-71. If Hikata’s interpretation is right, this figure should, therefore, represent Amitābha. However, this Buddha displays the *dharmacakra-mudrā*. There is, as far as I have been able to establish, no precedent for an Amitābha in *dharmacakra-mudrā*, a gesture usually reserved either for the Buddha Śākyamuni or for Vairocana. It should be mentioned, however, that in the *Bhadracarī* reliefs the scenes with multiple Buddhas show them in various *mudrās* without revealing any recognizable pattern or system. It is almost as if the sculptors were asked to represent “many Buddhas”, but were left free in the choice of *mudrās* in which they wished to represent them.

Finally, I have been unable to find a precedent for a representation of Amitābha’s paradise in which Amitābha shares the place of honor with a multitude of other Buddhas. For example, in the numerous representations of Amitābha’s paradise in the arts of the Far East, Amitābha is usually shown as the only Buddha, dominating the entire scene, and not, as in the last reliefs of Borobudur, as an equal of the other Buddhas, or, at best, a *primus inter pares*.

However, there is one argument that at first glance seems to support Hikata’s identification of the final relief (IV-72) of the *Bhadracarī* series. It shows both Samantabhadra and Sudhana seated on a lotus cushion. This is exactly as is described in verse 59 of the *Bhadracarī*: “There, in that radiant and wonderful *mandala* of the Jinas, seated on an exquisitely beautiful lotus flower, may I receive there the oral instruction of the Jina Amitābha.”

There is no other relief in which Sudhana is accorded a similar honor. As we have previously seen, we have not been able to discover any method in the sculptors’ decisions to provide certain protagonists with a halo, and to deny this attribute to other figures. Sudhana, too, is sometimes shown with, at other times without halo, even on adjacent reliefs. Now, however, the sculptors, for the first time in hundreds of *Gandavyūha* reliefs, placed Sudhana on a lotus seat after he has arrived at the final destination of his pilgrimage. This cannot be a coincidence or a careless mistake. However, it need not make us accept the explanation, offered by Hikata, that this represents Sudhana’s arrival in Sukhāvātī. The unprecedented singling out of Sudhana by the mark of distinction of placing him on a lotus right next to Samantabhadra, who

is seated on another lotus, can also be seen as an apt illustration of the prediction, made earlier by Maitreya: “Son of Buddha, soon you will be one of us” (T.278,773b,15).

Now that we have confirmed Bosch’s identification of the reliefs of the main wall of the fourth gallery as illustrations of the *Bhadracarī*, and not of any other scripture, we should consider the methods of illustration used by their sculptors. These remind us in many ways of the methods they applied to the reliefs illustrating the final visits to the three Great Bodhisattvas Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, and Samantabhadra on the third gallery and on the fourth balustrade. The elaborate illustration of verses 5 and 6 of the *Bhadracarī* on eleven consecutive reliefs (IV-5—IV-15) and of verse 18 on nine consecutive reliefs (IV-30—IV-38) once again exemplify the maximum use the sculptors made of text passages with illustrative potential. They adopted the methods of the sculptors of the visit to Maitreya, who made the most of the description of the ornamentation of that Bodhisattva’s palace of miracles, of the reflection of a host of different beings in a lotus pond and of Maitreya’s donations of bodily parts. We also notice the same consistency in the illustration of such expressions as “bringing happiness to all beings”, or “to the benefit of all beings”, with a distribution of gifts (IV-44 and IV-19). These scenes follow the example set on III-44 and IIIB-7. Just as the word *bodhi* is often illustrated by a scene of one or more Buddhas (IV-25, IV-40, IV-50, and IV-61), the word *careyam* now invariably prompts the illustration of a procession (IV-41, IV-48, and IV-49). The infinity of time and space is indicated by the sun and moon (IV-53, IV-57, and IV-70).

An unmistakable sign that the pilgrim is getting closer to his final destination is the gradual increase in the number of Buddhas in the reliefs. As we have seen, the word *bodhi* in the text often resulted in a Buddha scene on the reliefs. Whenever the Buddhas of the Three Ages are mentioned, the sculptor promptly created a trinity of Buddhas. Scenes with six Buddhas stand for the words “all Jinas”, for six is probably the number of Buddhas of the Borobudur pantheon (see pp.237-238). The words “Buddhas in the Ten Directions” in the text invariably result in a panel with ten images of the Buddha. This crescendo of Buddha figures in the final series of reliefs seems to have been designed to prepare the viewer for the multiple representations of the Buddha Vairocana in the latticed *stūpas* of the near-circular terraces of the higher levels of the monument. Just as the viewers were provided in the last reliefs of the second gallery with a preview of the realm of Maitreya on the third, they now are repeatedly offered a glimpse of the panoply of Buddhas in the *stūpas* of the circular terraces before they actually come face-to-face with them.

We have seen that the methods, used by the sculptors to illustrate the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī*, vary according to the character and contents of the passages which they were asked to illustrate. They nevertheless reveal the same remarkable consistency that we previously found in the messages of the other texts that have been illustrated. For example, the fundamental karmic notion that power, high prestige and wealth are the direct result of merit accumulated in precedent lives, first proposed in the *Karmavibhanga*, is also reflected in its reliefs. This theme became, as Douglas Osto has convincingly demonstrated (2008, ch. 4 and 5) fully developed in the *Gandavyūha*. The tendency to personalize and concretize or materialize abstractions, such as “for the benefit of mankind” or “generosity”, reveal an emblematic interpretation quite similar to the one we find in the earliest *Karmavibhanga* reliefs on the hidden base of the monument.

With the illustrations of *avadānas* and *jātakas* the reliefs of the higher galleries have less in common. This difference should probably be attributed to the lively, narrative character of

that genre of literature. It afforded the sculptors a rare opportunity to display their illustrative skills in various techniques of narration, all of which have yet to be more fully explored. On the other hand, the relatively few sections of the *Gandavyūha* that do have a lively descriptive and narrative character—especially the *avadāna*-like stories from their former lives told to Sudhana by the Night Goddesses, Gopā and Māyā—have almost invariably been reduced by the sculptors to an illustration of a single key episode of the story.

I have mentioned earlier the criticism of the literary merits of the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī*, voiced by both Krom and Bosch. A glaring contrast to their skepticism forms the more recent appraisal of the *Gandavyūha* by A.K. Warder (1980, 424). It is so lavish in its praise of the *Gandavyūha* that it would almost seem as if Warder and Bosch have read two entirely different texts. Warder summarizes his views as follows: "The *Gandavyūha* is a literary masterpiece, the most readable of all the Mahāyāna *sūtras* and almost the only one organised as a balanced work of art on an effective plan. The progressive plan leads the reader on, whilst the formidable prose style is impressively in keeping with the outlook embracing the whole universe and its inconceivable nature. The elaborate descriptions and wealth of similes and figurative language generally mark this as a work of art. In fact it is a highly imaginative religious novel, though it opens in the manner of a *sūtra*." This statement is quoted with obvious concurrence by Douglas Osto (2008, 34). Vetter (2004, 1), on the other hand, expresses some doubts as to whether Warder's appraisal is based upon an actual reading of the text.

While such widely different views should be mentioned here, a proper appraisal of the literary merits of the *Gandavyūha* falls outside the scope of the present publication and would certainly be far beyond the competence of this author. However, what is appropriate here is to evaluate the artistic merits of the *Gandavyūha* illustrations. Both Krom and Bosch, primarily focused on ancient Java, do not seem to have considered the immensely influential role the *Gandavyūha* and the *Avatamska-sūtra* played in the Buddhist history of Central Asia and the Far East. The wide artistic resonance which these scriptures produced over a period of many centuries in a large part of the Buddhist world is an important historical phenomenon that should be taken into account when we try to arrive at a proper evaluation of the literary merits of these texts.

While opinions may vary as to the *Gandavyūha*'s literary merits, the high artistic quality of its illustrations on Borobudur has never been in doubt. For the sake of fairness and balance I should like to quote here in conclusion of this chapter Bosch's more positive final judgment of the reliefs of the main wall of the fourth gallery as illustrations of the *Bhadracarī*. Bosch concludes: "But enough criticism. The impressive creations, which these panels so often represent, leave only room for admiration. Without doubt these reliefs compensate for any shortcomings which we may be able to find in their illustration of the poem. I would like, therefore, to sum up as follows my final judgment of the Borobudur reliefs, viewed as text illustrations. With a certain virtuosity which is not free from arbitrariness, the artists overcame the almost insuperable challenge of transforming into imagery a text of the type of the *Bhadracarī*. We cannot say that the final result entirely represents the intentions of the poet. On the contrary, those intentions were sometimes not, usually only approximately, and only in a few instances correctly interpreted. However, the results of the sculptors' labors have another, much greater merit. They were inspired by sentiments much stronger and much purer than the mediocre poem itself could have evoked in them. Their creations rise high above the text and thus became a worthy crowning achievement of the revelation of faith that is embodied in the *Gandavyūha*" (Bosch 1928, 254-255).

EPILOGUE

More than ninety years have elapsed since Krom and Bosch first began to investigate the many puzzles which Borobudur posed and continues to pose to the scholarly world. Since then many other scholars have contributed to our knowledge of the monument. The various theories that have been advanced to explain the etymology of the name Borobudur, to reconstruct its alleged originally intended architectural shape, to identify the iconographic system of its Buddhist pantheon, or to unravel the mystery of the multifaceted symbolism of the monument—to name only a few of the many diverse topics—could easily fill a small library. What almost all of these theories have in common, however, is that Borobudur’s magnificent bas-reliefs, to the identification of which Krom and Bosch have made such significant contributions, do not seem to have played a substantial role in most of these theories.

It has been the principal aim of the present study to establish, to the extent possible at the present time, the meaning of those reliefs of the second, third, and fourth galleries of Borobudur which illustrate passages from the *Gandavyūha* and verses of the *Bhadracarī*. Most scholars will agree with the words of Alfred Foucher, quoted earlier (p.149), that the identification of the reliefs should be our first priority after we have duly admired their beauty. At the same time, however, it will be evident that the identification of all individual reliefs—if that elusive goal should ever be reached—can never be the ultimate purpose of our investigation. We should never be satisfied to limit our role to that of a mere bystander, who peeks over the shoulder of the sculptors to check on their faithful adherence to the letter of the scripture they were asked to illustrate. The identification of the reliefs should be only a first step on the path towards a better understanding of the function, symbolism and meaning of Borobudur.

In his lectures Professor Bosch used to call Borobudur an “apple of discord”. And indeed, as soon as we begin to consider what kind of guidance its masterpieces of relief sculpture can provide us in our search for the original function, meaning, and symbolism of the monument, we run the risk of getting lost in a baffling maze of conflicting theories. During the past century, scholars have waged heated debates on such diverse topics as the alleged original design of the upper terraces, on the original placement and significance of the unfinished Buddha of the central *stūpa*, and on the symbolic or technical reasons for covering up the base of the monument. Some of the scholarly contributions to our knowledge of Borobudur have optimistically claimed to have discovered the key to “one of the last secrets of Borobudur” (Lévi 1931), or even to have solved “the secret of Borobudur” (Boeles 1985). It would perhaps be more realistic not to aspire to solve all at once the many remaining puzzles and unanswered questions concerning the different aspects of a monument as complex and multifaceted as Borobudur. In a study devoted first and foremost to the *Gandavyūha* and *Bhadracarī* reliefs it would instead seem more useful to focus first on one fundamental question concerning the bas-reliefs. That is whether there is anything in those reliefs, or in the text passages they illustrate, that either lends support to or contradicts any of the various theories concerning Borobudur that have been advanced over the years. This would seem to be the most prudent course to take since the content and meaning of Borobudur’s 1460 narrative reliefs played rarely—if ever—a significant role in the discussion of these topics.

1) *The Scriptural Resources of the Architects of Borobudur*

Before we can accept such limitations to the scope of our enquiry, a practical question should first be considered. In the extensive scholarly literature on Borobudur a vast range of Buddhist scriptures in several different languages, dating from widely differing periods and gathered from widely separated parts of the Buddhist world, has been marshaled in efforts to explain certain architectural features of Borobudur and its pantheon of Buddhas. The imaginative pioneering studies by Paul Mus (1933-1935) demonstrate how inspiring and stimulating such an approach can be. However, we should never lose sight of the fact that we often have no certainty at all, nor any tangible, visual proof, that these scriptures were all actually known to the Buddhist community of Borobudur. To make matters worse, legitimate doubts have been raised as to whether some of these texts—especially those of an esoteric character—were known in Java, or even predate Borobudur.

There is an obvious alternative to such a sweeping search for clues to the unresolved mysteries of Borobudur in the numerous and diverse scriptures of Buddhism. A narrower, but also more sharply focused approach is to start with the scrutiny of those texts of which it can be demonstrated with unquestionable certainty that they were known to the Buddhist community of Borobudur. These texts include, of course, all scriptures, which are illustrated in the narrative bas-reliefs that decorate the walls and balustrades of the monument. They include the *Karmavibhanga*, the *Lalitavistara* and the various—unfortunately, still largely unidentified—collections of *jātakas* and *avadānas*, which have been illustrated on the lower galleries of the monument.

From early times on, episodes from the life of the Buddha of the type recounted in the *Lalitavistara*, and the stories from previous lives of the Bodhisattva (*jātakas*) have been a primary source of inspiration for the decoration of *stūpas* of widely differing architectural shape, style, and date in South and Southeast Asia. At Borobudur themes from the *Karmavibhanga*, the *Gandavyūha*, and the *Bhadracarī* were added to this originally more limited repertoire of suitable texts. This expansion of themes may have been without precedent in the Buddhist world. The only other, considerably later example that comes immediately to mind is that of the murals and sculptures of the Tabo monastery in Spiti (Himachal Pradesh, 11th century C.E.), inspired by the *Lalitavistara* and the *Gandavyūha* (Klimburg-Salter, 1997).

The elevated location on Borobudur, reserved for the illustrations of the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī*, is a clear indication that these texts were held in the highest esteem in ancient Java. They probably were thought to embody the essence of the beliefs of the Buddhist community of Borobudur. The most obvious course for us to adopt would be, therefore, to investigate first of all whether these texts contain clues to a better understanding of the architectural shape, the ritual function, and the religious symbolism of Borobudur. For art historians this task has now been greatly facilitated by the excellent translations by Dōi, Cleary, Ehman, and Ijiri, of the *Gandavyūha* and the entire *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. Due to these scholars both texts have now become accessible to a readership far beyond the narrow circle of scholars specialized in Sanskrit or Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist literature. However, the early history of the transmission of the Flower Ornament Scripture (*Avatamsaka-sūtra*), the complete text of which has only been preserved in Chinese and Tibetan translations, has only recently become a topic of investigation (Nattier 2007). We should not take for granted, therefore, that not only the contents of its final chapter, the *Gandavyūha*, but also those of the entire *Avatamsaka-*

sūtra were known to the Buddhist community of Borobudur. This makes it advisable to first focus on the *Gandavyūha* and *Bhadracarī* before we broaden our investigations into other sections of the complete Flower Ornament Scripture.

One possible explanation why so many scholars in their search for the meaning of Borobudur have given low priority to an investigation of its 1460 narrative bas-reliefs could be that they considered them to be “decoration”, or non-essential embellishment. This is a misconception to which the dazzling decorative skills of the sculptors may have unintentionally contributed. The reliefs of Borobudur are undoubtedly “decoration” or “ornamentation” of the highest artistic order. But they are not decoration in our more narrow—perhaps mostly Western—definition of graceful, skin-deep ornamentation, merely superimposed on an architectural framework. Instead, the reliefs of Borobudur are, as we have seen, inextricably linked with and skillfully embedded in the overall architectural design of the monument. If the reliefs should, therefore, be called “decoration” at all, we should perhaps call them *alamkāra*, the Sanskrit term for ornamentation that is used throughout the *Gandavyūha*. When we take, for example, the elaborate enumeration of the decorations of Maitreya’s *kūtāgāra*, we find the word *alamkāra* repeated in every phrase. If we look at the detailed illustration of this passage in the relief’s (III-20—III-39), we begin to suspect that this decoration must have been considered not only an elaborate embellishment, but an essential part of the monument, and obviously a feature imbued with profound symbolic meaning. Phyllis Granoff (1998) has demonstrated the philosophical implications of the frequent references to the diamonds and jewelry that decorate the fantastic architecture described in the *Gandavyūha*. Of course, her observations on the symbolism of the decoration of the architecture need not apply exclusively to the imaginary *kūtāgāra* of Maitreya, as described in that passage in the *Gandavyūha*. They may equally apply to that other, real edifice: Borobudur itself. For just as the adornments of Maitreya’s *kūtāgāra* are deeply imbued with symbolism, the narrative bas-reliefs of Borobudur constitute an essential component of the meaningful “*alamkāra*” of the entire monument.

The scriptures which have been illustrated in the reliefs of Borobudur appear to have been selected from among those which were sometimes called “dharma treasures” or “dharma relics”. These are scriptures which condense or summarize *sūtras*, texts containing the words of the Buddha, reducing their contents and distilling from them the essence of the Buddha’s teachings (Fontein 2001, 88). The *Karmavibhanga* explains the *modus operandi* of karma, the ground rules of the Law of Causation and can, therefore, be regarded as a text that is basic in every respect. It constitutes the bedrock of the Buddhist world view. The concluding chapter of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, the *Gandavyūha*, was interpreted by Chinese Buddhist commentators as a kind of abstract of that voluminous *sūtra*, an allegorical summary containing the essence of the *Avatamsaka* doctrine. Just as corporeal relics are the essence of the Buddha’s mortal remains, these scriptures were believed to embody the essence of the Buddha’s teaching. Such a legacy of “dharma relics” was, therefore, particularly suitable to be included in the program of sculptural decoration of a *stūpa*. Instead of, or in addition to enshrining copies of such scriptures, together with the corporeal relics, in the relic chamber of the *stūpa*, quotations from and illustrations of these texts were sometimes carved on the exterior of the monument.

What distinguishes the sculptural decoration of Borobudur from that of other *stūpas* is first of all that other scriptures were added to the originally more limited traditional repertoire of *jātakas*, *avadānas*, and episodes from the life of the Buddha. Illustrations of these texts had been used in India from early times on to decorate *stūpas*, their gateways and their railings.

In South and Southeast Asia *stūpas* have sometimes been inscribed with “dharma verses” such as the so-called Buddhist credo—the well-known “*ye dharma*” formula—or other, more elaborate sayings stating the nature of causation, such as the *pratītya-samutpāda* (Deva 1989; Boucher 1991). In Nālandā a *stūpa* has been found inscribed with a verse from the *Bhadracarī* (Schopen 2001). However, only at Borobudur have these *stūpa*-related type of inscriptions or texts been replaced by sculpted reliefs illustrating more elaborate texts of a similar type and content.

Another important characteristic of Borobudur is that the panels of the texts chosen for illustration were laid out in a carefully designed sequence, in order to create a continuous narrative of gradual progress in spiritual development and increasing detachment from earthly bonds. Nothing is known about the preliminary stages of planning for Borobudur. We do not know, therefore, whether or how these widely diverse, but, nevertheless, from a *Mahāyāna* doctrinal point of view, well-matched scriptures were selected from among the scriptures kept in the library of the monastic community of Borobudur. The sophisticated plans for the “decoration” of Borobudur were obviously made by learned monks who had a vast knowledge of Buddhist literature. It is also possible, however, that the selected texts were brought over from India as a single collection of *Mahāyāna* scriptures with a coherent, consistent message and a common *Leitmotiv*.

Focusing our attention first of all on the texts that were definitely known to the Buddhist community of Borobudur has its obvious advantages. However, we have no reason to assume that the architects and ecclesiastics, who were charged with the building of the monument, looked for inspiration only to the contents of the scriptures that are illustrated on its walls. The possibility that they also drew their inspiration from other sources, as has been proposed by several scholars, should not be too readily dismissed.

2) *The Ten Stages of the Bodhisattva* [Daśabhūmi]

Besides the *Gandavyūha*, the only other chapter of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* of which the Sanskrit text has been preserved is the *Daśabhūmika*, a scripture which deals with the Ten Stages of the Bodhisattva. First edited in 1926 by Johannes Rahder, Krom’s colleague at Leiden University, it describes in detail the ten successive stages of spiritual progress of the Bodhisattva (Rahder 1926).

Even though the *Gandavyūha* sometimes gives the impression that this progress towards Enlightenment does not always advance at an even pace, it nevertheless leads inexorably towards an elaborately orchestrated and dramatic climax. Following in the footsteps of the pilgrim Sudhana, we sense that each next level of the monument brings the pilgrim to a higher level of consciousness and a more advanced state of detachment from worldly bonds. (For a discussion of the possible role of the *jātaka* reliefs in this progress towards Enlightenment see the appendix).

When we proceed from the general to the specific, one would expect the levels of Borobudur to symbolize a system of progressive stages, the best known of which is the Buddhist system of the Ten Stages of the Bodhisattva (*daśabhūmi*) This idea was first expressed by the buddhologist D. Friedmann in an entry on Mahāyāna Buddhism written for a popular Dutch encyclopedia (de Casparis 1950, 164). De Casparis took up this idea and elaborated

it in support of his own hypothetical reconstruction of the original name of Borobudur as *Kamūlān I Bhūmisambhārabhūḍara*, i.e. “Mountain of the Accumulation of Virtue on the Ten Stages of the Bodhisattva”. Only part of this name actually occurs in a damaged inscription of unknown provenance which is dated in accordance with 842 C.E. Neither Friedmann, nor de Casparis seems to have realized that their hypothesis, that the levels of Borobudur correspond symbolically to the Ten Stages of the Bodhisattva, is actually supported by a passage in the *Gandavyūha*.

Gómez (1981, p.180), dismisses the idea of any connection between the levels of Borobudur and the Ten Stages of the Bodhisattva. He even states categorically “The system of stages which purportedly is presented in the *Gandavyūha* is nowhere to be found in the Sanskrit text of the *Gandavyūha*” (Gómez 1981, 180). In this he errs, for both the Sanskrit text and all three Chinese translations mention the *daśabhūmi* several times. All of these references, except one, are brief and serve merely to indicate the numerical stage of spiritual advance attained by certain Bodhisattvas. However, the most detailed and for the present investigation by far the most relevant reference to the Ten Stages of the Bodhisattva is to be found in the description of Sudhana’s visit to the dharma merchant Ratnacūda (XVI).

When Sudhana visits the dharma merchant Ratnacūda, he is taken by this *kalyānamitra* to his residence, a ten-storied palatial building (Ehman 1977, 197-201; Cleary 1989, 114-118). On the first floor he saw how food and drink were being distributed. On the second floor garments and on the third floor pieces of jewelry were given away, and on the fourth floor other jewels were being donated to palace ladies. The fifth floor is inhabited by Bodhisattvas, who have attained the fifth of the Ten Bodhisattva Stages (*daśabhūmi*). The sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth floor are all inhabited by Bodhisattvas possessing various and increasingly subtle skills and perfections. The sixth floor is inhabited by Bodhisattvas who have acquired “profound wisdom and who fully understand Dharma-nature”. They have mastered the Three Insights and the Six Supernatural Powers of the Buddha and have entered the Perfection of Wisdom. The Bodhisattvas on the seventh floor are skilled in discussing knowledge and expedience (*upāya*). The Bodhisattvas residing on the eighth floor have achieved the state of irreversibility, while those on the ninth floor are bound to only a single rebirth before they achieve Enlightenment. On the tenth floor Sudhana saw “masses of vows for the discipline of all beings, sounds of the dharma wheel of all Buddhas, assembly-circles of all Buddha fields, spheres of miracles of all Buddha dharmas, oceans of vows for skill in the course of the production of very extensive thought [of Enlightenment] of all the Tathāgatas” (Ehman 1977, 201).

First a minor question of translation should be clarified. Ehman speaks of “chambers” and once of “ten upraised chambers”. However, we are not dealing with different chambers, but with different stories, floors, or levels of the building. On this point all other translators agree. That the sculptors of Borobudur also shared this view is evident from the five-storied edifice they created on relief II-31. Only the panel’s lack of sufficient vertical space, and the sculptors’ wish to maintain at least some degree of proportionality between the high-rise building and the figures of the two chief protagonists, forced them to reduce the number of stories from ten to five. Borobudur has—at least according to the most widely accepted way of counting—ten levels.

That Borobudur has only four entrances instead of the eight of Ratnacūda’s palace, is of no importance, for it will be immediately evident that the architectural shape of Borobudur itself was not in any way inspired or influenced by this passage in the *Gandavyūha*. What matters is

that the *Gandavyūha* gives here an example of a direct symbolic correspondence between the ten levels of a monument—in this instance Ratnacūda’s palace—and the well-known Buddhist system of the Ten Stages of the Bodhisattva, as described in detail in the *Daśabhūmika* chapter of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. The fact that the fifth floor of the palace is inhabited by Bodhisattvas residing in the fifth *bhūmi*, clearly suggests a direct numerical link between each architectural level and each successive stage of the Bodhisattva’s spiritual development. While the activities on the first four floors all seem to symbolize different types of generosity or, perhaps, the Perfection of Giving (*dānapāramitā*), the next five levels clearly indicate a progression towards wisdom and detachment. This textual evidence points to a symbolic association between the successive levels of a monument and the progressive stages of spiritual development of the Bodhisattva. It also lends additional weight to the choice of the location that was reserved exclusively for the reliefs of the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī* on the higher, most sacred galleries of Borobudur.

The association of the fifth level of Ratnacūda’s palace with Bodhisattvas who reside in the fifth *bhūmi* is unambiguous, and the highest, tenth level is obviously the most appropriate level for Tathāgatas to reside in. The abstract nature of the *daśabhūmi* (see Eimer 2006, 135-144) renders any effort to associate the activities and the spiritual achievements of the Bodhisattvas residing in the levels six through nine of Ratnacūda’s palace with any specific progressive stage of Enlightenment or detachment highly speculative. The spiritual progress itself is nevertheless unmistakable. What the *Gandavyūha* suggests and relief II-31 clearly indicates is that the builders of Borobudur must have been familiar with the basic concept of the Ten Stages of the Bodhisattva.

In the Chinese commentaries on the *Gandavyūha* attempts have been made to associate Sudhana’s visits to a long pageant of female *kalyānamitras*, including the eight Night Goddesses, with his instruction in the Ten Stages of the Bodhisattva (Rahder 1929; Fontein 1966, appendix). In accord with the extraordinary importance attached to the Ten Stages, the descriptions of these visits are among the lengthiest of the *Gandavyūha*. Yet they do not substantiate any direct connection between the individual *kalyānamitra*, or his or her *vimoksa*, and a specific stage. We have seen that the text states only one direct correspondence between a specific level of Ratnacūda’s palace and one of the Ten Stages of the Bodhisattva. Nevertheless, the correspondence of each level of Borobudur with a specific *bhūmi* is one theory concerning the symbolism of Borobudur that finds substantial support in the text of the *Gandavyūha*. Chihara (1996, 120) has proposed instead a connection with the Ten Perfections of Wisdom (*daśaprajñāpāramitā*). However, a connection between the ten levels of the monument and the Ten Perfections of Wisdom seems less likely. Douglas Osto has recently pointed out that in the *Gandavyūha* the Perfections of Wisdom are generally being applied in a less technical manner than in the commentarial literature (2008,95). However, in the *Gandavyūha* the Ten Stages and the Ten Perfections are sometimes mentioned in the same breath (see III-78).

3) *Kāmadhātu, Rūpadhātu, and Arūpadhātu*

Eighty years ago Willem Frederik Stutterheim (1929) first proposed the hypothesis that the hidden base, the galleries and the circular terraces of Borobudur symbolize another type of spiritual progression or cosmic differentiation. From his reading of the ancient Javanese eso-

teric Buddhist text, the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan* Stutterheim concluded that Borobudur can be symbolically subdivided into three different realms or spheres. Borrowing terminology from Indian cosmology, he assigned the hidden base of Borobudur with its *Karmavibhanga* reliefs to the Sphere of Desire (*Kāmadhātu*), the galleries to the Sphere of Form (*Rūpadhātu*), and the circular terraces to the Sphere of Formlessness (*Arūpadhātu*). His interpretation of a crucial passage of the text upon which he had based some of his ideas has later been called into question (Stutterheim 1956, 35, n.49). Moreover, even an early date of the compilation of the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan* still remains uncertain (Ishii 1992). Nevertheless Stutterheim's symbolic subdivision of the monument into these Three Spheres has in the course of time acquired the status of established fact and has found its way into many Borobudur studies.

At first sight part of Stutterheim's proposed division of the monument into Three Spheres looks attractive and plausible. It provides a perfect Buddhist counterpart to the three tectonic subdivisions of the Hindu temple into the *Bhūrlōka* (Sphere of the Mortals), the base, the *Bhuwarloka* (Sphere of the Purified), the cella and the body of the temple, and the *Swarloka* (Sphere of the Gods), the superstructure of the sanctuary (Soekmono in Washington, D.C., 1990, 73). Upon closer scrutiny, however, this idea turns out to be rather problematical. These doubts concern primarily Stutterheim's simplified rendering of the complex, multilayered cosmological structure of the Sphere of Desire, the *Kāmadhātu*.

Indian cosmology divides the Cosmos into Three Spheres. The Sphere of Desire encompasses all lower realms or states of rebirth (humans, animals, hungry ghosts, the *pretas*, the inmates of the various hells and, and—according to some traditions—the *Asuras*). In addition the *Kāmadhātu* includes a cluster of Six Heavens: the *Caturmahārājika*, the *Trāyastriśa*, the *Yāma*, the *Tusita*, the *Nirmānarati* and the *Parinirmitavaśavartin Heaven*. The first two of these heavens are still on *terra firma*. The *Caturmahārājika*, the realm of the Four Guardian Kings, is thought to be located on the upper slopes of Mount Sumeru. The summit of Mount Sumeru is in *Trāyastriśa Heaven*, where the palace of Śakra, or Indra, is located. The other four *Kāmadhātu* heavens are located high above the summit and reach to the Four Heavens of the Sphere of Form (*Rūpadhātu*) above. By definition the Four Heavens of the *Arūpadhātu*, or the Sphere of Formlessness, cannot be assigned a specific physical location (Nattier 2008, 115), but are regarded as lying beyond the heavens of the *Rūpadhātu*. The number, names, and sequential order of most of these heavens, especially those of the *Kāmadhātu*, are largely the same in most Indian texts and have barely changed in the course of time.

Stutterheim, using secondary sources, considers the *Kāmadhātu* a single unit and equates its totality with the hidden base of Borobudur. However, it would be a simplification to characterize the entire *Kāmadhātu* as one infernal subterranean abode where greed reigns supreme. In order to better understand the *Kāmadhātu* of Borobudur we should properly evaluate the symbolism of the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs which decorate the hidden base of the monument. First of all, we should disabuse ourselves of the idea that these reliefs focus primarily on deeds producing negative karma. The portrayal of crime and its stern karmic retribution is often an artistically more rewarding assignment for a sculptor than the representation of virtue and its beneficial karmic effects. No viewer of the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs can fail to be fascinated by the vivid realism with which the sculptors portrayed the members of the lowest social rungs of ancient Javanese society and the crimes that caused them to be reborn under such miserable conditions. However, our fascination with the conspicuous scenes of crime, greed, and its inevitable stern karmic retribution should not make us overlook the overwhelming evidence

that the sculptors and their principals, instead of emphasizing negative karma, actually favored the illustration of acts producing positive karma.

The first half of the *Karmavibhanga* treats positive and negative karma in strictly even-handed fashion. Although this first half of the text lists exactly the same number of positive and negative causes, the sculptors elected to illustrate considerably more examples of positive than of negative karma (Fontein 1989, 70). The second half of the text ends on a definitely positive note, for it deals exclusively with the manifold benign karmic benefits of various types of pious donations. There the sculptors remain faithful to their script and illustrate these positive themes at great length. Such an outspoken bias in favor of positive karma makes it rather unlikely that the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs were deliberately hidden from view because of their allegedly inauspicious content, as has sometimes been suggested. Acceptance of Stutterheim's equation of the hidden base with the *Kāmadhātu* inevitably gave rise to his questionable thesis that the covering of the base of the monument must have been a pre-planned, deliberate move, dictated by cosmological symbolism, instead of the architects' response to unanticipated problems of structural instability of the monument.

From time to time the monument itself seems to hint at the cosmological notions of the architects and sculptors of Borobudur. For example, Bosch convincingly demonstrated that the figures carved on the exterior wall of the first balustrade of Borobudur represent *yaksas*, who were believed to inhabit the lower slopes of Mt. Meru, the Cosmic Mountain, where they lived in a constant state of inebriation (Bosch 1955). This suggests that the exterior of Borobudur's lower galleries may have been symbolically identified with the lower slopes of the Cosmic Mountain. Bosch's interpretation of these figurative panels strengthened the case in favor of an interpretation of Borobudur as a symbolic rendering of Mt. Meru.

The exterior of Borobudur's lower galleries can thus be symbolically associated with the lower slopes of Mt. Meru. However, does this mean that the galleries of Borobudur should be assigned to the *Rūpadhātu* and the hidden base to the *Kāmadhātu*? We have previously seen how the sculptors did not relegate their graphic rendering of the horrors of hell to the reliefs of the hidden base. They also created such scenes elsewhere on the higher galleries, apparently without considering the elevated location of these panels. It would seem that the sculptors depicted a hell scene whenever the text called for one (see III-69 and IVB-78).

However, the reliefs with hell scenes may also give us an indication of the location of the various hells according to the cosmological notions of the Buddhist community of Borobudur. We have seen that it is doubtful whether the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs were covered up because of their allegedly inappropriate contents. We also should not take for granted that they were covered up because they had to be shown in a subterranean realm. For although Indian cosmology generally locates the hells in a subterranean region, other texts, including some Old Javanese texts, remain vague on the subject of the precise location of the hells. There seems to be no explicit textual evidence that the ancient Javanese located hell in a subterranean realm. In some ancient texts its location is believed to be in a separate realm somewhere in the southern or southwestern region of Jambudvīpa and is sometimes thought to be subterranean. However, it is also a realm which the hells share with some of the heavens (Kern, 1934, pp.31-36).

Given the presumably close proximity of hell and heaven in Javanese cosmology it is not surprising that it was permissible to show a Hell scene on the higher galleries of Borobudur. The heavens could be illustrated not only on the higher galleries (III-60—III-67 and IVB-67), where we would perhaps have expected to find them, but also on the hidden base (O-101—O-105).

The location of these reliefs suggests that the Hells and the Heavens of the *Kāmadhātu* were all thought of as belonging to the same sphere. Therefore, the reliefs of the hidden base cannot simply be equated with the *Kāmadhātu* and the Heavens or the galleries of Borobudur cannot be identified exclusively with the *Rūpadhātu*.

Turning now to the texts that have been illustrated on Borobudur, we find that the *Karmavibhanga* and the *Gandavyūha* both mention the Three Spheres several times. However, there is a significant difference between Stutterheim's *Kāmadhātu* and that of the *Gandavyūha*. Influenced (or, perhaps, misled) by his reading of the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, Stutterheim equates the entire *Kāmadhātu* with the hidden base of Borobudur and with the subterranean realm of the Hells. However, the *Kāmadhātu* of the texts is not just a single, indivisible entity, as Stutterheim maintains, but a multilayered succession of levels, encompassing not only the entire Mount Sumeru, but also part of the cluster of different Heavens rising above its summit. These Six Heavens of the *Kāmadhātu* are surmounted only by the Heavens of the *Rūpadhātu* and the *Arūpadhātu*, bringing the total number of Heavens to twenty-six or twenty-eight. The *Gandavyūha* mentions (T.293, 832a, 23), and the sculptors dutifully illustrate (III-60—III-66) the six successive layers or subdivisions of the cluster of Heavens of the *Kāmadhātu*. The context in which the *Kāmadhātu* is mentioned in the *Gandavyūha* and the *Karmavibhanga* suggests that both texts are in complete accord with the basic notions of Indian cosmology. In the *Gandavyūha*, as in other texts dealing with Indian cosmology, the Three Spheres are not only regarded as subdivisions or levels of Mt. Meru itself, as Stutterheim assumed, they designate the three distinct clusters of multiple levels of heavenly abodes into which not only Mt. Meru, but the entire cosmos has been subdivided. In Indian cosmology almost all of the Heavens are believed to rise above the summit of Mt. Meru, where Indra's palace was believed to be located.

The reliefs III-67 and III-68 reveal two other aspects of the cosmological notions of the Buddhist community of Borobudur that could be of possible significance. The scene of Maitreya's appearance in the *Brahmaloka* [III-67] is shown on a panel that is clearly separated by a staircase from the representations of the Six Heavens of the *Kāmadhātu*. This suggests the sculptors' familiarity with the separate identities of the Sphere of Desire and the Sphere of Form, the sphere to which the *Brahmaloka* has been assigned in the scholastic literature (Nattier, 2009, 106). That the *Asuras* of III-68 head the representation of the lower states of rebirth suggests that at Borobudur the *Asuras* were definitely considered part of that category (see Nattier, 2009, 101).

One may perhaps question how fruitful it is to subject the complex symbolism of a monument like Borobudur to such parsing of cosmological concepts. Nevertheless, it remains doubtful whether it is permissible to simply transfer the names of two of the Three Spheres from the Heavens rising high above the summit of Mt. Meru to locations on its slopes. It will require a more thorough investigation of Indian cosmological concepts than Stutterheim was able to undertake before his theory can be accepted. Neither the texts of the *Karmavibhanga* and the *Gandavyūha*, nor the reliefs illustrating them support the concept of the Three Spheres as interpreted by Stutterheim. The precise interpretation of the crucial passage in the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan* should be left to philologists. For the time being it would seem advisable to rely for the interpretation of the symbolism of Borobudur on the guidance provided by texts of Indian and Javanese cosmology, by the *Karmavibhanga*, and by the *Gandavyūha*, instead of on a passage of disputed meaning in an esoteric old Javanese text of uncertain date.

The striking contrast between the exuberant imagery of the galleries and the stark simplicity of the near-circular terraces with their latticed *stūpas* creates a definite impression that the architects and sculptors strove to express by artistic means the contrast between the mundane and supramundane or between a pilgrim's mind still inextricably embedded in the phenomenal world and the freedom of complete detachment from worldly thoughts. Even today many visitors, as they perform their own secular *pradaksinā* around the monument from one level to the next, share a sense of increasing sanctity that is created by the architecture and its decoration—or lack thereof. The question remains whether it is permissible to apply the Indian terminology of the Three Spheres to these different levels of consciousness and sanctity.

4) *The “Reconceptualization” of Borobudur*

Looking back on the history of Borobudur studies we cannot fail to notice how certain speculative ideas, proposed by the early pioneers of Borobudur studies, have been transformed over time by sheer dint of repetition into received wisdom. The theory of the Three Spheres, discussed above, is only one example of this transformation. Other hypotheses, sometimes not shared, or sometimes even promptly refuted by contemporaries of those who initiated them, resurface at a later date, to be invoked anew in support of fresh theories. This phenomenon may perhaps offer at least a partial explanation for the apparent ease with which over time some scholars seem to have accepted the fundamental notion that the architectural design of this great monument of Javanese Buddhism, as it stands today, is either flawed or, at the very least, differs significantly from its alleged original concept. Woodward (2004) has characterized this radical change as a “reconceptualization” of Borobudur.

The discovery in 1885 by J.W. IJzerman of the hidden base with its long series of buried, only partially finished *Karmavibhanga* reliefs may have first spawned such misgivings about the original building plan of Borobudur. Some scholars concluded from this surprising discovery—the first of its kind in Southeast Asia—that the architects of the original design of Borobudur had not been able to overcome the formidable technical obstacles they encountered during the construction of the monument. They believed that the architects were forced to compromise, to modify, and to scale back the more ambitious plans they originally had for the entire monument. Others held the view that the covering up of the original base was not forced upon the architects by structural instability. Instead they believed that the decision to cover the reliefs of the base was inspired by Buddhist concepts of cosmology and that the modification must, therefore, have been part of the original plan. As we have seen, this last idea had its origins in the hypothesis of the symbolic division of Borobudur into Three Spheres.

One reason why the hidden base of Borobudur attracted so much attention may have been that it was not yet known at the time of its discovery that such architectural modifications of Buddhist monuments, although seldom as radical, are far from unique in Southeast Asia. Soon, however, the attention of those, who concluded that Borobudur differs substantially from its original design shifted from the hidden base to the circular terraces of the monument. The initiator of this change of focus was—probably unintentionally—the distinguished French scholar Alfred Foucher. His comparison of Borobudur's architectural shape, characterized by the low profile of its terraces, with that of a “pâtisserie mal soufflée”, or a cake that failed to rise, has often been quoted (Foucher 1909, 41). When a cake fails to rise, we tend to blame

the chef, in this instance, therefore, the architects. However, Foucher's remark also seems to imply that somehow an unfortunate mishap had occurred in the kitchen, a mishap that was perhaps beyond the control of even the greatest chef.

Western architects and artists responded to these ideas and were only too eager to reconstruct the "original" intent of the architects of Borobudur. However, to place these efforts in their proper historical context we should bear in mind that in the early years of the twentieth century, when many of these ideas were first proposed, the art of the reconstruction of ruinous Southeast Asian monuments was still in its infancy. Reconstruction, either conceptually on paper or, in reality, by *anastylosis*, or three-dimensional puzzle solving, was for many archaeologists still an imaginative, artistic enterprise. It had not yet become the more methodical discipline into which it would soon be transformed.

In this respect van Erp's highly successful reconstruction of the ruinous terraces of Borobudur (1907-1911) was an unprecedented pioneering achievement, which over time has fully proven its validity. Van Erp's profound respect for the integrity of the work of the architects and sculptors of the "gray old *stūpa*", as he used to call it, is apparent from the motto that he adopted for his *Bouwkundige Beschrijving* (Architectural Description, 1931). Instead of choosing a quotation from Buddhist or Indian literature, as one might perhaps have expected, he chose a quotation from a poem in *The Book of Monastic Life* (*Das Buch vom Mönchischen Leben*, 1899) on the builders of the cathedrals by the German poet Rainer Maria Rilke (1876-1926). By choosing this poem (Zinn 1950, 16), van Erp gave testimony of his own deep dedication to his task. He clearly identified in spirit and "with trembling hands" (Rilke) with the devout builders of the European cathedrals.

The disciplined restraint and profound respect for the integrity of Borobudur with which van Erp, soldier, scholar, architect, and artist, approached his task, were very unusual and advanced for his time. Others, neither responsible for nor even involved in the restoration of Borobudur, could permit themselves the luxury of giving free rein to their artistic imagination. Henri Parmentier, previously known for his excavation (and imaginative reconstruction-on-paper) of the main temple complex of Dong-du'o'ng in Champa, believed that the original intent of the architects of Borobudur had been to erect a huge *stūpa* on top of the stepped base of the galleries of Borobudur. On his drawing board the monument was transformed into a towering structure of a type resembling Sri Lankan *stūpas*. The Dutch architect A. Hoenig considered the architectural shape of Borobudur "problematical." In the concluding paragraphs of his brochure (Hoenig 1924, 52) he lamented the "sad fate" of Borobudur, and compared it with that of the so-called "bent" pyramid of the Pharaoh Snofru (4th dynasty, 2700 B.C.E.) at Dashūr. This huge pyramid shows halfway up a sudden lowering of the angle of inclination from 52 to 43 degrees, an apparent change of plan, presumably made in order to prevent the collapse of the entire monument under its own weight. Hoenig sat down behind his drawing board and reshaped Borobudur into a Khmer temple resembling Phnom Bakheng. What these two architectural critics of Borobudur had in common was that both rejected the near-circular upper terraces of the monument as part of the original design. They considered them a makeshift compromise, probably dictated by tectonic problems (like those presumably encountered by the builders of Snofru's pyramid) beyond the control of the Javanese architects.

A partial explanation for these in our view—with the benefit of more than seventy-five years of hindsight—rather dubious-looking paper reconstructions, may perhaps be found in the access to the monument and its impact on the visitor's first impression. This visual aspect

is perhaps best appreciated by those who were privileged to have had an opportunity to visit Borobudur both before and after the UNESCO restoration of the 1970s. Until this second restoration of the monument, visitors could reach Borobudur only by a footpath passing through the eponymous village. Most of the houses of this modest farming village had been built on the lower slopes of the hill from which the monument rises. These farm houses effectively hid the Borobudur from view for the arriving visitors. They got their first glimpse of the monument only at the very last moment when they had almost reached the massive processional stone path encasing its base. It was the viewers' sudden close proximity to the foot of the monument which determined their angle of vision, an angle which tended to exaggerate Borobudur's low profile, thereby prompting Foucher's widely quoted unfavorable comparison with a cake that failed to rise.

Now that the entire Borobudur village has been relocated and visitors are obliged to approach the monument by a path winding through a spacious park, they can, for the first time, easily view the profile of the monument from a greater distance. This new angle of vision tends to de-emphasize Borobudur's low profile and helps to make its well-established symbolic association with the cosmic mountain Meru more convincing. The now completely relocated village can only have constituted a later secular encroachment upon what must once have been a sacred precinct. The newly created access may thus, perhaps unintentionally, have restored the angle of vision from which the approaching pilgrims were meant to view the monument.

Van Erp (1874-1958), the first restorer of Borobudur, lived for more than five years in the *passanggrahan* (government rest house) that once stood at its base. He became more familiar than anyone else with the numerous structural and esthetic modifications which the architects had made in the course of the construction of their monument. He described them in great detail in his monumental *Bouwkundige Beschrijving* (Architectural Description). At the time when this publication first appeared (1931) van Erp was criticized by some of his Dutch colleagues for having taken so long—twenty years—in submitting his final report of the restoration. Given the stellar quality of his report this criticism was certainly undeserved. However, the long delay in its publication had another unforeseen consequence. Krom's *Archaeologische Beschrijving*, first published in 1918, was partially translated into English in 1927, but a lack of funds during the economic crisis of the 1930s made it impossible to translate the companion volume, van Erp's *magnum opus*. Van Erp's well-reasoned refutation of the theories of Parmentier and Hoenig went, therefore, largely unnoticed. The imaginative paper reconstructions of Parmentier and Hoenig became an often illustrated, permanent part of the corpus of Borobudur studies. In retrospect it would seem that their theories may perhaps have received wider publicity than the intrinsic merits of their speculations deserved.

During the recent second restoration of Borobudur, in the course of which the entire middle section of galleries and balustrades was dismantled and reconstructed, the ideas of Parmentier and Hoenig regarding the original design of Borobudur received new traction and witnessed an unexpected transformation. Two architects, Chihara Daigorō, a member of the Consultative Committee for Borobudur of the UNESCO, and Jacques Dumarçay, a member of the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, at the time residing in Indonesia, were the first architects after van Erp to focus on the architecture of the monument. They were able to avail themselves of the unique opportunity, offered by the temporary partial dismantling of Borobudur, to study first-hand the building history of those parts of the monument that could now, for the first—and probably for the last—time, be temporarily inspected. Although their opinions on some

questions of detail differ, the two architects agree that the construction of Borobudur must have taken place in four or five successive phases. The construction was interrupted from time to time by pauses, due to earth movements or other mishaps, and by demolition or adaptation of previously finished, or half-completed construction (Dumarçay 1977 and 1978; Chihara 1996). Both believe that at the end of the second phase of the construction a radical change was made in the building plan, possibly inspired by a shift in Javanese Buddhism.

The unique opportunity for investigations *in situ*, which these two scholars were granted during the dismantling of the monument, lends additional weight to their observations. Moreover, by shifting the focus to architectural questions, which had been largely neglected since van Erp published his *Bouwkundige Beschrijving* in 1931, Dumarçay and Chihara provided many fresh perspectives. They restored the balance between architectural and art historical studies of the monument. They made a convincing case for many of the changes and alterations, which were carried out even while the construction of Borobudur was still in progress. Many of the most important modifications, such as the covering of the original base and the expansion of the first balustrade, as well as numerous minor adjustments and alterations had already been observed by van Erp during his much more limited first restoration of the monument. To these could now be added for the first time those changes which could only be discovered due to the temporary dismantling of the middle section of the monument.

The observations by these two architects on the numerous modifications have added new insights into the complex building history of the monument. Yet it would seem that both of them may have overestimated the impact these modifications had on the symbolism and religious meaning of Borobudur. Chihara revived the theories of Parmentier and Hoenig as follows: "An examination of both the photographs taken during this restoration work and the exterior of present-day Borobudur clearly reveals sections of stone work that hint at changes in plan such as were suggested by Parmentier and Hoenig. The problem simply is that we do not know what sort of structure it had been intended to erect before this change in plans, and it is worth noting that we have proof at least that plans for a structure differing from the present Borobudur were not only drawn up, but were also partially executed and then abandoned. In view of these facts it is clear that Borobudur was not the product of a consistent plan adhered to from first to last and that construction work was sometimes suspended and alterations were made to existing sections. It is therefore conceivable that the religious significance of Borobudur also differed before and after these modifications, and hence the question of whether these alterations were due to technical reasons or religious reasons could also become a possible subject of debate" (Chihara 1996, 116).

In contrast to Chihara's tentatively formulated suggestions, Dumarçay drew much more radical conclusions. His assertions first appeared in his original French publication (1977), but were later repeated somewhat more provocatively in the shorter English adaptation (1978), intended for a wider public. Dumarçay writes: "All the hypotheses tending to make the construction of the monument a prearranged cosmogony must be rejected. With this must be rejected the theories that each modification and each obliteration to the plan of work was foreseen" (1978, 42). In his statement Dumarçay seems to reject sweeping hypotheses, which, to the best of my knowledge, have never been proposed by anyone. However, of far greater significance is that he also seems to dismiss any possibility that the original Buddhist meaning of the monument could have been preserved in spite of the many architectural modifications and adjustments that were made in course of the construction.

Stutterheim (1929, 1956), whose study of Borobudur antedated van Erp's *Architectural Description*, and against whom the criticism by Dumarçay, quoted above, was probably directed, did not occupy himself with the technical details of the architecture. Paul Mus (1933-35), who wrote after van Erp's detailed report was published, seems to have made no use of it, probably because he—unlike his compatriots Georges Coëdès and Pierre Dupont—was unable to read Dutch. Dumarçay and Chihara became the first scholars after van Erp to focus primarily on architectural questions. What the two have in common is that they rarely dealt with the reliefs. Only once did Dumarçay draw upon the evidence of the reliefs to support his theory of a fundamental, sudden change in the meaning of the monument. This particular instance, therefore, deserves closer scrutiny.

Dumarçay writes: “During the second phase of construction, the reliefs of the base, which had not been finished during the first phase, were [still] left unfinished. After the first gallery had been reconstituted, its reliefs were carved. We know that the upper register illustrates the Life of the Buddha, interrupted at the moment of the First Sermon at Benares. Brandes thought that the story could have continued to be illustrated all around the inside of the wall surrounding the near-circular terraces. We believe that if the illustrations of the *Lalitavistara* would have continued, these reliefs should have been carved on the second gallery. One notices the change in the sculptural technique; its depth is shallow compared to that of the reliefs of the first gallery. We also believe that the change in the meaning of the monument took place at the moment when the second building phase was concluded and the reliefs of the base as well as those of the first gallery were finished. It was decided to change the meaning [of the monument], independently, at first, from the resumption of the construction. *A new series of reliefs was sculpted, which did not take into account the texts that had been previously illustrated* (italics J.F.). Meanwhile, the masters of the works probably decided that a transformation of the decoration would not be sufficient and they decided to undertake a third building phase” (Dumarçay 1977, 62, translation J.F.).

Dumarçay's choice of the word “interruption” to characterize the end of the *Lalitavistara* reliefs suggests a misunderstanding of both the contents and the character of this text. In early Buddhism there existed, as far as we know, no biography of the Buddha which covers the entire life of the Buddha from the moment of his conception, his descent from Tusita Heaven, and his birth to his attainment of Enlightenment, his Turning of the Wheel of the Law, and his ultimate entrance into *nirvāna*. Instead, episodes from the Buddha's post-Enlightenment career appear scattered over several different *sūtras* and *vinaya* texts. The *Lalitavistara*—the text closely followed by the sculptors of Borobudur—is one which begins with his conception and descent from Heaven and concludes with the First Sermon in the Deer Park of Benares. Therefore, at Borobudur the narrative sequence of the reliefs has not been interrupted, but simply ends at this point because the text of the *Lalitavistara*, which the sculptors were asked to illustrate, concludes with this key episode from the Buddha's life.

It turns out that the notion that the illustration of the Life of the Buddha had been “interrupted” is an older idea which Dumarçay borrowed from the great pioneer of the study of Hindu-Javanese art, Dr. J.L.A. Brandes. However, while invoking the authority of Brandes, he does not seem to have tracked down to its original source Krom's reference to Brandes in his *Archaeological Description* (Krom 1927, vol.II, 284). Krom's footnote actually directs us to the *Minutes of the Meetings of the Board of Directors of the Batavian Society*. In these *Minutes* Brandes declared, as early as 1902: “The panels of the main walls illustrate the Life of the Bud-

dha, to the extent they do, for the series is definitely incomplete as we see no representation of *nirvāna*" (Brandes 1902, p.XXXVIII, translation J.F.). The essay in which Brandes made this remark bears the cautionary title "The hazards of explaining the reliefs that are to be found in the old ruins of Java when one does not know the text in question". Brandes seems to have written this essay just before it became known that the Life of the Buddha, as sculpted on Borobudur, was based upon the *Lalitavistara*. This discovery was first published by C.M. Pleyte in *Die Buddha-Legende in den Skulpturen des Tempels von Bôrô-Budur*, (The legend of the Buddha in the sculptures of Borobudur), a book which appeared in Amsterdam in 12 installments in the course of 1901. Brandes could not have foreseen in Indonesia in January 1902 that the wise *caveat*, contained in the title of his essay, would so soon apply to his own interpretation of the reliefs of the Life of the Buddha on Borobudur.

We should judge the remarks by Brandes, made before the source of inspiration for the reliefs was known to him, in their proper chronological context. Krom's reference to the early remarks by Brandes was translated into English almost twenty-five years later. This was two years before Bosch established that the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī*, not an expanded version of the *Life of the Buddha*, provided the inspiration for the reliefs of the third and fourth galleries. Bosch's discovery ended all speculation regarding the interpretation of the reliefs of these galleries.

Even after the appearance of Pleyte's publication Brandes remained convinced that the original intention of the architects had always been to represent the Buddha's *parinirvāna* somewhere on the monument. He considered it inconceivable that a *stūpa* like Borobudur would lack a representation of the *parinirvāna*. Not finding such an easily recognizable scene as the Buddha's final extinction sculpted anywhere on the monument, he suggested that the inner wall of the fifth balustrade surrounding the near-circular terraces, left undecorated by the sculptors, must have been intended for the representation of the *parinirvāna* (Brandes 1903, VI-IX). This undecorated space intrigued other scholars of Borobudur as well. We have previously seen how Bosch later speculated that the intention of the architects had been to illustrate the final stanzas of the *Bhadracarī*, invoking the Buddha Amitābha, on those empty panels, an idea that he soon—quite correctly—abandoned.

Even before he became aware that the *Gandavyūha*, and not a continuation of the Life of the Buddha, was illustrated on the reliefs of the higher galleries, Krom had already demonstrated the fallacy of the hypothetical "interruption" (Krom 1927, 2, 286-287). In spite of his error, however, even Brandes, who time and again had displayed a remarkable affinity with the intentions of the Javanese sculptors, had not failed to recognize the gradual progress towards the final spiritual climax which the sculptors of the *Gandavyūha* reliefs successfully managed to capture.

Following in Brandes' footsteps more than seventy years later, Dumarçay revived the old idea that the portrayal on Borobudur of the Life of the Buddha was incomplete and had, therefore, been interrupted. He did not take into account the state of knowledge of the reliefs at the time when these remarks had first been made. He argued that if the *parinirvāna* were illustrated anywhere on Borobudur, the entire post-Enlightenment phase of the life of the Buddha should also have been shown on the walls of the second gallery. From the absence of a *parinirvāna* relief on that gallery he concluded that the architects must have abandoned their original plan to show such a relief. He finally decided that the illustrations of the *Gandavyūha*, which took their place, must have been the outcome of a drastic change in the sculptural pro-

gram, and, therefore, in the meaning of the entire monument. He apparently considers the change of focus in the reliefs from the Life of the Buddha to Sudhana's pilgrimage a sign of a radical change in the meaning of the monument. It would seem, however, that the idea of this radical change of plans—the so-called “reconceptualization” (Woodward 2004, 342) of Borobudur—is due to a misreading of remarks that have been taken out of their context in the successive phases of the discovery of the textual sources of the reliefs by Krom and Bosch. The (partial) English translation of Krom's *Archaeologische Beschrijving* appeared two years before Bosch published his discovery that the reliefs of the second, third, and fourth galleries all illustrate the *Gandavyūha*. Bosch's article (1929) was reproduced in van Erp's *Bouwkundige Beschrijving* (1931), but that book was never translated into English. The coincidental sequence of these various publications made that some comments on the reliefs of the higher galleries of Borobudur by scholars who do not read Dutch are still based upon information that had already been superseded by Bosch's new discoveries of 1929.

Dumarçay's leaves unproven his assertion that the architects, in choosing the *Gandavyūha*, did not take into account the contents of the texts that had been previously illustrated on the monument. It is not clear where this idea comes from, for it finds no support in the contents of the *Gandavyūha*. The selection of the *Lalitavistara*, with its marked shift in emphasis from the quest for *nirvāna* to the attainment of Enlightenment, is in full accord with mainstream Mahāyāna ideals, as expressed in the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* and the *Gandavyūha*. At Borobudur the tendency to de-emphasize *nirvāna* and to stress the quest for Enlightenment is not only typical of the *Lalitavistara*. It is already noticeable in the earliest series of Borobudur reliefs, illustrating the *Karmavibhanga*. There is, as we have previously seen, definite proof that the sculptors consistently omitted the representation of the tenth karmic effect of various acts of generosity, i.e. “a speedy entry into *nirvāna*” (Fontein 1989, 78). The sculptors of the *Lalitavistara* reliefs omitted the representation of *nirvāna* not because their work was interrupted by a change in the overall plan before it could be completely carried out. They omitted the *parinirvāna* because the *Lalitavistara* does not cover the last part of the life of the Buddha. However, that is not the only reason, for both the choice of the *Lalitavistara* as a text worthy of illustration on Borobudur, and the lack of emphasis on *nirvāna* in that text have their origins in the particular type of Mahāyāna Buddhism that was embraced by the Buddhist community of Borobudur. In this type of Buddhism the focus had clearly shifted from entering *nirvāna* to the achievement of the Conduct of the Bodhisattva and the attainment of Supreme Enlightenment.

We have previously seen how the last relief of the *Lalitavistara* series (Ia-120) shows the Buddha in the Deer Park of Benares, about to deliver his First Sermon. The First Sermon, shown on the last relief of the first gallery, blends harmoniously into the opening scene of the *Gandavyūha* on the first relief of the second gallery, only a few steps away. This time, the Buddha is shown in the garden of Anāthapindada in Jetavana, as described in the prologue of the *Gandavyūha*. In the minds of the ancient Javanese, the distance that separated these two sites in the far-away Holy Land of Buddhism may have been almost as short as the few steps which separate the relief of the Deer Park from those of the Jetavana garden on the walls of Borobudur.

That the *Lalitavistara* and the *Gandavyūha* are not totally unrelated texts, as Dumarçay seems to believe, is also evident from the description of Sudhana's visit to Māyā. Her account of the Buddha's descent from Tusita heaven into her womb has clearly been developed from

the description in the *Lalitavistara* (Granoff 1998, 357). However, another, perhaps even more crucial indication of a connection between the last *Lalitavistara* relief and the prologue of the *Gandavyūha* is not immediately obvious. It is found in the first lines of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, of which the *Gandavyūha* forms the concluding section. Preserved only in Chinese and Tibetan translation, these lines state clearly: “Thus I have heard. Once upon a time, the Buddha resided in the country of Magadhā, in a state of tranquility, at the site where he attained Supreme Enlightenment, just after he had achieved True Awakening.” These opening lines seem to make the claim that the events, which have been described in the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* (including its final chapter, the *Gandavyūha*) took place prior to the Buddha’s Turning of the Wheel of the Law (see the discussion on pp.17-19). The story of the *Gandavyūha* may not only be regarded as a kind of allegorical abstract of the entire *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, as some Chinese commentaries suggest. It is also in the chronology of the life of the Buddha as well as in the spirit of its contents, a sequel to the *Lalitavistara*. Instead of being an indication of an abrupt change of plans, the choice of the *Gandavyūha* as the source of inspiration for the reliefs of the higher galleries of Borobudur creates a perfect chronological sequel to the *Lalitavistara*. It is an unmistakable sign of the thematic and philosophical continuity of the series of reliefs and is the result of consistent, thoughtful planning by those who created Borobudur. The *Karmavibhanga* states in a systematic, pattern of ten-fold, alternating positive and negative paragraphs the ground rules of karma. These are followed by an enumeration of the ten-fold, invariably beneficial, effects of various acts of charity. The text thus ends on a definitely positive note, mentally preparing the viewer for the edifying illustrations of the *jātakas* and *avadānas*. In these stories the accumulative beneficial karmic effects of acts of charity, compassion, self sacrifice, and wisdom are now demonstrated by means of actual examples. This shift from the exposition of theory to that of its actual practical application in the *jātakas* and *avadānas* thus culminates inexorably, after numerous earlier rebirths of the Bodhisattva, in his last earthly incarnation, as described in the *Lalitavistara*.

The illustration of the *Gandavyūha* on Borobudur constitutes an addition to the repertory of texts that were considered appropriate to be illustrated on *stūpas*. Rare as this addition may be, it definitely is not “a new series of reliefs, which did not take into account the texts that had been previously illustrated” (Dumarçay). In his determined search for the Conduct of the Bodhisattva, the chief protagonist of the *Gandavyūha*, the pilgrim Sudhana, follows in the footsteps of Śākyamuni, who remains silent but who is always spiritually present in the background. Just as the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs are an appropriate prelude to the *jātaka* reliefs, the shining example of the future Buddha in the *Lalitavistara*, is the source of inspiration for the pilgrim Sudhana in his determined search for the Conduct of the Bodhisattva, instead of a quest for *nirvāna*.

When we now direct our attention to the reliefs of the higher galleries, we see that they, too, do not show the slightest trace of any radical mid-course change of plans affecting the meaning of the monument. Instead, they reveal a succession of closely interlocking series of reliefs, fully integrated into the architecture of the monument and connected by all sorts of visual cross-references. The final reliefs of the second main wall created an immediate, direct link between the second and third galleries. In the text there now occurs a marked shift from oral instruction by the *kalyānamitras* towards visionary means of educating the pilgrim, and this shift is clearly noticeable in the reliefs as well. The gradually increasing proliferation of Buddhas on the main wall of the fourth gallery prepares the viewer for the multitude of identical

Buddhas in the latticed *stūpas* on the round terraces of Borobudur's summit. The inclusion on the fourth main wall of a representation of a Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā*, seated inside a *stūpa* (IV-13), is like a lifting of the veil, a visual prediction of the scene, which is to be revealed to the pilgrim on the circular terraces. It establishes a direct link between the Buddhas in their latticed *stūpas* above and the narrative of the bas-reliefs down below. The surprising omission of any representation in the reliefs of the fourth balustrade of Vairocana, in whose august presence Sudhana's entire meeting with Samantabhadra takes place, reveals yet another link between these reliefs and the adjacent terraces with their Buddha statues seated inside the latticed *stūpas*. They all display Vairocana's *dharmacakra-mudrā*.

On several occasions the sculptors created visual predictions or prefigurations in their *Gandavyūha* illustrations. These faithfully reflect a typical feature of the *Gandavyūha*, for in the text less obvious similar prefigurations are often made. For example, the palace of the Princess Maitrāyanī (XI) is named *Vairocanaṅgarbha*. The name obviously prepares the ground for the pilgrim's future visit to the Palace of Miracles of Maitreya, the *Vairocanavyūhālamkāraṅgarbha* (Granoff 1998, 362). It is even possible that other, similar associations of names had already been created earlier between the series of reliefs on the first main wall. One wonders, for example, whether it is mere coincidence that the chief protagonist of the first series of *avadāna* reliefs on the first main wall, the story of Sudhana and Manohara, is a namesake of our pilgrim Sudhana.

What we see, therefore, is that the story of Sudhana's pilgrimage is a natural extension of the message of the Buddha, announced on the first gallery. It unfolds without interruption or hiatus from the main wall of the second gallery to the summit of the monument. Although we notice occasionally slight differences in carving, these are often due to the sculptors' adaptation to the changing format of the panels. There is not the slightest hint of any more obvious stylistic differences that a major interruption of the construction or a drastic change of building plans could possibly have brought about. Instead of revealing an interruption and subsequent abrupt change of plans, we see a carefully planned and executed allocation of themes to the reliefs between Sudhana's visits to Maitreya and Samantabhadra, extending over a distance of two main walls and two balustrades. This resulted, as we have seen, in a 110-220-110 formula for the division of principal themes. Instead of a drastic change in the program, we see the sculptors consistently staying the course of the pilgrim towards mastering the Conduct of the Bodhisattva and the achievement of Enlightenment, creating an uninterrupted flow of the narrative of the pilgrim's progress. It is difficult to reconcile this remarkable internal cohesion of the entire interlocking sets of reliefs with radical changes in the architecture, made in mid-course and directly affecting the meaning and symbolism of the entire monument.

Both Dumarçay and Chihara concede that there is, except for some scattered architectural debris, found *in situ* during the dismantling of the monument, no solid evidence for the shape of the building that they believe to have been erected above the second gallery of the monument, only to be subsequently demolished. However, if we accept, for the sake of argument, the former existence of such a structure, there would seem to be only one possibility to reconcile the ideas of radical change, as proposed by Dumarçay and Chihara with the visual evidence of the reliefs. Woodward (2004, 342), who accepts what he calls the "reconceptualization" of Borobudur as an established fact, supported by "archaeological evidence", was the first to point out this possibility. He suggested that the Borobudur, at one time during the construction, may have been crowned by an edifice that represented Maitreya's *kūtāgāra*. If that assumption

should turn out to be correct, the last three reliefs of the second main wall could have acted not as a prelude to the detailed portrayal of the interior of Maitreya's palace of miracles, as it does now, but as the prelude to a symbolic rendering of the complete palace of Maitreya itself. While this type of change—if it ever occurred—would perhaps qualify as a radical change from an architectural point of view, its impact on the meaning and symbolism of the monument would have been much less radical. The inclusion of the visit to Samantabhadra and Sudhana's final entry into the *Dharmadhātu*, the Realm of Ultimate Reality, would have constituted an amplification of the original idea, not a drastic change in the meaning of the entire monument.

The seamlessly evolving and tightly interlocking sequence of the *Gandavyūha* reliefs suggests that it would perhaps be more prudent to judge the numerous changes in the architectural design of Borobudur in a different light. Instead of seeing these changes as clear indications of a radical break with the original intent, affecting both the basic character and the appearance of the monument as well as the *Leitmotiv* of its reliefs, they may, perhaps, be regarded as the result of the Javanese methods of construction. They demonstrate the architects' own ways of coping with the technical and esthetic design problems they may have encountered in the course of the construction of the monument. One can easily get lost in speculations as to how and to which extent the various architectural modifications changed the basic character of the monument. The *Gandavyūha* reliefs offer not the slightest support for such hypotheses. The reliefs fit harmoniously into the architecture of the monument. The program of the reliefs and the contents of the succession of texts they illustrate shows a remarkable inner cohesion and philosophical consistency. This should caution us against speculations what shape Borobudur would have assumed if a hypothetical original design had been carried out. Instead it may be more fruitful to accept the present architectural shape of Borobudur as it stands, with all of its numerous major and minor modifications, and continue the search for an explanation of the monument in the scriptures that have been illustrated on its walls.

In his conclusion even Dumarçay (1978, 62), the chief proponent of Borobudur's "reconceptualization", admits: "What is perhaps remarkable is that after all its numerous alterations the monument manages to preserve an idea of unity. This was deliberately sought after at the end of the second and third periods of construction when the architect was able to give *the impression of there being a single concept behind the building* (Italics J.F.) by adding decoration to the cornices and new doorways to the lower galleries." However, the harmonious unity of Borobudur is not a superficial impression, but the result of the internal spiritual coherence of the monument. It is not an artificial unity that could be created as an afterthought by means of architectural cosmetics, but one that was, from the very beginning, thoughtfully planned and consistently maintained and executed.

5) *To see or not to see*

Borobudur's low profile—the "cake that failed to rise"—has been a topic of lively discussion among the scholars of Borobudur. In keeping with the method previously adopted, here only the possibility should be considered whether the *Gandavyūha* can contribute to our understanding of this salient architectural feature of the monument. And indeed, when reading the *Gandavyūha*, we soon come across several passages which suggest an entirely different perspective on the low profile, the so-called "problematical" (Hoenig) architectural shape of Borobudur.

At the very beginning of the *Gandavyūha*, almost immediately after the opening sentences of the prologue, a passage of unusual interest occurs. The five hundred *śrāvakas* and the disciples of the Buddha, who were all present in the Buddha's assembly in Jetavana, are unable to witness the miracles performed by the Buddha. As soon as the Buddha enters the "Lion's roar *samādhi*", a magnificent, gigantic edifice, a *kūtāgāra*, arises and envelops the entire garden. The Bodhisattvas are able to witness this first of several magic appearances of a *kūtāgāra*, as well as all "innumerable" later miracles of the *Gandavyūha*. However, the Buddha's own disciples are unable to witness these miracles, even though they are being performed right in front of their eyes.

The *Gandavyūha* gives a lengthy explanation of this phenomenon. While the Bodhisattvas are "pure in the sphere of the unobstructed eye of the act of beholding of the miracles of all Buddhas" (Ehman 1977, 114), the *śrāvakas* have yet to reach the advanced stage in the process of their spiritual ripening which will eventually enable them to witness these miraculous visions. "They do not see the extraordinary occurrences of the miracles, of the sphere, and of the *samādhi* of the Tathāgata, nor do they see the great assemblage of Bodhisattvas which is a great multi-faceted jewel. Why is this? Because the unobstructed eye of Bodhisattva knowledge is not pure among those, whose eye of knowledge is bound with the blindfold of ignorance which is the adversary of omniscience" (Ehman 1977, 158).

As Phyllis Granoff in her enlightening essay on these visionary experiences points out, "the ability to have visions is related specifically to an expansion of consciousness, accomplished by a freeing of the mind from any association with limited objects" (Granoff 1998, 362). The prerequisites for being able to witness the visionary miracles, which are performed by the Buddha and by some *kalyānamitras*, are spelled out for Sudhana by the lay woman (*upāsikā*) Āśā (VIII), who performs numerous miracles of her own. She tells Sudhana: "Son of good family, I do not come within the range of vision, so that I can really be seen and known, of those beings, who have not yet planted the roots of goodness, have not yet met Good Friends (*kalyānamitras*), and have not yet concentrated their mind on the Perfectly Awakened One. Son of good family, as soon as those beings have really seen me, they can no longer turn away from the path towards Supreme Perfect Awakening" (T. 278, 698b; T. 279, 434c; Ijiri 2005, 35-36).

As Sudhana already seems to have met most, if not all, of the spiritual requirements for this advanced type of vision, we may perhaps assume that he actually saw the miracles performed by Āśā, although this is not mentioned explicitly in the text. In the reliefs only her own personal "root of goodness", i.e. the homage she paid in previous rebirths to a succession of Buddhas, seems to be shown (II-76). The miracles she herself is able to perform are not. This still leaves the reader in uncertainty as to whether Sudhana is already able to see these miracles at this stage of his pilgrimage or whether he only heard them being described by the *upāsikā*.

The visionary capacity of the *kalyānamitras* and of Sudhana himself is a constantly recurring theme in the *Gandavyūha*, for it is obvious that the road towards the acquisition of this super-human gift is long and arduous. For example, when Sudhana visits King Anala (XVIII), he is initially taken in by the extraordinary spectacle of cruelty and horror displayed by this king, who orders the torturing of his subjects. Only later does Sudhana begin to realize that the scene is pure phantasmagoria. At that point in his search for wisdom he is apparently still prone to such elementary errors. Later, after he has witnessed the manifold miracles performed in Maitreya's *kūtāgāra*, the Bodhisattva asks him whether he has seen them. He answers: "Yes,

Noble One, that I saw [those miracles] is due to the power of you, my *kalyānamitra*, due to the divine power produced by your concentration” (T. 293, 835b, 6). It is probably no coincidence, therefore, that those miracles, which Sudhana has actually witnessed, are now, for the first time, also illustrated in the reliefs.

When he reaches the abode of Samantabhadra, a similar event occurs. Sudhana witnesses a long succession of visionary miracles, produced by Samantabhadra. Again he answers in the affirmative to the question whether he saw all these miracles. Samantabhadra asks: “Son of good family, did you see the strength of my mysterious power?” Sudhana replied: “Yes, Noble One, it is as you say. This [display of] inconceivable divine power can only be grasped by one with the power of the wisdom of the Buddha” (T. 293, 840c, 9). From these two passages it is evident that Sudhana, at some point in the course of his long pilgrimage, has acquired the ability to witness all the miracles performed by his last *kalyānamitras*. It is evident that the vision of the miraculous *Buddhaksetras*, or Buddha lands, and the *Buddhavisaya*, the Realm of the Buddha, is accessible only to the initiated, to those who have advanced far on the pilgrim’s progress towards the Conduct of the Bodhisattva.

This concept, emphasized time and again in the *Gandavyūha*, may hold the key to the much-discussed, “problematical” (Hoenig) architectural shape of the Borobudur. The almost total invisibility, up to the last moment, of the near-circular terraces with their latticed *stūpas* and their statues of Buddhas in *dharmacakra-mudrā*, first commented upon by Paul Mus (1933-35, 87-88), may perhaps be seen as a symbolic expression by architectural means of what appears to be one of the central themes of the *Gandavyūha*.

Did the low profile of the terraces and the limited visual accessibility have, in addition to this symbolic message, a practical, ritual function? The low profile of the higher levels of Borobudur may have served the specific purpose of keeping the terraces with their latticed *stūpas* and the Buddhas residing in them, hidden from view. They remained, as long as possible and up to the last moment, hidden from those pilgrims who had not—or, perhaps, not yet—been granted admission to the highest terraced levels of the sanctuary. The *Gandavyūha*’s repeated emphasis on the difference between seeing and not seeing, suggests the possibility that the low profile of Borobudur may have been inspired by this concept. It may have been not only a feature of profound symbolic meaning, but also a practical device with a ritual purpose.

That the main wall of the fourth gallery—and not, as one would perhaps have expected, the balustrade—was chosen for the illustrations of the *Bhadracarī*, the conclusion of the *Gandavyūha*, may have been another means to achieve the same effect. It probably made the sudden, dramatic transition from the narrow galleries to the wide open terraces even more effective. As the pilgrims passed through the highest gate leading towards the terraces, they saw that the minatory “Face of Glory”, carved in the lintels of the gates of the lower levels, had now been joined by airborne ascetics who welcome the pilgrim from high above the clouds with a floral tribute (van Erp 1931, 215). By choosing the main wall of the fourth gallery for the illustration of the *Bhadracarī*, the pilgrim was now, on the last leg of his *pradaksinā*, drawn irresistibly closer towards the sacred center of the monument.

There are unmistakable traces of the architects’ experimentation with the height of the near-circular terraces and the dimensions of the latticed *stūpas*. Practical considerations, as well as the rules of Buddhist iconometry may have required that the dimensions of the latticed *stūpas*, which the architects ultimately decided to construct, were determined by those of the statues enshrined in them. The diameter of those *stūpas* in turn determined how many of them could

be accommodated on the three near-circular terraces. The traces of initial experiments with a different diameter of these *stūpas*, already discovered by van Erp, should make us wary of numerological speculations concerning the number of those *stūpas*. But instead of being no more than a scaled-back compromise, forced upon the architects because of intractable structural problems, or inspired by a sudden change in Buddhist doctrine, the design of the terraces of Borobudur in their present shape would appear to be in yet one more respect consistent with the content and intention of the *Gandavyūha*.

6) *Proliferation and Multiplication ad infinitum*

In the course of his pilgrimage, Sudhana's *kalyānamitras* describe for his benefit, or Sudhana witnesses personally, an infinite number of miraculous visions. While these may vary in many respects, most of these miracles and visions have one typical characteristic in common. As soon as a vision or a miracle occurs, it replicates itself simultaneously innumerable times. The first vision of this proliferating type occurs already at the end of the prologue. The text describes how the Bodhisattvas, assembled at Jetavana, saw in each and every Buddha land in all worlds, extending into the limits of outer space, a Bodhisattva achieving Enlightenment (see II-15). Another miracle occurs right after he has entered Maitreya's *kūtāgāra*: "And inside this *kūtāgāra* Sudhana saw hundreds of thousands of other *kūtāgāras*, all decorated in similar fashion" (T. 293, 831c, .26).

Recently, Tilmann Vetter (2004, 2-3) has drawn attention to this unusual aspect of the *Gandavyūha*. He cites the example of Sudhana's sixth *kalyānamitra*, the *śresthin* (merchant) Muktaḥ, who has achieved a *vimokṣa* which enables him to see Tathāgatas, a vision in which "their magnificent manifestations appear unobstructed". He sees these Tathāgatas "in all Ten Directions in numbers equal to that of the specks of dust in ten Buddha lands". Vetter points out that Muktaḥ states the illusory character of this type of vision. Later, other Good Friends, notably Maitreya, make similar statements.

These visionary experiences often seem to coincide with important milestones in Sudhana's pilgrimage. After his vision of myriads of *kūtāgāras* inside Maitreya's palace, mentioned above, similar miracles and their simultaneous infinite multiplication occur at the time of his first encounter with Samantabhadra, and, in an even more dramatic multiplication, at the conclusion of this final visit to Samantabhadra, when the Bodhisattva touches Sudhana's head.

"At that time, the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra stretched out his right hand and touched the top of Sudhana's head. As he touched him, Sudhana again received as many *samādhis* as there are specks of dust in all worlds. And each of these *samādhis* was followed by other *samādhis*, in number equal to that of all specks of dust in all worlds. In each of these *samādhis* Sudhana saw oceans of *Tathāgatas*, as numerous as there are specks of dust in all worlds. He nourished virtues as many as all specks of dust in all worlds. He produced great wisdom and fulfilled an ocean of great vows. He adhered to the right path, and, boldly advancing, he accomplished all acts of the Conduct of the Bodhisattva. In this manner he came to be illuminated by the radiance of all Buddhas. Just as in this world, in the presence of Vairocana, the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra touched Sudhana's head in order to grant him *samādhis* as numerous as the specks of dust in all worlds, at the same moment Samantabhadra touched the top of Sudhana's head in all Buddha lands in the Ten Directions, in order that he may achieve this same marvelous merit" (T. 293, 840b, 21).

What most miracles of the *Gandavyūha* have in common is this simultaneous multiplication, the immediate, endless replication of exactly the same event and exactly the same figures. The *Gandavyūha* has an extensive vocabulary of huge numerals, used to indicate the numbers of Buddhas, Buddha fields, and miraculous buildings which appear during these visionary occurrences (Ijiri 2005, 46-48). Although the sculptors who were asked to illustrate the *Bhadracarī* populated some of their reliefs with an unusually large number of Buddhas, they wisely abstained from any effort to illustrate more than a minute fraction of these miracles of multiplication. With the exception of the two final *Bhadracarī* reliefs (IV-71 and IV-72), which together show thirty-two Buddhas, the words “all Buddhas” have usually been illustrated by a maximum of ten Buddhas (for the Ten Directions), just as “five hundred monks” were consistently reduced to five for obvious artistic as well as practical reasons.

The sculptors made no attempt to symbolically show these infinite multitudes of Buddhas in their reliefs. Instead the architects and sculptors seem to have saved their efforts to illustrate the miracle of the multiplication of Buddha figures for the statues in the niches above the galleries and in the latticed *stūpas* of the circular terraces. The system of Buddhas of Borobudur, which has inspired so much speculation by so many scholars, would seem to fit perfectly into this pattern of multiplication of identical figures. In spite of the repeated statements of the *Gandavyūha* that Sudhana’s encounter with Samantabhadra takes place in the presence of Vairocana, this Buddha is absent from the reliefs illustrating Sudhana’s visit to this Bodhisattva on the fourth balustrade. Vairocana’s multiple presence on the adjacent circular terraces was probably considered sufficient. After he has entered the realm of the near-circular terraces the pilgrim can discern for the first time the seventy-two identical Buddhas in *dharmacakramudrā*, the *mudrā* most often associated with Vairocana. In his last appearance in the reliefs of Borobudur, Sudhana is shown seated for the first time on a lotus cushion, a sign of his having achieved Bodhisattvahood. Aided and instructed by Samantabhadra, similarly enthroned, he has finally achieved the state of mind which enables him to see the supreme miracle of Vairocana’s miraculous multiplication.

Viewed from the perspective of the *Gandavyūha*, the terraces of Borobudur symbolize the climax of the story, the natural extension of the narrative of the pilgrimage illustrated on the walls of the galleries. The illustrations of the *Gandavyūha* have already been fully integrated into the architectural design of three of the four galleries of the monument. Now the story can be seen to lead directly into the design of the circular terraces. There does no longer seem to be any reason to doubt the philosophical consistency and unity of the entire monument. Although we should never exclude the possibility that other Buddhist concepts, not based upon the *Gandavyūha*, contributed to the creation of Borobudur, the story of the *Gandavyūha* remains the principal *Leitmotiv*. It unites not only the reliefs of the galleries and balustrades, but includes the terraces of Borobudur in one total, grand design.

7) *The Borobudur as a Mandala of Esoteric Buddhism*

In Western scholarly literature the notion that Borobudur is a three-dimensional esoteric *mandala* is usually attributed to Heinrich Zimmer, in whose *Kunstform und Yoga im indischen Kultbild* (1926) this hypothesis is generally thought to have first been proposed. In reality, the Japanese scholar Ōmura Seigai, best known in the West for his pioneering history of Chi-

nese Buddhist and Daoist sculpture (*Shina bijutsushi, Chōsohen*, Tokyo, 1913), had advanced the same idea already two years earlier in an essay (dated in accordance with 1924) entitled “Borobudur is a mandala”, which he contributed to a book on Borobudur, written by Miura Hidenosuke (Ōmura 1924). Almost simultaneously Krom’s Japanese friend, Ijiri Susumu, reached a similar conclusion in his book *Bārāboedoer*, a collection of reprinted essays, previously (1923) published in installments in the Buddhist journal *Daijō* (Ijiri 1924, 40-63). At the time, the idea that Borobudur represents a three-dimensional *mandala* seems to have been in the air. In 1925 the Javanese scholar Raden Ngabei Poerbatjaraka even mistook a picture of a *mandala* in Waddell’s well-known publication *Lamaism* for a groundplan of a building resembling Borobudur (van Erp 1931, 424).

While it is only fair to set the record straight and establish the original Japanese authorship of the *mandala* hypothesis, the far more important question is whether the interpretation of Borobudur as a three-dimensional esoteric *mandala* is valid and contributes to our understanding of the monument. Following in the footsteps of the early pioneers, other distinguished scholars, including Willem Frederik Stutterheim in Indonesia, Toganoo Shōun in Japan, Lokesh Chandra in India, and Alex Wayman in the United States, to name only a few of the most prominent, have taken up the idea, refining and elaborating it. The international reputation of these eminent scholars ensured a wide dissemination and general acceptance of their hypotheses. Thus the often repeated notion that Borobudur represents a Tantric cosmic diagram gradually acquired the status of established fact, a transformation it has in common with some of the other theories concerning Borobudur that we have previously discussed.

Some of the other theories concerning Borobudur were challenged no sooner than they had been proposed, but it would take more than seventy years before a clear voice of dissent regarding the *mandala* theory was first heard. This was when some of the basic assumptions of the hypothesis were called into question by Marijke J. Klokke (1995). She argued convincingly that, apart from an external, superficial resemblance to a cosmic diagram with its squares and circles, Borobudur lacks most of the basic characteristics of a *mandala* of Esoteric Buddhism. She also pointed out that the construction of Borobudur in all likelihood antedates the spread of Esoteric Buddhism in Java. As mentioned earlier, the date of the compilation of the principal Javanese text, which has often been adduced in support of the claims of Tantric influence at Borobudur, the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, cannot be proven with any certainty for the period before or during the construction of Borobudur (Ishii 1992, 232). A detailed discussion of Klokke’s principal points, or a critical review of the voluminous scholarly literature, produced by the many adherents to Zimmer’s and Ōmura’s theories, falls outside the scope of the present study. While most of Klokke’s arguments are quite compelling, she focuses, as the question mark in the title of her essay suggests, on her reasons for doubting that Borobudur is a *mandala*. In line with our previous treatment of other ideas regarding Borobudur, the only question which will be discussed here is whether the contents of the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī* support or contradict the notion that Borobudur is an esoteric *mandala*. If the answer to that question is negative, we should investigate whether the contents of these two scriptures offer a possible alternative to the *mandala* hypothesis.

When reading the *Gandavyūha* we soon begin to realize that the text does not offer substantive support for the *mandala* theory. Most scholars who have studied the *Gandavyūha* concluded that the text is a Mahāyāna scripture that is largely free from esoteric influences. Some of Sudhana’s *kalyānamitras* express heterodox ideas or commit acts that seem to foreshadow

Tantrism For example, Osto (2008, 96) points to the courtesan Vasumitrā (XXVI), whose method of teaching the Dharma may be considered to be a precursor of Tantric sexual yoga. One might perhaps also single out the boy Śilpabhijña (XLV), who utters magic syllables to enter the gates of transcendent wisdom. Śiva Mahādeva's inclusion among Sudhana's Good Friends should not be taken as proof that Borobudur is a syncretic Hindu-Buddhist monument. A few possible cases of proto-Tantrism may only reveal the wide diversity of views among Sudhana's *kalyānamitras*. Most of them are in possession of only one segment of the truth—their own *vimoksa*—but none of them is omniscient like the Great Bodhisattvas. None of this supports the idea that Borobudur is a three-dimensional esoteric mandala. Just as Osto (2008) classifies the *Gandavyūha* as a proto-Tantric text, we may perhaps characterize Borobudur as an example of a proto-Tantric mandala, which already incorporates an external feature, such as the geometric alignment of the figures, of what was later to become a full-fledged esoteric diagram..

The proponents of the *mandala* theory seem to have underestimated the important place the *Gandavyūha* occupies in the program of the bas-reliefs of the higher galleries of Borobudur. Instead most of them focused on the pantheon of Buddha statues in the niches and latticed *stūpas* of the monument. Stutterheim tried to interpret this pantheon with the help of the system described in the Javanese Tantric text *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*. However, even if we disregard the uncertainty as to its date and investigate this Javanese text as a source of inspiration for the Buddha system of Borobudur, it is as if we enter another world, separate from and not in any way related to the Buddhist universe described in the *Gandavyūha*. Nevertheless, to base a rejection of the *mandala* theory exclusively on the basically non-Tantric characteristics of the *Gandavyūha* may not be justified. For we would probably underestimate the wisdom of the ancient Javanese Buddhist community and its builders of Borobudur if we assume as a matter of course that their knowledge of the Buddhist doctrine was limited to the Mahāyāna texts that have been illustrated on its walls.

The history of the Chinese translations of the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī* should warn us against any classification of these texts which is based solely upon the sectarian affiliation of its translators. At first sight the history of the hymn adds grist to the mill of those who regard Borobudur as a monument of Esoteric Buddhism. Of the translators of the *Bhadracarī* and the monks, who were responsible for its spread to China and from there to Korea and Japan, several were prominent adherents of esoteric sects. Amoghavajra, the second translator of the *Bhadracarī* into Chinese, was one of the monks credited with the introduction of Tantric Buddhism into China. There is even what may be called a hypothetical Javanese connection. It is possible that Amoghavajra may have met with his teacher, Vajrabodhi, in Java long before Borobudur was built. The third translator of the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī*, the monk Prajñā, was a native of Kashmir, who studied the Five Kinds of Esoteric Buddhism under Dharmayaśas in Orissa. He also translated other texts into Chinese, including the *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya sūtra* (T. 253). In 806 C.E. Kōbō Daishi, the Japanese founder of the esoteric Shingon sect brought with him from China the first Sanskrit manuscript of the *Bhadracarī* to reach Japan. All this clearly demonstrates that the *Bhadracarī* was held in high regard by prominent adherents of Tantric Buddhism.

The Tantric affiliation of these translators and transmitters of the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī* has been taken by some as an indication that Borobudur is a monument with Tantric characteristics (Wayman 1981). The activities and the sectarian affiliation of the translators

of the *Bhadracarī* suggest that they perceived no inner conflict between their efforts to propagate the all-embracing, ecumenical Buddhism of the hymn and their own Tantric affiliation. But even the Indonesian (albeit primarily Śrīvijayan, not specifically Javanese) connections of some of these prominent ecclesiastics do not add up to convincing proof that early Tantrism in the archipelago played a role of any importance in the creation of Borobudur.

Marijke Klokke [1995] was the first to draw attention to what is perhaps the most crucial difference between an esoteric *mandala* and the Buddhist pantheon of Borobudur. The typical esoteric *mandala* represents a hierarchy of many different, individual Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and a variety of deities, arranged in a geometric design of squares and circles. It is the multiplication of many *identical* Buddha statues at Borobudur which definitely sets the pantheon of the monument apart from that of a typical esoteric cosmic diagram. The Buddha statues installed in the niches above the first three galleries of Borobudur show *mudrās* that differ according to the orientation of the statues in conformity with the most common system of the Five Jinas. However, the niches above the fourth gallery contain on all four sides identical statues of an additional Buddha in *vitarka-mudrā*. The statues in *dharmacakra-mudrā* in the latticed *stūpas* of the circular terraces are all identical, too. As we have seen before, it is exactly this type of multiplication of identical Buddha figures which is a common characteristic of many of the miracles and visions described in the *Gandavyūha*. It is difficult to see how this type of multiplication of identical icons can be reconciled with the basic characteristics of an esoteric *mandala* with its strict hierarchy of numerous, distinctly individual figures of a Buddhist pantheon.

Before we investigate further this critical aspect of the connection between text and image at Borobudur, a question of methodology should be raised. Much can be said in favor of an approach, which investigates first all possible connections between the reliefs and those texts of which we have proof that they were known to the Buddhist community of Borobudur. However, any explanation of the Buddhist pantheon of Borobudur, and especially of the Buddha statues in *dharmacakra-mudrā* inside the hollow, latticed *stūpas* of the near-circular terraces, should not *a priori* exclude the possibility that the design of the terraced summit of Borobudur could have been inspired or at least influenced by texts other than the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī*, be they of Tantric content or not. Perhaps a better approach would be, therefore, to establish first for which basic characteristics of Borobudur the texts that have been illustrated on its walls fail to offer an adequate explanation.

One suggestion for a different, non-Tantric source of inspiration for the upper terraces of Borobudur was made by Jan J. Boeles in *The Secret of Borobudur* (Bangkok, 1989). Boeles suggests that the key to the meaning of the terraces and the system of Buddhas of Borobudur is to be found in the *Saddharmapundarīka-sūtra*, or *Lotus Sūtra*. He specifically cites the well-known passage describing the great miracle of the apparition of the primordial Buddha Prabhūtaratna, the apparition of the *stūpa* in which this Buddha resides, the innumerable Buddhas in their *Buddhaksetras*, who all make their appearance, preaching the Law, and the descent of these *Buddhaksetras* and Buddhas to hear the Buddha Śākyamuni preach the *Lotus Sūtra* (Boeles 1989, 12 sqq.).

Whatever doubts we may harbor regarding this interpretation of the terraces of Borobudur, we have to admit that Boeles' idea has the merit of at least attempting to address two features of the terraces that have never been fully explained. One of these is the difference between the latticed *stūpas* of the third and those of the first and second terraces. These differences, which

took van Erp by surprise when he began the actual restoration of the almost totally ruined summit of the monument, are as follows. The body of the hollow *stūpas* of the third terrace is covered with a checkerboard pattern of square perforations, and topped by a *harmikā* of octagonal shape, whereas those of the first and second level have diamond-shaped perforations and a square *harmikā*. Boeles connects the square perforations with the words of the *Lotus Sūtra*: “decorated with a network of little bells, showing a checkerboard divided by gold threads into eight compartments”. Boeles did not realize that the descriptions of fantastic buildings in the *Gandavyūha* abound with very similar types of decoration. His evidence for a connection of the latticed *stūpas* with this specific passage in the *Lotus Sūtra* may therefore not be as strong as Boeles assumed. It is highly likely that the geometric, abstract differentiation between the levels of the circular terraces was inspired by a passage in a text, but which text that remains unclear.

Another unusual feature of Borobudur is that its hollow, latticed *stūpas* have Buddha statues installed in them. For this feature the *Lotus Sūtra* offers a well-known precedent in the *stūpa* of Prabhūtaratna. In the arts inspired by the *Lotus Sūtra* in several Buddhist countries Prabhūtaratna is often shown seated side by side in a *stūpa* together with Śākyamuni. While the reliefs of Borobudur show many different types of *stūpas*, there is only one relief which shows a Buddha in *dharmacakra-mudrā* seated inside a *stūpa* (IV-13). We have previously seen that this relief illustrates vs. 6 of the *Bhadracarī*, and corresponds with the words “[tall] like Mount Meru”. The symbolic illustration of Mount Meru by a *stūpa* may be an example of the liberties the sculptors allowed themselves with the text, as Bosch pointed out. However, their choice may also have been prompted by the wish to connect the reliefs illustrating the hymn with the design of the near-circular terraces, the same type of “sneak preview” that we have noticed elsewhere on the monument.

To the best of my knowledge, the *Gandavyūha* only once mentions a Buddha inside a *stūpa*. That is in the final stanzas of Prajñā’s Chinese translation, preceding those of the *Bhadracarī*. They contain the line: “Then he saw a statue of a Buddha, being erected inside a *stūpa*” (T.293, 842, 27, also in T.279, 443c, 15). It should also be pointed out that the words “May I witness all miracles [performed by these Bodhisattvas]” of vs. 45 of the *Bhadracarī* have been illustrated on relief IV-69 by the miraculous apparition of a *stūpa*. Such an episode is described in great detail in the *Lotus Sūtra*, but does not occur in the transmitted versions of the *Gandavyūha*.

The presence of a Buddha inside a *stūpa*, rare as it is in scripture as well as in sculpture, may be a distinguishing characteristic which the *Lotus Sūtra*, the *Gandavyūha* and Borobudur have in common. However, this should not close our eyes to the fact that there is an important difference between the two. In the *Lotus Sūtra* the *stūpa* is the ancient repository of the ashes of the primordial Buddha Prabhūtaratna. In order to fulfill a solemn vow, made during his lifetime in aeons past, and through the boundless magic power of the scripture he is resurrected and returns to the world when the *Lotus of the True Law* is being preached.

If the *stūpas* of the circular terraces of Borobudur resemble the magical buildings which are described at length in the *Gandavyūha*, they are all of an ethereal, immaterial, and luminous kind. They are visions and reflections, spontaneously produced by the accumulated merits of the Bodhisattvas. Like the *kūtāgāras* and all other miraculous multiple structures described in the *Gandavyūha* they “do not touch each other, but in the manner of reflections they all appear on each and every surface” (Granoff 1998, 353). The diamond patterns on these buildings, repeatedly mentioned in the text, may have inspired the architects and sculptors of Borobudur

to create their reticulated diamond patterns on the *stūpas* of two of the three near-circular terraces. Thus the sculptors seem to have invented their own method—perhaps the only possible method—to convey in a non-reflective, opaque medium such as andesite an impression of the reflective, yet simultaneously transparent surface of these visionary structures that are described in the text. The glimmering effect of the layer of white plaster, or *vajralepa*, which once covered the body of the *stūpas* and the floors of the terraces, may have helped them to create such an illusion.

In considering the possibility that the *Lotus Sūtra* could have provided the inspiration for the design of the upper levels of Borobudur, it may be of interest to mention here a development in Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhism in which a common ground was sought between the doctrines of the Huayan, or Avatamsaka School, and the Tiantai School, based upon the *Lotus Sūtra*. As we have previously seen, the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* was generally regarded as the embodiment of the Buddha's teachings, which he expounded immediately after he had achieved Enlightenment. The *Lotus Sūtra*, on the other hand, is believed to have been preached towards the end of his life. Not surprisingly, given their sectarian affiliation, the patriarch Fazang (643-712 C.E) of the Huayan Sect placed the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* above the *Lotus Sūtra*, whereas Zhiyi (538-597 C.E) of the Tiantai Sect was of the opposite opinion (Liu 1989). As next to nothing is known about the sectarian affiliations of the ancient Javanese Buddhists, we have no way to establish whether any similar effort to harmonize the views of these two schools of Buddhist thought was ever made in Java. There is no need, therefore, to pursue this topic here further. What is certain is that these two widely known Mahāyāna *sūtras* were at one time considered by some Chinese Buddhist patriarchs to have enough common ground to blend into one wider, common Mahāyāna vision. For that reason alone we should not reject out of hand the possibility that after the *Bhadracarī* yet one other text, this time outside the Avatamsaka tradition, could have contributed to the design of the upper levels of Borobudur.

We have previously seen how the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī* reveal a narrative *Leitmotiv* that encompasses both the galleries and the terraces of Borobudur and unites them into one unbroken continuum. Yet one crucial question remains unanswered: do the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī* also provide us with a precedent for a pantheon with a system of six or seven, instead of the more common Five Jinas? Most hypotheses that have been advanced to make Borobudur a monument of Esoteric Buddhism go back ultimately to the system of the Five Transcendental Buddhas of Esoteric Buddhism. However, it is evident that the Borobudur pantheon does not have five, but at least six, and possibly even seven Buddhas (if we add the controversial unfinished Buddha of the main *stūpa*). The proponents of the *mandala* theory have yet to account for this crucial difference in the number of Buddhas.

Some scholars try to account for the obvious differences between the *mudrās* of the statues of Borobudur and the traditional Indian iconography for the Buddhist esoteric pantheon with ingenious and complex, but sometimes highly speculative hypotheses. Of course, there is always a possibility that the Javanese sculptors deliberately deviated from the classical Indian rules of Buddhist iconography. It is well known that such deviations are from early times on a common phenomenon in Buddhist art of Southeast Asia. The *Bhadracarī* reliefs with their multitude of Buddhas do not seem to reveal any consistent pattern or system of *mudrās*. However, the number and the orientation of the different Buddhas, installed in the niches and latticed *stūpas*, and the *mudrās* of these statues are the only tangible and uncontested pieces of evidence that we have at our disposal in determining the characteristics of the Borobudur

pantheon. We have seen how Hikata tried to identify some of Sudhana's *kalyānamitras* by assuming that "mistakes" were made by the sculptors in the gender of some of Sudhana's Good Friends, or that a "misarrangement" of the reliefs occurred. He thereby weakened his own arguments. Any tinkering with the number of Buddhas or their *mudrās* in order to bring the Borobudur pantheon in line with a system of Five Transcendental Buddhas of Esoteric Buddhism would render such identifications equally questionable.

The proponents of the *mandala* theory have mainly concentrated their efforts on an explanation of these differences and on bridging the gap between the contents of the esoteric texts and the iconographic reality of Borobudur. However, they searched in vain for a South Asian or Far Eastern precedent for the iconography of Borobudur's pantheon with its six or seven Buddhas. One would expect that if the architecture and iconography of the near-circular terraces of the top of Borobudur have been inspired by the contents of the *Gandavyūha*, an explanation for Borobudur's system of Buddhas should be sought in the final chapters of that text. It is precisely there that the Chinese translations of the *Gandavyūha* provide the documentary evidence for a pantheon of six or seven *Tathāgatas*.

In his determined quest for an alternative to the *Bhadracarī* as a source of inspiration for the reliefs of the fourth main wall, Gómez noticed some verses in the last section of the Chinese translations of the *Gandavyūha* that do not seem to have an equivalent in the published editions of the Sanskrit text. The layout of these text passages in the *Taishō Tripitaka* treats them as verses, but their contents with their constant repetition of *huojian* (here he saw... there he saw) read more like regular *Gandavyūha* descriptive prose. Gómez discovered in these verses a direct reference to a set of six or seven Buddhas. As he was at that time primarily engaged in a discussion of Maitreya's *kūtāgāra* as the source of inspiration for the architectural shape of Borobudur, he probably considered the topic of the Borobudur pantheon beyond the scope of his article. Perhaps that was why he did not pursue the question, and relegated the discovery of this significant text passage dealing with the Borobudur pantheon to a footnote (Gómez 1981, 194, n.54). There it seems to have remained unnoticed by most other scholars, with the notable exception of Marijke Klokke. The passage occurs with several minor differences in all three Chinese translations of the *Gandavyūha*. As it was skipped in Cleary's translation it escaped the notice of many readers. While his English translation is largely based upon Śikṣānanda's Chinese translation (T.279), Cleary substituted a translation of the *Bhadracarī* (lacking in T.279) for the verses to which Gómez refers. Dōi, on the other hand, gives a full translation in German of these verses (Dōi 1978, 457-458). With the Sanskrit names of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, as reconstructed from the Chinese by Gómez, my translation of these verses reads as follows:

- 1) Here he saw how the Great Bodhisattvas filled the three thousand-fold worlds. They have accomplished the Benevolent Conduct of Samantabhadra. *The Tathāgatas preach the Law on their behalf.*
- 2) There he saw how [the Buddha] Vairocana during countless aeons in which he majestically purified the world, *achieved Supreme Perfect Enlightenment.*
- 3) Here he saw the Buddha Head of Wisdom [Bhadraśrī?], the Great Bodhisattva Samantabhadra and the [other] Great Bodhisattvas, who all fill the Land of the Miraculous Virtue of the Lotus Flower.

- 4) There he saw the Buddha Amitābha (or: Amitāyus) and the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara who have reached the state of Anointment and who have received the prediction of their future Buddhahood. They fill all Realms of Ultimate Reality (*Dharmadhātu*).
- 5) Here he saw the Buddha Aksobhya and the Great Bodhisattva Fragrant Elephant [Gandhahastī], who fill the splendid Land of Happiness and Glorious Purity.
- 6) There he saw the Buddha Wisdom of the Moon [Candramatī?] and the Great Bodhisattva Golden Banner. They fill the Land of Clear Reflection.
- 7) Here he saw the Buddha named Repository of the Sun [Sūryagarbha] and the Great Bodhisattvas who have achieved [the state of] the Anointment of Wisdom. They fill the Land of Pure Radiance.
- 8) There he saw the worlds in the Ten Directions, and *all the Buddhas radiating a bright light, turning the Wheel of the Law* on behalf of all sentient beings, dispelling the darkness of ignorance” (T. 278, 786b, 5-20).

Instead of verse 8 the translations of Prajñā and Śikṣānanda add:

- 8) “Here he saw the Buddha of Adamantine Great Radiance [Vajramahāprabha], together with the Bodhisattva Banner of Wisdom [Jñānadhvaja], roaming throughout the vast [Buddha] lands, preaching the Dharma and dispelling the ignorance of all sentient beings” (T. 293, 842b, 23-24 ; T. 279, 442c-443a).

The passage translated above occurs exactly there where one would have expected it, i.e. towards the end of the *Gandavyūha*. In Prajñā’s translation (T.293) it directly precedes his translation of the *Bhadracarī*. It agrees with the visual evidence of the monument in that it mentions six or seven Tathāgatas, corresponding at least in number to that of the pantheon of six or seven Buddhas of Borobudur. The only marked discrepancy between monument and text is that there are no statues of Bodhisattvas on the circular terraces. On the other hand, the passage “*all Buddhas turning the Wheel of the Law*” (verse 7) could well refer to the Buddhas inside the latticed *stūpas*. The passage “*the Tathāgatas preaching the Dharma*” (verse 1 and 7a) could be a reference to the Buddhas in *vitarka-mudrā* in the uppermost rows of niches above the fourth gallery.

From these verses emerges a system of six or seven Tathāgatas. Three of them (Vairocana, Amitābha and Aksobhya) are also part of the Five Jinas of the standard esoteric system. Of the three, or four other names, that of the Tathāgata Sūryagarbha occurs elsewhere in the *Gandavyūha*, not as the name of a Buddha, but as that of the 35th Bodhisattva in the assembly at Jetavana, described in the prologue. The Bodhisattva Jñānadhvaja (as reconstructed by Gómez) appears as Jñānaketu, the 85th Bodhisattva in the same assembly at Jetavana. The name of another Bodhisattva, Gandhahastī, does not seem to be mentioned elsewhere in the *Gandavyūha*. Elsewhere in the text, when Mukṭaka (VI) describes his vision of Buddhas, five Tathāgatas appear. Once again Vairocana, Amitābha, and Aksobhya are present, but this time they are accompanied by the Tathāgatas Simha and Candrabuddhi.

The three Chinese translations seem to suggest that in the *Gandavyūha* the Buddhas Ratnasambhava and Amoghasiddhi of the system of the Five Jinas have been eclipsed by Buddhas bearing other names. If the Borobudur pantheon indeed reflects the system of Jinas of the *Gandavyūha*, the Buddha whom the conventional wisdom identifies as Ratnasambhava

(associated with the South, his right hand in *varada-mudrā*), and Amoghasiddhi (associated with the North, his right hand displaying the *abhaya-mudrā*), would have to be renamed.

The verses from the *Gandavyūha* quoted above provide a clear textual precedent for a system of six or seven Tathāgatas, comparable to the system of Borobudur. This still leaves unresolved the question of their *mudrās*. Such phrases as “turning the Wheel of the Law” and “preaching the Dharma” obviously point to the *dharmacakra-mudrā* and the *vitarka-mudrā* respectively, while “achieving Supreme Enlightenment” of verse 2 could be a reference to the *bhūmisparśa-mudrā*. These Tathāgatas have been installed in the highest rows of niches and in the latticed *stūpas* of the monument. There is, however, no indication of the orientation or the *mudrās* of the other Tathāgatas. Perhaps that may be too much to expect of the *Gandavyūha*, a text in which such specific iconographic indications are extremely rare. Moreover, in the exceptional case that such details are mentioned in the text, as, for example, the indication that certain Buddhas are seated in the *paryanka* posture (*paryankāsana*), these have been consistently ignored by the sculptors (see the reliefs II-4 and II-74). Lacking clear iconographic guidance for the *mudrās* in their text, the architects and sculptors seem to have opted for a modification of the existing system of the Five Jinas. For the Buddhas in the niches of the first three levels they fell back on the *mudrās* of the traditional system of the Five Jinas. However, in accordance with the text passage quoted above, they inserted into the system a Buddha in *vitarka-mudrā* and installed his statues in the uppermost row of niches on all four sides of the monument

This leaves unresolved only the age-old, controversial problem of the unfinished Buddha in *bhūmisparśa-mudrā*, allegedly found in the central *stūpa*. The most recent study by Soekmono cites a Javanese account of a visitor to Borobudur, probably dating from the early 19th century. This visitor actually saw the statue installed in the ruined central *stūpa* (Soekmono 2001). This seems at least to eliminate the possibility of later manipulation of the statue, as has sometimes been alleged. The stanza “There he saw how Vairocana achieved Supreme Enlightenment” (verse 2) could refer to this unfinished Buddha. However, the statues in *dharmacakra-mudrā* are, as we have previously seen, more likely to represent Vairocana. It is even possible that all statues on the level of the terraces, including the unfinished Buddha, represent different emanations of Vairocana. However, while the version, quoted above, definitely leaves open the possibility of a seventh Buddha statue, there is not enough evidence to resolve once and for all the question whether the famous unfinished statue was part of the original Borobudur pantheon or not.

From the numerous parallels between the text of the *Gandavyūha*, the *Bhadracarī* and some of the different aspects of Borobudur that we have discussed here it seems possible to draw a number of conclusions. No other Buddhist scripture, adduced by scholars in support of their interpretation of the monument, describes or offers an explanation for so many of the most prominent and typical characteristics of Borobudur as the *Gandavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī*. The elaborate illustration of these texts on the higher, most sacred levels of the monument would seem sufficient justification for an interpretation of Borobudur as the creation of a Buddhist community which considered the *Gandavyūha*, or perhaps the complete *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, as the source of their fundamental, most deeply held beliefs. If we accept the view that Borobudur is the creation of a branch of Mahāyāna Buddhism which is free from esoteric characteristics, we can also assign the monument its proper place in the chronology of the development of Javanese Buddhism. In all probability the monument was designed and built in the ninth century C.E., prior to the spread of Esoteric Buddhism in Central Java during the first half of the following century.

Nothing is known about the circumstances that led to the founding of Borobudur. No charter or other epigraphic document has been found *in situ* which preserved for posterity the date of the founding or the identity of the builders of the monument. However, it is almost inconceivable that a monument of such unprecedented scope could have been built without patronage of the royal court. In this respect the founding of Borobudur may have something in common with that of the great monuments of the Far Eastern Avatamsaka sects which flourished under royal or imperial patronage in China, Korea, and Japan. During the eighth and ninth century C.E. the Far Eastern Avatamsaka sects always maintained close ties with their rulers and their government. Earlier we have mentioned Empress Wu Zedean's personal involvement with the Chinese translation of the *Avatamsaka sūtra*. The Japanese Emperor Shōmu (701-756 C.E.) was a devout Buddhist who studied Buddhahadra's translation of the *Gandavyūha*. He was inspired by the tale of a just and benevolent king, whose story is told in the *Gandavyūha*. Following the example set by this king the Emperor proclaimed a general amnesty for criminals (Morimoto 2009). After the completion of the Great Buddha Hall (Daibutsuden) of the Tōdaiji in Nara in 752 C.E. he retired to spend the rest of his life as a monk. Avatamsaka Buddhism thus became a source of inspiration for the building of two of the greatest Buddhist monuments, the Daibutsuden in Nara and Borobudur in Central Java.

APPENDIX: NOTE ON THE RELIEFS OF THE SECOND BALUSTRADE

While we have followed in Sudhana's footsteps on his long pilgrimage to his many *kalyānamitras*, depicted in all its fantastic, visionary detail on the main wall of the second gallery of Borobudur, our eyes have been diverted from the panels on the opposite balustrade. In a study devoted to the *Gandavyūha* reliefs of the main wall of this gallery, there are two questions regarding the reliefs of the second balustrade that need to be addressed here. The first is which text or texts have been illustrated in these panels. The few stories that can be identified with certainty are all *jātakas*. It would seem reasonable to assume, therefore, that yet another collection of birth stories has been illustrated there. The juxtaposition on the second gallery of illustrations of birth stories on the balustrade with scenes from the *Gandavyūha* on the main wall raises the question whether there is any thematic connection between those juxtaposed texts and, consequently, between these two series of reliefs. The second question, inextricably connected with the first, is where this particular series of balustrade reliefs fits into the larger overall sculptural program of Borobudur and into the sequence in which the successive series of reliefs were meant to be viewed by the faithful.

Krom (1920) and Sivaramamurti (1961) have identified some of the stories illustrated on the second balustrade as well-known *jātakas*. Krom had every reason to believe, therefore, that the other, as yet unidentified stories are tales of the same genre. The only scholar who has proposed a different explanation for the entire series is Hikata Ryūshō. In a separate paragraph of his study of 1980, entitled *Concerning the 100 Panels of IIB as a Supplement to the Whole* (Hikata 1980, 125-126), he maintains that the planners of Borobudur, may have looked back at their work on the main wall of the second gallery and discovered that some of the meetings of Sudhana with his *kalyānamitras* (e.g. the Brahman Jayosmāyatana) had been skipped. Perhaps, Hikata argues, the sculptors also felt that even episodes that had been illustrated once or twice on the main wall of the second gallery were still insufficiently represented. They therefore created a supplement of additional *Gandavyūha* illustrations on the second balustrade. It remains unclear why Hikata, the author of an authoritative study and detailed index of Buddhist birth stories, rejected or ignored the much more likely possibility that the reliefs of the second gallery are all illustrations of *jātakas* (Hikata 1980, 125-126).

Elaborating his ideas in the accompanying table (no.8) Hikata identified ten reliefs of the second balustrade as representations of Sudhana's visits to certain *kalyānamitras*. Three of these identifications (IIB-25 as Jayosmāyatana X, IIB-26 as Maitrayānī XI, and IIB-43-44 as Acalā XX) he seems to have considered tentative, for their names are followed by a question mark. The others he apparently considered definite. These identifications are: IIB-13 (Meghaśrī II), IIB-27 (Indriyeśvara XIII), IIB-29 (Samantanetra XVII), IIB-41 (Mahāprabha XIX), IIB-86 (Vāsanti XXXII), and IIB-87 (Sarvajagadraksāpranidhānavīryaprabhā XXXIX). Hikata carefully matched the gender and status of the alleged *kalyānamitras*, as they are shown on the reliefs, with those described in what he considered to be the corresponding passages in the text. It should be noted, however, that not a single one of these reliefs provides any additional visual clue that could support the identity attributed by Hikata to these Good Friends. Of course, this fact alone does not invalidate his identifications. We have previously seen

similar problems of identification on the main wall of the second gallery. There, however, the visual clues in some reliefs confirm the correctness of the other, more tentative identifications of adjacent panels. On the balustrade of the second gallery no similar clues support Hikata's identifications. .

By dismissing or ignoring entirely the identifications by other scholars of some reliefs which he classifies as "unidentified", Hikata also overlooked the possibility that the entire series of reliefs of the balustrade does not even illustrate the *Gandavyūha* at all. This is suggested first of all by the presence on the second balustrade of several reliefs that obviously represent *jātaka* stories in which the Bodhisattva (the future Buddha) is reborn as an animal. Although many of Sudhana's teachers recount stories from their precedent births, not one of these concerns their rebirth as an animal. The relief that Hikata identifies as Sudhana's visit to one of the Night Goddesses (IIB-87) turns out to be part of a series of eight consecutive reliefs, beginning with IIB-81, which Sivaramamurti (1961, 16) had already convincingly identified as illustrations of the *Mahāsupina Jātaka* (Cowell, no. 77). It actually illustrates a version of this story that closely resembles that of the Pāli Canon. Among several other *jātakas* that can be identified with certainty are the *Mayūra Jātaka*, the *Story of the Peacock* (IIB-62-66), the *Mrga Jātaka*, the *Story of the Deer*, (IIB-57-58) and the *Śaśa Jātaka*, the *Story of the Hare* (IIB-59-61).

Instead of adopting Hikata's interpretation of the reliefs of the second balustrade as a supplement to the *Gandavyūha* reliefs, it would seem preferable to consider them a sequel to the series of *jātaka* stories of the first gallery of the monument, as Krom proposed. However, Krom's proposal raises several new questions. A puzzling problem is the viewing sequence of the different series of reliefs. Van Erp, the first restorer of Borobudur, was also the first to point out that the five hundred *jātaka* reliefs of the first balustrade cannot have been part of the original iconographic program of Borobudur. He rightly considered them an afterthought, a by-product of the considerable gain in wall space, created by the enlargement of the first balustrade. This enlargement in turn was necessitated by the construction of the processional path that covered the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs of the base. It is possible that these two new series of superimposed *jātaka* reliefs were created to compensate for the inevitable loss of the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs. The first balustrade was transformed from a low, plain railing of the type seen at Candi Mendut into a much higher balustrade, complete with reliefs and niches containing Buddha statues. Exactly five hundred *jātaka* reliefs were carved in two registers on the inside of this balustrade. This arrangement echoed that of the reliefs on the opposite main wall, where edifying stories of the *jātaka* and *avadāna* type are shown in the lower, and the Life of the Buddha according to the *Lalitavistara* in the upper register. Unlike those of the main wall, the stones of the added reliefs of the balustrade were not deeply embedded and fully integrated in the expanded structure of the balustrade. In the course of time many of the stones, especially those in the upper rows, have fallen off and many of those disappeared. The poor state of preservation of the reliefs of the first balustrade has frustrated efforts to identify many of them.

Jātakas and *avadānas* describe events which occurred during one of the future Buddha's or another saints' previous lives. One of their principal aims is to explain the long and arduous road, leading towards Supreme Enlightenment and ultimately to total extinction. This final destination is reached only after countless successive rebirths, all spent in the performance of deeds of piety, charity, heroism, self sacrifice, and wisdom. It stands to reason to suppose, therefore, that pilgrims visiting Borobudur in ancient times would have been expected to

first inspect the reliefs illustrating stories from precedent births of the Bodhisattva before they proceeded to view the panels illustrating his final rebirth as a prince and his subsequent achievement of Supreme Enlightenment, followed by the First Sermon in the Deer Park of Benares. How the 500 reliefs of the first balustrade, which represented a change in the original building plans, fitted into this viewing sequence remains unclear. Also, whether this expanded balustrade was to be viewed top register first or last remains will remain unclear for at least as long as the text or texts upon which many of these panels are based have not been identified.

The question of the exact viewing sequence of the series of reliefs becomes even more problematic when we turn to the second gallery. If we assume that the pilgrims, after viewing the reliefs illustrating the life of the Buddha according to the *Lalitavistara* and after having witnessed the Buddha's achievement of Supreme Enlightenment and his First Sermon on the first main wall, proceeded forthwith to the second gallery, what would have been their next step? Did they immediately plunge into the miracles of the prologue to the *Gandavyūha*, illustrated on the main wall? Given the chronological and spiritual continuity of the themes this possibility would appear the most likely. Or did they first turn to the *jātakas* of the second balustrade? Let us assume that the hypothetical pilgrims first followed in the footsteps of that exemplary other pilgrim, Sudhana. When they reached the last panels of the second main wall, they were afforded a tantalizing first glimpse of the miraculous palace of Maitreya, the *kūtāgāra*, on the reliefs II-126 to II-128. How could they then have returned to the theme of the Bodhisattva's previous rebirths as a hare, a deer, or a peacock, illustrated on the second balustrade? The alternative is viewing the *jātakas* of the second balustrade, after already having witnessed the Buddha's attainment of Supreme Enlightenment on the first main wall, and only then proceeding to the panels illustrating the *Gandavyūha*. This hypothetical sequence would seem to be almost equally anticlimactic.

The only alternative scenario that avoids these problems is the one proposed by Jan J. Boeles (1985). It calls for the viewing of the panels of the Life of the Buddha first, followed by four successive circumambulations to view all *jātakas* and *avadānas*, three series on the first and one on the second gallery, before finally proceeding to an inspection of the *Gandavyūha* reliefs. Although this sequence seems to solve some of the practical questions I have raised here, it has other problems of its own. Its principal drawback is that it does not seem consistent with the edifying and preparatory function of the *jātakas* and *avadānas*. The story line would seem to develop contrary to the intent and function of this type of literature.

We have previously seen that the development of the story of the *Gandavyūha*, the sequence of its themes, and even the composition of many individual reliefs of the second main wall was created with the clockwise movement of the pilgrim's *pradaksinā* in mind. One could imagine, however, that the actual viewing of the reliefs may have been somewhat less rigidly structured than the systematic layout of the reliefs seems to suggest. It is possible, that some sort of "cross reference" occurred in which the viewing of the reliefs of the main wall was from time to time interrupted in order to view related, relevant stories on the opposite balustrade. Although the identification of several *jātaka* stories on the second balustrade directly contradicts Hikata's conclusions regarding the textual content of the reliefs, his suggestion that there may be some sort of connection between the reliefs of the main wall and the balustrade of the second gallery deserves closer consideration.

In spite of their obvious differences in content, the consistent philosophical agreement between the two juxtaposed series of reliefs on the main wall and balustrade of the second gal-

lery can be illustrated here with an example, based upon an article by Ludwig Alsdorf (1961). This essay deals with the evolution of the *Śaśa Jātaka*, the Story of the Hare. It is of particular interest to us because this same story has been illustrated three times on Borobudur, each time in a different version. It is one of the most famous *jātaka* stories, in which the Bodhisattva, reborn as a hare, performs the ultimate act of *dāna-pāramitā*, the Perfection of Generosity, by self-immolation in order to provide nourishment to a famished holy man.

The hare makes his first appearance on Borobudur in the reliefs of the first balustrade illustrating the *Jātakamālā* (IBa 23-25). There we see him still accompanied by his three friends, the otter, the jackal, and the monkey. After describing the timely intervention of Śakra, this version concludes: "And the others, the otter, the jackal, and the ape disappeared thereafter from the earth and arrived in the world of Devas, thanks to their possessing such a holy friend." Alsdorf suggests that the concluding passage quoted here may have suggested to the author of a later collection of birth stories, the *Avadānaśataka*, the idea to let the other three animals disappear from the story altogether. This new author then reshaped the entire *jātaka*, shifting the focus from the hare's self-immolation to his role of holy friend, i.e. a *kalyānamitra*. In the *Avadānaśataka* the self-sacrifice produces a timely downpour of rain, which saves the hare and enables the hermit to continue his frugal life in the forest, while the hare makes a solemn vow to become a Buddha in a future rebirth. This version of the story has been illustrated on relief IBb-79. In a third version of the story, illustrated on the second balustrade (II B-59-61), the hare jumps into the fire, which instantly changes into a lotus pond. This version of the story can be found in the *Avadānsārasamuccaya*, a text studied by Ratna Handurukande (1972).

The reliefs of Borobudur can only reveal the most obvious, tangible visual differences in the variations of this story, such as the presence or absence of the three friends, the miraculous downpour of rain and the transformation of the blazing fire into a lotus pond. The shift in moral emphasis, noted by Alsdorf, could, of course, not be captured in stone. From the hare's heroic acts of physical self-sacrifice in the earlier versions, the focus now shifts to his role of *kalyānamitra* of the hermit. Thanks to his association with the hare, the hermit masters the Five Forms of Supernatural Knowledge. The simple physical act of self-immolation may perhaps at first sight seem hardly compatible with the lofty spiritual ideals of the *vimokṣas*, described by Sudhana's *kalyānamitras*, who are portrayed on the opposite main wall. However, the shift in moral emphasis in the story of the hare brings it in perfect harmony with the ideals expressed in the *Gandavyūha*. It should be noted that the only examples of physical self-sacrifice that are given in the *Gandavyūha* are those of Maitreya and Samantabhadra, who give away parts of their body. The self sacrifice of Maitreya has been extensively illustrated on the reliefs IIIB-71 to IIIB-83, but the sculptors have skipped entirely the passage describing the self sacrifice of Samantabhadra.

Perhaps we should not only try to establish why they considered it appropriate to juxtapose on opposite walls of the second gallery scenes of Sudhana's pilgrimage and stories from the Buddha's precedent births. We should also investigate why they chose not to follow the same course on the higher galleries. The monks who were responsible for the decisions regarding the sequence of the different series of reliefs and for their assignment to different levels of the monument, seem to have taken into consideration at least two crucial aspects of the stages of Sudhana's spiritual progress on the path towards Supreme Enlightenment

One fact that a reading of the *Gandavyūha* reveals about Sudhana's gradual spiritual advance is that in the course of his pilgrimage Sudhana achieves a state of advanced con-

sciousness in which he is capable of total recall, in a moment's thought, of all of his own previous rebirths. We actually even know which term the sculptors of Borobudur used for this state of mind. An inscription accompanying one of the *Karmavibhanga* reliefs of the hidden base calls it *pūrvābhijñā* (relief O-133b, see Fontein 1989, 61). One would expect that once Sudhana reaches this particular state of advanced consciousness, the *jātakas* lose their edifying, instructive function, for at that point the pilgrim has obviously already transcended the moral message of these stories.

Another stage on his way towards Enlightenment is reached when Sudhana's spiritual progress gains such momentum that it becomes irreversible and a relapse into a lower state of rebirth is no longer possible. Although the exact moment when Sudhana reaches this irreversibility of the progress towards Enlightenment (Skt.: *avaivartya*) cannot be pinpointed, it would likewise seem to eliminate the need for further instruction by the pilgrim's contemplation of illustrations of *jātakas*. That the reliefs illustrating *jātakas* cease at the very moment when, on the opposite wall, Sudhana first sees Maitreya's *kūtāgāra*, is probably not a coincidence. It is yet another example of the careful programmatic planning by the architects and their ecclesiastical advisors or supervisors. For it is Maitreya who predicts, right after their first encounter, that "Sudhana will soon become one of us."

Now that we have demonstrated the likelihood that a collection of *jātakas* has been illustrated on the second balustrade, it would be of interest to establish whether any collection exists among the numerous examples of this genre of stories in which the four or five *jātakas* that have been identified here appear in the same order. As this topic falls outside the scope of the present study, I will limit my remarks to a few preliminary observations.

At first it seemed like a distinct possibility that a text closely resembling the *Avadānasārasamuccaya*, first analyzed by Ratna Handarukande (1972), could have guided the sculptors of Borobudur. This collection contains a version of the *Story of the Hare* which has exactly the same happy ending as the *Śāśa-jātaka* that is illustrated on the second balustrade (IIB-59-61). The first part of the *Mayūra Jātaka*, likewise illustrated on the second balustrade (IIB-62-66), and culminating in the peacock's ceremonial reception at court, where he appropriately delivers a discourse on non-violence, also agrees with the version of this same collection. The same can be said of the reliefs illustrating the *Mrga Jātaka* (IIB-57-58), for they follow one of the two versions of this story contained in the same collection. Only the *Mahāsupina Jātaka*, or any other story resembling it, is not represented in the *Avadānasārasamuccaya* at all. This proves that the contents of this collection of *jātakas* do not agree entirely with all the themes illustrated on the reliefs.

There is, however, one other possible resemblance between the collection of *jātakas* illustrated on the second balustrade and the text of the *Avadānasārasamuccaya*. Many of the existing collections of *jātakas* are replete with duplications, repetitions and redundancies of stories. Sometimes two or more entirely different versions of the same story appear in one and the same collection. Therefore, the fact that the *Story of the Hare* is shown three times, each time in a different version, on the first and second balustrade of Borobudur, does not necessarily indicate that the sculptors must have illustrated at least three different *jātaka* collections.

In his search for an answer to the question as to exactly how many collections of these birth stories have been illustrated on Borobudur, Krom noticed that two reliefs on the first balustrade (IBa-214 and IBa-371) show wish-fulfilling trees (*kalpavrksa*), flanked by a pair of *kinnaras*. These two panels closely resemble several reliefs of the hidden base, where they have

sometimes even been inscribed with the word “svargga”, i.e. “Heaven”. There, they illustrate the words “you will soon be reborn in Heaven” in the text. The function of these two similar reliefs on the first balustrade remains unclear. Krom suggested that they may have no connection at all with the flow of the narrative. Instead, he believed that these two reliefs may have performed a function as signposts or markers, indicating the end of the illustrations of one and the beginning of those of another collection of *jātakas*. Krom himself was the first to point out what would appear to be the weakest link in his own hypothesis. There is no such marker in the one place where we would have definitely expected to find one. That place is the panel immediately following the last relief illustrating the final story of the *Garland of Birth Stories*, the *Jātakamālā*, the story of the lion and the woodpecker (IBa-135). There is no marker of this type to separate it from the next story, which has obviously been taken from another collection of *jātakas*.

For the second of these hypothetical signposts or markers in the shape of a heavenly tree (IBa-371) a different explanation is a possibility. That relief is the penultimate panel in the upper register of the first balustrade. It is followed only by a single relief, which has been recognized as an illustration of the *Rsipañcaka Jātaka*, the story of the Five Sages, the Brahman, the crow, the pigeon, the snake, and the deer, all of whom have their own particular view as to what constitutes the greatest misery in the world. It is, as Krom rightly pointed out, somewhat surprising to find such a marker—if that is what it is—just one relief before we reach the end of the balustrade. It makes no sense, unless, of course, it illustrates the first story of a new collection of birth stories which continued in the lower register of the same balustrade. Although it seems likely that the expansion of the first balustrade postdates the carving of the reliefs of the first main wall, it is not known at which point in time this expansion was carried out.

It is of interest to note that one collection of *jātakas* that opens with the *Rsipañcaka Jātaka* happens to be the *Avadānasārasamuccaya*, the text that already provided the key to the identification of several stories on the second balustrade. The sculptors may have deliberately split this story in two parts in order to provide a smooth transition from one register of the balustrade to the next, a treatment resembling that of Sudhana’s arrival at Maitreya’s palace (II-126—II-128). Unfortunately, the first seven reliefs of the second balustrade are missing, and there is no way, therefore, to establish whether the story of the Five Sages could have had a similar sequel on the second balustrade. The various scenarios described here remain purely hypothetical. Yet there is one important indication that has not been discussed before. The total number of reliefs illustrating *Jātakas* and *Avadānas* in the lower register of the main wall of the first and the balustrade of the second gallery together is exactly 220. The basic units of 110 and 220 in the allotment of space devoted to the Great Bodhisattvas on the second, third, and fourth galleries had apparently already been introduced before the first balustrade was expanded. The possibility of a continuing sequence of illustrations from the first to the second balustrade is therefore highly unlikely.

For now the exact sequence in which the successive collections of *jātakas* of Borobudur should be viewed cannot be established with certainty. It will probably remain unclear at least until the literary sources of the *jātaka* reliefs have all been identified. That task may turn out to be more complicated than expected. If we would be able to establish that the sculptors were guided by one or more *jātaka* collections that have actually been transmitted to the present day, this would greatly aid the identification of the different individual stories. However, it is

also possible that the monks who planned the program of the reliefs made up their own anthology from the collections that were available to them in the monastic library of Borobudur.

A further investigation of the *jātakas* of the second balustrade falls outside the scope of the present study. It should perhaps be postponed until a comprehensive reconsideration of all birth stories can be undertaken. Whatever this viewing sequence may eventually turn out to be, and whatever the procedures were for viewing these reliefs, one thing seems likely. The location of the reliefs illustrating birth stories suggests that the sculptors carefully crafted the transition from the *jātakas* to the story of Sudhana's pilgrimage. By adopting this course they ensured a smooth and harmonious transition from one level of the monument to the following and, therefore, from one level of consciousness and detachment to the next.

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The *Gandavyūha*, a sacred text of Mahāyāna Buddhism, is an allegorical tale of the pilgrimage of a youth named Sudhana, who visits fifty-three spiritual mentors to receive their instruction in the Conduct of the Bodhisattva. His miraculous journey on the path towards Enlightenment inspired the sculptors of Borobudur (9th century C.E.) to illustrate the tale in 460 bas-reliefs on the higher galleries of this great Javanese monument. During the 1920s N.J. Krom and F.D.K. Bosch identified many of the panels, but most of their findings, written in Dutch, remained unnoticed. *Entering the Dharmadhātu* compares the complete set of panels with three early Chinese translations of Central Asian and Indian Sanskrit manuscripts of the *Gandavyūha*. This first identification of the entire series in English concludes with a discussion of the new perspectives on the meaning, symbolism, and architecture of Borobudur that a reading of the *Gandavyūha* suggests.

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