PREFACE

This volume represents part of the work done by me as a Government Research Scholar in Iconography for four years from 1920 to 1924. It is an attempt to write a comprehensive work on the Buddhist Iconography of India, and is mainly based on a Sanskrit text prepared from seven recensions of the Sādhanamālā alias Sādhanasamuccaya in the libraries of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Nepal, and Cambridge University. This text so collated I hope to publish as soon as the opportunity presents itself. The text has been illustrated by pictures representing images in several museums in India and elsewhere and in the collections of numerous Nepalese monasteries. Where images could not be obtained or photographing was impossible or unsatisfactory the text has been illustrated with the help of drawings prepared by Nepalese Citrakāras of Buddhist origin from the ancient albums of their forefathers. Where no drawing could be obtained only the original text has been quoted with a translation.

The publication of this work necessitated, on my part, a prolonged visit to Nepal whither my father, Mahāmālapādhyāya Haraprásād Śāstrī, was proceeding on an invitation from His Highness the Mahārājā of Nepal. It also necessitated a visit to the museums of Calcutta, Dacca, Patna, Sarnath, Lucknow, Mathura, and Ajmer, to the Cave-temples at Ellora and Ajanta, to the excavations at Nalanda, and to Vikrampur, the seat of Bengal Buddhism.

In several ways I have been very fortunate in carrying out my researches. First, I have had the proud privilege of working under Professor A. Fouche, the accredited authority on Indian Buddhist images, during the period he was in charge of the Archaeological Section, Indian Museum. Secondly, through the kindness of the Mahārājā of Nepal I was able to secure a number of MSS. from the Durbar Library for collation and study. Thirdly, through the kindness of Mr. P. J. Hartog, M.A., C.I.E., Vice-Chancellor of the Dacca University, I secured the loan of one of the three Cambridge MSS. of the Sādhanamālā which I had absolutely no chance of getting otherwise. Fourthly during the first two years the most valuable library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal was thrown open for my use. Fifthly, the Dacca University gave me all facilities whenever applied for. Sixthly, the Government granted
me, as a special favour, the Research Scholarship for a fourth year, a privilege not ordinarily granted under the rules.

Professor Foucher impressed upon me the fact that of the Buddhist Iconography, the most important and illuminating theme was in Indian section; and that this was the fountain-head from which Tibet, China, and other countries drew their inspiration, which each amplified according to its own genius. The root of Buddhist Iconography is Indian, and Professor Foucher asked me to concentrate my attention on Indian images only. This advice has been of very great value to me; it has enabled me to grasp some of the principles on which the whole fabric of Buddhist Iconography and methods of worship in later Buddhism is based. This Buddhist Iconography, for instance, is not idolatry; the images do not represent objects of worship but represent the highest Buddhist ideal of Śūnyā or Void, commingled with Vijñāna and Mahāsukha.

My grateful acknowledgments are due to His Highness Sir Chandra Shamsher Jung Bahadur Rana, Mahārāja of Nepal, for rendering me ungrudging help in all difficulties in a foreign land and for placing at my disposal the services of a Gubhāju and a Citrakāra, during our stay in Nepal.

I am deeply grateful to Mr. W. W. Hornell, M.A., C.I.E., M.I.C., until recently Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, for granting me the Research Scholarship I have been enjoying for four years; and I am especially indebted to Mr. W. B. Finnigan, Personal Assistant to the Director of Public Instruction, for the interest he has taken in my affairs and for his sustaining encouragement. Without his kind help the work of printing would have been stopped long ago.

I have also to record my heartfelt thanks to Mr. P. J. Hartog, C.I.E., Vice-Chancellor, Dacca University, for kindly procuring for collation one of the three Cambridge MSS. of the Sādhanaamūlā and for his unceasing efforts to obtain for me Rátopgraph copies of the other two MSS in palm-leaf. My thanks are also due to Prof. G. H. Langley, M.A., I.E.S., Dr. S. W. Kemp, D. Sc., and Mr. K. N. Dikshit, M.A. for taking a keen interest in my work and for their sound advice.

In compiling the present work I have to acknowledge help from several other sources: I am indebted to Rai Bahadur P. N. Mookerjee, I.S.O., Principal N. N. Raye, M.A., Prof. M. G. Bhattacharyya, M.A., and Mr. B. B. Mittra, M.A., for revising portions of the manuscript and helping me in correcting the proofs; to my friend Mr. N. K. Bhattasali, M.A., Curator, Dacca Museum, for many acts of kindness and valuable suggestions; and to Messrs. S. C. Mondol and A. B. Maitra for preparing a number of negatives for my use.
Lastly, it is not merely as a filial duty that I acknowledge the debt I owe to my father Mahāmahopādhyāya Haraprasād Shāstri, M.A., C.I.E. for whose sustaining help in all matters of difficulty, domestic, educational and financial, I shall ever remain grateful, and to whom this book is dedicated as a mark of profound devotion and respect.

For various reasons this book had to be hurried through the press. I am aware that, in consequence, it is not free from errors. I much regret these and hope that the book may be so fortunate as to pass through the press again, since this will give me an opportunity of removing them.

Baroda,
29th January, 1921.

BENOYTOSH BHATTACHARYYA
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LIST OF ERRATA

P. 1, l. 7 from bottom; for respectfully read respectfully

P. 2, ll. 28 and 31; for Bodhyāgri read Bodhyāngī
P. 3, footnote †; for manuscripts read manuscript

P. 4, ll. 18 and 20; for Vairoceṇa read Vairoceṇa

P. 7, l. 23; delete while

P. 7, l. 26; for Abhaya read Varada

P. 8, ll. 11-12; for and the like read and others

P. 9, l. 2; for its read his

P. 13, footnote *; for Pantheon read Buddhism

P. 14, footnote *; for Pantheon read Buddhism

P. 20, l. 19; for Siddhaikavriya read Siddhaikavira

P. 87, l. 14; for dvāravvahāra read dvāravvahāra

P. 54, l. 9 from bottom; for distinguishes read distinguishes

P. 91, l. 23; for this read his

P. 114, l. 8; for right read left

P. 114, l. 9; for left read right

P. 153; footnote *; for Supra read supra

P. 157, l. 7 from bottom; for XII, c read XII, c

Plate XIII, c; for Vajrārāga read Vajrārāga

Plate XXXI, c, d; for Usūṣavijaya read Usūṣavijaya
TRANSLITERATION

So many systems of transliteration are in existence that it is almost impossible to say which one is the standard. In the present work I have generally followed Professor Foucher, and the following examples of transcription in Roman are noteworthy in it:—

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INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. A Brief Historical Survey of Buddhism.

Buddha was born during a period of intellectual ferment. The bold speculations of the old seers in the Aranyakas and the Upaniṣads were confined within the circle of the Brahmanical society. But soon after these speculations were ventilated, there appeared to have grown a large and extensive Āryāvarta which geographically included nearly the whole of Northern India, and no more comprised exclusively of the Brahmins and their followers, but included within its fold, some of the nomadic tribes just settling down to an ordered and civilized state of existence.

These tribes were, as they called themselves, the Kṣattriyas. They were fond of war, and after reducing the original inhabitants into the condition of the serfs, they remained there in right royal style, living in splendid cities and indulging in all sorts of moral, intellectual and artistic pursuits. Their number was very large towards the East and North-East of the old Arvan land, and the Śākyas, Vṛjīs, Videhas and Mallas, all belonged to this sort of unincorporated Kṣattriyas. The Kuru, the Pāṇcālas, the Saurāṣṭras and the Ikṣvākus were more or less influenced by the culture of the Brahmans. As a result of the great upheaval in the domain of intellect and temperament mentioned above, some of the choicest spirits sprung from among the Kṣattriyas—men who profoundly influenced the subsequent Indian thought. Seven names stand forth as the most prominent in the matter of philosophy and religion. These are—Buddha, Mahāvīra, Gosaḷa Maṅkhaḷiputra, Saṅjaya Bellaṭṭhiputra, Kakuda Kātyāyana, Pūrua Kāśyapa and Ajitakeśaṃkumbala. We are, of course, here concerned only with Buddha, and the system of philosophy of which he is the founder.

The ethical system of Buddha was based mainly on the Śāṅkhya, but profoundly modified by his own speculations. The boldness of the speculation, the grandeur of the moral idea set forth, and the strictness of discipline gave his system an attractive and engaging character. People of all shades of thought came to him and he incorporated them within his own fold and kept them in harmony as long as he lived.

But with the death of Buddha things changed and dissensions crept in, and though the Eklers for a time succeeded in checking all schismatic efforts of the Youngers, it was at Vaśāli that they parted company, never to be...
united again, on points which to the modern historian appear exceedingly minor and trifling. The Youngers, however, thought, as we learn it from the *Mahāvastu Avadāna*, that the difference was fundamental and far-reaching.

Thus the whole camp was divided into two parties. Those who stuck to Ethics and moral discipline were called the Therāvādins, and those who trifled with Ethics and discipline but stuck to metaphysical and altruistic doctrines were called the Mahāsāṅghikas. One point of difference is very marked—the Youngers were all Lokottaravādins and believed in the superhuman character of Buddha. But schisms bring forth further schisms, and in the course of a century, the two parties split up into eighteen principal sects, beside a number of minor ones.

One of the Therāvādin sects, the Vaibhajyavādin or the Analytical sect was favoured by Aśoka, and rose to prominence. They sent missionaries to all parts of India and outside and succeeded in converting a multitude of people. But with the dismemberment of the Maurya Empire, the Buddhists fell on evil days. The relentless persecution of three successive Brahmin dynasties proved too much for the new faith. Young and vigorous, bold and speculative as the Mahāsāṅghikas were, they sought new fields for their activities beyond the dwindling empire of the Brahmins. They were most active amongst the new settlers in India, the Śakas, the Yavanas, the Pahlavas, and the Kuśānas. The Vibhajyavādins, losing their prestige, under the persecuting zeal of Pusyamitra and his successors, seem to have fled to South and made their last Ceylon their home, where their doctrines can even now be studied in all their pristine purity.

The Mahāsāṅghikas made a headway at the time of Kaniṣka. In the Council held in his time, the Therāvādins were very feebly represented and the Vibhajyavādins were not existent. The Mahāsāṅghikas made a commentary on the sayings of Buddha called "Bibhasā." The whole literature is now lost in the original but fragments exist in Chinese translations. At the Council of Kaniṣka there was a small but pushing sect called the Mahāyāna, but at that Assembly they did not count. But two generations later they made a great headway under Nāgārjuna and his powerful disciple, Āryadeva. Both of them were absolute Sūnyavādins. Buddha himself did not go beyond Arhatship. He held out to his followers as a reward for their discipline Arhatship, or an escape from the miseries of birth, old age and death in other words, from the evils of transmigration. All speculations beyond Arhatship Buddha discouraged as of no use. But bolder spirits after him could not resist the temptation of speculating, and their speculations ended in the time of Nāgārjuna in Sūnyavāda. But
the hancequerings of the Mahāyānists and so Maitreyanātha, one or two generations after Nāgārjuna, added Viṃśa to it, and founded what developed later on as the Yogācāra System.

The Aṣṭasāhasrika Prajñāpāramitā which Nāgārjuna is said to have rescued from the nether regions became the standard work of the Śūnyavādins, and the same work as modified by the ideas of Maitreyanātha became the Pañcavinśati-sāhasrika Prajñāpāramitā. This again became the standard work of the Vijnānavādins. The Aṣṭasāhasrika is divided into thirty-two chapters, while the Pañcavinśati-Sāhasrika is divided into eight only, following the chapters of Maitreyanātha's work.

The controversy between the Śūnyavādins and the Vijnānavādins raged for several centuries and many ranged themselves on both sides. But in the 8th century people were not satisfied with Vijnānavāda. They imported into it another element called the Mahāsukhavāda, so that after ordinary Nirvāṇa there were three elements, namely, Śūnya, Vijnāna and Mahāsukha. It is from Mahāsukha that Vajrayāna originated, and Vajrayāna is the system rich in iconographical ideas.

To understand the rise of Vajrayāna we shall have to go back to the teachings of Buddha. He had two Yānas, the Śrāvakayāna and the Pratyekayāna. The Śrāvakas were to hear from a Buddha, but they had to wait till the advent of another Buddha, for their emancipation. In the meanwhile the Śrāvakas could teach, but they could neither attain, nor help others in attaining Nirvāṇa. The Pratyekas were eminent men; they could attain Nirvāṇa by their own efforts without the help of a Budhdha; but they could not impart Nirvāṇa to others.

Buddhism continued in this state till the rise of the Mahāyāna whose proper name is Buddhāsattvavāyana. The Mahāyānist contemptuously called the previous Yānas as Hinayānas. They held that they could by their own exertion reach Nirvāṇa and even Buddhahood, and help others in attaining both. The distinction between the Mahāyāna and Hinayāna is graphically described in the first book of the Mahāyānasūtraśāṅkara attributed to Asaṅga.

Thus there were three Yānas in Buddhism about the 2nd. and 3rd. centuries A.D. But there were four Schools of Philosophy, Sarvāstivāda (Sautrāntika), Vāhyārthabhaṅga (Baibhasika), Vijnānavāda (Yogācāra) and Śūnyavāda (Mādhyamaka). How these four systems were distributed amongst the three Yānas is one of the vital questions of Buddhism. But no light has been thrown on it as yet by the extant European or modern Indian literature on Buddhism. Happily, the discovery of an ancient manuscript entitled,
Tattvaratnāvali, by Advayavajra has dispelled the darkness. Advayavajra was a Bengali and he flourished in the 12th century. He was a Bengali because he commented upon the Bengali Dohakośa by Sarahavajra, who flourished in the 11th century. He says:—"There are three Yānas, Srāvakayāna, Pratyekayāna and Mahāyāna. There are four theories, Baibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, Yogācāra and Mādhyamaka. Srāvakayāna and Pratyekayāna are explained by the theory of the Baibhāṣikas. Mahāyāna is of two kinds, Pāramitānaya and Mantranaya. Pāramitās are explained by the theories either of Sautrāntika, Yogācāra or Mādhyamaka; Mantranaya is explained by the theories of Yogācāra and Mādhyamaka only."*

So Mantranaya commences with the most abstruse theories of Śūnyavāda and Vijñānavāda. Advayavajra postpones the explanation of Mantranaya in one place, and says,—"Mantranaya is very abstruse. It concerns with men who seek emancipation by deep and solemn methods. It is also very extensive owing to the understanding of such theories as the four symbolic representations. Therefore, we are not fit to explain it".† He cites for his authority—"Mantraśāstra transcends all other Śāstras, because, though all Śāstras have the same common object, there is no fear of ignorance here. The means are many, and they are not difficult of attainment, but it can be attained only by men whose senses are sharpened to the highest degree. On this point we have written a work, Sekanirṇaya."‡

The Sekanirṇaya is a short work in the same bundle of manuscripts by the same author. It accepts the Mahāsukha theory and dilates upon the various stages of the development of Mahāsukha, which, according to the author, is not possible to attain without the Śakti, the embodiment of Karuṇā.


‡ Ekāḥthatvyāprasamnabhūt vahupayātraduskarat.
Tāḥśūdrādhibhikaracet Maṇtrāśstramaḥ viśeṣyate.
Kṛtakṣeṣhābhrastra Sekanirṇaya nāma ṛṇṭheḥ.
In another of his short works entitled, Mahāsukhaprakāśa, he says—'from the right perception of Śūnyatā comes "Bija." From "Bija" is developed the conception of an icon and from that conception comes the external representation of the icon;* so the entire iconography of the Buddhists proceeds from a correct understanding of the doctrine of Śūnyatā. The yab-yum conceptions were an outcome of the dual conceptions of Śūnyatā and Karuṇā, both of which were conceived and represented, but which ultimately proved to be one and the same.

* "Śūnyatābodhito bijam bijat vimbham prajāyate ।
Vimbe ca nyāsaviryāsa taamā tārvam pratityajam ॥"

Mahāsukhaprakāśa in Ibid, Fol. 32.
§ II. Evolution of the Doctrines.

The pivot of distinction between the Mahāyāna and the Hinayāna lies in the question of Nirvāṇa or the final goal of a Buddhist, though the actual split between the Mahāsāṅghikas and the Sthaviras was originally due to difference on ten minor points of discipline. The Hinayānist, whether a Śrāvakā or a Pratyekabuddha, is mean, selfish and always strives towards his own Nirvāṇa or emancipation, ignoring altogether all other beings of the world. The Mahāyānist, on the other hand, takes just the opposite view, makes Compassion (Karunā) his motto, and sets himself to work vigorously for the uplift of mankind, nay, all sentient beings from man to the smallest insect. In fact, he seems to be more solicitous about the emancipation of the latter than of his own self.

Both the Hinayānist and the Mahāyānist agree in saying that Buddha as a Bodhisattva remained in the Tuṣita Heaven prior to his descent to this earth. They agree in holding that Buddha as Sākyasimha was born in the womb of Māyā, the queen of Sudhodana the king of Kapilavastu, and Māyā in her dreams saw a white elephant entering into her womb. They also agree that his birth took place at the Lumbini garden, that he obtained his Enlightenment under the Bo-tree at Bodh-Gaya, preached his First Sermon at Sarnath and entered into Nirvāṇa at Kusinagara.

But they differ on the question of the divinity of Buddha. The Hinayānist regards him as the Progenitor of the Law, and calls him a super-man, but nothing but a man with extraordinary intellect. But the Mahāyānist, on the other hand, looks upon him as a divinity, and as such, an eternal being coming to earth only for the salvation or deliverance of the beings tortured by Māra, the Evil One. The Hinayānist believes in the Buddhist Triad and reveres and worships it in the order of Buddha, Dharma and

* II. Sāstī; Rauddhadharma No. 11.—"Tāḥhārā sakalei Daśavastur viruddhe mat dīlen, krameśe mat pracaī hulla; yābhārā se mat graha karilen tābhāder nām hulla Śthaviravādī, yābhārā grahan karilen nā tābhāder nām hulla Mahāsāṅghikī." (in Brnyṣṭhi.)

† Compare Mahāvastu Avadāna, Vol. I, p. 2.—"Ārya-Mahāsāṅghikānāṃ pāthena Vinayapitakakāya Mahāvastuyā śāli." Kern has taken the Lokottaravādins as a sect of the Mahāsāṅghikas. But the fact seems to be that the Lokottaravādins are the same as the Mahāsāṅghikas, who attempted for the first time to establish the divinity or the eternity of Buddha. The Mahāsāṅghikas subsequently turned out to be the Mahāyānists. Manual of Buddhism, p. 3 et seq.
Saṅgha, that is the Promulgator of the Law first, the Law second and the recipients of the Law last. Every new recruit to the faith had to recite the Trisaraṇa in the above order. But the Mahāyānist changes the order into Dharma, Buddha and Saṅgha, attributing the first and highest place to the Law, and the next higher place to the Promulgator of the Law. According to a Mahāyānist, Dharma or Prajñā is eternal and the highest object in Buddhism; Buddha is only the Upāya or the means of obtaining that knowledge, which is diffused into the masses through him. This idea bears a close resemblance to the Hindu conception of the Mantras,* which are supposed to be eternal and of which only a glimpse was obtained by the Vedic Rsis. It took a considerable time, though we cannot definitely say how much, for the idea of Prajñā and Upāya to evolve from Buddha and Dharma. As a consequence the Saṅgha was also changed to a more dignified designation of Bodhisattva † which meant in earlier times all members of the Holy Order, and later on, only the higher members‡, as is current even is now Nepal.

In the matter of Nirvāṇa, Mahāyāna has on entirely different development. The Hinayānist will be satisfied if he is emancipated from the bond of worldly sufferings, from the evil of birth and rebirth. He does not look beyond his own salvation. But the Bodhisattva, on the other hand, being anxious to do good to the world, acquires a certain state of mind known as ‘Bodhicitta’ (Bodhi Mind), which makes him advance higher and higher. Simultaneously with his advancement he acquires merit and commences his march towards the Akaṇṭha Heaven, where Amitābha Buddha of Boundless Light resides. The Universe according to the Buddhists consists of twenty-six Lokas or Heavens divided into three broad divisions. (1) Kāna

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† The compound word “Bodhisattva” may be expounded as Bodhau yatante ye sattrabh i.e. “Those who strive for the attainment of Bodhi.” In primitive Buddhism, according to the Mahāyānists, therefore, all members were Bodhisattvas. See also Sujuki: Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism, p. 290 et seq.

‡ As in Beal: Si-yu-ki. Cf. Āryadeva Bodhisattva, i, 189: Āśvaghoṣa Bodhisattva, ii 73, 100, etc. In Nepal now all Vajrācāryyas are called Bodhisattvas.

§ There is another intellectual movement by which the Bodhisattvas cross the ten Bhūmis, first enumerated and described in Mahāvastu Anadāna p. 78 et seq. The word “Vivarta” has been taken by Senart to mean “returning back from a higher Bhūmi to a lower.” But this word in Mahāvastu always refers to a forward movement.
(2) Rūpa and (3) Arūpa.* When the Bodhisattva remains in the Kāma Lokas he will be subject to sensuous desires; in the second group of Heavens he will be above these desires but will nevertheless retain his form,—and in the third the form of the Bodhisattva will be lost. The Rūpa Heavens again are divided into four broad divisions; † in the first of these, the Bodhisattva is not subjected to sensuous desires; in the second, he gains absolute purity, in the third, he is freed from the cycles of rebirth; and in the fourth, he reaches the Akanisṭha Heaven or Sukhāvati and becomes a Buddha.

The Arūpa Heavens are four‡ in number and in these the form of the Bodhisattva is lost; in the first of these, the Bodhisattva is able to conceive the idea of and to merge himself in Infinite Space; in the second, he attains Infinite Intelligence; in the third, he conceives the idea of absolute Non-entity; and in the fourth, he abides neither in consciousness nor unconsciousness. This is the highest state,—this is Nirvāṇa.§

But here arose a most baffling controversy. On the question whether Nirvāṇa meant absolute Void (Śūnya) or a conscious state (Vijñāna)—the Mahāyānists ranged themselves in two divisions. The Yogācāra School could not persuade itself to believe that sentient beings after ages of striving should only end in Void. The followers of this School were known as the Vijñānavādins of whom Maitreyanātha in the chief, who held that even in Śūnya, the Vijñāna or consciousness remained. The Mādhyamikas were more radical. They held that Śūnya meant a transcendental state (not annihilation), about which neither existence, nor non-existence, nor a combination of the two, nor a negation of the two, can be predicated. ||

* Max Muller: Dharmasamgraha, p. 31. The three equivalents in Sanskrit are Kāmāvasara, Rūpāvasara, and Arūpāvasara.
† Morier Williams: Buddhism p. 211 et seqq. The Rūpāvasara heavens are either eighteen or twenty-two. See also Dharmasamgraha, p. 31.
‡ The four Arūpa heavens ex—Ākāsānanta-yātana, Vijñānānanta-yātana, Akṣara-yātana, Naivasaṁjñānānanta-yātana.
§ Compare Aśvaghosa’s conception of Nirvāṇa in Saundarananda.
"Dīpo yathā nirvāṁ-abhyupeto naivāvanīm gacchati nāntarkṣaṁ; Dīmaṁ na kācit vidīṣaṁ na kācit sneha-kṣayāt kevalo añātī; Evam kṛtā nirvāṁ-abhyupeto naivāvanīm gacchati nāntarkṣaṁ; Dīmaṁ na kācit vidīṣaṁ na kācit kleśa-kṣayāt kevalo añātī"
|| Sujātikṣa is of opinion that the word, ‘Śūnya’ is used because the language does not furnish a more expressive word. Cf.—the statement in Mādhavacarīya Sa ṇ dararāṇa- samgraha:—"asieduct-tadubhāyā-nubhayā-caturāvita-vinirmuktām Śūnyarūpaṁ." pp. 23-24. Compare also Advayāvatrasamgraha, Fol. 13. —
"Na san nāsan naśasana na caṇḍana-nubhabātmyakām: Catuṣkoṭi-vinirmuktām tattvam Mādhyamikā vidūḥ" ||
These are in short, the main ideas underlying the divisions of the Mahāyāna doctrine which is always very abstruse. But Buddhism, we should not forget, was a mass-religion and the mass is not expected to be so intelligent as to grasp the real philosophical significance of Prajñā and Upāya or of Nirvāṇa. The priests found a great deal of difficulty in making the mass understand the meaning of Nirvāṇa, to the attainment of which every Boddhisattva strives. They invented a word for Śūnya; it was Nirātmā, that is, something in which the soul is lost. The Boddhicitta merges in Nirātmā and there remains in eternal bliss and happiness (Mahāsukhavāda). The word, ‘Nirātmā,’ it may be noted, is in the feminine: the Nirātmā is therefore a Devī, in whose embrace the Boddhicitta remains. The masses well understood the significance of Nirātmā, and this feminine aspect—an outcome of Mahāsukhavāda—in the doctrine of Nirvāṇa, gave rise to what is known as Vajrayāna.

The word ‘Vajrayāna’ means the vehicle of obtaining Nirvāṇa through the medium of Vajra, which is another name for Śūnya, so called because it is a thing which cannot be destroyed, cannot be cut, cannot be burnt. The position of the priests, the Gurus and the Vajrācāryyas in the Vajrayāna thus became very much magnified, because they invented other methods for the mass to attain an easy salvation. The mass could not master the sacred writings and could not even recite them. The Dhāraṇīs, which were mostly meaningless strings of words, were composed for them, and the recitation of these Dhāraṇīs promised them great merit. These Dhāraṇīs were later on, shortened into equally unintelligible Mantras and Vījāmantras. Individual Mantras were assigned to individual deities, who were held to take their origin from the Vījāmantras or mystic syllables. How the deities originated from particular syllables is a matter for independent investigation. Those votaries who could not worship their gods in accordance with the prescribed procedure (Sādhana) were promised by the Gurus perfection.


† Cl.—Adhyayavijnānasamgraha. Fol. 16.—

"Uktātāca Vajrādikho—

Dṛḍhām sārām asaṃśīryaḥ acchedyābhedyalakaṇḍaḥ

Adāb hvināt ca Śūnyāt vajraṁanyakate;"
only through the muttering of the Mantras*. Thus the position of the Gurus became paramount and as they showed the easy way or the adamantine path for Nirvāṇa, they were called the Vajrācāryyas.

It was an evil day for Mahāyāna when Asaṅga in the sixth century went up to heaven and brought the Tantras down to earth and introduced the much expected aid of gods, the want of which was keenly felt,—into the religion of the Mahāyānists of his time; they had already lost faith in their own exertions and required the help of the gods for their salvation, nay more, they even stooped so low as to crave for the ordinary worldly perfections (Siddhis) and were not satisfied if they could not secure them.

What the word "Tantra" really means is difficult to ascertain. Various scholars have explained the word in various ways. Mahāmahanābhyaśa Haraprasād Śāstrī says,† "The word Tantra is very loosely used. Ordinary people understand by it any system other than the Vedas. But it really means the worship of Śakti or female energy. The female energy is worshipped in conjunction with male energy. The union of male and female energy is the essence of Tantra."

The mentality of the mass and the mentality of the Vajrācāryyas was in such a state that it readily grasped and assimilated the doctrines of Tantra and developed a form of religion, which, according to Bendall,‡ was brought to "the level of very thinly veiled Kāmaśāstra." Rājā Rājendralal, while commenting upon the Guhyasamājā,§ says, "but in working it out theories are indulged in and practices enjoined, which are at once the most revolting and horrible that human depravity could think of, and compared to which the worst specimens of Holiwell Street Literature of the last century would appear absolutely pure." Yet nevertheless, the feminine element in the doctrine attracted a large number of followers and made it extremely popular and the most exquisite art, which this school developed, made it doubly attractive.

Whatever might be the fault of the Vajrayānis it is to them we owe the legacy of a rich, varied and extensive Pantheon. The purely Tāntric

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*Cf. the statement, "khede sati Mantram japeti", very often repeated in the Śādhanaśāstra.

† H. Sāstrī : Introduction to Modern Buddhism, p. 10.
‡ See C. Bendall's Introduction to Śikṣānāmocaya, p. V1.
§ R. Mitra : Sanskrit Buddhist Literature, p. 281.
The gods were invariably accompanied with their Śaktis, who were sometimes given a separate seat in sculptures, sometimes the same seat, sometimes a seat on the lap of the gods, and sometimes they were represented in the actual embrace of the gods. The sober form of Tantra generally adopted the first three courses. But the most thorough-going form worshipped the gods in the embrace, in union with their Śaktis, or as the Tibetans describe it—in Yab-yum.
§ III. Evidence of Art.

The Buddhist Universe is represented by a Stūpa and the Stūpas received worship from the Buddhists from the life-time of Buddha down to the present day (Plate II). Similar is the case with the Three Jewels, which came to be represented later, both in symbolic and in human form* (Plate III). As Buddhism was originally a religion of tolerance it incorporated many of the Hindu deities in the first stage; when Buddha had attained Enlightenment and was about to retire from the world, Brahmā and Indra approached him suddenly and asked him to stay for a time to deliver the people of Magadha. Kuvera, the Hindu god of Wealth, who is usually represented with a bag of gems in the left hand was also incorporated; so was the case with Vasudhāra, who became in later times, the consort of Jambhala, the Buddhist god of Wealth. The railings of Bodh Gaya, Sanchi, Bharaut and Amaravati dating from the 3rd. to the 1st. century B.C. show unmistakable signs of worshipping everything that Buddha made sacred by his magic touch. For instance, the Bodhi Tree (Plate IV,a), his turban (Plate IV,b), his footprints (Plate IV,c), the Wheel-of-the-law (Plate IV,d), and similar objects were revered by the later Buddhists in the absence of their Departed Master. The railings show further, bas-reliefs representing innumerable scenes from Buddha’s life as recorded in the Lalita-Vistara or the Mahāvastu Avadāna (e.g. Dream of Māyā, Plate I,c) as well as stories from the Jātakas. The Nāgas and the Yakṣas are also to be seen everywhere, but whether they received any worship, is difficult to say.

For several centuries after the Mahāparinirvāṇa of Buddha we never meet with any representation of the Great Master himself. Perhaps his personality was too great to admit of a representation, or was it owing to the religious bias of the Indian Buddhists? Whatever might be the cause, it so happened that the Indians were not the first to carve out a statue of Lord Buddha, one of the greatest celebrities of India.* In Mahāyāna we have seen,

* From the materials now before us we may safely hold that the Nepalese Buddhists were the first to conceive the Holy Triad in human form, in which the Triad is worshipped there even in modern days. When represented in art, Dharma shows the Añjali against the breast in the first pair of hands and carries the rosary and the double lotus in the second. Buddha shows either the Samādhi or the Bhūmiśparśa Mudrā; and Saṅgha, a male divinity, shows the Dharma-cakra Mudrā in the first pair of hands and the rosary and the book in the second pair.
Buddha was assigned a subordinate position among the Three Jewels; time obliterated almost everything of his solemn personality, and the Graeco-Buddhists carved out his first statue in Gandhara.* The intermixture of the Greek with the indigenous plastic art gave rise to what we now call the Graeco-Buddhist Art, popularly known as the Gandhara School of Sculpture. Buddha was the chief object of representation in this art; the events and stories from his life were represented; many of the Jātaka stories of his previous births were also represented. At Taxila, Peshwar, Sahri-Balhol and numerous other places in the North-West Frontier Province, heaps of stones have been unearthed bearing innumerable images of Buddha in different attitudes (Āsanas) and different gestures (Mudrās). Besides Buddhas images, we meet with the images of Jambhala, Maitreyā, Hārīti, the Indian Madonna, and her consort, and other Bodhisattva images † in the Gandhara Art, besides numerous other things.

There is considerable disagreement among scholars as to be beginning of Gandhara Art. Prof. A. Foucher declares that the reign of Menander was perhaps most suited for such a school of art to begin. But the date he assigns to Menander is cir. B. C. 160.‡ There again, scholars are divided in their opinion. Dr. R. C. Mazumdar who has gone deep into the question, and has examined all the arguments in favour or against the date, has come to the conclusion that a date prior to 90 B. C. cannot be assigned to Menander. We take it, that the Gandhara Art began in the reign of Menander in 90 B.C. and that no image of Buddha was made before that time.

This art was carried over to Mathurā, where again the Gandhara Art coming in contact with the local art took a somewhat different development, which has been assigned the name of the Mathura School of Sculpture.§ This School also produced numerous Buddhas and Bodhisattva images, the image of Kuvera,‖ the scenes depicting the four principal and the four minor scenes of Buddha’s life generally, including other scenes also. The Yakṣas and the

* A. Foucher: *Beginnings of Buddhist Art and other essays*, p. 127.

† See V. A. Smith: *Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, figs. 62, 63, pl. XXVIII. fig. 64, 65, also Garuda and Nāga images, fig. 70; refer also to the image of Kuvera, No. 3912 of Indian Museum.

‡ Foucher: *Beginnings of Buddhist Art*, p. 127.

§ Cf. Vogel: *The Mathura School of Sculpture,*—" This explains the mixed character of the Mathura School in which we find on the one hand a direct continuation of the old Indian art of Bharhat (Bharaut) and Sānti and on the other hand the classical influence derived from Gandhara." A. S. I. Ann. Rep. 1906-7, p. 145.

‖ Ibid p. 144 and V. A. Smith’s *History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, fig. 92.
Nāgas which are the common property of the Hindus and the Buddhists, are to be frequently met with in this art. The Mathura School is famous for its images of the Kuśāna kings, and its flourishing period ranges from the first century A. D. to the early Gupta period,* for we do not meet here with any of the later Buddhist gods, Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī, Tārā and the like.

Next to Mathura we come to Sarnath which covers a period from the time of Aśoka down to the reign of the Pālas.† It is here that we meet with the representations of the varied and extensive Pantheon of the Vajrayāna Buddhists. The images of Śaḍákṣari Lokāṇātha, Uchusma Jambhala, Mañjuśrī, Tārā, Vasudhārā, Maṅgālī, the five Dhyāni Buddhas, Vajrasattva and many others, point to a higher and later form of Vajrayāna. Though the gods are here represented for the first time with their Šaktis, they do not, nevertheless, belong to the most attractive form in which they are required to be represented in Sampuṭayoga or in union, or as the Tibetans call it, in Yab-yum.

Further downwards the monasteries of Odantapuri, Nalanda and Vikramaśila must have developed the latest form of Vajrayāna before Buddhism was finally wiped out at the advent of the Muhammadan invader Bukhtiyar Khilji and his warlike cavalry, who targetted the shaved heads of the innocent Buddhist priests mistaking them for soldiers.‡ Nalanda is being excavated and a large number of images belonging to the higher form of Tantra have been unearthed. The Vikramaśila monastery has not been identified yet; but if the Odantapuri site be also excavated, it will most assuredly, yield innumerable images of Vajrayāna gods.

The most flourishing period of the Bengal school of sculpture ranges from the tenth century or even earlier down to the settlement of the Muhammadans in Bengal. A large majority of the images that have up till now been discovered in Bengal belong to the Hindu form of religion, though Buddhist images are also to be extensively met with. The products of the Bengal school are undoubtedly the best specimens of Indian art, but unfortunately

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† Vincent Smith: History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon, p. 110.
‡ Elliott's History of India, p. 306. In Tabakul-i-Kusirī, Minhāj-š-Sinj gives a graphic description of how Bukhtiyar conquered the peaceful Vihāra and massacred all the undefended inmates. He smelt of plunder and seems to have destroyed the Vikramaśila Vihāra, Jagadāśa Vihāra and probably the Nalanda Vihāra also, which is only eight miles or so away from Odantapuri (mod. Bihar on the Bukhtiyarpur Bihar Light Railway). This Vihāra contained perhaps the last remnants of the Mahāvīraṇās. 
the existence of this school has not even been acknowledged by scholars. Many of the specimens of the Bengal School are preserved in the three museums of Calcutta, Dacca and Rajshahi, but a large number of them are scattered about in Parganah Vikramjur, and the Districts of Dinajpur and Comilla.

The images of gods at Ajanta, Ellora, and South-India show signs of immature Tantra and may be assigned a time prior to the Bengal School, though the paintings of Ajanta and other sculptures have a long antiquity. Veteran scholars have asserted Java's indebtedness to Bengal in the matter of Art and religion, and it is quite probable that the art and the later Mahayanaism was carried over by the sea from Tamralipti to Java by the Bengalecs.

In the later phase of Vajrayana, after its destruction in India, the priests of the celebrated monasteries took refuge in Nepal, and thus kept the torch of Buddhism still burning in India. The art of Bengal was carried over there, but it soon degenerated at the hands of the native artists. We need not dwell here on the question as to how the priests fled to Nepal, and how they built innumerable monasteries there. Suffice it to say, that the followers of Vajrayana, in order to make sure of their existence, converted a good many of the natives and carved out innumerable images of gods both in stone and in wood, so much so, that a student of Iconography is overwhelmed at their wealth and variety.
§ IV. The Pantheon.

The Pantheon of the Northern Buddhists was not built in a day. This we have tried to show in the two previous sections from the point of view of Buddhist doctrine as well as from the point of view of extant images. Now we shall examine the evidence of the Mahāyāna literature in Sanskrit and the accounts of the Chinese Travellers, who were Buddhists and who have recorded their observations minutely in their works. From what follows, we come to the conclusion that all Sanskrit works mentioning the five Dhyāni Buddhas or Vajradhara or Vajrasattva or any of the later gods cannot belong to a period prior to the time of Indrabhūti (circa 700-750 A.D.)

There is no mention of the five Dhyāni Buddhas in the literature of the Mahāyāna Buddhists prior to the time of Indrabhūti. But it cannot be held that they were invented all at once. We meet with none of them in the works of Āśvaghoṣa (1st century A.D.), Nāgārjuna (2nd century A.D.) and Āryadeva* (3rd century). We have evidence that during A.D. 148-170 A.D. the Sukhāvatī-Vyāha or the Amitāyus Sūtra was translated into Chinese. This Sūtra mentions for the first time the name of Amitābha, and his other name Amitāyus,† who resides in the Sukhāvatī or the Akanṭha heaven, where he remains in constant meditation and where he is believed to have brought forth the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara into existence.‡ The smaller recen-

* It may here be mentioned that as the work Cittaviśuddhiprakāraṇa mentions the five Dhyāni Buddhas and other later Vajrayāna gods, the author of the work cannot be the same Āryadeva, the disciple of Nāgārjuna, who flourished in the third century A.D. He must be the later Āryadeva of the Tāntric age, not only because he mentions the later Vajrayāna gods, but also because his work breathes throughout the doctrines of Tantra. Furthermore, the Tangyur Catalogue attributes the same work, with a slightly different name, Cittasodhanaparakaraṇa, to him, which fact convincingly pushes him forward into the Tāntric age. It may be noted, however, that the name Cittaviśuddhiprakāraṇa has not been given in the Colophon of the work published in J. A. S. B. 1898 p. 117 ff, but it was given on the authority of C. Bendall. The real name of the work is Cittasodhanaparakaraṇa as given in the Tangyur Catalogue.

Nāgārjuna's Dharmaśāstras likewise mentions the five Dhyāni Buddhas. Either this Nāgārjuna is the later Śiddhāchāryya, Nāgārjuna, or the passage mentioning the Dhyāni Buddhas is an interpolation. We are more inclined to accept the latter theory, as the manuscript of Dharmaśāstras we have been able to find out in Nepal and of which we possess a copy—omits the passage altogether.

† Sukhāvatis-vyāha, pp. 1, 28, 32.

‡ There is however a faint reference to Avalokiteśvara in the word, 'Avalokita' in Mahāvastu Avadāna, Vol. II. p. 294.
sion of this *Amitāyus Sūtra*, which was also translated into Chinese between A.D. 384-417, mentions two more names, of Akṣobhya as a Tathāgata and Mañjuśrī as a Bodhisattva. It may be noted, however, that Fa-Hien (894-414 A.D.) mentions the names of Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya; Hiuen Thsang (A.D. 629-645) the names of Avalokiteśvara, Hārīti, Kṣitigarbha, Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, Padmapāni, Vaiśravaṇa, Sākya-Buddha, Sākya Bodhisattva and Yama. Besides these, the latter refers to *Vidyādharaṇī* and *Vajrapāṇidhāraṇī* belonging to Mantrayāna. There is evidence also in his work that many of the saints were deified as Bodhisattvas, such as, Aśvaṅgoṣa, Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, Samedhas, and others. He refers to many of the previous Buddhas also. I-Tsing, another devout Buddhist traveller, (A.D. 671-695), came all the way from China to India during the last quarter of the seventh century. He mentions the names of Avalokiteśvara, Amitāyus or Amitābha, Hārīti, the Catūrmahārājikas, Maitreya, Mañjuśrī and Yama besides several Hindu gods.

Let us next examine the works of Śāntideva of the Nalanda monastery, who has been assigned to the middle of the seventh century by Cecil Bendall. This date seems rather doubtful in view of the fact that I-Tsing does not mention him in his work. In any case, we cannot assign to him a date later than A.D. 800, as his book, Śikṣā-samuccaya, was translated into Tibetan in the reign of the celebrated Tibetan king, Khri-lde-sron-btsan, who reigned between A.D. 816 and 838.* In this work we meet with the names of Akṣobhya as a Tathāgata, Amitābha as a Tathāgata, Gaganagaṇja as a Bodhisattva, and Śīrṇavikṛśīta as a Tathāgata. That in his time Tantra had just begun to wield its influence is evident from a fairly large number of references to Tantric works. It gives the Dhāraṇīs for Cundā, Trīsāmayarāja and Mārici. The name of the book, Śrīmālā-Śīrṇanāda, clearly speaks of Śīrṇanāda, one of the numerous names of Avalokiteśvara. In his *Buddhacaryāvatāra*, Śāntideva speaks of Mañjughoṣa, one of the many forms of Mañjuśrī.

After Śāntideva for nearly a century and a half we do not meet with dated manuscripts in Sanskrit belonging to the Buddhist faith except the Jñānasiddhi of Indrabhūti. But there is no doubt that during this period Vajrayāna developed in a marvellously rapid degree. Many works

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* *C. Bendall’s Introduction to Śikṣā-Samuccaya*, p. V.

It seems to me likely that he flourished at a period prior to the time of Indrabhūti (C. 77-750) as he does not mention the five Dhyāni Buddhas in any of his works. The five Dhyāni Buddhas were invented by Indrabhūti and had Śāntideva known it, he would have mentioned them, inasmuch as his Śikṣāsamuccaya mentions the two among them, Amitābha and Akṣobhya.
were written, and great many deities were added to the Pantheon. Yantras (magic diagrams) and Maṇḍalas (magic circles) were invented, Mantras (charms) and Viṣṇum Mantras (germ-syllable) were assigned to individual deities, and the number of deities increased astonishingly.

In the reign of Rudradeva (1015 A.D.) we find manuscripts of Aṣṭa-pañḍarikā Prajñāpāramitā bearing a large number of miniature pictures of Buddhist Tāntric deities. Some illustrated manuscripts of Pañcarakṣā belong to the same period. The various copies of the Śādhanamālā that we have been able to gather, date from A.D. 1165 and in one of these no less than four hundred descriptions or Dhyānas of both minor and principal deities are to be found.

Though Tantrayāna was introduced into the Mahāyāna System, it did not weild a great influence on the minds of the Indians before 700 A.D. Tārānāth writing in the 16th century says plainly that the Tantras existed in an occult form in the period between the time of Asaṅga and Dharmakīrti (A.D. 645-71),* for naturally it takes rather a long time to assimilate an entirely foreign influence such as the Tantra. Tārānāth further says that during the reign of the Pāla Dynasty there were many Vajrācāryyas and Siddhāpurusas, who performed many prodigious feats. It was during this period that the Vikramaśīla monastery was famous as a centre of Tāntric learning and culture.†

The very first thing that Vajrayāna brought with it was the five Dhyāṇi Buddhas and their Śaktis along with a number of deities as emanating from them in the same way as Avalokiteśvara emanated from Amitābha, and as Prajñāpāramitā emanated from Akṣobhya mentioned in a Śādhana attributed to Asaṅga in the Śādhanamālā. The creator of all this, in all probability, was Indrabhūti, the king of Uddiyāna, who, according to Tibetan tradition‡, flourished in the first half of the eighth century A.D. The word Vajrayāna is first met with in his work, entitled, Jnanasiddhi, in which there is a chapter on Pañcarātra giving the origin and the forms of the Dhyāni Buddhas. This

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* "Dharmakīrti is not mentioned by Yuan Chwang (travelled through India 629-645) but he is spoken of by I-Tsing" (671-95). Consequently, Dharmakīrti's palmy days were in 645-71"—Ul, Vaiśeṣika Philosophy, p. 17.
† Kern : Manual of Buddhism, p. 123.
‡ Indrabhūti's son is Guru Padmasambhava, who went to Tibet in 647 A.D., and his daughter is Lakṣmimārī, who is believed to have been the founder and a vigorous exponent of Sahajayāna. Waddei: Lamaism, pp. 380 ff. Śāhātri: Buddhism in Bengal, in the Dacca Review, Vol. II, No. 7, p. 98. "Sahajayana was preached by one of the Udiya chiefs named Indrabhūti and his gifted daughter Laksmi Devi or Laksmimārī Devi." See also Tangyur Cat. 2e partie—pp. 55 and 211.
work breathes throughout the doctrines of Tantra and betrays the anxiety of the author to establish a definite school of Mahāyāna by means of learned discussions and arguments. The theory of Mahāsukha also appears for the first time in this work with all its various ramifications. There is a great deal of controversy regarding the identification of Uḍḍiyāna; some hold that it is the same as U-Chang-ha of Huien Tsang or Udyāna in the Swat Valley in the North-Western Frontier Province, but many others are of opinion that it is the same as Orissa. The latter theory seems probable, for Uḍḍiyāna must be a place where Vajrayāna flourished, and a place where we should expect to find some Vajrayāna images. Sādhanamāla mentions four Pīthas or sacred spots of Vajrayāna, namely, Kāmākhyā, Sirihat, Pūrṇagiri* and Uḍḍiyāna, and Uḍḍiyāna must be a place not very far off from Kāmākhyā and Sirihat. Moreover, in the Sādhanamāla there is a Sādhanā for the worship of a four-armed variety of Kurukullā, which goes by the name of Uḍḍiyāna Kurukullā, or Kurukullā as worshipped in Uḍḍiyāna. Images of this deity is extremely rare and if we are to believe the testimony of Mr. N. N. Vasu the only image of this variety of Kurukullā has been discovered in Orissa†. Lastly in Buddhist MSS of the Tāntric period the variants, Odā, Oḍra, Udra, Oḍaviṣa, Odivāna, are mentioned, and all these seem to be the variants of Uḍḍiyāna. All this evidence, combined together, points to the identification of Uḍḍiyāna with Orissa, where innumerable images belonging to the Vajrayāna School have been discovered. Against the first theory identifying Uḍḍiyāna with Udyāna several arguments may be brought forward. We have no evidence that Tantra in the form of Vajrayāna ever flourished in Udyāna, nor a single Tāntric image is reported to have been discovered there, though much earlier images of the Gandhara School are daily coming out from this site. It is, moreover, improbable that Uḍḍiyāna being one of the four Pīthas would be two thousand miles away from two others, Kāmākhyā and Sirihat, which are contiguous. In view of these facts we may conveniently identify Uḍḍiyāna with Orissa and set aside its identification with Udyāna.

Alexander Csoma de Koros places the introduction of the conception of Ādi-Buddha in Central Asia in the last half of the 10th century. The conception of Ādi-Buddha originated at Nalanda by the first half of the 10th century and no mention of Ādi-Buddha is made by Indian writers before that time. Ādi-Buddha is the Primordial Buddha from whom the five Dhyāni Buddhas are said to have taken their origin, and homage is paid to

* Pūrṇagiri has not been identified.
† N. N. Vasu: Maurombanj Archaeological Survey.
Ádi-Buddha in the shape of a flame, which the priests of Nepal consider eternal, self-born and self-existent. Ádi-Buddha first manifested himself in Nepal in the shape of a flame of fire, and Mañjuśrī is said to have erected a temple over it in order to preserve the flame.* This temple is known as the Svayambhū Caitya (Plate II) and the place derives its name from it.

The conception of Vajradhara in human form presupposes Ádi-Buddha and therefore later than the first half of the 10th century. Vajrasattva, being a regular development of Vajrapāni, the Bodhisattva emanating from Akṣobhya, might be a little earlier. In Vajrayāna, Ádi-Buddha is regarded as the highest deity, the originator even of the Dhyāni Buddhas. When represented in human form (Plate V), Ádi-Buddha begets the name of Vajradhara and is conceived in two forms, single, and Yab-yum. Vajradhara is decked in princely ornaments and garments, sits in the Vajraparyānika attitude, with his two hands, carrying the Vajra in the right and the Ghanṭā in the left, crossed against the breast in what is known as the Vajrahūnḍā Mudrā. When represented in Yab-yum (Plate VI.a-b-c) his form would be exactly the same as described above, with the difference that he should be embraced in Yab-yum by his Śakti, whose name, according to Getty, is Prajñā-pāramitā. The Śakti is richly dressed and richly decked in ornaments, and carries the Kartti in the right hand and the Kapāla in the left.

The Ádi or the Primordial Buddha was accepted mainly in the Kālacakrayāna,† a later development of the Vajrayāna, and the Svayambhū Purāṇa which deals with the glories of the Svayambhūksetra “the place of the Self-born” or Ádi Buddha, belongs to the system of Kālacakrayāna. This Ádi-Buddha, it may be pointed out, is a generic name. It signifies Vajradhara, described above, in the Kālacakrayāna; but the Vajrayānists were not slow to appreciate the theory of a Promordial Buddha. Some considered Akṣobhya to be the Ádi-Buddha, others considered in the same way other Dhyāni Buddhas as the Ádi-Buddha, after their own fashion. Thus the Vajrayānists were divided into so many cults, according as they accepted

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* It is very curious that Mañjuśrī is connected with this tradition as recorded in the Svayambhū Purāṇa. Mañjuśrī is as old as 4th century A. D. If not earlier and the conception of Ádi Buddha first originated in the first half of the 10th century. We wonder how Mañjuśrī could ever come to erect a temple over the flame. See Oldfield: Sketches from Nepal, Vol. II, p. 80 and 156 ff. and 188. Hodgeson’s Essays, pp. 115 ff.

one or the other of the Dhyāni Buddhas as the Ādi-Buddha. The followers of different cults made their deities bear the image of their own Dhyāni or Ādi-Buddha on their crown, sometimes contrary to the directions laid down in the Śādhanas.* We have evidence in a work belonging to the Aksobhya cult that even the Dhyāni Buddhhas themselves bear the image of Aksobhya on their head in order to show their origin.† In other words, the followers of different cults believed the other Dhyāni Buddhhas to be the offsprings of that particular Dhyāni Buddha whom they considered as their own Ādi Buddha.

The Hindus say that the number of their deities is thirty-three crores, and it seems that the Buddhists can claim a similar figure. One single deity may have innumerable forms according to the number of hands, the number of faces and the number of legs. He will differ, again, according to colour, according as he is worshipped in different Maṇḍalas, the number of which it is no very easy matter to ascertain. He will differ again according as he is invoked in different Tāṇtric rites, according to his companions, in accordance with the Āsanas, and the different weapons that are held in his hands. A permutation and combination of these different categories will give innumerable forms to one single deity. Besides these, the deity varies according to the whims of the devotees, or the donors, and ignorance of the sculptors or the painters.

* This accounts for the image of Amitābha on the crown of the Sarnath figure of Ucchusma Jambhala and the Lucknow Museum figure of Māriol, and also of Aksobhya on the crown of the Indian Museum figure of Uṣṇīṣavijāyā. According to the Śādhanas, the image either of Ratnasambhava or of Aksobhya is prescribed for Ucchusma Jambhala, that of Vairocana for both Māriol and Uṣṇīṣavijāyā. See Infra.

† Advaravajra, who flourished in the 11th century, was a follower of the Aksobhya cult, and he makes all the Dhyāni Buddhas except Aksobhya bear the miniature figure of the latter, in his work Advayavajracāṇamgraha, Vol. 16.