

THE JOURNAL
OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
BUDDHIST STUDIES

CO-EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Gregory Schopen
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana, USA

Roger Jackson
Fairfield University
Fairfield, Connecticut, USA

EDITORS

Peter N. Gregory
University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, USA

Ernst Steinkellner
University of Vienna
Wien, Austria

Alexander W. Macdonald
Université de Paris X
Nanterre, France

Jikidō Takasaki
University of Tokyo
Tokyo, Japan

Bardwell Smith
Carleton College
Northfield, Minnesota, USA

Robert Thurman
Amherst College
Amherst, Massachusetts, USA

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Bruce Cameron Hall
College of William and Mary
Williamsburg, Virginia, USA

Volume 9

1986

Number 2

CONTENTS

I. ARTICLES

1. Signs, Memory and History: A Tantric Buddhist
Theory of Scriptural Transmission, *by Janet Gyatso* 7
2. Symbolism of the Buddhist *Stūpa*, *by Gérard Fussman* 37
3. The Identification of dGa' rab rdo rje,
by A. W. Hanson-Barber 55
4. An Approach to Dōgen's Dialectical Thinking
and Method of Instantiation, *by Shohei Ichimura* 65
5. A Report on Religious Activity in Central Tibet,
October, 1985, *by Donald S. Lopez, Jr. and
Cyrus Stearns* 101
6. A Study of the Earliest *Garbha Vidhi* of the
Shingon Sect, *by Dale Allen Todaro* 109
7. On the Sources for Sa skya Paṇḍita's Notes on the
"bSam yas Debate," *by Leonard W. J. van der Kuijp* 147

II. BOOK REVIEWS

1. *The Bodymind Experience in Japanese Buddhism:
A Phenomenological Study of Kūkai and Dōgen*,
by D. Shaner
(William Waldron) 155
2. *A Catalogue of the sTog Palace Kanjur*,
by Tadeusz Skorupski
(Bruce Cameron Hall) 156

3.	<i>Early Buddhism and Christianity: A Comparative Study of the Founders' Authority, the Community, and the Discipline</i> , by Chai-Shin Yu (Vijitha Rajapakse)	162
4.	<i>The Heart of Buddhist Philosophy: Dinnāga and Dharmakīrti</i> , by Amar Singh (Richard Hayes)	166
5.	<i>Shōbōgenzō: Zen Essays by Dōgen</i> , translated by Thomas Cleary (Steven Heine)	173
6.	<i>Studies in Ch'an and Hua-yen</i> , edited by Robert M. Gimello and Peter N. Gregory (John Jorgensen)	177
7.	<i>The Tantric Distinction</i> , by Jeffrey Hopkins (Bruce Burrill) Jeffrey Hopkins Replies Bruce Burrill Replies	181
	NOTES AND NEWS [2 items]	189
	LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS	191

Symbolisms of the Buddhist *Stūpa* *

by *Gérard Fussman*

Prior to the seventies, the problem of the origin and symbolism of the Buddhist *stūpa* did not interest many scholars outside France. As they were written in French, seminal studies on this particular topic by outstanding scholars (Foucher 1905, Mus 1935, Benisti 1960, Bareau 1962), though often referred to, were only known by a handful of scholars, mainly from Europe. As a consequence the conveners of the seminar on “The Stūpa, Its Symbolism, Its Religious, Historical and Architectural Relevance” (Heidelberg, July 3 to 7, 1978) could write: “We felt that though there are quite a few books, articles, and essays on the stūpa theme, they are not only very difficult to locate, scattered as they are in journals and old publications, and for this very reason they are perhaps unknown or forgotten, but we also felt the need for a fresh approach to this ‘core’ problem of Indian and South East Asian civilisation and art” (Dallapiccola 1980, vii). Since then, a good deal of literature has been published on this specific subject, ranging from short papers or stray remarks in various articles to the epoch-making studies by Irwin (1979 and 1980) and Roth (1980), and culminating in a 407 page book by Snodgrass in 1985. A new international conference was even convened on “The Buddhist *Stūpa* in India and South-East Asia” (Varanasi, March 22–26, 1985).

It would have been presumptuous or useless to dare write anew on this topic were it not for the need to remind the reader that we cannot deal with Buddhism as an unchanged whole: history, chronology and geography have also to be taken in consideration. The point is that the earliest *stūpa*—which was not necessarily Buddhist—was built c. 2500 years ago; that since then Buddhism has spread over the whole of India and in many

countries abroad; that we know for sure that Buddhism was a many-sided creed; that Buddhist speculations and metaphysics evolved differently at different times and in different countries so that it is likely that the symbolism of the *stūpa* did not remain the same through the ages, nor for every Buddhist sect, nor in every country; and finally that laymen, ordinary monks, supposed *arhants* or *bodhisattvas* did not necessarily view the *stūpa* in the same way.

The most recent writer on the subject, however, is freed from this prejudice. "The symbol addresses not only the waking consciousness but the whole man; 'symbols speak to the whole human being and not only to the intelligence.' Symbols communicate their 'messages' even if the conscious mind remains unaware of the fact. This being so, the hermeneutic of a symbolic form such as the stupa is freed from the necessity of asking 'how many individuals in a certain society and at a given historical moment understood all the meanings and implications of that symbol.' If the stupa can be shown to have clearly expressed a meaning at a certain moment of its history one is justified in supposing that the meaning inhered within its form at an earlier epoch, even if it is not consciously perceived or explicitly affirmed in the writings of those who built it . . . These considerations are deemed sufficient to justify a non-historical and a-temporal exegesis of the symbolism of the stupa."¹ Not being a seer, I shall restrict myself to the humbler duties of the historian. I feel bound by necessity to ascertain what meaning a *stūpa* had in the conscious minds of the people who commissioned it, built it and paid homage to it in such and such a country and at such and such a time. *Prima facie*, that seems to have been the very purpose of J. Irwin; his brilliant papers (Irwin 1979 & 1980), written with much acumen and understanding, backed by an impressive erudition, are undoubtedly to be referred to by every scholar interested in unravelling the symbolic meaning of the Buddhist *stūpa*. Nevertheless, some points need to be clearly articulated. Some of these have already been dealt with by Harvey (1984), mainly from Pāli (Theravādin) sources; more is still to be gained by sifting the enormous amount of data collected by the outstanding scholars I named above. Since this data is in the main known by most scholars perhaps I need not dwell on it here.

I. J. Irwin's Thesis

Following Mus (1935), J. Irwin states that the early *stūpa* had two main components, an axial pillar rising from the ground, and an hemispheric-shaped dome or *aṇḍa*, "egg". The whole was a cosmogram, i.e., a replica of the cosmic order and a means through which that very cosmic order was imposed on the country or on the spot where the *stūpa* was built. J. Irwin goes further. He tries to show that the axial pillar was called *yūpa* (Skt) or *Inda-khīla* (Pāli), which for him is indisputable evidence of its cosmogonic and religious significance. "In the earliest stage, this pillar had not been erected simply to mark the center of the mound: it had taken structural precedence over the raising of the mound itself, the latter serving as an envelope to enclose it."² Moreover this axial pillar was first made of wood. It was "none other than the Axis Mundi itself, metaphysically identified with the World Tree and the World Pillar as interchangeable images of the instrument used to both separate and unite heaven and earth at the Creation . . . By its orientation to the four cardinal points, the Axis expresses the unity of Space-Time and enables the worshipper, by performance of the rite of sunwise circumambulation (*pradakṣiṇā*-) to identify with the rhythm of the cosmic cycle."³ He adds that some *stūpas* were metaphorically encircled by water⁴ and that that water is to be understood as the Cosmic Waters. That means that the *stūpa* is a "microcosm, i.e., an image of the creation of the universe dynamically conceived"⁵ as it is articulated, according to Irwin, in the *Ṛg-Veda*: from the depths of the cosmic waters arose a clod of earth to float restlessly on the surface; after a while it expanded to become the Primordial Mound (symbolised by the hemispheric dome (*aṇḍa*) of the *stūpa*); then Indra separated earth and heaven, propping up the sky with the world axis (the pillar inside the *stūpa*) and at the same time "pegging" with the same pillar (*Indra-kīla*) the Primordial Mound to the bottom of the Cosmic Ocean.⁶

When reading Irwin's papers, and moreover when you have the privilege of listening to him, as I have had a number of times, you cannot fail to be immediately convinced. His is a brilliant demonstration backed by a wealth of evidence: scrutinizing of archaeological data, careful analysis of Vedic and

Buddhist texts, use of comparative history of religions and so on. Everything seems to fit in—everything but chronology. At times it is difficult to know whether the story told by J. Irwin applies to the Buddhist *stūpa* historically and archaeologically known, or to much earlier mounds and representations. Indeed J. Irwin's interest in the *stūpa* seems to stem from the idea that the *stūpa* embodies much older concepts, that it is evidence for a lost neolithic ideology which prevailed the world over; and that whether the Buddhists, or the Buddhist elite, was aware of it or not does not matter.

II. Some Flaws in J. Irwin's Constructs

The only piece of evidence J. Irwin could bring to support his contention that ancient Indians believed in the cosmogony described *supra* does not stem from Vedic texts. It is a construct and, as Irwin himself repeatedly indicates, it is a quite recent construct. It stems from analyses made by such great scholars as Lüders, Brown and Kuiper, who tried to piece the evidence together and make sense of it. In fact you can quote many a Ṛc to support various parts of that construct, but you will never find the whole story so told in a connected way in a *Samhitā*, or in a *Brāhmaṇa*, or, later, even in an *Upaniṣad* or in a *Purāṇa*. In fact, Brown, Kuiper and Lüders were only pointing to a way of interpreting some obscure stanzas of ṚV which are *stūti* only and not detailed and connected expositions of myths. They also knew that there were many different Indian creation myths, and that Indra's creation myth was only one of them, possibly the older and more important one, but nevertheless still only one of them. Indeed, I would venture to say that there are so many different cosmogonic stories in Indian lore precisely because creation is not the core of Indian religions. Many Indian texts begin with a history of creation; many Indian gods are creators, but that is not what matters most: Indian creation myths, possibly with the exception of the *Puruṣa-sūkta* (which is not Irwin's cosmogonic story), are not so crucial for Indians as the *Genesis* story is for Jews and Christians. Perhaps that explains why today Jews and Christians work so hard to find in the *Veda* a connected creation story. The absence of such a connected

story did not seem to bother Indians, who never tried to stick to one and the same cosmogonic myth.⁷ As a consequence there is no proof of the correctness of the constructs proposed by Brown, Kuiper, Lüders and Irwin. The data they use is there, and they use it in a very clever way. But we cannot exclude the possibility that they pieced together parts which belonged to very different myths, and we have to admit that many different creation stories were currently told at the same time. Moreover, even if they are right, it would still remain true that "their" creation myth soon fell into oblivion since neither Buddhists nor Hindus continued to refer to it. Why then should it have been remembered by *stūpa* builders and only by them?

Buddhist textual evidence also is not strong. It has been shown by de Jong (1982) that the occurrence of *yūpa-yaṣṭi-* in *Divyāvadāna* XVIII (p. 244, 11) is doubtful. Only one of the four manuscripts reads so and the meaning of the compound *yūpa-yaṣṭi-*, if it really occurs (and it is the only occurrence so far known in a Buddhist text), is obscure: *dvandva* (*yūpa-* and *yaṣṭi-*) or *karmadhāraya* (a *yaṣṭi-* which is a *yūpa*)? The only other occurrence of *yūpa-* in a Buddhist text dealing with *stūpas* goes contrary to Irwin's thesis. In *Mahāvamsa* 28, 2, we are told that King *Duṭṭhagāmaṇi* when entering the city saw a stone pillar (*sīlayūpa-*) raised upon the place where he was to build the *Mahāthūpa*. But, contrary to Irwin's hypothesis, this pillar was not to be the core or the Axis of the *stūpa*: before building the *stūpa*, the King had the *yūpa-* taken away (*hāretvā*).⁸ This well-known *Duṭṭhagāmaṇi* story makes it difficult to agree with Paranavitana,⁹ who maintains that the stone pillar was an essential component of early-Sinhalese *stūpas*. The archaeological evidence is at least dubious. Even if Paranavitana and Irwin were right in supposing that such stone pillars were embedded inside the Sinhalese *stūpas*, still there is nothing to be concluded from the Pāli name Sinhalese pandits gave to them when specifically asked about them by Paranavitana: *inda-khīla-*, i.e., Skt. *indra-khīla-*. In Pāli and in Buddhist Sanskrit,¹⁰ *inda-khīla-* no longer has the etymological meaning of "Indra's peg"; it means only a short post rammed deep into the ground against which the wings of a gate are closed.¹¹ Moreover, these pandits never saw the stone column they were asked to name by Paranavitana actually standing inside the masonry of a *stūpa*: they were shown

some stone post lying in the debris around some demolished *stūpa* and when asked what they would call it, they simply and exactly answered "post," i.e., *inda-khīla*-.

It is quite true, nevertheless, that a pillar stood inside many *stūpas*. Irwin collected all the evidence he could get from excavation reports. He could have added that according to a late story told to (and by) Hiuan-tsang,¹² a *stūpa* was made from three parts: square bases, to remind us of the Buddha's *cīvara*-; a rounded dome, to remind us of the Buddha's alms-bowl; and a post which is Buddha's staff, *yaṣṭi*-. But *yaṣṭi*- also has a cosmographic meaning: a *yaṣṭi*- was supposed to have stood in the middle of the capital-towns of former *cakravartins*¹³ and Irwin points out that such a pillar protruded from the top of many Amarāvātī *stūpas* and was apparently not meant to hold any parasol (*chattra*-).¹⁴

This, however, is late evidence, stemming from Andhra Pradesh (2nd c. A.D.) only. Taken as a whole, the archaeology is simply not conclusive. Although excavators have discovered shafts for poles inside many *stūpas*, many more had none. This is true, for example, of the very early *stūpas* of Vaiśālī and Piprahwā,¹⁵ of those at Sāñcī, Bharhut, and Amarāvātī, of all the so-called votive *stūpas*, of the relic-boxes carved into *stūpa*-shape, and especially of the big stone *stūpas* carved inside of caves, as at Ghājā, Bedsā, Kārla and so on. Even when the remains of such shafts or poles have been found during excavations, they very often cannot be used as evidence of a cosmic symbolism. For instance, in most Gandharan *stūpas*, there was a pole, sometimes a very big one, but it never went through all of the masonry: a shaft was sunk in the upper part of the dome so that the pole could be firmly set inside, but the shaft was never dug to the ground, i.e., it was never deeper than necessary for buttressing the pole. We may also add that if the pole, which in most instances is needed for holding the parasols, were a cosmic axis, and if the *stūpa* were an image of the world (Mus) or of the creation of the world (Irwin), how could it stand inside a cave, with a mountain over it, as in so many instances that we know? And how could it have occurred that the shape of the hemispheric dome (*aṇḍa*-), made in the likeness of the celestial vault (Mus) or the primitive mound (Irwin), came to evolve and be surimposed, as early as Bharhut (c. 100 B.C.), on a circular drum and later on square bases?

I need not dwell upon other suggestions made by J. Irwin. Three late instances of *pradakṣiṇā-patha-* covered by blue-glazed tiles¹⁶ do not prove that the hundreds of *pradakṣiṇā-patha-* so far known were meant to symbolize the Cosmic Waters; the more so as in many instances it would have been easy to bring water around the *stūpa* if the builders had wanted to do so. More puzzling is the fact that in some (not *many*, as Irwin says) late (1st-2nd c. A.D.) depictions of *stūpas*, "the axial pillar breaks out of the summit in the actual form of a tree, with foliage resembling parasols."¹⁷ In at least one depiction that I know,¹⁸ this type of *stūpa* is being honoured by *nāgas* and *nāginīs*, the foliage looks like lotus leaves, and it is quite possible that the intention was to depict the *stūpa* standing under water where it would quite naturally receive the homage of *nāgas* and *nāginīs*. In other instances,¹⁹ a seven(?)-headed *nāga* is depicted in front of the *stūpa* so that the explanation could well be the same. But I must confess it cannot hold true for the depiction of the *stūpa* reproduced by Irwin (1979 p. 829, fig. 19): here the *stūpa* is clearly depicted standing in the open air, with birds flying around it and without *nāgas*. In any case, even if Irwin's explanation is true, it is valid only for post-Christian Andhra Pradesh, not for the whole of India.

The strongest point to make against Irwin's reconstruction, however, is the following one. Every Indian building is supposed to be built according to some diagram (*maṇḍala-*); its main axes are determined by using a gnomon and, wherever possible,²⁰ made according to the cardinal points, which are not four, as in the West, but at least five, the fifth one being the direction of the zenith. This would have been no scandal for Indian Buddhists, so that it is difficult to understand why they did not acknowledge that the *stūpa* was some sort of *maṇḍala* if they actually believed it to be so. Moreover, from the beginning, the conceptions of the Buddha and the *cakravartin* are closely associated; the Buddha is *mahā-puruṣa-*; he is omniscient (*sarva-jña-*); he is above the gods; he emits rays of light as if he were the sun, so that it would have been quite easy for Indian Buddhists to have conceived of his main monument, the *stūpa*, as a cosmogram. Why did they not acknowledge it if they in fact actually believed it, or if lay-followers believed it? In short, J. Irwin's thesis is the following: in the beginning, well before the advent of Buddhism, the *stūpa* was a cosmogram or a permanent

cosmogony; Hindus forgot it; Buddhists forgot it; Jains forgot it; or if they knew, they concealed it, why, we do not know; but the Indian illiterate peasant stuck to that old conception so that 19th century “Hindu fakirs” knew better than archaeologists the sanctity of such spots.²¹ We are here no longer in the realm of history. As far as neolithic people are concerned, I am afraid all we can tell is mere guess; as far as Indian Buddhism is concerned, I deem it far better to stick to the facts, even if they are not as attractive as Irwin’s constructs. Let us only summarize here some of these facts.

III. The Early Buddhist Stūpa

The Buddhist literary tradition seems to imply that there were *stūpas* before the advent of Buddhism. In one of the earliest and best known Buddhist *sūtras*, the *Mahā-parinirvāṇa-sūtra* (c. 3rd century B.C.?), Buddha tells Ānanda not to be concerned with his body: his corpse is to be burnt and buried under a *stūpa*, as was done for *cakravartin* kings.²² Although no such royal tomb has ever been discovered, we know for sure that kings could be buried under a *stūpa* as late as the 3rd c. B.C.²³ Plutarch’s famous story about various cities dividing Menander’s ashes equally and erecting monuments (μνημεῖα) over them²⁴ may be only a reflection of the war over the relics which is supposed to have ensued after Buddha’s death.²⁵ But Strabo XV, 54 has preserved an account of Indian funerals, taken from Megasthenes, which, from the context, must refer to royal funerals: “Their tombs are plain and the mounds raised over the dead, lowly . . . Attendants follow them with umbrellas.”²⁶ These umbrellas point to kings or to holy people. Still in the 2nd century B.C. the Sinhalese king Duṭṭhagāmaṇi (161–137 B.C.) raised a *cetiya*, i.e., a *stūpa*, over the ashes of his defeated enemy, the Tamil king Eḷāra.²⁷

That does not mean that the *stūpa* was a tomb. Indeed early Buddhists were not overly concerned with relics. A *stūpa*, with or without relics, is only a memorial. When seeing it, people remember (*anusmaranti*) the Buddha and his teaching, which induces in them a good thought (*kuśala-citta-*), which produces good *karma* (*puṇya-*).²⁸ By building a *stūpa* and paying it homage,

one could also reap good fruits: “Devas and men produce what is skilled when they have paid homage to the relics and the jewel of the knowledge of the Tathāgata who has attained complete *nibbāna* and does not accept. And through what is skilled, they allay and assuage the fever and the torment of the threefold fire.”²⁹ Built over ashes or empty, a *stūpa*, thus, was not a proper tomb; it was a memorial and did not differ greatly from those *chattri* we see built not over Rajputs’ ashes, but as cenotaphs.³⁰ That is why *stūpa* and *caitya*, from CIT, are quasi-synonyms.³¹

Being memorials much more than tombs, even for Hindus, *stūpas* could be raised over anything likely to induce a good thought, be it personal belongings of the Buddha, places where he passed through, ashes of *arhants* and so on.

IV. The *Śarīra-stūpa*

There is some evidence that in early times “the construction and worship of a *stūpa* was the concern of laymen and not of monks.”³² These *upāsaka* had gone to the Buddha for refuge, to the *Dharma* for refuge, to the *Samgha* for refuge. Everyone knew what *Dharma* meant and where the *Samgha* was to be found. But where was the departed Buddha? It seems that the *stūpa* soon became, at least among lay-followers, a substitute for the Buddha. If the Buddha had left for *nirvāṇa*-, who (or what) could receive *pūjā*- in lieu of Him and bring good *karma* to the worshipper except for *stūpas*? The *stūpa* became thus a symbol of the *parinirvāṇa*-gone Buddha, i.e., for most people, of the dead Buddha. The symbol would be stronger if there were inside some corporeal relics (*śarīra*, *sarīra-dhātu*, *dhātu*) of the Buddha, and Buddhists became more and more engrossed in the search for relics.

This change did not set in before the 2nd century B.C. The story about Aśoka dividing Buddha’s relics and building 84,000 *stūpas* over them, or the story of Sakka sending Buddha’s collar-bone to the Sinhalese king Devānampiyatissa, friend of Aśoka, are fictitious: nothing points to something like this in Aśoka’s inscriptions, not even in the Buddhist ones. In Bharhut and Gayā epigraphs, in Mathurā, even much later in Mahārāṣṭra, donors never allude to Buddha’s relics. The same holds true

for the Sāncī and the Vidiśā topes, built over relic boxes containing ashes and inscribed with *arhants'* names, where there is no evidence of Buddha's relics nor inscriptions mentioning his *śarīra*.³³ The earliest occurrences I know of such a "trade in relics" are the enshrinement of relics in the Mahāthūpa by Duṭṭhagāmaṇi Abhaya (161–137 B.C.),³⁴ and especially in numerous Kharoṣṭhī epigraphs recording the establishment of corporeal relics of the Buddha where previously there were none.³⁵ It is no accident that the *śarīra*-cult is referred to in the Kashmir *Sarvāstivādin Vibhāṣa* around the beginning of our era.³⁶

This search for relics stems from the belief that the *stūpa* is the Buddha. The same idea explains the setting up of Buddha images, around the same time, against Buddhist *stūpas*, as exemplified in Mathurā and in Gandhāra. Many Mahāyāna *sūtras*, for instance the *Saddharmapundarīka*, not only praise the worship of relics deposited in *stūpas*; they maintain that such and such a Buddha is actually sitting inside the *stūpa*, for instance Prabhūta-ratna.³⁷ The same trend is conspicuous in the great cave-*stūpas* of Ajanta, Ellora and so on, carved in the 5th century A.D., where the Buddha is depicted actually sitting both in the forepart and inside the *stūpa*.³⁸ Buddhists more concerned with "orthodoxy," if this concept means anything in Buddhism, explained that the *stūpa* was indeed Buddha's body, not his human and mortal body (*catur-mahā-bhūti-kāya-*, *rūpa-kāya-*), but his *dharma*-body. One may find in Roth (1980) texts where every component of the *stūpa* is attributed a dogmatic symbolism. Thus, the first stepped terrace represents the four *smṛty-upas-thāna-*, the dome, the seven *bodhy-aṅga-*, etc.

V. *Stūpa* and *Maṇḍala*

The use of *maṇḍalas* and *yantras* is very ancient in India. The Vedic *agni-cayana-* is already a *maṇḍala*. It is quite possible that from the earliest times, Buddhist monks used *maṇḍalas* as an aid for the kind of meditation they call *bhāvanā-*. After the beginning of the Christian Era these *maṇḍalas* became common occurrences. This could explain why *stūpas* came also to be perceived as structural (*vāstu-*)*maṇḍalas*. We have already noticed

that *stūpas* were usually facing the cardinal points; inside many of them was a pillar, stemming from the ground or more often stuck in the dome, protruding from the top and looking like a zenithal axis even if it bore parasols. In Nepal, eyes are painted on the *harmikā*- and are said to represent the four *loka-pālas*. In Śrī Laṅka, over the *harmikā*- a cylindrical *devatā-kotuwa*, "house of gods," is built, on which are sometimes carved the eight *aṣṭa-dik-pālas*. Since the *loka-pālas* dwell around Meru, the protruding part of the *yaṣṭi*- could be intended for Meru.³⁹ In the same way Tibetan *stūpas* are crowned by a moon and sun.⁴⁰ But alongside of these facts I must point out that although we have many descriptions of Buddhist *maṇḍalas*, no one text has ever been produced, as far as I know, stating that the *stūpa* is a cosmogram embodying Mount Meru. This could mean that the interpretation of the *stūpa* as symbolizing the orderly cosmos is not linked with the Buddhist monastic community, but with the lay-followers and especially the royal lay-followers.

It is not by chance that evidence for the *stūpa* as an embodiment of Mount Meru comes from Nepal and Śrī Laṅka, i.e., two countries where the *stūpa* was closely linked with the welfare and even the existence of the country. In former times, the Kathmandu valley was a lake; in the midst of it, the self-produced Ādi-Buddha (*svayaṃ-bhū*-) sat on a wonderful lotus. To provide access to him, the *bodhisattva* Mañjuśrī drew his sword and drained the valley of its waters. Over the spot where *Svayambhū* was to be seen, the king-turned-*bhikṣu*-, Śāntaśrī, raised the *Svayambhū-nātha stūpa*, the holiest *stūpa* in Nepal.⁴¹ In Śrī Laṅka, from Duṭṭhagāmaṇi's time on, and perhaps before, Buddhist relics and the *stūpa* which enshrined them were the true palladium of power and magically protected the kingdom. The citation of two instances will suffice. When Duṭṭhagāmaṇi had conquered the whole island of Laṅka and had been consecrated its sole and supreme ruler, he went out to indulge in water sports "to observe the tradition of crowned kings." As he needed no weapon, "in the very place where the *stūpa* (afterwards) stood the king's people who carried (his) spear planted the splendid spear with the relic (mounted on/in it)" by means of which he had won his previous victories. In the evening, when they wanted to take it back, they could not remove it. The King was delighted since he took it as a very good omen and "had a *cetiya* built

around it. That is the *Marica-viṭṭi-thūpa*.⁴² The same Duṭṭhagāmaṇi, before enshrining other relics in the Mahāthūpa, dedicated thrice his kingdom to them and honoured them with his white parasol of state.⁴³

Some *stūpas*, therefore, are directly responsible for the emergence of the kingdom (Nepal) or its preservation (Śrī Laṅka). They have a magic and protective power for the king and his subjects. Again in the same countries, several kings tried to equate their kingdom with the whole world by transforming it into a replica of the cosmos, with Mount Meru at its center and a row of deities (in Hindu kingdoms) or *stūpas* (in Buddhist countries) placed in such a way that the whole country, or at least its capital town where the king sat, was perceived as a gigantic *maṇḍalā*-. Instances of this are the whole of Hindu Nepal;⁴⁴ the four so-called Aśokan *stūpas* protecting the mostly Buddhist town of Patan in Nepal;⁴⁵ Sigiriya in Śrī Laṅka, where the *maṇḍala*- is clearly to be seen; and—outside India proper—Angkor in Cambodia, the Borobudur *vastu-maṇḍala*- in Java⁴⁶ and the big *stūpas* and monasteries transforming the whole of Tibet into some kind of sacred space.⁴⁷ It is quite understandable that in such countries, and by people holding such beliefs, the *stūpa* came to be viewed as the world itself, with Mount Meru concealed inside it and protruding from its top.⁴⁸

The roots of such a conception of the *stūpa* may be very old. We may suppose that in the 2nd century B.C. and later, when petty kings established the *śarīra-stūpas* we alluded to *supra*, they wanted also to protect their kingdom and their own royal power. This very conception is the core of the well known legend told about Aśoka: he is said to have divided one part of the Buddha's relics, to have sent them all over his kingdom, and to have built 84,000 *stūpas* to enshrine them, i.e., one *stūpa* in each part of the inhabited world,⁴⁹ spreading thus the Buddhist *dharma* all over the world and at the same time equating his kingdom to the entire world. At this point we are back where we started from: a *stūpa* is an embodiment of many symbolic conceptions, but the *cakravartin* symbolism appears to be the main one.

NOTES

*Revised text of a paper originally sent to the Varanasi conference on the Buddhist *stūpa*.

1. Snodgrass 1985, p. 9, whose quotations are from Eliade.
2. Irwin 1980, p. 12.
3. Irwin 1979, p. 834.
4. Irwin 1979, pp. 828–829.
5. Irwin 1979, p. 842.
6. Irwin 1979, pp. 826–827.
7. Varenne 1982, pp. 27–31. Varenne translates into French in this book 34 creation hymns coming from the *śruti*: 11 RV hymns, 5 from AV, 9 excerpts from the *Brāhmaṇas*, and 9 from the *Upaniṣads*. Most of them tell a different story.
8. *Mhv.* 28, 2: *tato puram pavisanto thūpaṭṭhāne nivesitam passitvāna silāyūpam . . .*
Mhv. 29, 2: *hāretvā hi tahim yūpam thūpaṭṭhānam akhānaya . . .*
De Jong 1982, p. 318. *Thūp.*, ch. 12. For a discussion of *yūpa* as a simile in Pāli texts, see Harvey 1984, pp. 77–81.
9. Quoted by Irwin 1979, pp. 820–824.
10. *Mahāvastu* I, 195, 6.
11. See *CPD* s.v. and Harvey 1984 pp. 80–81.
12. S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, London, 1906, I, pp. 47–48.
13. *Mahāvastu* I, 196, 15 and II, 229, 12.
14. Irwin 1979, pp. 821–823.
15. As pointed out by Gupta 1980, pp. 267–268.
16. Irwin 1979, pp. 821–823.
17. Irwin 1980, p. 16.
18. Bachhofer 1929, II, Pl. 129, 1.
19. Irwin 1980, Pl. I, 4. Bachhofer 1929, II, Pl. 124, 1–2.
20. Mountain *stūpas* in Gandhāra face East only where the topography allows it. When looking at the plans of Śrāvastī and specially Sārnāth one may see that not every *stūpa* is facing East. From the location of the stairs and of the Aśokan pillar, it appears that Sāñci *stūpa* n° 1 faced South, maybe West, certainly not East.
21. Irwin 1979, pp. 807–808.
22. Discussed by Bareau 1971, p. 35.
23. For earlier instances, see Bareau 1971, *note ad p.* 38.
24. Plutarch, *Moralia*, 821 D-E. Narain 1957, p. 98.
25. On this war and its supposed historicity, see now Bareau 1971, pp. 265–288 and more precisely pp. 270–273.
26. Mac Crindle 1901, p. 57.
27. *Mhv.* 25, 73: *taṃ deha-paṭiṭaṭṭhāne kūṭāgārena jhāpayi cetiyam tatha karesi parihāraṃ adāsi ca*
Thūp., p. 87. In older literature Duṭṭhāgāmaṇi is said to have reigned from 104 to 80 B.C. My revised dating comes from Bechert 1982, p. 32 n. 17, quoting recent Sinhalese literature.

28. Bareau 1975, p. 21. Hirakawa 1963, p. 88, n. 170. Lamotte 1958, pp. 701–705.

29. *Mil.*, 98 (translation Horner, I, p. 137). It must be said that besides this orthodox explanation, there is some evidence, even in Pāli texts, for more “popular” beliefs. My colleague G. Schopen is collecting data showing that in many instances relics were thought to be endowed with life.

30. Already noted by Foucher 1905, p. 50, n. 2.

31. Bareau 1975, p. 21.

32. Roth 1980, pp. 183–186. Hirakawa 1963 makes too much of this point.

33. Lamotte 1958, pp. 358–361.

34. Lamotte 1958, p. 399. *Mhv.*, chap. XXXI. *Thūp.*, chap. 15.

35. Fussman 1980, 1982, 1984. Salomon and Schopen 1984.

36. *Apratiṣṭhite prthivī-pradeśe lathāgatasya sārīraṃ stūpaṃ pratishṭhāpayati / ayam . . . brahmaṃ puṇyam prasavati* / References and explanations by La Vallée Poussin in *Kośa*, 4 (tome III), pp. 250–251. References to *sārīraḥ stūpaḥ* are also to be found in *Vinaya of MSV, Saṃghabhedavastu*, I, p. 161 and p. 162.

37. Hirakawa 1963, pp. 85–88.

38. As pointed out by my colleague D. Srinivasan, the obvious parallel, and perhaps the explanation, is to be sought in the so-called *mukha-līṅga* compared to the purely symbolic *līṅga*.

39. Gail 1980. Harvey 1984, p. 81.

40. These Tibetan *stūpas* may seem to be late. However there is now a very early (and unrecognized) Indian instance of such a *stūpa* crowned with a moon and sun. It is a *graffitto* found by my colleague Prof. Jettmar at Chilas II, in the Upper Indus Valley, and illustrated in Dani 1983, p. 97 n° 76. It is certainly to be dated in the 1st century A.D.

41. Lévi 1905, I, pp. 331–333. Slusser 1982, p. 298.

42. *Mhv.*, chap. XXVI (especially XXVI, 9–13). *Thūp.*, chap. 10 (translation, pp. 89–90).

43. *Mhv.*, XXXI, 90–92. *Thūp.*, translation, p. 132–133.

44. Gütschow 1982.

45. Lévi 1905, II, pp. 1–2. The legend adds that there was a fifth *stūpa*, which had disappeared, standing at the centre of the town. These *stūpas* were thus facing the five cardinal points.

46. Lokesh Chandra 1980.

47. Stein 1981, pp. 17–18. Aris 1982.

48. Further instances of *maṇḍala* symbolism in hinduized and Buddhist southeast Asia are fully commented on by Snodgrass 1985, pp. 73–77.

49. Strong 1983, p. 117. In *Suvarṇa*° a sentence is found referring to the 84,000 kings and the 84,000 towns constituting the whole inhabited world (p. 170, 31–33 of the Tibetan text; p. 191, at the end, of the German translation).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

a) Texts

- Divyāvadāna*, edited by E.B. Cowell and R. A. Neil, Cambridge 1886.
- Kośa*: Louis de La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, traduction et annotations, nouvelle édition anastatique présentée par E. Lamotte, Bruxelles 1971–1980.
- Mhv.*: *Mahāvamsa*, edited by W. Geiger, London, Pali Text Society, 1908; translated into English by W. Geiger, London, Pali Text Society, 1912.
- Mahāvāstu*: Texte publié par E. Senart, Paris, Société Asiatique, 1882–1897 (reprint, Tokyo, 1977); translated into English by J.J. Jones, London, Pali Text Society, 1949–1956.
- Mil.*: Pali text edited by V. Trenckner, London, Pali Text Society, 1880; translated into English by I.B. Horner, London, Pali Text Society, 1963–1964.
- Suvarṇa*^o: *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra, Das Gold-glanz-Sūtra, Ein Sanskrittext des Mahāyāna-Buddhismus*, herausgegeben von J. Nobel, Leipzig, 1937; *Die Tibetischen Übersetzungen*, herausgegeben von J. Nobel, Leiden, 1944–1950; *I-TSING's Chinesische Version und Ihre Tibetische Übersetzung*, übersetzt . . . von J. Nobel, Leiden, 1958.
- Thūp.*: *The Chronicle of the Thūpa and the Thūpavamsa, being a Translation and Edition of Vācissarathera's Thūpavamsa* by N.A. Jayawickrama, London, Pali Text Society, 1971.
- Vinaya of MSV: The Gilgit Manuscript of the Saṅghabhedavastu, Being the 17th and Last Section of the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādin*, edited by R. Gnoli, 2 vol., S.O.R. XLIX, 1–2, Roma 1977 et 1978.

b) Modern authors

- Aris 1979: Michael Aris, *Bhūtan, The Early History of a Himalayan Kingdom*, Aris & Phillips Ltd., Warminster, 1979.
- Bachhofer 1929: L. Bachhofer, *Die Frühindische Plastik*, Leipzig, 2 vol., 1929.
- Bareau 1962: A. Bareau, "La construction et le culte des stūpa d'après les *Vinayaṭīka*," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient*, L, 2, 1962, pp. 229–274.
- Bareau 1971: A. Bareau, *Recherches sur la biographie du Buddha dans les Sūtraṭīka et les Vinayaṭīka anciens: II, Les derniers mois, le parinirvāṇa et les funérailles*, tome II, Publications de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient, vol. LXXVII, Paris, 1971.
- Bareau 1975: A. Bareau, "Sur l'origine des piliers dits d'Aśoka, des stūpa et des arbres sacrés du bouddhisme primitif," *Indologica Taurinensia*, II (1974), Torino 1975, pp. 9–36.
- Bechert 1982: Heinz Bechert, "The Date of the Buddha Reconsidered," *Indologica Taurinensia*, X, 1982, pp. 29–36.
- Bénisti 1960: Mireille Bénisti, "Etude sur le Stūpa dans l'Inde Ancienne," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient*, L, 1, 1960, pp. 37–116, Pl. I–XXX; see also G. Roth, "Bemerkungen zum Stūpa des Kṣemaṅkara,"

- Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik*, heft 5/6, 1980, pp. 181–194.
- CPD: *A Critical Pāli Dictionary*, begun by V. Trenckner, Copenhagen, 1924–
- Dallapiccola 1980: *The Stūpa, Its Religious, Historical and Architectural Significance*, edited by A.L. Dallapiccola in collaboration with S. Zingel-Avé Lallemand, Beiträge zur Südasien-Forschung, Südasien-Institut, Universität Heidelberg, Band 55, Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden 1980.
- Dani 1983: A.H. Dani, *Chilas, The City of Nanga Parvat (Dyamar)*, Islamabad 1983.
- De Jong 1982: J.W. De Jong, Review of Irwin 1980, *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 24, 4, Octobre 1982, pp. 316–318.
- Foucher 1905: A. Foucher, *L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhāra*, Paris, 1905–1951.
- Fussman 1980: G. Fussman, "Nouvelles inscriptions śāka: ère d'Eucratide, ère d'Azès, ère vikrama, ère de Kaniška," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient*, LXVII, 1980, pp. 1–43.
- Fussman 1982: G. Fussman, "Documents épigraphiques kouchans III: L'inscription kharoṣṭhī de Senavarma, roi d'Odi: une nouvelle lecture," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient*, LXXI, 1982, pp. 1–46.
- Fussman 1984: G. Fussman, "Nouvelles inscriptions śāka II," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient*, LXXIII, 1984, pp. 31–46, Pl.I–VI.
- Gail 1980: A. Gail, "Cosmical Symbolism in the Spire of the Ceylon Dagoba," in Dallapiccola 1980, pp. 260–266.
- Gupta 1980: S.P. Gupta, *The Roots of Indian Art (A Detailed Study of the Formative Period of Indian Art and Architecture: Third and Second Centuries B.C., Mauryan and Late Mauryan)*, Delhi, B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi, 1980.
- Gütschow 1982: N. Gütschow, *Stadtraum und Ritual der newarischen Städte im Kathmandu-Tal. Eine architekturanthropologische Untersuchung*, Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart 1982.
- Harvey 1984: Peter Harvey, "The Symbolism of the Early Stūpa," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, VII, 2, 1984, pp. 67–93.
- Hirakawa 1963: A. Hirakawa, "The Rise of Mahayana Buddhism And Its Relationship to the Worship of Stupas," *Memoirs of the Toyo Bunko*, 22, Tokyo 1963, pp. 57–106.
- Irwin 1979: J. Irwin, "The Stūpa and the Cosmic Axis: The Archaeological Evidence," *South Asian Archaeology 1977* edited by M. Taddei, Naples, Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1979, pp. 799–846.
- Irwin 1980: J. Irwin, "The Axial Symbolism of the Early Stūpa: An Exegesis," in Dallapiccola 1980, pp. 12–38.
- Lamotte 1958: E. Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien, I, Des Origines à l'Ère Śāka*, Bibliothèque du Muséon, vol. 43, Louvain 1958.
- Lévi 1905: S. Lévi, *Le Népal*, 3 vol., Paris 1905–1908.
- Lokesh Chandra 1980: Lokesh Chandra: "Borobudur: A New Interpretation," in Dallapiccola 1980, pp. 301–319.
- Mac Crindle 1901: J.M. Mac Crindle, *Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature*, Westminster 1901, reprint Amsterdam 1971.
- Mus 1935: P. Mus, *Barabudur, Esquisse d'un histoire du bouddhisme fondée sur la critique archéologique des textes*, Hanoi 1935.

- Narain 1957: A.K. Narain, *The Indo-Greeks*, Oxford 1957.
- Roth 1980: G. Roth, "Symbolism of the Buddhist Stūpa," in Dallapiccola 1980, pp. 183–209.
- Salomon & Schopen 1984: R. Salomon and G. Schopen, "The Indravarman (Avaca) Casket Inscription Reconsidered: Further Evidence for Canonical Passages in Buddhist Inscriptions," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, VII, 1, 1984, pp. 107–123.
- Snodgrass 1985: Adrian Snodgrass, *The Symbolism of the Stupa*, Studies on Southeast Asia, New York, Cornell University, 1985.
- Slusser 1982: M.S. Slusser, *Nepal Mandala, A Cultural Study of the Kathmandu Valley*, 2 vol., Princeton University Press, 1982.
- Stein 1981: R.A. Stein, *La civilisation tibétaine*, 2nd edition, Paris 1981.
- Strong 1983: J.S. Strong, *The Legend of King Aśoka. A Study and Translation of the Aśokāvadāna*, Princeton University Press, 1983.
- Varenne 1982: J. Varenne, *Cosmogonies Védiques*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1982.