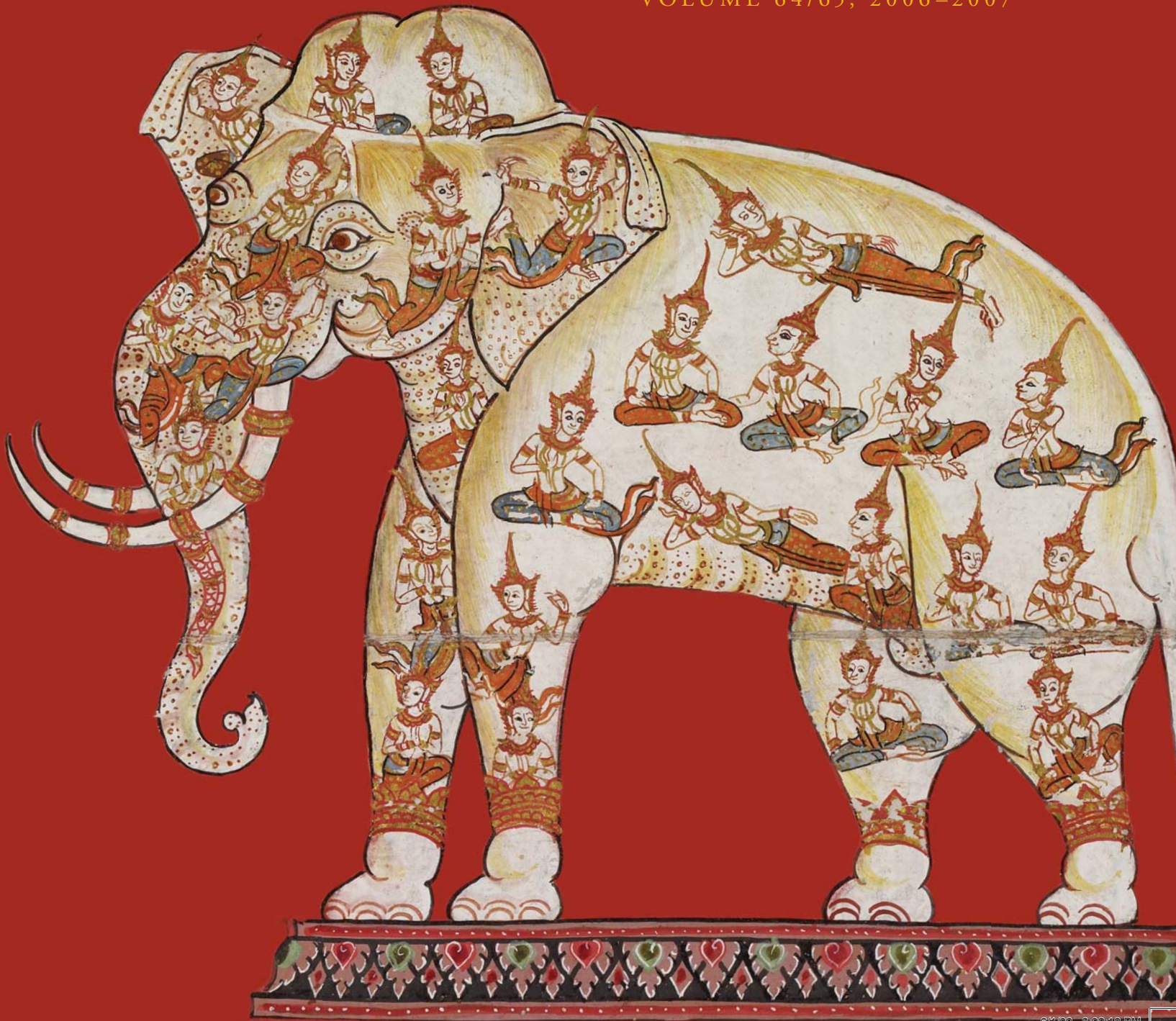


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A CURATOR'S CHOICE: ESSAYS *in* HONOR
of HIRAM W. WOODWARD, JR.

VOLUME 64/65, 2006–2007



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Cover: Detail of folio from Treatise on Elephants (Thai, ca. 1825). The Walters Art Museum, Gift of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's Southeast Asian Collection, 2002 (W.893)

Contents

Preface

WILLIAM NOEL

Bibliography of Hiram W. Woodward, Jr.

ESSAYS

Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., and the Asian Department at the Walters Art Museum

WILLIAM R. JOHNSTON 13

The Walters Art Museum’s collection of Asian art, once predominantly limited to Chinese and Japanese porcelains and other decorative works of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has expanded during the last several decades in areas that neither William nor Henry Walters would likely have envisaged. Today, the collection excels in the arts of India, the Himalayas, and Southeast Asia, particularly Thailand. Fields that were overlooked by the Walters family, such as Japanese woodblock prints and Chinese glass, are now well represented. Equally significant to collection’s expansion has been the creation of appropriate contexts in which the arts of Asia are displayed.

Protecting the Protector of Phimai

BORETH LY 35

The verbal and visual materials in the twelfth-century Buddhist temple of Phimai raise questions about the nature of narrative and thus challenge assumptions about the presence of an artistically constructed “pictorial program.” The essay proposes that there is no intentional visual narrative program at Phimai. Instead, the images there served primarily political and apotropaic purposes. The disjunctive pictorial layout of the Rāmāyaṇa episodes at Phimai suggests that this temple might possibly have been conceived as a *maṇḍala*, or a spatial configuration conceptually and theoretically bordering on a *maṇḍala*.

Hevajra at Bantéay Chmàr

PETER D. SHARROCK 49

The unrestored and remote ancient Khmer temple of Bantéay Chmàr, close to the modern Thai border and 100 km northwest of Angkor, is beginning to yield new clues to the Buddhism of King Jayavarman VII, who took the Khmer empire to the apogee of its power at the end of the 12th century. The Global Heritage Fund is now starting the first conservation project in the temple ruin that will surely enhance our understanding of Jayavarman’s Tantric Buddhism — a subject pioneered in 1981 by Hiram W. Woodward, Jr.

Avalokiteśvara in Javanese Context: *Gaṇḍavyūha*, *Kūṭāgāra*, and Amoghapāśa

NANCY TINGLEY 65

Javanese art of the ninth through thirteenth centuries indicates a wide knowledge of the iconography of the bodhisattva and of the sādhanas, texts, and rituals surrounding him. Most of these images are bronzes, but absent the context within which bronze images were worshipped, it is not possible to fully comprehend the individual object's import. A focus on Javanese in situ stone carvings of Avalokiteśvara in the monuments of Borobudur, Caṇḍi Mendut, Caṇḍi Plaosan, and Caṇḍi Jago may further our understanding of Javanese Buddhism as it was practiced in ninth- through thirteenth-century Java.

The Earliest Viṣṇu Sculpture from Southeast Asia

MICHAEL DE HAVENON 81

Early in the last century scholars began to endorse the thesis that the earliest Hindu sculptures from Southeast Asia dated to the sixth century; and, in the middle of the century, a group of Vaiṣṇava sculptures found at or near Phnom Da were assigned to the first half of that period. Approximately twenty years later, it was hypothesized that a Viṣṇu sculpture found at Chaiya in peninsular Thailand dated no later than 400 C.E. Although several scholars have questioned this thesis, the clear consensus has been one of support. Based primarily upon an iconographic and stylistic analysis utilizing more extensive Indian sources and more recent dating for these sources, this essay moves the date of the Chaiya Viṣṇu forward to the second quarter of the sixth century; nonetheless it remains the earliest Viṣṇu sculpture from Southeast Asia.

Thai Painting in the Walters Art Museum

HENRY GINSBURG 99

In recent decades, what began as a modest collection of Thai Buddhist paintings on cloth, wood, or paper at the Walters Art Museum has grown into a major resource for the study of Thai art. This was the result of gifts from two major collections. The first was that of Alexander B. Griswold, presented in the late 1970s and following his death; the second, a gift from the Doris Duke Cultural Foundation in 2002, consisted of objects collected by Doris Duke. As a consequence of these two major gifts, as well as other donations of Thai paintings and illustrated manuscripts, the Walters Art Museum now houses one of the finest Western collections of Thai paintings. The article surveys the Walters' collection of banner paintings, large and smaller-scale Lives of the Buddha, Vessantara sets, and illustrated manuscripts.

The *Bun Phra Wet* Painted Scrolls of Northeastern Thailand
in the Walters Art Museum

LEEDOM LEFFERTS 149

The gift to the Walters Art Museum from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation of three scroll paintings illustrating the *Vessantara Jataka* acquired by Miss Duke as part of her collection of Thai art and artifacts is an inestimable contribution to the museum's collection. A close examination of these scrolls and a study of how they are used in present-day annual *Bun Phra Wet* recitations give us a more accurate understanding of the role of Theravada Buddhism in the lives of the inhabitants of northeastern Thailand and lowland Laos.

Two Pieces of Kangxi Porcelain Decorated in Underglaze Red
in the Walters Art Museum

HUI-WEN LU 171

Two rare pieces of Kangxi porcelain decorated in underglaze red and enamel in the Walters Art Museum raise myriad questions about their manufacture, decoration, and dating, as well as their relation to “Peach Bloom” porcelains.

Collecting Against the Grain: Unexpected Japanese Ceramics in the
Collection of the Walters Art Museum

LOUISE ALLISON CORT 177

William and Henry Walters did not restrict their collecting to bright, decorated Japanese and Chinese porcelains; indeed, they were captivated as well by the more somber coloration of Japanese stoneware. The collectors’ purchases constitute a skeletal history of trends in Japanese ceramic production from the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries. Thirty works from this overlooked aspect of the collection are considered, ranging from a sixteenth-century small Seto or Mino jar to a masterful vase by Itaya Hazan.

A Kütahya Bowl with a Lid in the Walters Art Museum

YOLANDE CROWE 199

The decoration of eighteenth-century Kütahya ceramics, including a bowl with a lid in the collection of the Walters Art Museum that incorporates exuberant sprays of imaginary flowers, fanciful insects, and decorative patterns, is a curious anomaly in the context of eastern Mediterranean painted wares. The study of other media, including Indian painted chintzes, Mughal and Persian painted miniatures, as well as Kangxi export porcelain, likely disseminated through wide-ranging trade mediated by the Armenian land- and sea trade, suggest a decorative repertoire informed by artistic and cultural cross-fertilization.

The Shifting Identity of a Thai Buddha in Seventeenth-Century Europe

JOANEATH SPICER 207

The inclusion of Thai artifacts in seventeenth-century European collections is little studied. On the basis of its subsequent history, a statuette recorded in a 1617 Dutch inventory has been identified as a Thai Seated Buddha. The various ways that it was interpreted over the following century—Isis, a pagoda, a Siamese goddess—are telling reflections of current European knowledge of “pagan” religions.



Photo: John Dean

Preface

WILLIAM NOEL

The essays collected in this volume are dedicated to Dr. Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., to celebrate his tenure, from 1986 until 2003, as curator of Asian art at the Walters Art Museum. Woody has been a major presence in the field of Southeast Asian art for more three decades, and the breadth of his interests and range of his expertise, which extend to the arts of China, Tibet, Japan, and India, as well as European and American decorative arts and contemporary art, have immeasurably enhanced the museum's collections in many areas and inspired innumerable visitors and patrons. What began, with the gift of Henry Walters in 1931, as a narrowly focused collection of Japanese and Asian ceramics, expanded under Woody's tenure to place the Walters among the leading American collections of Himalayan and Tibetan art (through the gift of John and Berthe Ford) and Thai sculpture and paintings (through the combined gifts of Alexander Griswold, the Breezewood Foundation, Yoshie Shinomoto, and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation). His inspired installation of the Asian collections in the late nineteenth-century-style Hackerman House situates these exquisite objects in a context that complements their beauty.

Woody's scholarship, focusing on the art, history, and cultures of Thailand and Cambodia, is infused with his understanding of the development and spread of Buddhism throughout the continent. His *Art and Architecture of Thailand*, published in 2003, crowns more than thirty years of study and writing on topics as diverse as Chinese, silks, Tantric and esoteric Buddhism, and Thai bronzes. The breathtaking scope of his scholarship is evident in an early paper (1979) on the role of acquisition

in our relations with works of art, which synthesizes Tasso, Diderot, Piranesi, Marx, Cézanne, Matisse, and Benjamin, as well as blue-and-white Chinese ceramics and Buddha heads from Borobudur, in a dazzling study of the impulse to collect. His thoughtful studies of the monuments of Southeast Asia, in making their value as works of art and religious devotion more widely known, have immeasurably advanced their preservation.

In assembling this group of essays, it was clear from the start that we would need the help of a scholar of Asian art, and one who knew Woody well, to create a volume that did justice to its theme. It was natural for us to turn to Henry Ginsburg, a leading specialist in Thai painting and, until his retirement, curator of Thai and Cambodian Collections at the British Library, who for many years had been close to Woody and his family. Henry's tragic death in 2007 prevented his seeing this project and his essay herein to completion. We are immeasurably grateful for his expertise and his enthusiastic contributions to this project. Many people have since put energy, time, and care into the production of this volume of essays, including Kate Gerry, Jennifer Corr, and Charles Dibble.

I first met Woody in my first week as a young curator at the Walters in 1997. Like many of my colleagues, I admired him as a consummate scholar and a model curator, and I found him to be a surprisingly indulgent mentor. He continues to be a source of knowledge and information for so many in the field, and I, like many others, still look to him for advice and counsel in many matters.

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Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., and the Asian Department at the Walters Art Museum

WILLIAM R. JOHNSTON

Prior to the arrival of Dr. Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., at the Walters Art Gallery in 1986, Asian art could have been described as the institution's stepchild.¹ Over the next nineteen years, however, it would become the fastest-growing department within the institution, testimony both to the generosity of the museum's patrons and to the curator's capabilities. Originally, the sixty-five hundred works, including porcelains, lacquers, metalwork, bronzes, and ivories acquired by William T. Walters (1819–94) and his son, Henry (1848–1931), fell under the purview of Edward S. King.² In 1934, the year that the Walters opened as a public institution, Ed King was one of five “research associates” hired on what was assumed to be a temporary basis to catalogue the collection. Both primary and secondary areas of responsibility were assigned to each of these “scholarly cataloguers,” as they were subsequently listed. In addition to Far Eastern art, Ed King was given responsibility for all European paintings dating from before 1700. Apart from these daunting responsibilities, he would later become the museum's administrator (1945–51) and eventually its director (1951–66).

When the Walters opened to the public in 1934, the European paintings represented a greater priority than did the Asian holdings. Nevertheless, within two years, Ed King had not only catalogued over nine hundred Western paintings and sixteen hundred Japanese and Chinese pieces of ceramics and sculpture but was also fully engaged in writing his portion of the museum's handbook.³ For the ceramics, he drew on Stephen W. Bushell's ten-folio survey of Asian porcelains illustrated with works from William Walters' collection;⁴ to identify other aspects of Asian art, he consulted outside scholars, including John Alexander Pope, then on the faculty of Harvard University, and Edgar C. Schenck, the recently appointed director of the Honolulu Academy of Art.⁵

Compared with the original Walters galleries, the space dedicated that year to Chinese and Japanese art

on the second floor of the museum must have appeared sparsely installed (fig. 1). William Walters' Ming and Qing porcelains, particularly the mostly eighteenth-century monochrome wares in which he had taken such pride and his Japanese decorative arts of the Meiji era, no longer held the same interest as they had for an earlier generation of collectors. Likewise, the prize-winning porcelains and sculptures that William and Henry Walters had purchased at the international exhibitions between 1873 and 1915 were now dismissed as of negligible scholarly interest. Since William Walters' time, Americans had developed a broader knowledge of Far Eastern art, in part as a result of the scholarship and activities of those collectors who actually visited Asia. With the contributions of Edward S. Morse, Ernest Fenollosa, and William Sturgis Bigelow, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston had emerged as a preeminent center for Far Eastern art in this country. Likewise, the establishment of the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., in 1923 had further aroused the public's interest in the earlier arts of Asia. Its superb holdings of early Chinese ceramics, bronzes, and paintings far surpassed, in historical significance,



Fig. 1. The Asian Gallery, 1934



Fig. 2. Camel. China, Tang Dynasty, 7th–8th century. Earthenware with *sancai* glazes, 57 × 47 cm. Museum purchase, 1949 (49.2383)

those acquired by Henry Walters.⁶ Therefore, in planning the 1934 installation, Ed King sought to illustrate the development of Chinese art from the twelfth century B.C. to the end of the eighteenth century A.D., stressing the earlier periods rather than emphasizing the museum's rich holdings of later materials. Fortunately, at his disposal were some of the more historical pieces that Henry Walters had acquired in the early twentieth century in Boston and New York.⁷ Pivotal works in his first installation were a late sixth-century A.D. bodhisattva carved of quartz sandstone said to have come from the Temple of the Stone Buddhas, Yüing-Kang, China, and an extremely rare, late sixth-century painted lacquer over wood seated Buddha. Both were purchased from Yamanaka & Co. in 1920.⁸

Through the 1930s, progress continued in cataloging and conserving the museum's collection of Far Eastern art. Because preservation had been a concern from the outset, the museum hired both a conservator, David Rosen, and a physicist, Harold Ellsworth. As early as 1937, technical studies of the Chinese bronzes, tomb figures, and paintings were already underway. That year, a group of Chinese porcelains was displayed in the first temporary exhibition of Far Eastern art to be held in



Fig. 3. *Famille Verte* Wine Pot in the Form of the Character "Shou" (Long Life). China, 1625–1725. Biscuit porcelain with enamels, height 23.5 cm. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Fred J. Van Slyke, 1958 (49.2393)

the museum.⁹ A second, one-room porcelain show took place in 1941, and two years later, a more comprehensive exhibition of the porcelains, jades, enamels, and paintings, titled *The Decorative Arts of China*, was mounted.

Given the already overcrowded storage areas, acquisitions were not a pressing issue.¹⁰ Donors were not courted, and potential donations were often directed to the Baltimore Museum of Art. The first significant gifts of Chinese art came only in 1946, when a local collector, Randolph Mordecai, presented six Chinese blue-and-white vases dating from the late eighteenth century as well as a folding lacquer screen.¹¹ Mordecai's contributions continued, and at his death in 1949, an iron head of a bodhisattva and two superb Kangxi scroll paintings were included in his bequest.¹² Although they were of moderate quality, Baroness Giskra expanded the scope of the collection with gifts of eighteen Indian, primarily Gandharan, sculptures and a couple of Tibetan *tankas*.¹³ To further strengthen the early portions of the collection, Ed King suggested the purchases of a Tang dynasty earthenware camel (fig. 2) streaked with amber, brown, blue, and green glazes, an addition to the collection in which he took particular pride, as well as a Song dynasty Cizhou headrest, and a Chinese prehistoric terracotta jar



Fig. 4. Ganeśa. India, Pala period, ca. first half 11th century. Muscovite biotite schist, height 95.2 cm. Gift of J. Gilman d'Arcy Paul, 1967 (25.49)

with an impressed pattern.¹⁴ Unfortunately, many of his other recommendations had to be rejected because of lack of funds.

Not until 1954 did the museum focus on its Japanese collection. That year, an exhibition was organized featuring lacquers, porcelains, ivories, and metalwork. With the financial support of the Municipal Arts Society of Baltimore, Martha Boyer, a Danish scholar who was studying Far Eastern art at Harvard University, was retained to catalogue the Walters' extensive holdings of Japanese lacquers. Although the project was not completed until eight years later, her *Catalogue of Japanese Lacquers*, which eventually appeared in 1970, had the distinction of being the first publication devoted to this subject in America.¹⁵ Miss Boyer, whose field of research was early seventeenth-century Japanese export lacquers, may have been disappointed that most of the Walters' collection dated from the late eighteenth through the

nineteenth century. She nevertheless included almost four hundred entries in her catalogue and recommended that more than 170 of the remaining pieces be withdrawn from the collection.¹⁶

Meanwhile, in July 1964, and again the following January, James Cahill, curator of Chinese art at the Freer Gallery of Art, undertook a two-day survey of the Chinese and Japanese paintings purchased by Henry Walters, primarily at the Panama-Pacific Exposition in 1915.¹⁷ He concluded his examination with brief notes for the individual pieces, characterizing them with such comments as "Not bad at all, whatever it is," "at worst, the work of a pretty good follower," and very occasionally "excellent." He divided the paintings into four categories: "Excellent" (five examples); "Good" (thirty-nine examples); "Fair" (thirty-nine examples), and "Poor" (fifteen examples). The scrolls were stored in metal and cardboard canisters, and, lest there be any confusion, the categories were written in black paint on the ends of each of these containers. For a number of years, Cahill's critiques remained uncontested, and only the "Excellent" paintings were displayed.

The early holdings of Chinese ceramics were strengthened in 1956 when Mrs. David K. (Evangeline) Bruce of Washington, D.C., gave two Tang dynasty earthenware tomb figures of officials (acc. nos. 49.2387, 49.2388). Also, at that time, a local couple, Mr. and Mrs. Fred J. Van Slyke, began their association with the Walters, donating two examples of Chinese cloisonné enamel from the reign of the Kangxi emperor (acc. nos. 44.638, 44.639). In consultation with Ed King and Philippe Verdier, the curator of sculpture and decorative arts, the Van Slykes assembled substantial collections of Asian and European ceramics while continuing to donate significant pieces to the museum. In 1958, for instance, they gave a porcelain wine ewer in the form of the Chinese character *shou* (long-life) (fig. 3) that was exhibited paired with another ewer in the form of the character *fu* (happiness).¹⁸ Their last contribution, in 1963, was a late eighteenth-century statuette of a water buffalo and its attendant carved of red amber (acc. no. 74.3). Fred Van Slyke had maintained that he would bequeath his Asian ceramics to the Walters and his European porcelains to the Baltimore Museum of Art, but unfortunately he died intestate, and his collections were dispersed at auction.

A building expansion that would permit the display of the works in storage had long been the museum's goal. In 1964, after two city bond issues for this purpose had been defeated at the polls, the museum's trustees endeavored to reach out to a younger public by appointing new leadership.¹⁹ Richard H. Randall, Jr., a Baltimorean

who had trained as a medievalist at Harvard University, became assistant director in 1964 and full director two years later. During his administration, the Walters realized its long-awaited ambition in 1974, the completion of the “New Wing.”

The major development in the Asian field over the sixteen years of Dick Randall’s directorship was the growth in the collection in Indian and Southeast Asian art. It began in 1967 with the gift of a large Indian statue carved in black schist of a pot-bellied, elephant-headed dancing Ganeśa (fig. 4).²⁰ Dating from the first half of the eleventh century, the piece had been donated by a Baltimorean, J. Gilman d’Arcy Paul, after consultation with his friend Alexander Brown Griswold, a former secretary of the museum’s board of trustees.²¹

In 1969, Ed King, then a research curator, recommended another medieval Indian sculpture, a sandstone figure of Sarasvatī, a deity embodying the power of speech and serving as goddess of music, which had come from a secondary niche in a Hindu temple in central India. The multiarmed figure is represented playing a stringed instrument known as a *vīṇā* while holding a manuscript (acc. no. 25.50).

In preparation for the upcoming installation of the Asian collection in the new wing, the Walters sought funds in 1971 to employ a specialist in Chinese porcelain. With a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and matching monies from the Rockefeller Foundation’s JDR 3rd Fund (the precursor to the Asian Cultural Council), the Walters employed Lois Katz, a consultant for the collector Arthur M. Sackler and a former curator at the Brooklyn Museum. Commuting from Brooklyn over the next three years, often working throughout the night, Ms. Katz examined the porcelains, photographing and classifying them.

Meanwhile, in late 1970, a dinner party held in Baltimore would have far-reaching consequences for the museum. The hosts, John Gilmore Ford, a collector of art from India, Nepal, and Tibet, and his godfather, Edward Choate O’Dell, whose passion was Chinese snuff bottles, persuaded Ed King to view their holdings. The latter’s enthusiastic report prompted Dick Randall, within a week, to plan an exhibition of John Ford’s collection for the following spring. Shortly after graduating from the School of Interior Design at the Maryland Institute in 1960, John Ford had developed a fascination for Tibetan art, including the esoteric aspects of Buddhist imagery. Subsequently, his interests extended to all aspects of South Asian art. The eighty-seven sculptures and paintings that John Ford included in the exhibition proved to be representative of only the beginning of his collection.

The majority of his pieces came from India with additions from Tibet, Nepal, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and to a lesser extent, Indonesia. After closing in Baltimore, *Indo-Asian Art from the John Ford Collection* traveled to Houston and to Los Angeles, accompanied by a catalogue written by Pratapaditya Pal, curator of Indian and Islamic art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.²² This event was to profoundly affect both John Ford’s future and that of the Walters. Not only did he meet his wife-to-be, Berthe Hanover, at the exhibition’s opening in Baltimore, but he also developed a close association with the museum that would eventually become the recipient of the major portion of his much-expanded collection.

The long-anticipated new wing finally opened in November 1974. Two architectural firms designed the addition: Shepley, Bullfinch, Richardson, and Abbot of Boston, and Myers, Ayers, and Saint of Baltimore. Donald Tellalian, the principal designer from Boston, wished to create intimate exhibition spaces that would provide viewers with a sense of immediacy when looking at the works of art, which tended to be small in scale. The Asian collection was allocated to the core of the building’s fourth floor. Described as consisting of “five galleries,” the space for Asian art was essentially a central square surrounded by four small alcoves. Towering in the center was the large sixth-century quartz sandstone Chinese bodhisattva flanked by several smaller sculptures.²³ In a



Fig. 5. Dragon. China, Six Dynasties period, 4th–5th century. Painted earthenware, 18.5 × 26 cm. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Edward L. Brewster, 1977 (49.2425)

recess in the rear allocated to Japanese art, stood a lacquered-wood seated figure of Dengyo Daishi (767–822), founder of Japanese Tendai Buddhism, which had been lent by a private collector.²⁴ Placed behind the statue as a backdrop was the pair of six-fold screens purchased the previous year.²⁵ Showing blossoming cherry trees, these screens have been dated to either the Momoyama or the early Edo period (late sixteenth to early seventeenth century) and have been linked in style to the artist Kaiho Yusho (1533–1615). The new installation, however handsome, was still woefully inadequate to provide anything other than a modest sampling of the riches of the collection.²⁶

The greater visibility of the Asian collection encouraged additional gifts. In 1977, Mr. and Mrs. Edward L. Brewster donated an earthenware crouching dragon from a tomb of the Six Dynasties period (A.D. 220–589) (fig. 5), as well as a pair of terracotta figurines of court ladies from the Tang Dynasty.²⁷

That same year, Alexander Griswold presented eleven Thai and Cambodian works in bronze and stone ranging in date from the eighth to the eighteenth century. While serving in the U.S. Office of Strategic Services, Griswold

had parachuted into Thailand in 1945, and three years later, he began to study Southeast Asian history and archeology, distinguishing himself as a scholar of Thai Buddhism. In addition to publishing *Dated Buddha Images of Northern Siam* (1957), Griswold wrote numerous articles and served as a member of the editorial board of *Artibus Asiae*, a scholarly journal devoted to Asian art. In 1964, he was appointed visiting professor of Southeast Asian art history and archaeology at Cornell University. As early as 1945, Griswold had acquired his first Thai sculptures under the tutelage of the distinguished collector H.H. Prince Bhanubandhu Yugala, but most of his collection was assembled over a period of four years starting in 1951. He maintained residences in both Thailand and Maryland, and it was the annual openings, starting in 1956, of his house, “Breezewood,” and its collections, in Monkton, Maryland, that introduced Baltimoreans to the arts of Southeast Asia.²⁸ Among the more outstanding pieces Alexander Griswold gave in 1977 was a seated Buddha in leaded bronze that had been made in Sukhothai, the first important Thai kingdom within the borders of modern Thailand. This sculpture, perhaps the finest Sukhothai bronze in America, dates from the second half of the fourteenth century (fig. 6).²⁹ Two years later, the Walters received sixty works from Griswold and his foundation, among them eight Thai seated Buddhas, ranging in date from the fourteenth to the early sixteenth centuries, and a selection of Indian and Vietnamese pieces. As a collector and scholar of Thai Buddhism, Alexander Griswold’s particular interest was in iconography rather than aesthetic merit; although not all of his gifts were of equal interest, they were nonetheless harbingers of more consequential donations to follow.

Dick Randall resigned as director in 1980 to become curator of medieval art and arms and armor, two of his lifelong passions. Nevertheless, that autumn he completed one of his other projects, the organization of *Masterpieces of Chinese Porcelain*.³⁰ This exhibition, drawn from the museum’s collection, was held to commemorate the republication in one volume of S.W. Bushell’s monumental catalogue of William Walters’ porcelains, *Oriental Ceramic Art*, which had originally appeared in 1896.³¹

In 1981, thirty-five-year-old Robert P. Bergman, a medievalist and a former associate professor at Harvard University, was appointed Dick Randall’s successor. Although his background had been strictly academic, the new director brought to the Walters an infectious enthusiasm as a proselytizer for the arts.³² This trait, together with the growth of the board of trustees, and,



Fig. 6. Seated Buddha. Thailand (Sukhothai), ca. 1350–1400. Bronze, 68.8 × 53.5 cm. Gift of Alexander B. Griswold, 1979 (54.2520).



Fig. 7. Woody with Achan Nisa Sheanakul in Thailand, about 1965, while an English teacher at the Faculty of Archaeology, Silpakorn University

until 1991, a favorable economy, all contributed to the museum's expansion over the next twelve years.

For the first half of his tenure, Bob focused on renovating and refurbishing Henry Walters' original museum building. Nevertheless, during this period, exhibitions of Asian art continued to take place, including *Japan and the West in Japanese Prints*, a show that was held to celebrate Maryland's sister-state relationship with Kanagawa, Japan, and rotating exhibitions of Japanese lacquers and ceramics. Three years later, the museum hosted *A Myriad of Autumn Leaves: Japanese Art from the Kurt and Millie Gitter Collection*, an exhibition featuring paintings from the Edo period (1615–1868).³³

The most significant development at the Walters in 1983 was the formation of a group of members known as the Friends of the Asian Collection that met for lectures and visits to various collections. John Ford, the driving force behind the organization, served as its first chairman. The initial membership of seventy-five soon doubled. One of the Friends' objectives was to raise funds to support a full-time curator of Asian Art,³⁴ a goal that became acutely pressing three years later when the Walters successfully competed for stewardship of Hackerman House. Number 1, West Mount Vernon Place, the most imposing house on the square and the former residence

of the Thomas, Jencks, and Gladding families, had been donated to the City of Baltimore by the philanthropists Willard and Lillian Hackerman.³⁵ Several institutions competed for the newly acquired property, but the mayor, William Donald Schaefer, decided that the most appropriate use for the house would be to serve as "the Walters Art Gallery Museum of Asian Art."

Some twenty candidates applied for the Walters curatorship; twelve were interviewed, but it soon became apparent that Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., was the most qualified for the position. His appointment as the Walters' first curator of Asian art was announced in 1986. For Woody, as he is known by his friends and colleagues, this position represented a homecoming. A native of Baltimore, Woody had left to pursue an academic career studying fine arts at Harvard College. He subsequently received both a master's degree in Southeast Asian studies and a doctorate in fine arts at Yale University in 1975.³⁶ In the meantime, from 1963 to 1966, he served in the Peace Corps in Thailand (fig. 7), where he again resided from 1969 to 1972, traveling extensively through Southeast Asia. Prior to returning to Baltimore, Woody had taught in the department of the history of art at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and subsequently served as associate professor at the University of

Vermont. In addition to his academic credentials—he was already widely recognized as one of the country's foremost authorities on Thai art—Woody brought with him curatorial experience at the Fleming Museum of the University of Vermont, the University of Michigan Museum of Art, and the National Museum, Bangkok. His other qualifications included his knowledge of Chinese ceramics (one of the Walters' strengths) and his extremely broad range of interests, which extended to such diverse fields as European and American decorative arts and contemporary art.

Woody's most pressing assignment upon arriving at the Walters was the installation of Hackerman House. The firm of James R. Grieves Associates, which had been retained as the architect, immediately began the structural alterations necessary to transform the house into a climate-controlled museum.³⁷ Two members of the firm, Martha Jones and David G. Wright, were assigned to collaborate with Woody in planning the installations and a designer, Elroy Quenroe, was employed for the case designs. Given the museum's strength in Japanese holdings, it was fortunate that a curatorial assistant was hired, initially Lee Bruschke-Johnson, and a year later, Kathleen Emerson-Dell, otherwise known as Ked. Fluent in Japanese, Ked would provide invaluable service to the museum in numerous projects over the next fifteen years. To prepare the articles selected for display, additional conservators were added to the staff: Ann Bolton was hired with funds provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, and Rika Smith came to the museum through a grant from the J. Paul Getty Foundation. They would concentrate on Asian art for the next several years.

The team faced two major challenges: the disproportionate nature of the Walters' holdings, with a majority of the works dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the decidedly classical and Renaissance-revival styles of the downstairs rooms in Hackerman House, which seemed dauntingly inimical to the display of Asian art. Devising an ingenious solution for these issues, Woody proposed that the ground floor be installed as the chambers of an American collector of Chinese and Japanese art, displayed in the tastes of the 1880s and '90s. To approximate the aesthetic tastes of these periods, Woody assiduously consulted images of late nineteenth-century private galleries and domestic interiors. He and Martha Jones of the Grieves firm selected appropriate wall papers, paint colors, and fabrics, and commissioned carpets to be woven in England.³⁸ Even in drafting the architectural plans, Woody's views often prevailed. David Wright recalls how Woody preserved the integrity

of the conservatory by insisting that a staircase be placed at an end rather than set in the center of the space as originally proposed.³⁹

In the installation of the ground floor, the eighteenth-century Chinese monochrome wares were placed in Elizabethan-style bookcases in the front library; behind, in what had originally been the dining-room, were installed the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Japanese decorative arts, including many of the prize-winning virtuoso porcelains, ivory carvings, and sculptures that William and Henry Walters had bought at various international exhibitions (fig. 8). Across the hall, the double parlors, linked together as the Great China Room, were devoted to Chinese and Japanese porcelains (fig. 9). Among them were seventeenth-century blue-and-white wares, some decorated with European scenes, *famille verte* and *famille rose* enameled porcelains, and ceramics set in ormolu mounts. The Walters boasts some exceptionally fine examples of Japanese Hirado ware, which were highlighted in the front section of the double parlor. In the second-floor rooms, where the architecture was less obtrusive, Woody installed larger sculptures, the earlier, more historical objects, and the Japanese decorative arts (fig. 10). The rapidly growing Southeast Asian and Indian holdings were displayed in an upper level of a carriage house that stood between Henry Walters' gallery and Hackerman House. These three buildings were connected by a bridge adroitly designed by Grieves so as not to obstruct the view of Mount Vernon Place.

The Hackerman House Campaign Committee raised seven million dollars, and groundbreaking took place in 1989.⁴⁰ In May 1991, the house opened to the public with much fanfare, including a parade up Charles Street, Baltimore's main north-south thoroughfare, headed by a seventy-five-foot-long silk dragon. A critic for the *Washington Post* observed enthusiastically:

Forming the apex of a golden triangle of Asian art whose bases are Washington's Freer and Sackler galleries, the Hackerman's two exhibit floors can showcase a thousand artworks at a time without seeming busy or crowded. And without showing off, either. In keeping with the subtlety and refinement of Asian fine arts the Hackerman's seemingly simple mountings are masterworks of understatement as well as thoroughness and thoughtfulness.⁴¹

Coinciding with the completion of Hackerman House was the publication of the handbook *Asian Art in the Walters Art Gallery: A Selection*, with a text by Woody and sumptuous color illustrations taken by the museum's photographer, Susan Tobin.

In preparation for the opening of Hackerman House, Woody had embarked on a campaign to expand the collection through purchases and gifts. Rather than defending the limitations of the original holdings, he decided to exploit their strengths, particularly in the later periods of Japanese and Chinese art. During his first six months at the Walters, in order to complement the Edo and Meiji porcelains, metalwork, and ivories, as well as the Qing porcelains, he recommended the purchase of a number of late Japanese and Chinese paintings, works that still fell within the range of the limited funds the Walters had received through a bequest from Ambassador and Mrs. William J. Sebald.⁴² His purchases included six Japanese nineteenth-century hanging scrolls, among them, the vibrantly colored *Roosters, Chicks, and Morning Glories* (acc. no. 35.132) by Watanabe Seitei (1851–1919), a Japanese artist who fell under the influence of Western painting while visiting the Paris Exposition Universelle in 1878.⁴³ Likewise, he located for the collection two Chinese seventeenth-century calligraphic scrolls and an eighteenth-century fan mounted as an album leaf, *Garden with Pavilion*.⁴⁴ As indicated by the prefix to the signature, the artist Li Shizhuo (1687–1770) had painted the fan for the Qianlong emperor.

Continuing to draw upon the Sebald Fund, Woody in 1987 acquired an early eighteenth-century Chinese fan painting, *Lilies and Butterflies* by Yun Bing. Over the next couple of years, the Sebald Fund made possible acquisitions of such diverse objects as an ornate nineteenth-century Chinese armchair produced for the Western market and two boxes for betel quid, one Indian and the other from the Philippines.⁴⁵

As the opening of Hackerman House approached, Woody also drew upon the W. Alton Jones Foundation Acquisition Fund, established in 1983, to allow for the purchase of works that would otherwise fall beyond the Walters' means. With these monies, he acquired in 1989 a pair of six-fold panel screens in ink and gold wash on paper depicting a Buddhist temple in winter and a Shinto shrine in summer (fig. 11). The artist, Mori Kansai (1814–94), had established a school of painting in Kyoto during the late Edo period.⁴⁶ Woody used the same fund the following year for the purchase of a spectacular double set of four-panel sliding doors in ink, color, and gold leaf. By chance, they were painted by Mori Ippo (1798–1871), an early associate of Mori Kansai in Kyoto in the 1840s. Again the two seasons are represented: in late winter a peacock rests on a prunus tree looking down at a peahen; the same birds are represented guarding their chick, in summer, as indicated by the flowering peonies.⁴⁷



Fig. 8. Hackerman House, first-floor galleries: Japanese decorative arts

Fig. 9. Hackerman House, first-floor galleries: Chinese and Japanese porcelain and ceramics

Fig. 10. Hackerman House, second-floor galleries: Early China



Fig. 11a–b. Mori Kansai (Japanese, 1814–1894), *The Kamigamo Shrine in Summer*; *Byodo-in Temple in Winter*. Ink and gold wash on paper with hints of color, each 47 × 136.7. Museum purchase with funds provided by the W. Alton Jones Acquisition Fund, 1989 (35.147, 35.148)

As the activity in the Asian department accelerated, gifts arrived more frequently. The scope of the museum's collection expanded in 1986 to include Japanese woodblock prints, a field hitherto ignored by William and Henry Walters. A donation of fifty-one prints by Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861), the “*Seichu gishiden*” (*Stories of True Loyalty of the Faithful*) from Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Snell was followed by another of 140

nineteenth-century Japanese prints from Justine Lewis Keidel.⁴⁸ With a grant from the E. Rhodes and Leona P. Carpenter Foundation awarded to the Walters in 1993 to conserve and catalogue its growing Japanese print collection, Ked began the practice of mounting four small, rotating print exhibitions every year.

In 1987, John and Berthe Ford, now regular donors, gave a Tibetan *tanka* showing the Buddha Śākyamuni



Fig. 12. Buddha Śākayamuni with Jātaka Tales. Tibet, ca. 1700. Opaque watercolors on cotton, 131.5 × 66.3 cm. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John Gilmore Ford, 1987 (35.140)

recounting the story of six or seven of his previous existences. Surrounding him are bodhisattvas and patriarchs enacting the texts the Buddha is delivering (fig. 12). Two years later, the Fords offered two bronzes, one of Śiva and the other of Gaṇeśa, both from Mysore or Kerala, and dating from the fourteenth or fifteenth century.⁴⁹

The most significant bequest of Asian art received at the Walters until this time was that of Alexander Griswold.⁵⁰ By an agreement signed in 1987 between the Walters and the Breezewood Foundation, the museum would become the eventual destination for the art works remaining at the foundation.⁵¹ Completed in 1992, the transfer of the collection placed the Walters in the vanguard of American museums in the field of Southeast

Asian art in general and Thai art in particular. Although Alexander Griswold had begun to transfer the works from his collection to the museum fifteen years earlier, family members acknowledged that Woody's appointment had been a determining factor for the bequest. Woody had not only met Griswold as early as 1962, but the donor had also served as his dissertation adviser. As a scholar of Buddhist iconography, Woody published a late twelfth-century Cambodian statue from the Griswold collection, relating the eight-armed deity, Avalokiteśvara, the embodiment of compassion (fig. 13) to images King Jayavarman VII (r. 1181–ca. 1200) had distributed to various towns throughout his kingdom, according to an inscription of 1191.⁵²

Prior to the opening of Hackerman House in 1991, the museum had continued to host significant exhibitions of Asian art, beginning in 1987 with *Stories from China's Past: Han Dynasty Pictorial Tomb Reliefs and Archaeological Objects from Sichuan, People's Republic of China*. The institution's schedule for 1989 was dominated by the Asian department. That spring, Woody brought to the museum *Ikats: Woven Silks from Central Asia*. These are silks distinguished by the dyeing of the warp threads and occasionally also weft threads before being woven to create cloudlike patterns. The collection of fifty *ikats*, mostly robes and hangings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was borrowed from Pip Rau, a Central Asian expert and dealer based in London. Following that show came *The Nature of Loyalty: Japanese Warrior Prints*, drawn exclusively from the museum's print collection recently established with the Snell and Keidel gifts. The year closed with *Japanese Cloisonné*



Fig. 13. Avalokiteśvara. Cambodia, ca., 12th–13th century. Low-tin bronze, 48 cm. Gift of A. B. Griswold, 1992 (54.2726)

Enamels: The Fisher Collection. Over a span of twenty-five years, Stephen W. Fisher, an early member of the Friends of the Asian Collection, had assembled a remarkable collection of this art form, one that the Meiji emperors had promoted for export to Europe and America. Beginning with the Vienna International Exhibition held in 1873, Japanese cloisonné enamels had appeared at the various world's fairs until the early twentieth century. The Fisher exhibition enabled the viewer to follow the development of cloisonné enameling in Japan through the creations of Namikawa Yasuyuki (fl. 1872–1922), a great master of the art who worked with gold and silver wires of varying thicknesses, to the wireless enamels, an extraordinary technical achievement introduced by Namikawa Sosuke (1847–1910), a member of the imperial household guild.

Meanwhile, Ked had become enthralled by a porcelain vase decorated with a blossoming plum tree in underglaze blue, pink, and yellow from the studio of Miyagawa Kozan (1842–1916), the Japanese ceramist who was regarded as the greatest master of his age.⁵³ She undertook a study of Kozan porcelains, which culminated in an exhibition, *Bridging East and West: Japanese Ceramics from the Kozan Studio, Selections from the Perry Foundation* that opened in Baltimore in the winter of 1994–95 and traveled to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, the following spring.⁵⁴

The arrival of Laurance and Isabel Roberts in Baltimore in 1988 provided a welcome addition to the city's cultural community—particularly to the Walters—and they soon befriended Woody. Laurance Roberts, a specialist in Asian art, had been appointed director of the Brooklyn Museum in 1938 but served in army intelligence during World War II, leaving Isabel Roberts to run the museum. At the end of the war, he assumed the directorship of the American Academy in Rome, a position he held until retiring in 1960. He remained active in the scholarly community, publishing the *Connoisseur's Guide to Japanese Museums* (1967) and an important reference source, the *Dictionary of Japanese Artists* (1976). In the 1990s, the Roberts began to divest themselves of their holdings, and over the next seven years they presented the Walters with numerous Chinese and Japanese sculptures, bronzes, porcelains, and paintings, ranging from a late Shang or Zhou dynasty dagger ax of about the eleventh century B.C. to a set of scroll paintings showing Mount Fuji in four seasons by the Japanese artist Kano Tsunenobu (1636–1713).⁵⁵ Perhaps their most singular gift was a collection of rubbings of Chinese stele, wall carvings, and tomb epitaphs. They included some rare and unique images, and an exhibition was therefore proposed but never realized. Many of the rubbings



Fig. 14. Donna Strahan, Woody, and Henry Ginsburg in Thailand, 1993



Fig. 15. Baltimore mayor Kurt L. Schmoke, Maryland governor Parris N. Glendening, H.M. Queen Sirikit, and Woody admiring the Walters' elephant manuscript (MS W.893) at the opening of *Unearthly Elegance: Buddhist Art from the Griswold Collection*, 24 May 1995.

have been incorporated into rotating installations in Hackerman House.

Gary Vikan, who succeeded Robert Bergman as director of the museum in 1994, is widely admired for his bold vision and flair for engaging the public. It was he who brought to Baltimore one of the most successful exhibitions of Asian art to appear at the Walters, *The First Emperor: Treasures from Ancient China*.⁵⁶ Opening in the spring of 1997, it featured eighty works of art, including fourteen life-size terracotta guardian figures from the tomb complex of Emperor Ch'in Qin Shihuangdi (r. 221–206 B.C.), who unified much of what is now China in the third century. The tomb had been discovered near Xian in Shaanxi Province in 1974.⁵⁷ Coming from what is widely regarded as the most spectacular archeological discoveries of recent times, the figures could not fail to captivate the public, and the exhibition drew a record attendance of 154,000.

Once Hackerman House opened in 1991, Woody turned to cataloguing the Griswold collection.⁵⁸ Over three hundred works had come either from the Breeze-



Fig. 16. Brushholder with figures in a garden setting. China, second half of the 18th century. Opaque white glass with red overlay, 18.7 × 8.8 cm. Gift of Mrs. Edward L. Brewster in memory of Edward L. Brewster, 1993 (47.698)

wood Foundation or from Alexander Griswold personally. In addition, the collector's longtime companion, Yoshie Shinomoto, donated a number of Thai and Cambodian pieces, including bronzes and nineteenth-century banners from the Breezewood residence, which, with its contents, had been bequeathed to him. From the outset, Woody intended the publication to serve not merely as a catalogue—indeed only one hundred pieces were included—but more as a general history of Thai sculpture illustrated with most significant examples in the collection. Although Griswold had also acquired sculptures in stone, stucco, and ceramics, much of the work is focused on pieces cast in bronze, ranging in date from the seventh-century Dvāravatī Kingdom to the 1767 destruction of the city of Ayuttahaya. In addition to summarizing the history of the collection and providing an account of Buddhism and its various doctrines, Woody thoroughly documented every work, placing it within its artistic and historical context. At his disposal he had Alexander Griswold's file cards for each piece, though many listed little more than the date of purchase



Fig. 17. Ten-fold screen with scenes of filial piety. Korea, Choson period, 18th–19th century. Ink and colors on silk, 37.3 × 138 cm. Gift of Beverly Becker in memory of General and Mrs. Carter B. Magruder, 1994 (35.199)

and the source. Among the project's major achievements was the technical examination and analysis of each piece using the most current techniques, including radiography and thermoluminescence testing undertaken by members of the museum's division of conservation and technical research and their colleagues elsewhere. An unprecedented analysis of clay cores from the bronze sculptures, headed by Terry Drayman-Weisser, was carried out by Chandra L. Reedy of the University of Delaware.⁵⁹ Fortunately, in 1993, a grant from the Asian Cultural Council enabled Woody and conservator Donna K. Strahan to travel to Bangkok and to various provincial museums as well as to visit various existing foundries in Thailand (fig. 14). An exhibition, *Unearthly Elegance: Buddhist Sculpture from the Griswold Collection*, highlighting the results of their research, was opened at the Walters two years later by H. M. Queen Sirikit of Thailand (fig. 15). When *The Sacred Sculpture of Thailand: The Alexander B. Griswold Collection*, was published by the Walters Art Gallery as a permanent record of their research in 1997, it was acclaimed as a paradigm of scholarship and completeness in a field unfamiliar to most Western readers.⁶⁰

In 1993, Mrs. Edward L. Brewster donated in memory of her husband, a longtime supporter of the Walters, a number of gifts, the most significant of which was a collection of twenty-seven examples of Chinese glass dating from the early eighteenth through the mid-nineteenth century that had been assembled by Mr. Brewster's father in Chicago. Glass is a medium not particularly well represented in any department at the museum, and Chinese glass, in particular, appears to have been either ignored or unknown to both generations of the Walters

family. Among the more interesting examples that Woody singled out for special attention is a brush holder carved in transparent, red overlay glass on a snowflake white body showing children playing in a garden setting (fig. 16).⁶¹

In his study of Asian ceramics in the Walters' collection (1899), Stephen Bushell had allocated a short chapter to Korean wares.⁶² The few original Walters holdings of Korean ceramics were supplemented in 1981 with a gift of twenty additional pieces ranging in date from the Silla period (57 B.C.–A.D. 936) to the Goryeo period (936–1396).⁶³ Woody organized the first exhibition devoted to Korean art in 1993. Quoting the archaeologist Kim Wonyong, he titled it *Like the Taste of Good Rice: Art from Korea*.⁶⁴ Exhibited were not only the Walters ceramics, but also works borrowed from members of the Friends of the Asian Collection as well as from other local collectors. A lively program of events intended to reach the Korean community as well as the general public was held in conjunction with this popular exhibition. Significant additions to the Korean holdings followed, including a selection of celadon and stoneware ceramics, as well as a ten-panel folding screen presented by Beverly Becker in memory of General and Mrs. Carter Magruder in 1994. The screen illustrates seven of twenty-four paragons of filial piety attributed to the Chinese sage Confucius, which had become familiar in Korea as early as the fourth century. Depicted are scenes extolling good behavior within the family, beginning with one showing a devoted seventy-year-old, toothless Lao Lai-tzu, dressed in colorful, patched clothes attempting to entertain his even more aged parents with a bird (fig. 17).⁶⁵



Fig. 18a–b. Wang Yuanqi (Chinese, 1642–1715), *Free Spirits among Streams and Mountains*, details, 1684. Ink on paper, 33 × 710.9 cm. Museum purchase with funds provided by the W. Alton Jones Foundation Acquisition Fund, 1994 (35.198)

In the evening of 28 May 1996, the Friends of the Asian Collection gathered for an opening of an exhibition celebrating the acquisition made with the W. Alton Jones Fund of a major seventeenth-century Chinese handscroll, *Free Spirits among Streams and Mountains* (fig. 18).⁶⁶ The artist Wang Yuanqi (1642–1715), a scholar-official, is regarded as the last great master of the orthodox school of Chinese painting. In 1700, he was appointed the Kangxi emperor's adviser for the imperial art collections and "was subsequently considered a towering figure, whose work expressed the highest values of

traditional Chinese culture."⁶⁷ In this early work from 1684, created before he had fully developed his mature style, the artist looks back to one of the greatest handscrolls of the past, *Dwelling in the Fu-ch'uan Mountains*, painted in 1350 by Huang Gongwang during the Yuan dynasty. Although Wang Yuanqi's scroll was displayed in the exhibition at its full length, 710.9 cm, each of its twelve sections would originally have been unrolled for contemplation, one section at a time. In explaining to the members how the artist provided a range of experiences for the viewer as he moved through an ideal world, going



Fig. 19. Six-fold screen with scenes from the "Genji Monogatari." Japan, Momoyama period, 1570s. Ink, color, and gold on paper, overall 63.5 × 306.7. Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Robert Feinberg, 1997 (35.210)



from mountains to lowlands, expanses of water, forests, rocks, and villages—not merely copying appearances, but embodying nature’s forces and energies—Woody compared the sensations evoked to those experienced at a musical performance. He likened the rhythm of the painting to the rhythm of life, namely, breathing. The purchase of Wang Yuanqi’s scroll, a cause to which Gary Vikan and the trustees lent their full support, raised the Walters’ collection of Qing paintings to a level of quality in keeping with its porcelain holdings of the same period.

The year 1997 proved particularly fruitful for the Asian collection. Robert Feinberg, a trustee and future president of the museum board, and his wife, Betsy, donated three Japanese paintings, the earliest being a small six-fold, screen painted by a Yamato-e school artist of the 1570s.⁶⁸ Represented are three scenes from *The Tale of Genji*, generally regarded as the world’s first novel, which was composed in the eleventh century A.D. by a lady at the Heian court known as Murasaki Shikibu. Depicted from right to left are three scenes selected to represent the different seasons: a banquet given in the



autumn at Nijo in honor of Genji's fortieth birthday (chapter 34) (fig. 19), "The Shell of the Locust," a summer view in which Genji spies on two sheltered women playing the game of *go* (chapter 3), and a winter, moonlit gardenscape in which young maidservants enjoy themselves making snow balls (chapter 20).⁶⁹

Among other major gifts that year were thirty-five mostly early Chinese ceramics and bronzes presented by Robert Ballentine and his wife Dorothy. Dr. Ballentine, a retired professor of biology at the Johns Hopkins University, had begun to collect while serving as an instructor at Columbia University, New York, during the 1940s. The Ballentine gifts ranged from a late third to early second millennium B.C. painted bowl to a celadon vessel dating from the late nineteenth century,⁷⁰ but predominating in the collection were several earthenware Tang tomb figures from the sixth through the eighth century. After Dr. Ballentine's death in 1998, Mrs. Ballentine donated eight additional pieces of equal if not greater historical interest, including a sixth-century model of a house with a woman grinding grain (acc. no. 49.2777).

The culminating coup in 1997 was John and Berthe Ford's announcement in September of the year that they intended to bequeath to the museum their Indian and Himalayan art holdings. It is anticipated that this generous act will place the Walters among the six greatest collections of those fields in America. One hundred and ninety-three paintings, sculptures, and liturgical objects were selected for an exhibition, *Desire and Devotion, Art from India, Nepal, and Tibet*, that opened in Baltimore in the autumn of 2001 and traveled to museums across the country, as well as to Hong Kong. Pratapaditya Pal, author of the 1971 Ford publication, prepared the catalogue, which included Woody's essay on artistic production and Buddhist religious practices.⁷¹ While the show traveled, Woody and John Klink, the head of exhibition design at the Walters, planned the renovations of the former Hackerman House complex (once the backyard) so as to create a large gallery worthy of accommodating the Fords' pieces. Following the exhibition's return from Hong Kong, a selection of sculptures and paintings were mounted in the John and Berthe Ford Gallery, which opened in July 2004.

The Fords, meanwhile, have continued their practice of donating several works of art to the institution every year. Among their gifts in 2001 was an Indian painting illustrating a scene from the *Bālākanda* (Book of Childhood) of *Rāmāyana*, the epic written in Sanskrit by the poet Vālmikī.⁷² It is thought to have been painted by a court artist in Rajasthan, Mewar, in 1700–25. In

2004, the Fords gave a thirteenth-century Indian bronze statue of Viṣṇu, a member of the Hindu trinity along with Brahma and Śiva.⁷³ The deity is regally portrayed, wearing a tall crown on his head and richly decorated with ornaments. He holds in one of his upper hands a flaming wheel—a symbol of the sun, the universal mind, and the cosmic order—and in the other a flaming conch, signifying the ocean with its material riches as well as primordial sound. Among the other spectacular works now displayed in the Ford gallery as a promised gift is a gilt bronze statue of Kalachakra (Wheel of Time) and Viśvamata (World Mother) locked in an amorous embrace known as the *yab-yum* (fig. 20).⁷⁴ Simultaneously, the deities are trampling on representations of Rudra (anger) and Jana (desire). The rendering of the figures must have posed an anatomical challenge to the artist: the male god has twenty-four arms, while the four-headed female has eight. Although the sculpture is generally thought to have been produced in eastern Tibet about 1500, the treatment of the lotus on the base suggests to some scholars a Chinese origin.

They were initially skeptical, but Woody's colleagues supported him in 1998 when he recommended the acceptance of an ornamental rock intended for a scholar's table (fig. 21). The donor, the sculptor Richard Rosenblum (1940–2000), had learned of Chinese scholar's rocks in the late 1970s while endeavoring to achieve "a volumetric sense of deep space" in his own art.⁷⁵ Over the next two decades, he would assemble the most comprehensive collection of scholar's rocks in the world. The prototypes for such objects were the fantastically shaped, large rocks installed in the imperial gardens of China as early as the second century B.C.; by the eleven and twelfth centuries, smaller examples were being mounted on wooden stands and displayed indoors. These "found" objects were often reworked with a chisel, although any trace of such human intervention was later concealed. Woody compared the rock to one appearing in a scroll painting from 1738, noting that because of evolution in tastes, the Walters' example, with its distinctive slender shape and deep furrows, could be assigned to the eighteenth century.⁷⁶

Beginning in 2000 and continuing for two years, Woody's energies were divided when he was obliged to serve as acting codirector of curatorial affairs, a demanding position at that time as the Walters was in the process of reinstalling Henry Walters' original building following extensive renovations. Nevertheless, the Asian department continued to expand in diverse areas including Chinese snuff bottles, wood-block prints, nineteenth-century Indian bronzes, and early Chinese ceramics. In



ABOVE: Fig. 20. Kalaśakra and Viśvamata, eastern Tibet or China, ca. 1500. Gilt bronze, 40.6 cm. Promised Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John Gilmore Ford (F.217)

RIGHT: Fig. 21. Ornamental rock, China, 18th century. Black *lingbi* limestone with white veining, 50.8 × 35.6 × 35.6. Gift of Richard Rosenblum, 1998 (41.322)



2001 and 2002, Cylia and William G. Siedenburg of New York, through personal gifts as well as those from their foundation, and his bequest, extended the scope of the collection with a number of sculptures and utensils from Indonesia, Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, and Java. A highlight among their donations was a gold and silver sculpture of the enthroned Buddhist goddess Tara made in central Java during the ninth century (fig. 22). Adopting a form of Mahayana Buddhism from the monastic centers in northern and northeastern India, the Javanese created images of both Buddha and the Buddhist pantheon. Tara was the goddess who assisted the god-to-be Avalokiteśvara in extending his compassion to the suffering beings of the world.

The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation decided in 2001 to dispose of its collection of some two thousand Thai, Burmese, Chinese, Lao, and Khmer art works,

donating the “museum-worthy” pieces to several institutions.⁷⁷ In choosing recipient museums, the foundation gave priority to institutions with collections in the field that also included on their staff curators specializing in Southeast Asian art. That autumn, Woody was invited to submit a “wish list” of items that he thought would be appropriate for Baltimore.⁷⁸

Doris Duke, whose fortune was derived from the Duke Power Company and the American Tobacco Company, had first encountered Islamic and Asian cultures while traveling on an around-the-world honeymoon in 1935. On that trip, she and her husband, James Cromwell, stopped in Thailand, where she is known to have visited Wat Phra Kæo, the Buddhist temple attached to the old royal palace. These travels instilled in her an enduring fascination with the peoples of both the Near and Far East that was first manifested three years later



ABOVE: Fig. 22. Tara. Java, 9th century. Gold and silver, 9.2 cm. Gift of The Cylia and William G. Siedenbug Foundation, 2001 (57.2282)



RIGHT: Fig. 23. Miyagawa Kozan (Japanese, 1842–1916), *Mother and Child (Kosodate Kannon)*, 1886. celadon-white porcelain, height 63 cm. W. Alton Jones Foundation Acquisition Fund, 2002 (49.2793)

when she built Shangri-La, her residence in Honolulu, Hawai'i, to house what would become an outstanding collection of Islamic art. Returning to Thailand during an Asian tour in 1957, the Miss Duke decided to reassemble a Thai village in Hawai'i. In preparation, she embarked on an ambitious buying campaign in the late 1950s and early 1960s that netted more than two thousand purchases. However, dissuaded by the seemingly endless setbacks encountered in choosing the site of the village, she transferred the art to the Duke Farms in Hillsborough, New Jersey. There it was displayed to the public in the Coach Barn for a nominal entrance fee. On return trips to Southeast Asia in 1973 and 1974, Doris Duke augmented the collection, mostly Buddhist sculpture and furniture. In the dispersal of the collection in 2001, the foundation, seeking to “advance the display

of Thai and Burmese art” in accordance with Doris Duke’s wishes, ultimately divided between the most important works between the Walters and the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.⁷⁹ The division was conducted over the telephone with Woody and Forrest McGill of San Francisco alternating in making their choices—the Walters receiving one hundred and fifty items. Unlike the Griswold collection, with its emphasis on bronze sculpture, the Duke holdings excelled in Thai paintings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and in wood and lacquer furniture. Among the gifts were several Thai two-sided, accordion-pleated manuscripts treating such topics as the status of elephants both real and divine, and illustrating the Rāmayaṇā. No less impressive were the manuscript cabinets and chests exquisitely lacquered and decorated with gold leaf.⁸⁰

In 2002, Woody recommended to the trustees a most ingenious and appropriate purchase—a tall, celadon-white, porcelain sculpture of the Buddhist divinity Kosodate Kannon, portrayed in a gracefully swaying posture holding an infant sucking its fingers (fig. 23), a subject that had arisen in China several centuries previously, possibly as a result of Christian influence, and one that an artist of Meiji Japan wanted to endow with universal appeal. The works of the artist Miyagawa Kozan (1842–1916) had drawn the notice of Henry Walters, who purchased his prize-winning bowl (the same bowl that prompted Ked to undertake her study of Kozan porcelains) at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904. Kozan had established a kiln in Yokohama in 1871 to produce wares for export. Exhibiting in the domestic industrial fairs in Japan, as well as in the great international expositions, he came to be regarded, both at home and abroad, as the greatest living Japanese ceramist. Most of his pieces were utilitarian vessels, but the Walters piece stands apart as one of Kozan's few documented sculptures. Purportedly, he based it on a monumental statue of Kosodate Kannon in Koyasu City. It is inscribed with the date, “the spring of the twentieth year of Meiji” (1886) and is known to have been made as a retirement present for a Mr. Oki, mayor of Kanagawa prefecture (now Yokohama).

The year 2003, the year when Woody's position was named the Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Quincy Scott curator of Asian art, and when he also resigned as full curator, saw the publication of his magnum opus, *The Art and Architecture of Thailand: From Prehistoric Times through the Thirteenth Century*.⁸¹ In this exhaustive study, reflecting over twenty-five years of research and reflection, Woody traces the numerous threads in the development of the early art of Thailand, placing each within its cultural context. As one scholar notes, Woody sought to establish a “stylistic geography” in which every art object participates in a stylistic lineage, so that an object can be traced back to other objects with which it shares stylistic features, creating a web of interrelationships. The same reviewer continued, noting: “It is a book that really only Woodward could write. The book demonstrates a complete mastery of an enormous corpus of art and architecture, and the use of an extensive corpus of scholarly references and often abstruse and rare textual sources.”⁸²

Most of a curator's achievements are inherently ephemeral. Exhibitions open and close, gallery installations are invariably subject to change, and publications, hopefully, serve as the stepping-stones for subsequent scholars. The installation of Hackerman House, one

of Woody's most remarkable accomplishments, will be altered over time, and his seemingly exhaustive study of Thai sculpture will undoubtedly be superseded by future advances in scholarship. What will endure, however, will be the transformation of the Asian department during his years at the Walters. Once limited to about sixty-five hundred objects, predominantly Chinese and Japanese porcelains and other decorative works of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the collection has expanded with over thirty-one hundred additions, mostly in fields that neither William nor Henry Walters could likely have envisaged. Today, the collection excels in the arts of India and the Himalayas, and Southeast Asia, particularly Thailand. Fields that were ignored by the Walters family, such as Japanese woodblock prints and Chinese glass, are now well represented. Equally significant has been Woody's reevaluation of the original Walters holdings. Not only did he reassess their significance, sometimes acquiring additions for the collection that would complement them, and creating appropriate contexts in which to display them. Over the past nineteen years, Woody's wisdom and sound judgment has proved invaluable to the Walters, and his consistently high level of connoisseurship and scholarship has served as a goal to which other curators aspire.

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NOTES

1. Dr. Woodward was appointed curator of Asian art in November 1985, and assumed the position on 1 July 1986. He remained in this capacity until 1 September 2004, when he became research curator.
2. Edward S. King was appointed associate curator of European painting and Oriental art in 1937 and full curator in 1941, a post that he held through 1965. Subsequently, until 1978, Ed continued to serve as research associate for paintings and Far Eastern art.
3. Minutes of the Trustees' Meeting, January 1935, 98. The publication was *Handbook of the Collection* (Baltimore, 1936).
4. *Oriental Ceramic Art: Illustrated by Examples from the Collection of W. T. Walters, with 116 Plates in Colors and Over 400 Reproductions in Black and White. Text and Notes by S. W. Bushell, M.D., Physician to H. B. M. Legation, Peking* (New York, 1897); *Oriental Ceramic Art: Collection of W. T. Walters, Text Edition to Accompany the Complete Work* (New York, 1899).
5. John Alexander Pope (1906–82) later served as director of the Freer Gallery in Washington, D.C., and Edgar C. Schenck (1910–59) became director of the Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York.

6. Most of the Walters' Chinese scroll paintings had been purchased either at the China Pavilion of the Panama-Pacific International Exhibition held in San Francisco in 1915 or at the Dr. John C. Ferguson Sale, American Art Association, New York, 7 April 1916.
7. Henry Walters dealt with Bunkio Matsuki, a Japanese dealer who had immigrated to Boston, and with Yamanaka & Co. of New York.
8. Standing Bodhisattva, Sui dynasty (580–618), from Shaanxi Province, quartz sandstone with traces of paint, height 194.3 cm (acc. no. 25.4); Buddha, Sui or Tang dynasty, ca. 590, from Hopei province, painted lacquer over wood, 105.4 × 71.8 × 48.4 cm (acc. no. 25.9). See H. W. Woodward, Jr., *Asian Art in the Walters Art Gallery: A Selection* (Baltimore, 1991), 22–24 (nos. 8 and 9).
9. Theodore Y. Hobby, associate curator of Far Eastern art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, assisted with this exhibition.
10. By 1917, Henry Walters had already filled the galleries in his building, which he had opened in 1909. In 1934, the early curators were obliged to contend with an additional 243 crates of acquisitions still in storage.
11. The porcelains are acc. nos. 49.2372–77; the screen is acc. no. 67.648
12. In addition to the two Kangxi scroll paintings (acc. nos. 35.108, 35.109), and the late fifteenth-century Ming iron bodhisattva head (acc. no. 25.32), Mordecai's gifts included a pair of dragon-head terminals from a temple roof (acc. nos. 49.2378, 49.2379) and two famille noire vases (acc. nos. 49.2380, 2381).
13. Baroness Giskra (d. 15 November 1963) was born Helen King, daughter of John King, Jr., of Baltimore. The sculptures are acc. nos. 25.33–47; the tankas, acc. nos. 35.106 and 35.107.
14. The Tang camel (acc. no. 49.2383) was bought in December 1949, and the headrest (acc. no. 49.2384) and the prehistoric jar (acc. no. 49.2385) were acquired in January 1950. For the camel, see Woodward, *Asian Art*, 14 (no. 4)
15. M. Boyer, *Catalogue of Japanese Lacquers* (Baltimore, 1970), was funded with a grant from the Ford Foundation. In 1955, Miss Boyer was appointed curator of the department of Far Eastern art at the National Museum in Copenhagen. To mark the publication of her catalogue of the Walters' lacquers, an exhibition was held in the summer of 1970.
16. The funds from the sale of the lacquers were used in 1973 to purchase a pair of six-fold screens of blossoming cherry trees painted in the manner of Kaiho Yusho (1533–1615), Momoyana period (1574–1614) (acc. no. 35.114). See Woodward, *Asian Art*, 72–73 (no. 33).
17. James Cahill visited the Walters' storage on 28 July 1964 and again on 12 January 1965.
18. The ewers are acc. nos. 49.2393 (shou) and 49.2347 (fu). Both are published by Rose Kerr in "The William T. Walters Collection of Qing Porcelain," *Oriental Art* 22, no. 4 (April 1991) 60, fig. 6.
19. Bond issues for an extension to the gallery, incorporating much of the south side of Mount Vernon Place, were defeated in 1958 and 1960. D. Luke Hopkins stated the reasons for new leadership in a conversation with the author in 1966.
20. The Ganeśa was published by Woodward in *Asian Art*, 20 (no. 7).
21. Alexander Brown Griswold (1907–91), a member of the venerable banking firm of Alex. Brown & Co., had served as secretary for the board of trustees from 1933 to 1934 and as assistant secretary from 1934 to 1946. His father, B. Howell Griswold, had been the board's first chairman.
22. P. Pal, *Indo-Asian Art from the John Gilmore Ford Collection* (Baltimore, 1971).
23. See note 8 above.
24. Portrait of Dengyo Daishi, Muromachi period (1333–1573) or later, dry lacquer on wood, 27 × 27 cm. Lent by Mrs. Sandra Neubardt (TL.1974.35).
25. *Blossoming Cherry Trees*, Japan, ca. 1600–50 (acc. no. 35.114); see note 16.
26. The actual installation, undertaken the night before the museum's opening, was one of the more harrowing episodes in the history of the institution. The guest curator, Lois Katz, directed the installation while her son crawled through the rows of cases laid out end-to-end, placing the objects. In the meantime, Ursula McCracken, editor at the Walters, typed the labels as the works were being positioned.
27. For the dragon, see Woodward, *Asian Art*, 12 (no. 3); The figurines are acc. nos. 49.2426 and 49.2427.
28. Breezewood and its gardens were opened to the public one day each month during the summers.
29. For the Seated Buddha, see Woodward, *Asian Art*, 40 (no. 17); and H. W. Woodward, Jr., with contributions by D.K. Strahan, T. Drayman-Weisser, J. Lauffenburger, C. Reedy, and R. Newman, *The Sacred Sculpture of Thailand: The Alexander B. Griswold Collection* (Baltimore, 1997), 158 (no. 54), and 165–66, fig. 155). For Alexander Brown Griswold, see H. W. Woodward, Jr., "Alexander Brown Griswold (1907–19)," *Arts of Asia*, 45 (1992), p. 94.
30. Randall retired from the Walters in 1984.
31. Crown Publishers reprinted the Bushell catalogue in 1981.
32. Bob Bergman had previously served as assistant professor of art and archeology at Princeton University and had taught at the University of Rochester, Rochester, New York, and at Lincoln University, Oxford, Pennsylvania.
33. This exhibition was circulated by the New Orleans Museum of Art and appeared in Baltimore from February to April, 1984.
34. In 1981, a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts had been matched with donations from John Ford and Dr. and Mrs. Robert Feinberg to hire Ellen Smart for two years as a research curator for Asian art. She limited her studies to the Islamic pottery at the Walters.
35. The property had originally been purchased in 1848 by John Hanson Thomas, who two years later had the house built by the architectural firm of Niernsee and Neilson in the Greek revival style. Mr. and Mrs. Francis M. Jencks bought the house in 1892 and had the building altered slightly by Mrs. Jencks' brother, the architect Charles A. Platt. His most notable changes included the addition of a bay to the east side of the building and the redesigning of the spiral staircase. The building began to deteriorate in the 1950s, but in 1960 it was acquired by Harry Gladding who resided in it with his mother. Because of failing health, Mr. Gladding placed the house on the market. It was then bought by Mr. and Mrs. Willard Hackerman who, in turn, gave it to the city of Baltimore.
36. "Studies in the Art of Central Siam, 950–1350 A.D.," Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1975.
37. By the time the renovation was completed the firm was renamed Grieves, Worrall, Wright & O'Hatnick.

38. At Martha Jones's request, the carpets incorporate the rosette motifs that appears in the stuccowork of the parlor ceiling of the parlor.
39. I am grateful to David Wright for this information.
40. The members included the trustees Jay M. Wilson, Neal Borden, Constance R. Caplan, Benjamin H. Griswold IV, Curran W. Harvey, Samuel K. Himmelrich, Sr., Mark K. Joseph, Bernard Manekin, George V. McGowan, Decatur H. Miller, Stephen T. Scott, and Adena W. Testa.
41. H. Burchard, "The Art of Baltimore," *Washington Post*, weekend section, 3 May 1991, 10.
42. The funds for these acquisitions had become available through the sale of works of art bequeathed to the museum by Ambassador and Mrs. William J. Sebald in 1976. William Sebald had formed his collection while serving with General MacArthur as American ambassador to Japan after World War II. His bequest included ninety-nine Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Indian artifacts, none of which had been deemed appropriate for the museum's collection. An additional five hundred pieces were added to the bequest in 1981 following the death of William Sebald's widow, the former Edith de Becker.
43. This artist not only exhibited at the 1878 Paris Exposition Universelle, but attended it as well. The other scrolls were *Heron Standing in a Lotus Pond* by Okamoto Shuki (1807–62) (acc. no. 35.131); *Autumn* (1834) and *Winter* (1846) by Nakabayashi Chikuto (1776–1853) (respectively, acc. nos. 35.133 and 35.134); *Birds, Flowers, and Rock* (1853) by Yamamoto Baiitsu (1783–1865) (acc. no. 35.135) and a calligraphy by Nukina Kaioku (1778–1863) (acc. no. 35.136).
44. The two hanging scrolls with calligraphy (acc. nos. 35.137 and 35.138) are by Wang Shih-Min (1592–1680). The scrolls and the fan (acc. no. 35.139) were purchased in 1986.
45. The Chinese armchair (acc. no. 65.111) dating from the late nineteenth century was installed in the Japanese Study in Hackerman House. The Indian betel box (pan dan) (acc. no. 53.153) is thought to have been made in Kashmir in the eighteenth century whereas the Philippine box (lutuan) (acc. no. 53.152) was made in Mindanao during the nineteenth century. Betel quid, a gummy substance made from the nut of the areca palm, the leaf of the betel vine, and slaked lime was chewed by Moslems as an alternative to tobacco. The practice is thought to have begun in India and to have been transferred to the Philippines by Malay sailors. See C. J. Locke, "Betel Nut Sets," *Arts of Asia*, January–February 1986, 25–26.
46. For the screens, see Woodward, *Asian Art*, 94–95 (no. 44).
47. For the doors (acc. nos. 35.152–55 and acc. nos. 35.156–59), see Woodward, *Asian Art*, 86–87 (no. 40).
48. Nos. 95.5.1–55 and 95.6.1–145. In 1987, the Snells donated an additional thirty-six flower paintings, the *Nihon Han Su-e*, by Ogata Gekko (nos. 95.7.1–36).
49. Acc. nos. 54.2648 (Śiva) and 54.2649 (Ganeśa). For the Śiva, see Woodward, *Asian Art*, 44–45 (no. 19); for the Ganeśa, see P. Pal, *Indo-Asian Art from the John Gilmore Ford Collection* (Baltimore, 1991), no. 21.
50. For A. B. Griswold and Breezewood, see Woodward, *The Sacred Sculpture of Thailand*.
51. In addition to the works that Alexander Griswold had given to the Walters in 1977 and 1979, he also donated seventy-one pieces between 1975 and 1978 to the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University. This university also received his library.
52. Acc. no. 54.2726 Statue of eight-armed Avalokiteśvara, published by H. W. Woodward, Jr., in "The Jayabuddhamahanatha Images," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 52–53 (1994–95): 105–11, and in Woodward, *The Sacred Sculpture of Thailand*, 85, figs. 78, 100, 102.
53. Vase with Blossoming Plum, ca. 1904 (acc. no. 49.1912).
54. Kathleen Emerson-Dell, *Bridging East and West: Japanese Ceramics from the Kozan Studio, Selections from the Perry Foundation* (Baltimore, 1994).
55. The late Shang or Chou dynasty dagger ax (ko[ge]) is acc. no. 54.2896; the four scrolls by Kano Tsunenobu are acc. nos. 35.203–6.
56. In 1985, Dr. Gary Vikan, a Byzantinist, formerly on the staff of Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C., was appointed assistant director for curatorial affairs and curator of medieval art. In 1994, he became director, a position that he holds today.
57. *The First Emperor: Treasures from Ancient China*, organized by the Birmingham Museum of Art, the Administrative Bureau of Museums and Archaeological Data of Shaanxi Province, and Shaanxi Archaeological Overseas Exhibitions Committee, opened in Birmingham before moving to Baltimore, the only other American venue.
58. By December 1992, the Griswold collection was definitively transferred to the Walters Art Gallery.
59. For a review of the technical studies, see the book reviews by S. Wolf in *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation* 38, no. 2 (1999), article 7.
60. H. W. Woodward, Jr., *The Sacred Sculpture of Thailand: The Alexander B. Griswold Collection*, with contributions by D. K. Strahan, T. Drayman-Weisser, J. Lauffenburger, C. Reedy, and R. Newman (Baltimore, 1997).
61. See H. W. Woodward, Jr., "A Gift of Chinese Glass," *Walters Art Gallery Monthly Bulletin*, November 1994, 5.
62. S. W. Bushell, *Oriental Ceramic Art, Collection of W. T. Walters* (New York, 1899), 671–84 (text edition).
63. Acc. nos. 49.2492–2515. The ceramics were the gift of Robert Broadus in memory of Carol Connors Broadus.
64. Kim Wonyong, "The Harmony is perfect—something that gains in the savouring; like the taste of good rice." H. W. Woodward, Jr., "A Choson-period Wine Bottle," *Walters Art Gallery Monthly Bulletin*, 46, no. 6 (Summer, 1993), 4–5.
65. Scenes of Filial Piety, Korean, Choson period (eighteenth or nineteenth century) (acc. no. 35.199). See H. W. Woodward, Jr., "A Loving Son," *Walters Art Gallery Monthly Bulletin*, 46, no. 7 (September 1993).
66. The handscroll had actually been purchased in November, 1994, using the W. Alton Jones Foundation Acquisition Fund.
67. Notes by H. W. Woodward, Jr., in curatorial file.
68. The Feinbergs' other gifts that year included two late eighteenth-century scroll paintings (acc. nos. 35.211 and 212) by Nagasawa Rosetsu (1754–99).
69. In 2000, Mrs. Anna Kovaszny donated a seventeenth-century Japanese scroll painting showing a scene from the fifty-second chapter of the Tale of Genji (acc. no. 35.222).
70. Yangshao-type bowl with handles and painted design, late third to early second millennium B.C. (acc. no. 49.2756) and Celadon bowl, possibly Japanese, Ch'eng-hua mark (acc. no. 2754).

71. P. Pal with an essay by H. W. Woodward, Jr., *Desire and Devotion: Art from India, Nepal and Tibet, in the John and Berthe Ford Collection* (Baltimore, 2001). The exhibition traveled to the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, the Albuquerque Museum, and the Birmingham [Alabama] Museum of Art.
72. Ibid., 130 (no. 58).
73. Ibid., 80 (no. 23).
74. Ibid., 302–3 (no. 177).
75. V.C. Doran, “Richard Rosenblum (1940–2000),” *Orientations*, April 2000, 69.
76. H. W. Woodward, Jr., “Found Objects, Abstract Sculptures, *The Walters* (formerly the *Walters Art Gallery Monthly Bulletin*), vol. 52, no. 1 (January–February 1999), 9. The 1738 scroll painting, *Potted Calamus and Pleasure Rock* (acc. no. 35.209), is by Chang Ch’i (1729–52).
77. For Doris Duke and her collections see N. Tingley, *Doris Duke: The Southeast Asian Art Collection* (New York, 2003).
78. Olga Garay (program director for the arts of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation) to Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., 11 October 2001.
79. The deed of gift made between the Foundation for Southeast Asian Art and Culture and the Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery was signed in August 2002.
80. The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation’s gifts are listed in “The Year in Review,” *Walters Art Museum Annual Report*, 2003 (Baltimore, 2004), 11–14.
81. H. W. Woodward, Jr., *The Art and Architecture of Thailand: From Prehistoric Times through the Thirteenth Century*, Handbook of Oriental Studies, section 3: South-East Asia, vol. 14 (Leiden, 2003).
82. R.L. Brown, in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 124.4 (2004): 798–99.

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS: Courtesy of Donna Strahan: fig. 14; Walters Art Museum, Susan Tobin: figs. 1–6, 8–13, 16–23; Hiram W. Woodward, Jr.: figs. 5, 7.

Protecting the Protector of Phimai

BORETH LY

Scholars of Southeast Asian art and architecture often ask questions about visual narratives and cultural meanings embedded in the pictorial programs of Hindu and Buddhist temples in Cambodia. I have argued elsewhere that an underlying pictorial organization, based on what I call “the principle of picture pairings,” unites the stories recounted on the bas-reliefs at the tenth-century temple of Banteay Srei into an ideological totality.¹ However, not all ancient Cambodian temples have a coherent narrative program. A case in point is the twelfth-century Buddhist temple of Phimai, located in modern northeastern Thailand. The verbal and visual materials there raise a very different set of questions

about the nature of narrative and thus challenge assumptions about the presence of an artistically constructed “pictorial program.” I argue below that there is no intentional “visual narrative program” at Phimai. Instead, the images there served primarily political and apotropaic purposes, and they formed part of a maṇḍala-like architectural configuration. Before we turn our attention to the Phimai reliefs, however, it is perhaps worthwhile to consider the broader political implications and uses of Buddhist Tantric imagery in Cambodia before the twelfth century.

The politicization of Vajrayāna Buddhism at the temple of Phimai is by no means unprecedented; it has

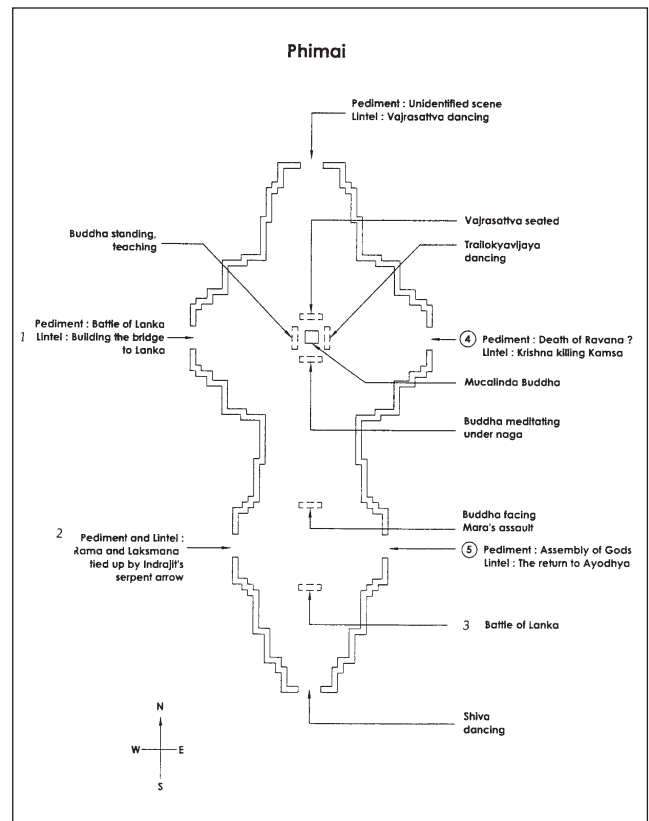


Fig. 1. Phimai temple from the east



ABOVE: Fig. 2. The maṇḍapa and central shrine of Phimai

RIGHT: Fig. 3. Ground plan showing the placement of narrative panels at Phimai



its roots in the ninth-century temple of Bat Chum.² In the eleventh century, however, an inscription appeared that made clear reference to the function of Buddhist Tantric images as political protectors of the Khmer kingdom.³ A case in point is the recently discovered Sab Bāk inscription (dated 1066 C.E.), which vividly states:

[T]he images of Vrah Buddhalokeśvara were installed by the Venerable Sristyavarman, who had supernatural power, in the past, on Abhayagiri, with the intention that Java not attack Kambuja [Sruk Khmer].

Later on, the nine images deteriorated. The venerable teacher by the name of Dharanindrapura has renovated these deteriorated images and reinstalled them once again. In this way, they became free from harm.

Indeed, his pupil, Vrah Acharyya Dhanu, has installed these images in the year 988 [*saka*] which is in the reign of His Majesty King Udāyadityavarmanadeva. May he live long and remain powerful for the rest of his reign.⁴

The king mentioned in the above passage might be King Udāyadityavarman II (r. 1050–1066), the Shivaite king who sponsored the construction of the eleventh-century

temple of the Baphuon and reportedly also a great supporter of Vajrayāna Buddhism. It is clear that the nine Buddha images described in the inscription were produced and subsequently renovated with the specific purpose of protecting Sruk Khmer (literally, the Khmer district or kingdom) from Javanese invasion.⁵

The Rāmāyaṇa reliefs and Buddhist Tantric images at Phimai served similar parallel political and apotropaic functions. This privileging of the apotropaic function of images over storytelling (i.e., narrative sequence) in part explains the curious absence of a coherent and sequential narrative program in the pictorial layout of the Rāmāyaṇa reliefs at Phimai. Moreover, like the apotropaic role of the nine images mentioned in the Sab Bāk inscription (which were used to protect the Khmer kingdom, or a geographical maṇḍala from foreign invasion), the iconic and narrative images at Phimai are spatially organized in a maṇḍala-like architectural configuration to protect the temple's inner sanctum.

THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION AND THE PICTORIAL PATTERN AT PHIMAI

Phimai is a Tantric Buddhist temple located in north-eastern Thailand. The temple faces south and is com-



Fig. 4. Mucalinda Buddha, from the central shrine of Phimai

posed of a single tower (*prāṅ*) and a maṇḍapa (figs. 1 and 2). The temple's six entrances open to the four cardinal directions (see ground plan in fig. 3). The name *Phimai* probably derives from the Sanskrit *vimāya* (or *bimāya*), meaning "illusion."⁶ The temple was dedicated to a deity named *Vimāya* (whose image is now lost or yet to be identified). Presumably, the image of Lord *Vimāya* was once housed in the inner sanctum of the central shrine. Hiram Woodward, Jr., has suggested that Lord *Vimāya* was probably the name of a nāga who protected the Buddha (Mucalinda Buddha), comparable to a replica presently found in situ (fig. 4).⁷ Without doubt, the theme of political protection is closely associated with the role of the patron at Phimai.⁸ For instance, an inscription engraved on the door jamb of the south gate of the second enclosure informs us that the patron played a martial role in protecting the image of the deity, Trailokyavijaya, and that, in turn, this particular deity served and protected the main deity (possibly Mucalinda Buddha) at Phimai:



Fig. 5. Trailokyavijaya [?]. Khmer or Khmerizing style, 12th century. From Phimai. Bronze, height 16 cm. National Museum, Bangkok.

On Sunday December 8, 1108 A.D., Śrī Virendrādhipativarman of Chok Vakula had erected an image of Karamtan Jagat Senāpati [general] Trailokyavijaya who is the *senāpati* [protector] of the *senāpati* of Phimai.⁹

No three-dimensional image of Trailokyavijaya seems to have been found at Phimai,¹⁰ although in his recent book, *The Art and Architecture of Thailand*, Woodward makes a reference to a bronze image of a Tantric Buddhist deity (now housed at the National Museum, Bangkok), probably from the region of Phimai, that may resemble the one mentioned in the above inscription (fig. 5).¹¹ We do know, however, that Trailokyavijaya is another Tantric form of the protective bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi.¹² David Snellgrove suggests further that Trailokyavijaya might be a title referring specifically to Vajrapāṇi:

Although this particular image [of Trailokyavijaya] referred to is no longer evident, it is likely the ten-armed dancing figures whom we see represented,



Fig. 6. Trailokyavijaya [?]. Lintel situated on the outer gateway of Phimai

particularly on the lintel at the entrance to the main sanctuary and even more clearly reproduced on a lintel in the north-east corner of the galleries, should be identified as Trailokyavijaya (“Victory over the threefold world”) [fig. 6]. This title pertains to Vajrapāṇi as the result of his subduing and converting to Buddhism the major divinities of the whole (threefold) world, thus forming them into a special maṇḍala known as the Trilokṣakramaṇḍala (Maṇḍala of the Circle of the Triple World), of which he himself is the central presiding divinity.¹³

Interestingly, both Woodward and Snellgrove attach the identification of Trailokyavijaya to two very different images. We might never know what Trailokyavijaya at Phimai looks like, but one thing is clear: both the patron and the image of Trailokyavijaya served as protectors in more ways than one at Phimai. Moreover, it is clear that Śrī Virendrādhīpativarman was a marshal (*senāpati*) who protected the deity Trailokyavijaya; as a marshal, Śrī Virendra’s role was also to protect the town of Phimai. In addition, we know that Senāpati Śrī Virendra served as an important member of the army of King Sūryavarman II (1113–1150 C.E.). A portrait of Śrī Virendra appears on the bas-reliefs of the south gallery at Angkor Wat. Here the marshal is portrayed as a powerful soldier riding an elephant while holding an unidentified weapon with his right hand (fig. 7). According to Albert le Bonheur, a person’s rank during King Sūryavarman II’s reign was signaled by the number of parasols over his head; the nine that shade Śrī Virendrādhīpativarman suggest that he was a important individual in the military hierarchy.¹⁴

The visual theme of political protection (i.e., the conquering and subduing of demons) dictated the function



Fig. 7. Portrait of Śrī Virendrādhīpativarman of Phimai, ca. 12th century, south gallery, Angkor Wat

and, in effect, shaped the arrangement of both the iconic and narrative images at Phimai.¹⁵ The images at Phimai are arranged in a maṇḍala-like pattern moving outward from the center (i.e., the central shrine), and the deities placed on the margins of this rectangular and square architectural configuration are strategically placed to serve an apotropaic function (see fig. 3). A case in point is the placement of a Tantric Buddhist figure at the foot of a pilaster next to the southern entrance at Phimai (fig. 8). The figure is shown holding a *vajra* (thunderbolt) and a *ghaṇṭā* (bell), and he stands on a corpse. Woodward suggests that this figure might be Vajrasattva in a secondary role as one the sixteen *vajra* beings in certain esoteric maṇḍalas.¹⁶ Vajrasattva is another manifestation of Vajrapāṇi, whose role is to guard the temple’s entrance. In addition, Woodward has pointed out that the four interior lintels of the central shrine (figs. 9–12) depict deities in the act of conquering:

The other four interior lintels have Buddhist subject matter and may each involve conquering. The outer southern lintel depicts the defeat of Māra; on the western lintel . . . is a standing crowned Buddha at the center of a crowd of figures; and the northern and eastern lintels, both themselves stretched-out-maṇḍalas, have at their centers forms of Vajrasattva and Samvara, respectively.¹⁷

At a cursory glance, the standing crowned Buddha rendered on the west interior lintel might at first appear contradictory because he is not portrayed in the act of conquering anything. However, on second glance, this crowned Buddha, who stands at the center of a group of figures and dancers, seems indeed to be registering a victorious moment (fig. 10). Moreover, the standing Buddha



Fig. 8. Vajrasattva [?]. South entrance, central shrine, Phimai



Fig. 9. The Defeat of Māra. South interior lintel, central shrine, Phimai



Fig. 10. Standing Crowned Buddha. West interior lintel, central shrine, Phimai



Fig. 11. Vajrasattva “stretched-out” maṇḍala. North interior lintel, central shrine, Phimai

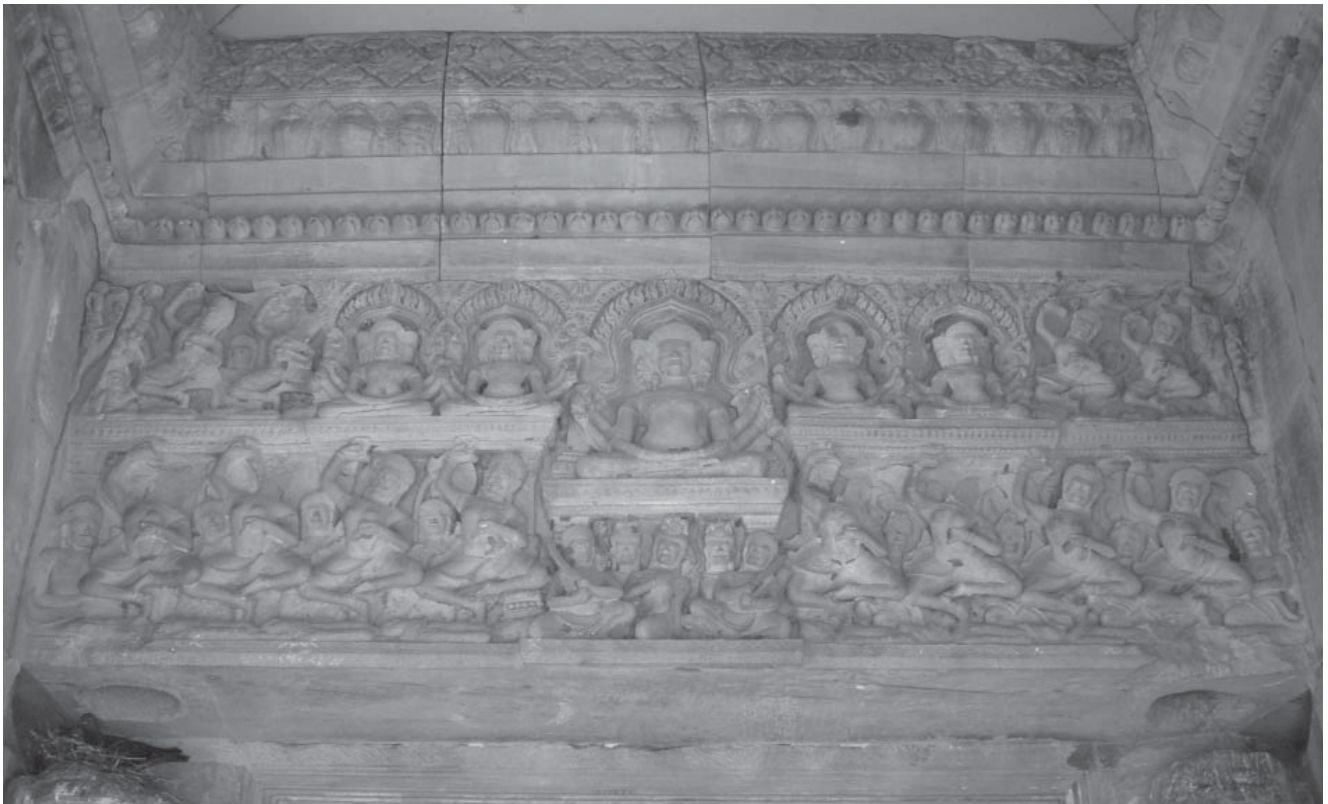


Fig. 12. Samvara “stretched-out” maṇḍala. East interior lintel, central shrine, Phimai



Fig. 13. The Battle of Laṅkā, from the Rāmāyaṇa. South interior lintel, Phimai



Fig. 14. The Battle of Laṅkā, from the Rāmāyaṇa. Northwest pediment, central shrine, Phimai



Fig. 15. The Death of Ravana, from the Rāmāyaṇa. Northwest pediment, central shrine, Phimai



Fig. 16. Kṛṣṇa Decapitating King Kaṁsa, from the Harivamśa. Northeast exterior lintel, central shrine, Phimai

and the other Tantric deities depicted on the other three interior lintels face outward toward the four respective cardinal directions. It is thus plausible to argue that they served apotropaic roles in preventing malignant spirits from penetrating into the inner sanctum of the central shrine (see ground plan in fig. 3).

The Rāmāyaṇa reliefs at Phimai were largely intended to perform a similar apotropaic role. Thus the disjunctive narrative layout of the Rāmāyaṇa reliefs at Phimai might be attributed to the protective role that these narrative reliefs were intended to perform. For example, if we were to view the five episodes sequentially, they would appear in the following order: (1) Building the Bridge to Lanka; (2) Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa Tied up by Indrajiṭ's Serpent Arrow; (3) the Battle of Lanka; (4) the Death of Rāvaṇa (5) The Assembly of the Gods and the Return to Ayodhya (see ground plan in fig. 3).¹⁸ Clearly, the five Rāmāyaṇa episodes are not sequentially placed.¹⁹ Moreover, they are situated quite far apart from one another and thus spatially are not conducive for viewing in situ as one moves through the monument. In short, the placement of the Rāmāyaṇa reliefs at Phimai follows neither a clockwise nor a counterclockwise pattern of viewing as generally dictated by Hindu or Buddhist ritual.

Instead, we see narrative reliefs placed rather randomly on pediments and lintels situated at the interior and exterior of the monument. It is perhaps not a coincidence that most of the Rāmāyaṇa episodes (and other texts) narrated at Phimai tend to show the martial episodes that further amplified the theme of political protection. For example, the Battle of Lanka appears twice at Phimai (see ground plan in fig. 3). We first see the Battle of Lanka episode rendered on the south interior lintel (fig. 13). Rāma is shown riding on the shoulders of Hanuman, his monkey general, while confronting



Fig. 17. Unidentified episode. North pediment, central shrine, Phimai

Rāvaṇa, who is riding on his chariot. This particular scene is repeated again on the northwest pediment of the central shrine. Here we see the ten-headed demon, Rāvaṇa (on the viewer's right), and Rāma (on the left) confronting one another while riding on their respective chariots (fig. 14). Lastly, another problematic scene that has been interpreted as the Death of Rāvaṇa is found on the northeast pediment of the central shrine (fig. 15). It is doubtful that this scene is from the Rāmāyaṇa, and numerous scholars have questioned the puzzling iconography involving the scene of a flying palace supported by the four-headed Brahma.²⁰ Michael Freeman gives the following interpretations:

The pediment probably shows the death of Rāvaṇa, near the end of the Rāmāyaṇa epic. Until recently, however, it was thought that this was the judgement of Rāvaṇa's uncle, the Brahma Malivaraja (also from the Rāmāyaṇa), shown in the middle descending from heaven on a haṃsa. Heaven here is represented by no less than the temple of Phimai itself. Below, on chariots, are Rāma (left) and Rāvaṇa (right). So far so good, but if you look carefully under the horses' hooves, you can see an inverted head. Khmer lintel carvers were quite fond of including the various parts of a story in a single narrative lintel, and this head is now thought to be Rāvaṇa's, as he is killed.²¹

Oddly, there is no precedent for the Brahma Malivaraja or the Death of Rāvaṇa on other ancient Khmer temples in present-day northeastern Thailand and Angkor proper. Moreover, to the best of my knowledge, the Death of Rāvaṇa is rarely depicted on ancient Khmer temples; contemporary artists and dramatists in mainland Southeast Asia tend to avoid depicting the episode because it is considered to be inauspicious. On the other hand, it is possible that the Phimai version is simply a regional variation. Regardless of whether this particular scene is from the Rāmāyaṇa, it is undeniably clear that it depicts a scene of conflict. Let us entertain the possibility that this scene is from the Rāmāyaṇa and that it depicts the Death of Rāvaṇa, which took place at the Battle of Lanka. Essentially, it is another battle scene registering conflict and confrontation. We see presumably the ten-armed (but single-headed) Rāvaṇa and Rāma shown riding on their respective chariots while engaged in a fierce battle. Rendered on a lintel below the above-mentioned pediment is a scene from an entirely different text, the Harivaṃśa, depicting the episode of the Kṛṣṇa Decapitating King Kaṃsa (fig. 16). This scene is also violent and hence apotropaic, guarding the northwest entrance to the central shrine.



Fig. 18. Constructing the Bridge to Laṅkā, from the Rāmāyaṇa. West exterior lintel, central shrine, Phimai

Equally fierce and ferocious is an image of Vajrasattva Dancing that is depicted on the north lintel of the central shrine (fig. 17). Vajrasattva adds a Buddhist layer of visual protection on the margins of the architectural configuration of Phimai. Admittedly, it is not easy to pinpoint the precise identity of this four-armed dancing figure with a couple (Umā-Maheśvara being conquered by Vajrasattva?) all tied up on his right. To his left is another unidentified figure holding a club in his hands. However, it is clear that the dancing figure on the lintel is shown engaged in the act of subduing demons. The much-damaged scene rendered on the pediment above remains to be identified.

Since the Death of Rāvaṇa episode took place at the Battle of Lanka, one might even venture to argue that the Battle of Lanka episode is represented not twice, but three times, at Phimai. It is perhaps not a coincidence that the Battle of Lanka is represented three times and that each scene is rendered on lintel and pediments above three different entrances to Phimai. It is possible that the need to keep malevolent spirits from entering the shrine dictated the placement of battle scenes from the epic poem on the periphery of the temple because they underscore further the visual theme of political protection. As David Gordon White has pointed out, Tantric images play significant political roles on the margins of a maṇḍala:

The principal deity with whom the non-elite specialist or practitioner will interact—some low-level ‘lord of spirits’—will not be absent from the elite *maṇḍala*; rather, he or she will be relegated to a zone nearer to the periphery of that *maṇḍala*, as a fierce protector deity guarding the *maṇḍala* of the King’s (and supreme deity’s) utopian realm from incursions by



Fig. 19. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa Captured by Indrajit’s Serpent Arrows,” from the Rāmāyaṇa. West pediment and lintel of the maṇḍapa, Phimai

malevolent spirits from the outside, that is, enemies. [Thus] the fierce and heavily armed deities pictured at the borders and gates of the Tantric *maṇḍalas* are recognized as protectors of the realms.²²

How, then, does one account for the presence of the other three Rāmāyaṇa episodes at Phimai?

As I pointed out earlier, it is apparent that these three episodes are not sequentially placed; therefore, they are not conducive to viewing in situ. Hence, it is possible that they are present to provide a cause and effect to this “narratable” program at Phimai.²³ In other words, the climatic moments of these three battle scenes required preceding causal events that lead to this dramatic effect. For example, in order to fight the Battle of Lanka it was first necessary to construct the bridge to the island of Lanka. This explains the presence of the Building of the Bridge to Lanka episode on the northwest lintel of the



Fig. 20. Assembly of the Gods and Return to Ayodhya [?] Southeast pediment and lintel of the maṇḍapa, Phimai

central shrine (fig. 18). The narrative of the Building of the Bridge to Lanka begins with a detailed and imaginatively carved episode from the Yuddha Kanda, which presumably shows Rāma instructing his monkey army to throw rocks into the ocean in order to construct the causeway to the island of Lanka.²⁴ The monkeys' attempts were unsuccessful at first because Rāvaṇa had instructed all the sea creatures to consume the rocks in order to prevent the completion of the bridge. However, after several failed attempts, Rāma and his army managed to build the causeway. The Building of the Bridge to Lanka episode is sequentially followed by that of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa Tied up by Indrajit's Serpent Arrow, situated on the southwest pediment and lintel of the maṇḍapa (fig. 19). This particular scene represents the moment when Indrajit, the son of Rāvaṇa, held Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa captive with his powerful serpent arrows. The panel shows the two brothers, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa,

tied up with the serpent ropes while their monkey army (depicted on both the badly damaged pediment above and on the lintel below) attempts to liberate the two brothers from their restraints.

Finally, another dubious episode that is purportedly from the Yuddha Kanda of the Rāmāyaṇa is the Assembly of the Gods and the Return of Rāma and Sītā to Ayodhya (fig. 21). Both scenes are depicted on the east pediment and lintel of the maṇḍapa. The four figures rendered on pediment are respectively: Śiva and his consort, Parvati, riding on their vehicle, Nandi (above); below them (from the viewer's left to right) are the four-headed Brahma on his *haṃsa* goose, Indra on his three-headed elephant, and the four-armed Viṣṇu shown riding on his Garuda. These four gods are present to confer the blessing of Rāma and Sītā's victory, and their return to Ayodhya is rendered on the lintel directly below. The identification of these two scenes is perplexing because at Angkor



Fig. 21. “The Assembly of the Gods” and the “Return to Ayodhya” from the Rāmāyaṇa? Southeast pediment and lintel of the maṇḍapa, Phimai

Wat and many other Khmer temples, the episode of the Return of Rāma and Sītā to Ayodhya is portrayed with Sītā and Rāma seated on their puṣpaka, a flower chariot accompanied by a group of monkeys. Oddly, at Phimai we see two figures (perhaps Rāma and Sītā?) seated at the center of a boat with a group of unidentified figures shown paying homage to them. In brief, the scene remains to be identified. It is possible, however, that the distinctive rendering of this particular episode at Phimai might be attributed to a regional variation. Another possible explanation might be that these two scenes are derived from entirely different texts and, likewise, remain to be identified.

The identification of these episodes as belonging to the Rāmāyaṇa (or not) actually plays a minor role in our discussion of the overall pictorial program (or the lack thereof) at Phimai. More pressing and relevant to my argument is that the narrative scenes depicted on the pediments and lintels at Phimai are not narrative precisely because they are clearly not sequentially placed. More importantly, episodes from the Rāmāyaṇa are placed on the periphery of the maṇḍala-like architectural configuration of Phimai. I would like to suggest that they extend further the protective role of the Tantric Buddhist images situated on the four interior lintels. Thus the rather conspicuous and repeated battle scenes from the Rāmāyaṇa are now used to further underscore the theme of political protection. This denigration of the narrative role of images by privileging the protective quality of the iconic is commonly found in esoteric art and maṇḍala.

Although one might argue that the square and rectangular layout of Phimai contradicts entirely the literal meaning of the Sanskrit word maṇḍala (“circle”), meaning is not established merely by etymology.²⁵ Moreover,



Fig. 22. Hevajra maṇḍala, ca. 12th century, National Museum, Bangkok

it is undeniable that the Buddhism practiced at Phimai was Vajrayana. In addition, the use of maṇḍala is one of many important devices in Tantric practice. In fact, there are maṇḍalas that are contemporaneous with Phimai that are shaped like a Khmer *prasat* (temple). For example, the Hevajra maṇḍala (now housed at the National Museum in Bangkok) is shaped like a miniature version of Phimai (fig. 22).

Hevajra, the main deity is shown dancing at the center of the maṇḍala, accompanied by eight yoginis dancing on the outer circle. J.J. Boeles points out that these eight yoginis hold iconographic attributes comparable to the ones held by the yoginis rendered on the two “stretched-out-maṇḍalas” found on the interior lintels of Phimai.²⁶ Another similar feature between the architectural configuration of Phimai and the Hevajra maṇḍala is the placement of a crowned Mucalinda Buddha (in *dhyāna mudrā*) on the very top of the maṇḍala. One might imagine that a comparable crowned Mucalinda Buddha was originally placed at the inner sanctum of

the central shrine at Phimai. In addition, the standing Buddha depicted on the northwest interior lintel is also portrayed as wearing a crown on his head. Boeles suggests further that the crowned Mucalinda Buddha on the Hevajra maṇḍala might be Adi Buddha. It suffices to say here that the similar spatial configuration and iconographic attributes shared between the Tantric figures in the Hevajra maṇḍala and at Phimai are sufficient reasons to qualify Phimai as a maṇḍala. Moreover, Woodward has convincingly pointed out that the two lintels with Vajrasattva and Samvara can be called “stretched-out-maṇḍalas.” Last, historians such as O. W. Wolters have long used the word maṇḍala to describe the geopolitical entities of early kingdoms in Southeast Asia.²⁷

In a different context, but relevant to our discussion of Phimai as a maṇḍala-like structure, is Marijke Klokke’s sound argument that Borobudur is not a maṇḍala but a stūpa. Klokke has astutely pointed out in her writing:

I do not know of any *maṇḍala* in which narratives play such a prominent role as they do on Borobudur. Some *maṇḍalas* have narrative elements, but these always play a subordinate role. Narratives depicted in 1460 relief panels, as on Borobudur, can hardly be called subordinate. They form an integral part of the structure of Borobudur, but have generally been neglected in studies which emphasize the theory of Borobudur as a *maṇḍala*.²⁸

Turning Klokke’s argument on its head, one can argue that the de-narrativization of the Rāmāyaṇa at Phimai makes Phimai into a maṇḍala. In brief, the disjunctive pictorial layout of the five Rāmāyaṇa episodes at Phimai suggests that this temple might possibly have been conceived as a maṇḍala, or a spatial configuration conceptually and theoretically bordering on a maṇḍala.

Clearly, the visual theme of political protection in the iconic and “narratable” program at Phimai calls for the denigration of the narrative in order to foreground the apotropaic power of iconic images. Furthermore, one might even argue that the iconic is more representational than a narrative panel and thus expressively more conducive for the mapping of the symbolic power relation between sacred image, patronage, and kingship. Subsequently, it is probable that the five “narratable” episodes from the Rāmāyaṇa at Phimai are present in order to reinforce and to further underscore this political agenda.

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NOTES

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1. See B. Ly, “Picture-Perfect Pairing: The Politics and Poetics of a Visual Narrative Program at Banteay Srei,” *Udaya: Journal of Khmer Studies* 6 (2005): 151–85.
2. The Bat Chum inscription opens with the protective role of Vajrapani. See G. Coedès, “Les Inscriptions de Bat Cum,” *Journal Asiatique* (Paris, 1958), 237. See also A. Chouléan, “Collective Memory in Ancient Cambodia with Reference to Jayavarman II,” in M. J. Klokke and T. de Bruijn, eds., *Southeast Asian Archaeology 1998* (Hall, 1998), 117–22.
3. Kamaleswar Bhattacharya has pointed out the political usage of Hindu images in early Cambodia. See K. Bhattacharya, “Hari Kambujendra,” *Artibus Asiae* 27 (1964–1965): 72–78; and P. A. Lavy, “As in Heaven, So on Earth: The Politics of Visnu, Siva and Harihara Images in Preangkorian Khmer Civilisation,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 34 (2003), 21–40.
4. Chirapat Prapandvidya, “The Sab Bāk Inscription: Evidence of an Early Vajrayāna Buddhist Presence in Thailand,” *Journal of the Siam Society* 78, no. 2 (1990): 13.
5. For an analysis of the content of the Sab Bāk inscription, see H. W. Woodward, Jr., *The Art and Architecture of Thailand* (Leiden, 2005), 146. See also Claude Jacques, “The Buddhist Sect of Srighana in Ancient Khmer Lands,” in François Lagarde and Paritta Chhlermpow Koanantakook, eds., *Buddhist Legacies in Mainland Southeast Asia* (Paris, 2006), 71–78.
6. See H. W. Woodward, Jr., “Studies in the Art of Central Siam, 950–1350 A.D.” (Ph. D. dissertation, Yale University, 1975), 64.
7. *Ibid.*, 32.
8. The political uses of Buddhist Tantric images are by no means a specifically ancient Khmer phenomenon, as it was a common practice elsewhere in the Buddhist world. See G. G. White, “Tantra in Practice: Mapping a Tradition,” in G. G. White, ed., *Tantra in Practice* (Princeton, N.J., 2001), 3–38. See also P. Berger, “Preserving the Nation: The Political Uses of Tantric Art in China,” in M. Weidner ed., *Latter Days of the Law: Images of Chinese Buddhism, 850–1850* (San Francisco, 1994), 89–124.
9. G. Coedès, “Études cambodgiennes,” *Bulletin de l’École française d’Extrême Orient* 24 (1924): 350–51.
10. See H. W. Woodward, Jr., “Esoteric Buddhism in Southeast Asia in the Light of Recent Scholarship,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 35 (June 2004): 348–52.
11. A photograph of this image is reproduced in Woodward, *The Art and Architecture of Thailand*, pl. 46 (A).
12. For a discussion of the origin of Trailokyavijaya and his association with Vajrapāṇi, see F. A. Bishchoff, trans., *Ārya Māhābala-Nāma-Mahāyānasūtra*, *Buddhica* 10 (Paris, 1964). See also R. Linrothe, *Ruthless Compassion* (Boston, 1999), 178–213. For the debate on the image of Trailokyavijaya, see H. W. Woodward, Jr., “Practice and Belief in Ancient Cambodia: Claude Jacques’ *Angkor* and the *Devarāja* Question,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 32 (June 2001): 249–61; and *idem*, *The Art and Archaeology of Thailand before 1300* (Leiden, 2005), 117–64.
13. D. Snellgrove, *Asian Commitment: Travels and Studies in the Indian Sub-Continent and South-East Asia* (Bangkok, 2000), 473.

14. A. Le Bonheur, *Of Gods, Kings, and Men* (London, 1995), 19.
15. For a comparable study of narrative reliefs and maṇḍala at Caṇḍi Jago in Java, see K. O'Brien, "Caṇḍi Jago as a *Maṇḍala*: Symbolism of Its Narratives," *Review of Indonesian and Malayan Affairs* 22, no. 2 (Summer 1988): 1–57.
16. J.J. Boeles, "Two Yoginis of Hevajra from Thailand, in Ba Shin et al, eds., *Essays Offered to G. H. Luce*, vol. 2 (1966), 14–29. In addition, see R. Tajima, *Les deux grands maṇḍalas et la doctrine de l'ésoterisme Shingon* (Tokyo, 1959), 168–75.
17. Woodward, *The Art and Archaeology of Thailand*, 149.
18. M. Freeman, *Khmer Temples in Thailand and Laos* (Bangkok, 1996), 84–85. In his guidebook, Freeman presents sequentially the Rāmāyaṇa reliefs at Phimai in the clockwise direction starting with the episode of Rāmā and Lakṣmana Tied up by Indrajit's Serpent Arrow, situated on the west pediment. The problem with Freeman's presentation lies in the fact that the Building of the Bridge to Lanka is located on the northwest pediment, which precedes this episode. In short, there is no narrative sequence in the pictorial layout of these reliefs.
19. The Rāmāyaṇa follow neither clockwise nor counterclockwise patterns of circumambulation.
20. J.J. Boeles has identified this palace as the Kutagara mentioned in *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*. See his, "Two Aspects of Buddhist Iconography in Thailand," *Journal of the Siam Society* 48 (1960): 74–77.
21. Freeman, *Khmer Temples in Thailand and Laos*, 85.
22. White, "Tantra in Practice: Mapping a Tradition," 31.
23. By "narratable" I mean that some episodes are composed of two events and can be perceived as independent units that clearly tell a story. For example, the two events rendered on the northwest lintel and pediment at the central shrine of Phimai clearly fit the definition of a narrative (i.e., it has two events). The narrative here begins with the Building of the Bridge to Lanka rendered on the lintel and, in effect, lead to the Battle of Lanka, which is found on the pediment above (fig. 14). In brief, these two events are sequentially placed and hence it is a narrative, but they are not sequentially placed in relation to the rest of the Rāmāyaṇa episodes found at Phimai. Therefore, the two episodes are "narratable" but do not constitute a complete narrative.
24. J.J. Boeles, "A *Rāmāyaṇa* Relief from the Khmer Sanctuary at Phimai in North-East Thailand," *Journal of the Siam Society* 57 (1969), 163–169. See also Uraisri Varasin and Nandana Chutiwongs, "Essai d'interprétation d'une scène du Rāmāyaṇa représentée sur un linteau d'art khmer," in *Sinlapa lae bôrāṅkhadi nai Prathêt Thai/Art and Archaeology in Thailand* (1974), 201–26.
25. See M. Brauen, *The Maṇḍala: Sacred Circle in Tibetan Buddhism* (Boston, 1998).
26. Boeles, "A *Rāmāyaṇa* Relief," 28–29. See also Pattaratorn Chirapravati, *Votive Tablets in Thailand: Origin, Styles, and Uses* (Singapore, 1997), 40–49; and W. Lobo, "The Figure of Hevajra and Tantric Buddhism," in H. Jessup and T. Zephir, eds., *Sculpture of Angkor and Ancient Cambodia: Millennium of Glory* (Washington, D.C., 1997), 71–98.
27. For example, O. W. Wolters wrote:

[The] *maṇḍala* represented a particular and often unstable political situation in a vaguely definable geographical area without fixed boundaries and where smaller centers tended to look in all directions for security. *Maṇḍalas* would expand and contract in a concertina-like fashion. Each one contained several tributary rulers, some of whom would repudiate their vassal status when the opportunity arose and try to build up their own networks of vassals.

See O. W. Wolters, *History, Culture, and Religion in Southeast Asian Perspectives* (Singapore, 1982), 16–25. See also R. Hagesteijn, *Circles of Kings: Political Dynamics in Early Continental Southeast Asia* (Providence, 1989), and S. Tambiah, "The Galactic Polity: The Structure of Traditional Kingdoms in Southeast Asia," in his *World Conqueror and World Renouncer* (Cambridge, 1976), chap. 4.
28. M. Klokke, "Borobudur: A Mandala? A Contextual Approach to the Function and Meaning of Borobudur," in Paul Van der Velde, ed., *IJAS Yearbook* (Leiden, 1995), 195. See also H. W. Woodward, Jr., "On Borobudur's Upper Terraces," *Oriental Art* 45, no. 3 (1999), 34–43.

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS: *The Journal of the Siam Society* 57, part 1 (January, 1969), page 171: fig. 18; P. Krairiksh, *The Sacred Image: Sculpture from Thailand* (National Museum Bangkok, 1979), page 129: fig. 5; B. Shin et al, eds., *Essays Offered to G. H. Luce*, vol. 2 (Ascona, 1966), pages 16–17: figs. 8, 22; Boreth Ly: figs. 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9–17, 19–21; Nanditta Sharma: fig. 3.

Hevajra at Bantéay Chmàr

PETER D. SHARROCK

On a recent field trip to the ruins of Bantéay Chmàr temple in northwestern Cambodia, in dry season conditions that made clambering over the treacherous piles of overgrown sandstone blocks easier than usual, I climbed up close to the miraculously still-standing remnant of a doorway leading to the easternmost hall of a mandapa to the central sanctuary. The lintel over the door bears a large weather-worn icon, which, to my knowledge, has not been published. Some years earlier, I had taken a rainy season, tourist-style photograph of the same doorway from a safe distance across a slippery mass

of collapsed stones and forgotten about it. But on this dry season trip, which came after months of research into the Khmer bronzes of the late Tantric Buddhist deity Hevajra, the lintel gripped my attention. First I marveled that the 70 × 75 cm icon was still standing over a three-meter-high door amid such devastation (fig. 1). Then it sank in that I was looking at an eight-headed, twenty-armed, dancing figure bearing swords in its right hands—Hevajra! At last, I thought in a flash, we have an icon of this wrathful manifestation of the supreme Buddha of the Tantric cosmos “showcased”¹ in a central



Fig. 1. Bantéay Chmàr: Hevajra lintel and doorway, 2004



Fig. 2. Bantéay Chmàr: detail of Hevajra lintel, 2004

lintel on the wall of a Khmer temple (fig. 2), which can be securely dated to the end of King Jayavarman VII's reign (1181–ca. 1220). For several months, I had been studying all the traces of Buddhism's third Tantric wave, Vajrayāna, passing through the culture of the ancient Khmers; now, at last, they could be anchored to the walls of one of Jayavarman's largest temple complexes. The sudden identification of the figure in the lintel felt like the culminating affirmation of a hypothesis that had been gradually superseding all others in my current research—the royal creed of the Buddhist state that Jayavarman was building around the Bāyon temple, in the late twelfth century, was *essentially Tantric*. Although the evidence for this is muted, and probably severely reduced by subsequent sectarian desecration, the time had come to challenge the prevailing conceptions.

My research into the Tantric elements in Khmer sacred art was first stimulated by a pioneering article that Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., published in *Ars Orientalis* in 1981 titled “Tantric Buddhism at Angkor Thom.” In 1979, Woodward had already posited that “in Jayavarman's Buddhism there were indeed Tantric elements that probably came from Phimai, but their precise relationship to his [Buddhist] triad remains to be defined.”² Two years later he extended his research in the complex, groundbreaking 1981 paper that made my own research possible.³

The 1981 paper is an erudite, densely written piece, requiring slow ingestion,⁴ that does something remarkable: it pulls into a coherent argument multiple strands of evidence from across the medieval Buddhist world in a way that makes it possible, for the first time, for modern scholars to seriously reconsider the nature of Khmer Buddhism, and in particular the status of Hevajra in the



Fig. 3. Hevajra, early thirteenth century C.E. Gilt bronze, 22 × 12 cm. From the site of the royal palace of Angkor Thom (Siemreap), excavated 1952. National Museum, Phnom Penh (inv. E1/13.17)

state cult of Jayavarman VII. It also ponders anew the question of when and how the Khmers swung from northern Mahāyāna Buddhism to the southern Hīnayāna they follow today. And yet the article did not launch the wave of reexamination it should have done. Art historians went on marginalizing the Khmer bronzes, considering them incapable of further illumination, principally because there is no mention of Hevajra, a supreme, wrathful, Tantric Buddhist deity, in the surviving inscriptions of Jayavarman. David Snellgrove, for example, whose 1959 translation of the *hevajra-tantra* established a platform for the scholarly rehabilitation of Tantric Buddhism in general and Hevajra studies in particular, some twenty years before Woodward's breakthrough article appeared,

still viewed the bronze Hevajras as the product of some obscure fringe cult: “Judging by the number of images of Hevajra found around Angkor and on various sites on the Khorat Plateau in Thailand. . . . it would seem that a cult of this important Tantric divinity was practised from the 11th century onwards. Since no relevant literature is available, not even a stray reference on a carved inscription, nothing of certainty can be said regarding this cult.”⁵

Woodward has long since gone beyond such hesitations. Some scholars, like Christine Hawixbrock, carefully weighed Woodward’s arguments but reached the same epigraphic block as Snellgrove. After acknowledging the indeed large number of Tantric votive bronzes from Angkor, she nevertheless remains guarded in her conclusion: “Mahāyāna Buddhism did therefore become the state religion but it remains impossible to say whether the Small Vehicle cohabited with it or in what manner and in what proportions Tantric Buddhism infused the Mahāyāna in Jayavarman VII’s reign. As before, no iconographic or epigraphic index allows us to discern these sectarian specifics.”⁶

No inscription sheds light on the significant number of Khmer ritual bronzes of Hevajra, Vajrasattva, Vajradhara, and Vajrapāṇi, which George Coédès had brought to general notice back in 1923.⁷ Furthermore, nothing was found to provide an indisputable, in situ link between the bronzes and the walls of any of Jayavarman’s temples. As a consequence, the obvious questions of why the elaborate, technologically sophisticated bronzes of Hevajra were made, and what kind of rituals took place in the temples that required their manufacture, were not even posed. Nonetheless, Vajrayāna had mushroomed across many Asian states between the eighth and twelfth centuries, disseminating such rituals through the courts of East and Southeast Asia.

A further reason art historians hesitated to accord anything but minor importance to the signs of mature Vajrayāna in Angkor in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is that the material record is virtually all in easily transportable bronze, for which exact provenance exists in only one or two instances. Jean Boisselier, whose influence on Woodward was strong, first raised this issue. He delivered a highly original paper in 1951 on the major, though overlooked, role of the Tantric bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi in Khmer Buddhism, in which he also noted that Coédès’s 1923 publication, *Bronzes khmèrs*, had “revealed the existence of unequivocal representations of [the supreme Tantric Buddhas Vajradhara and Vajrasattva].” Yet Boisselier played down the importance of the bronzes of the Tantric deities because of

the absence of icons in stone: “These bronzes from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries constitute a fairly considerable group, but with no stone statue being reported for the same period, the importance of the role that these divinities played in Khmer Mahāyānist beliefs is strongly diminished.”⁸

Woodward’s eventual, indirect counter to this, the second deficit that Boisselier perceived in the material record of Khmer supreme Buddhists deities—first no inscription and now no *stone* icon—was to draw attention to the huge bust of a stone Hevajra that the French scholars seemed to have forgotten, for it had been sold to New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art by the École française d’Extrême-Orient back in 1935. We will see shortly that this icon—which the French experts wrongly identified as an eleven-headed Avalokiteśvara, but which Alan Priest, after careful examination, correctly published as an eight-headed, sixteen-armed Hevajra⁹—must have held a significant position in Jayavarman’s Angkor. Furthermore, the overlooked lintel I photographed in Bantéay Chmâr at last supplies the missing link between the Hevajra bronzes and the temples. This is an invitation to explore the ritual and liturgy of the ancient Khmer Hevajra cult.

HEVAJRA AT BANTÉAY CHMAR

The Khmer sculptors created a unique, graceful, dancing form of Hevajra that is quite distinct from the Hevajra icons of Bengal, Nepal, Tibet, and China. This was an artistic tour de force by the royal workshops, for Hevajra is a complex amalgam of many deities and is represented with eight heads, sixteen to twenty arms, bearing various attributes, and with four feet trampling the corpses of Vedic and Hindu gods. Yet the Khmer rendering of this burdened figure turns naturally and powerfully in a cosmic dance.

The lower part of the Bantéay Chmâr Hevajra lintel, where the feet were carved, has fallen into the rubble of the unrestored temple ruin, and the top parts of the legs are abraded. But the dancing posture is unmistakably that of Hevajra in late Bâyon-style bronzes. The pyramidal tower of eight addorsed heads is weathered, but many of the details can still be made out, and they are close to those of the gilt Hevajra bronze that B. P. Groslier excavated from the site of the royal palace in Angkor Thom (fig. 3). The details include the lift of the left knee, the poised frontal posture, some of the facial features, the way the large earrings are supported by the shoulders, and the manner in which the multiple arms are inserted into the primary ones below ornate upper-arm jewelry.



Fig. 4. Prince Śrīndrakumara defeats Bharatu-Rāhu, Bantéay Chmàr, western gallery

In the Bantéay Chmàr lintel, in the lowest tier of heads, the central smiling Buddha face has on its left a frowning Asura-like face, which is the Khmer representation of the Vajrapāṇi wrathful *trailokyavijaya* mode.¹⁰

ŚĀSTRADHARA HEVAJRA

Swords are not Hevajra's usual attributes, though he is a warrior, and a Sanskrit Tantric text taken to China in the eleventh century defines his essence as "the perfection of heroism (*vīryapāramitā*)."¹¹ This aspect is perhaps reflected in the militaristic form of the deity known as the *śāstradhara* ("arms-bearing") Hevajra.¹² This is one of the four variants of Hevajra identified in the fifth maṇḍala of Mahāpaṇḍita Abhayākaragupta's authoritative eleventh-century *Nispannayogāvalī*, the classic text that contains details of twenty-six major maṇḍalas.¹³ The fifth maṇḍala in the *nispānnayogāvalī* collection lists Hevajra's right-hand weapons as a fang, trident, cudgel, drinking bowl, discus, arrow, sword, and vajra. This list of attributes was not adopted by the Khmers; the Bantéay Chmàr Hevajra holds two broad swords, four curved swords, and perhaps three daggers in nine of its ten right hands. (The left hands of the lintel icon are all missing.) And the bronze in the Bangkok National Museum, identified as a *śāstradhara* Hevajra by Piriya Krairiksh and Wibke Lobo, appears to be holding only vajras.¹⁴

The militaristic Hevajra may have been chosen for Bantéay Chmàr because the temple is associated with battles. It was dedicated to the memory of Prince

Śrīndrakumara—probably a younger brother of Jayavarman¹⁵—along with four generals, two from this region, who sacrificed their lives to save the prince in a palace coup; the two other generals died defending Jayavarman in an ambush in Čampā.¹⁶ The Bantéay Chmàr inscription says that images of the prince and four generals were raised in the central sanctuary of the temple and in sanctuary-towers around it.

When considering a Čam inscription describing a temple built to celebrate a military victory in 1194—exactly contemporary with the final phase of construction of Bantéay Chmàr—we shall come back to this Khmer association of the *śāstradhara* Hevajra with victory in battle.

HEVAJRA AND ŚIVA

The Hevajra maṇḍala appears in extended three-dimensional format at Bantéay Chmàr in that this central lintel is surrounded by a frieze of 70-centimeter-high Yoginīs, who embellish a large "hall with dancers" added in the final construction phase of the temple. Another narrative element in the lintel itself must also be accounted for: a smaller, five-headed figure, to Hevajra's left, who seems to be moving in harmony with Hevajra's dance. Hevajra's lower, angry Vajrapāṇi face glares down at the smaller, armed figure. The most likely identification of this figure is Sadāśiva of the Siddhantā Tantras—the only figure in the late Khmer pantheon usually shown with five heads.¹⁷ Other examples of the five-headed Sadāśiva or Pañcānana can be seen on Bantéay Chmàr's murals. Vajrapāṇi's glare brings to mind earlier Khmer sculptures of the bodhisattva's wrathful form in which he destroys Śiva with his vajra and forces him to enter the thirty-seven-deity Vajradhatu maṇḍala.

I suggest that a more local war was also intended. One of Śiva's many names, "Bharata," appears in the inscription in the nearby cella in combination with the name of the sun-eating demon Rāhu. Cœdès interpreted "Bharata-Rāhu" as a reference to Tribhuvanāditya, the Śaiva usurper who ousted Jayavarman's relative Yośvarman II in 1167 while the future Jayavarman VII was residing in Čampā. Jayavarman's younger brother, Prince Śrīndrakumara, came to Yośvarman's aid during the palace coup but was defeated.¹⁸ The inscription says Śrīndrakumara would have been killed had not two of his generals sacrificed their lives to save him. A large panel on the western gallery of Bantéay Chmàr shows a prince defeating Bharata-Rāhu, depicted as a giant in the form of a *rāksasa* (fig. 4). Groslier thought that rather than the losing fight to save Yośvarman, this



Fig. 5. Sarvavid Vairocana with Prajñāpāramitā, Pāla period. Red sandstone, height 12.1 cm. National Museum, New Delhi

panel illustrates the quelling of an internal insurrection, possibly the one at Malyang, between Battambang and Pursat, where Čam prince Vidyānandana restored Angkor's authority. Bantéay Chmār, linked in this way to battles with Jayavarman's Śaiva enemies, may also be making a dynastic statement—drawing a parallel between the subjugation of Śiva in the Buddhist Tantras and the replacement of Cambodia's long-supreme Śiva with the creation of Jayavarman's new Buddhist state.

RITUALS

Bantéay Chmār makes royal and military statements. It is reasonable to assume that the rituals celebrated there involved some of the large number of superbly designed Khmer bronzes of Hevajra and the Yoginīs now distributed across the museum collections of the world or seen fleetingly on the art market. How did such Tantric rituals work?

Maṇḍalas were key elements in these rituals, and the Tantras indicate a threefold purpose: they determine which deities are assigned to initiands, stimulate deity visualization in yoga, and frame the enactment of ritual narratives. Giuseppe Tucci offers this account of deity yoga: "the initiate, evoking a divinity out of the bottom

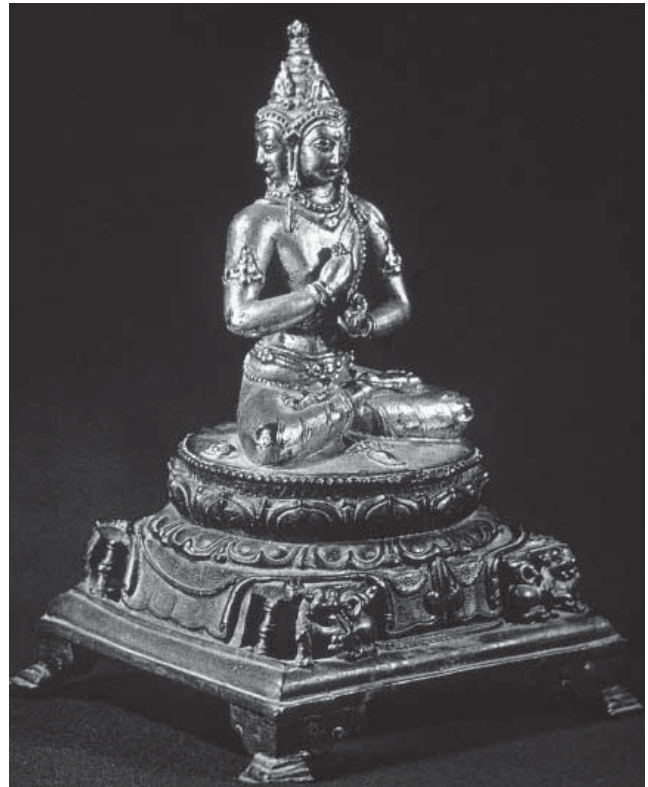


Fig. 6. Sarvavid Vairocana. Pāla period. Gilt bronze. Nālandā Site Museum, Bihar

of his heart and awaiting its epiphany in confidence and awe, interpreted as true revelations the images appearing before him when he had fallen into the trance of ecstasy."¹⁹

Tantric ceremonies gradually evolved from secret initiations for monks behind monastery doors into large public rituals. This is traceable in the evolution of ritual icons in Pāla Bengal, where roughly carved eighth-century stone relief icons of Vairocana have been interpreted by scholars as the work of artisan monks who themselves crafted the stones for secret ceremonies. The icons are inscribed on flat stones and designed for placement in sand or rice-powder maṇḍalas (fig. 5). By the ninth century, Pāla Vairocana icons had evolved into large gilt bronzes whose creation would have required a costly team of technologists and artists, of the kind found only in royal workshops or in the best-endowed monasteries (fig. 6). These are bronzes for courtly ceremonials, and the high quality of the Khmer bronzes also suggests royal ritual use.

HEVAJRASEKAPRAKIYĀ

Thanks to the tradition of Chinese Buddhist pilgrims, who courageously walked the mountain passes to India

or sailed the typhoons of the South China Sea to bring Buddhist texts to China, a Hevajra cult ritual manual has been preserved that is close in time to the Khmer Mahādhara dynasty to which Jayavarman VII belonged. A Sanskrit palm leaf (*olla*) handbook titled “The Hevajra Consecration Ceremony” (*hevajrasekaprakīyā*) was photographed in 1914 by Henri Maspero at the P’ou-ngan temple in China’s Tchō-kiang province, northwest of Taiwan, and was translated into French by Louis Finot in 1934. Maspero was told by the P’ou-ngan bonzes that the *olla* had been brought from India with other Tantric texts by the monk Pao-tchang in 1057.²⁰ Finot assigned the script, on paleographic evidence, to eleventh-century Bengal. A similar text reached Java, and it is not impossible that another was brought to Cambodia at that time.²¹

The *hevajrasekaprakīyā* is written in a clear, practical style for use in Hevajra monastic consecrations, but the instructions are also applicable on a grand, royal scale. It opens with homage to Vajrasattva, Hevajra, and the officiating master, described as the incarnation of Hevajra. It is worth summarizing the rituals described in the text, which is a simplified schema inspired directly by the *hevajra-tantra*, to glean some notion of what the twelfth-century Khmers may have actually been enacting in their temples. The Hevajra maṇḍala is sketched on the ground with colored powder,²² “and the gods are installed upon it, while their mantras are recited” and parasols, banners, and standards erected.²³ (This is perhaps how the Khmer bronze Hevajras, Yoginīs, and Vajrasattvas were used in rituals.) The initiand, his face covered by a red veil, dressed in royal robes, and holding a garland of flowers, imagines the maṇḍala shooting up into the air on an eight-petaled lotus, poised on the tip of a vajra-thunderbolt. He is directed into this “protected circle” (*raksācakra*) toward a raised throne and warned not to touch the sketched lines, the deities, or their attributes. Once inside the magic circle, he is protected against “the evil committed earlier during many tens of millions of kalpas.”²⁴ He throws a garland onto the image of the presiding deity that will determine his own special powers and hands a flower to an attendant Yoginī who assists him in subsequent meditations. He is consecrated with water from the “urn of victory” (*vijayakalāśa*) and enters a yoga trance of triple concentration (*samādhitraya*). A vajra and bell are placed in his hands in further consecrations and he is given a new name that includes the word “vajra.”²⁵ Finally a curtain is drawn and a girl brought in for the secret consecration (*guhābhiseka*) with the magic syllables *om*, *hūm*, *āh* inscribed on her head, breast, and “stigma” (*kiñjalke*). The P’ou-ngan *olla* is damaged here,



Fig. 7. Khubilai Khan’s *hevajravaśita*?

possibly censored at some later date, but a reference can be made out to “the drops of nectar left in the heart of the lotus.”²⁶ The initiand identifies so intimately with Hevajra that he worships him as present within his own body at the climax of the ceremony. With a deity as complex as Hevajra, whose eight heads are an accumulation of deities interacting with the eight surrounding Yoginīs, this makes an extraordinary demand on the adept, who, if he reaches this stage, is said to be already on the way to becoming a Buddha. The external maṇḍala icons are thus crucial aids to awakening a new inner self.

The largest and most remarkable set of maṇḍalic aids for submission to Hevajra was found near Beijing. It is made up of six life-size bronze *yab-yum* couples sitting on mounts: an elephant, a resuscitated man, a buffalo, a bull, a goat, and a gazelle. These bronzes were photographed in the 1920s (fig. 7), before they disappeared without trace. P. H. Pott speculated that a maṇḍala on this scale could only have “featured in the consecration of a sovereign, perhaps at Khubilai [Khan]’s [1261] Hevajravaśitā [‘submission to Hevajra’].”²⁷

FEMALE PARTICIPATION

We have no evidence for what selections from the *hevajra-tantra* the Khmers adapted for their Hevajra rituals. The virtual absence in the Khmer images of Hevajra in sexual union (*yab-yum*, “father-mother” in Tibetan) with his partner Nairātmyā may indicate that the Khmers did not share the Indian (or Chinese) tantrikas’ penchant for sexual yoga, corpses, cannibalism, and other antinomian activities recurrent in the Indian Tantras. On the other hand, female celestial dancers, draped with flower garlands, are accorded primary importance at the entrances to the Bāyon and in the large halls added late to the other

Buddhist temples in Angkor, including Bantéay Chmàr, suggesting an intense female participation in rituals. And we do have a brief contemporary text which suggests that the four consecrations of the Hevajra system were being conducted by the Khmers, including erotic yoga. Chau Ju-kua, the Chinese superintendent of maritime trade in Canton, in 1225 recorded what he had heard was taking place in Jayavarman's temples: "[In Chen-la, i.e. Cambodia] the people are devout Buddhists. In the temples there are 300 foreign women; they dance and offer food to the Buddha. They are called a-nan. . . . [Skt. ānanda (bliss)]."²⁸ The four blisses in Vajrayāna represent the mounting intensities of meditational states and correspond with the four cosmic spheres of the Buddhas.²⁹

RITUAL PARAPHERNALIA

Further evidence for a sizable cult of consecrations is found in the large numbers of museum collection bronze lustration shankhas, vajras, bells, and other paraphernalia, many bearing impressions of Hevajra's image; these were the principal ritual instruments of the officiating monks. Although much in the Tantric cults remained secret and could be transmitted only between guru and pupil, rituals were gradually adapted to public performance, where the secrets were enshrouded in a coded language (*sandhyābhāṣā*) understood only by the initiated. Once the rituals were recorded in manuals, the Tantra writers designed interludes as full theatrical scripts, lending themselves further to public performance. These included dialogues between the Buddhas, bodhisattvas, gods, and heavenly choruses. Initiation ceremonies, embellished with song and dance, varied in the many currents of Vajrayāna, but they were no doubt always emotionally charged. Tucci describes Tibetan rituals involving secret rites with female partners, in which the initiand collapses after a frenzied dance (*vajranṛtya*), before being revived to dash wildly through the maṇḍala, brandishing a weapon.³⁰

INDICATIONS OF SCALE

The paradigm for a large state-level Tantric Buddhist cult was set in China, when the Tang emperors and their Buddhist mandarins sought to exploit the potential claimed by the Tantric community for generating superhuman powers and designed large public ceremonies for "state protection." These required the aristocracy, the army, and the educated classes to undergo consecration in mass ceremonies, designed to procure both expressions of loyalty to the emperor and the favorable alignment of

the body politic with the ultimate powers of the cosmos. The supernatural powers conferred by the rituals were of direct interest to kings and armies of Bengal, Java, China, Tibet, Mongolia, and Japan.³¹ In China, Tantric ceremonies are recorded as lasting for weeks and requiring the erection of large consecration platforms, with food and accommodation for thousands of participants. This style of court-imposed mass propagation of esoteric Buddhism was led by the Indian master and translator Amoghavajra in the late eighth century under the Tang. Amoghavajra became the most powerful adviser to three emperors³² and was often called on to perform rituals in time of war. Charles Orzech calls him "the most powerful Buddhist cleric in the history of China . . . [who] developed a new paradigm of religious polity for Esoteric Buddhism."³³

Because of the scant textual evidence for Tantric Buddhism in Cambodia, the scholars who have written about the Hevajra bronzes have been reluctant to evaluate the likelihood of a national cult being practiced in public in Jayavarman's large series of temple complexes. But I believe we should now ask again: Did Jayavarman VII follow this model of mass engagement in potent loyalty or "state protection" ritual?

WHICH ARE THE KHMER HEVAJRA TEMPLES?

Before the Bantéay Chmàr lintel caught more than my tourist eye, there was little apart from the overlooked Yoginī-dancer motif to connect the Tantric Khmer bronzes with Jayavarman's temples. Only two bronze Hevajras enjoy fairly reliable provenance. One in the Bāphūon style was discovered in the floor of a side sanctuary in Bantéay Kdei. Another dancing Hevajra, this time in late Bāyon style, was excavated by Groslier in 1952 from the ruins of the royal palace. Yet there is a host of pointers to a royal Tantric cult:

- A large infrastructure of Buddhist temples was being created that can leave us in no doubt that the temples were at the heart of the regnal strategy, and absorbing a significant part of national resources.
- More than a hundred Khmer bronze icons of Hevajra, sometimes encircled by eight Yoginīs in his maṇḍala, are now held in museum collections around the world or have passed through the auction rooms. Their striking elegance and refined casting suggest that they were made for courtly ceremonies.

- There are *thousands* of dancers carved in Tantric-style postures in the entrances of the Bāyon and on a double row of pillars outside its external gallery. The frontal, stamping-dance posture of these Yoginī-style dancers, with their piercing, confrontational stares, seems to identify them with the bronze Yoginīs in Hevajra’s three-dimensional maṇḍalas.
- More Yoginī-like dancers are carved into the lintels and pillars of large roofed halls inserted as late additions to Jayavarman’s earlier temples in Angkor—Prah Khan, Tà Prohm, and Bantéay Kdei. The largest Yoginī hall of all, in Bantéay Chmàr, measures 35 × 15 meters. The halls constitute the largest covered sacred spaces in ancient Cambodia.
- The halls are surrounded by even larger stone platforms and terraces with Nāga balustrades, which would accommodate many more ritual participants. The balustrades feature Garuda embracing Nāgas, a symbol in Tantric Buddhism for converts being protected by the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi.³⁴
- Just before the Bāyon was opened, a large flat 4.5-meter-high platform in the form of a Greek cross was extended around the temple’s central sanctuary, creating an elevated area that would have made public rituals visible to a large section of the city’s population.
- Dozens of libation conches have survived that bear images of Hevajra and the Yoginīs. Along with vajras, bells, and other ritual paraphernalia, these shankhas would have been sufficient to service a large program of Hevajra consecrations.

The temple rituals under Jayavarman VII, from the evidence at our disposal, appear to have been large and lavish in color, song, and dance and richly furnished with icons in gold, silver, and bronze. They were conducted, with a privileged role for women, in a series of large new stone temples. The Hevajra and Yoginīs on the walls of Bantéay Chmàr clearly indicate that, at this temple, large rituals toward the end of the reign were performed in celebration of the Khmer Hevajra. Before going further into exploring Bantéay Chmàr and its Hevajra cult, I would like to consider another piece of evidence, also found outside Angkor, for the spread of such a cult.

A ČAM PIECE OF THE PUZZLE?

An inscription from neighboring Čampā may throw light on the Khmer cult. The Mī-Sq̄n inscription c92 B

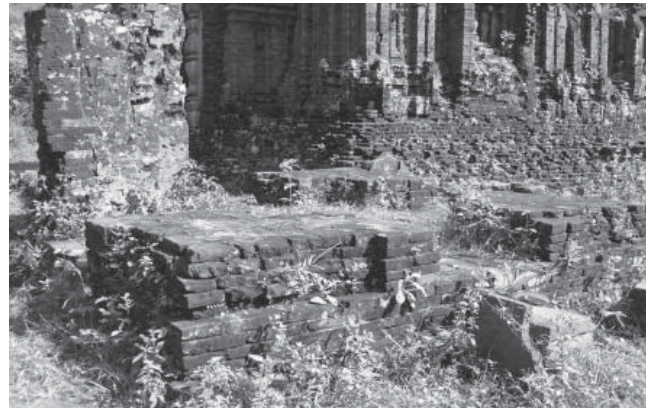


Fig. 8. Vidyānandana’s Heruka temple at Mī-Sq̄n

is an unusually clear historical account that suggests both a departure from Čam tradition and an adoption of Khmer style.³⁵ It departs from the conventional mix of panegyrics for the patron, supplication of the gods, and details of daily maintenance to provide a compact and lucid account of current Khmer-Čam political relations as well as of the beliefs and motives of the principal actors.

The man who commissioned the inscription is Prince Vidyānandana of Tumprauk-vijaya, appearing in the inscription under his reign name, King Sūryavarman. Sūryavarman-Vidyānandana is described as practicing the “true science of the Mahāyāna teaching” (*mahāyānad-harmma tuy jñānopdeśa*). The inscription says he erected a temple to the Tantric god Heruka (*Śrī herukaharmya* “Lord Heruka’s mansion”) in Amarāvati (Quảng Nam).³⁶ The temple dedicated to Heruka celebrated Vidyānandana’s victory at Jai Ramya-vijaya over an army sent against him by Jayavarman VII in 1194.³⁷ The stela was found beside the so-called inscription temple: a small 3 × 3-meter brick structure at the heart of the largest surviving Čam sanctuary site, the dense Mī-Sq̄n complex inland from the modern port of Danang (fig. 8).

“Heruka” is both a wrathful supreme deity with a distinctive but rarely found iconic form and a generic name for wrathful manifestations of the supreme Buddha that include Hevajra (with eight heads), Saṃvara (with elephant hide), and Mahākāla (black, with tongue extended). The names “he-ruka” and “he-vajra” were initially conceived as similar invocations of supreme states or deities experienced by adepts at critical, ecstatic moments in rituals, which were hardly capable of definition—“O, radiance!”, “O, adamantine!”³⁸ Later these deities of intercession with the ultimate, formless levels of cosmic being were conceived in distinctive iconic forms. All Heruka deities perform the meditation-dance



Fig. 9. Heruka of Bahal II Padang Lawas. Early eleventh century C.E.

of ruthless compassion³⁹ that enables adepts to feed the transcendent Buddhas within their bodies. The Čam inscription's reference to Heruka was passed over without comment by the pioneers who excavated and translated the inscription. Yet this temple citation is nothing less than the sole surviving epigraphic record of a Heruka/Hevajra cult in ancient Indochina.⁴⁰ Does this mention of Heruka begin to fill the blank in ancient Khmer epigraphy that has so inhibited scholarship? Can it be linked to Jayavarman VII?

Until now, scholars have followed Boisselier and linked it with Śrīvijaya, ancient Indonesia⁴¹—a view that I believe may be a red herring. Boisselier alludes to the growing Tantrism in the Buddhism of Java by the late thirteenth century,⁴² while Emmanuel Guillon points us to Java a century earlier, in Vidyānandana's time.⁴³ Nandana Chutiwongs says that Heruka cults were important in northern Sumatra in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but the evidence she adduces does



Fig. 10. Heruka, Pala period, eleventh century C.E. Black stone, height 65 in. From Comilla, Subhapur (Bengal). Bangladesh National Museum, Dacca (inv. E47).

not show a distributed cult.⁴⁴ She cites F. M. Schnitger's excavation of the temples of Padang Lawas in 1935,⁴⁵ which uncovered a single, shattered early eleventh-century relief of Heruka (fig. 9), very close in design to an eleventh century two-armed dancing Heruka,⁴⁶ with Akṣobhya in his flaming hair, now in the Dacca Museum (fig. 10). Heruka images are rare, as attested by Dacca curator Nalini Kanta Bhattachali,⁴⁷ one of the few extant examples coming from the monastery at Nālandā in the Ganges Valley. The image that Schnitger found may therefore have been an import from eastern India to the small Tantric Buddhist kingdom on the Panai River—a kingdom that was evidently important enough to be invaded by the Chola king Rājendra I in 1025⁴⁸—suggesting continued close links between the remnant ruling groups from the Śailendras of Borobudur, who settled in Sumatra after precipitously leaving Java. However, Schnitger found no other Heruka icon. In 1976 Rumbi Mulia followed up on his work and revisited the remote

Batak region of Sumatra. He reached the overgrown temple ruin with difficulty but found no trace of the Heruka relief.⁴⁹ So we are left with a single photograph of the sole known icon of the Sumatran Heruka cult. In the ninth century, Sumatra may well have had links with the large Čam Tantric Buddhist foundation at Đông-dүүng, but there is no hard evidence for this. Daigoro Chihara believes that the visit of a Čam courtier to Java in the late ninth or early tenth century may have led to the revitalization of Čam temple architecture at Khүүng Mỹ *kalān*, southeast of Đông-dүүng, and the Mĩ-Sơn Aĩ temple (later devastated by an American B-52 strike), where certain Javanese foliage motifs and *kāla-makaras* seem to have been reproduced by the Čams.⁵⁰ John Guy, pursuing this argument in favor of Śrīvijayan influence in Čampā, has further suggested a link between the unusual chimney-stack stupas of Đông-dүүng and the Maligai stūpa of Candi Maura Tankus, further south of Panai on the eastern coast of central Sumatra.⁵¹ But the similarity here is less striking, and as Đông-dүүng predates Maura Tankus by at least a century (Chihara estimates the latter as built in the eleventh–twelfth centuries),⁵² Guy concedes that the influence could have gone the other way.⁵³ (Boisselier had earlier taken the contrary view that Đông-dүүng’s “cylindrical-conical” stupas with rings “singularly evoke the stūpa-towers of China and Việť-nam.”)⁵⁴ In summary, the case for claiming that the Heruka cult of the small Tantric Buddhist kingdom of Panai of northern Sumatra led to Vidyānandana erecting a temple to Heruka is far from convincing.

It seems worthwhile, then, to look in another geographical direction to account for the sudden appearance of a Tantric Heruka in Mĩ-Sơn. The Čam king who erected the Heruka temple had intimate connections with the Khmer court of King Jayavarman VII. Ironically, this Heruka temple, erected to celebrate a Khmer defeat by a Čam turncoat of military genius, may give us an important clue to the kind of Buddhism then being practiced by the Khmers. For Čam usurper Sūryavarman-Vidyānandana, the author of the inscription, had passed his youth at the Khmer court. As Prince Vidyānandana, he arrived at a tender age (*kāla prathamayauvana* “in early youth”) at the court in Angkor in 1182 and was raised like a favorite son of the newly enthroned Jayavarman VII. This was just one year after Jayavarman seized power in Angkor, possibly with Čam allies from his long sojourn in Vijaya from approximately 1150 to 1167. The Mĩ-Sơn inscription does not explain why the Čam prince was received at the Khmer court, but it suggests why he was



Fig. 11. Vidyānandana brings rebel heads to the king after Malyang? Bāyon, western outer gallery

rapidly elevated to the status of Khmer crown prince (*yuvārāja*): “The Cambodian king, seeing that he had all thirty-three marks of a great man, took him into his affection and taught him, like a prince of Cambodia, all sacred works and all weapons.”⁵⁵

Prince Vidyānandana’s education in religion, statesmanship, and arms was that of King Jayavarman VII himself. The inscription shows how Jayavarman trusted the gifted Čam teenager by conferring on him the quelling of an internal revolt by the city of Malyang, west of Angkor.⁵⁶ From the way this revolt may be depicted on the western outer gallery of the Bāyon, the Malyang rebellion was one of the major domestic crises of Jayavarman’s early reign. The Bāyon relief, in between scenes of Khmer soldiers fighting Khmers in apparent civil war, may recount how the Čam warrior prince offered up the severed heads of two traitors to the king (fig. 11).

Jayavarman’s trust was further affirmed a decade later as Vidyānandana was sent home to Čampā at the head of a Khmer army sent to defeat insurgent Čams and install prince In—a brother-in-law of Jayavarman of unspecified nationality—as ruler in Vijaya. Vidyānandana succeeded and was himself made vassal ruler of southern Čampā. When, soon thereafter, Prince In ran into difficulties, Vidyānandana first came to his rescue against a usurper but then suddenly betrayed his benefactor’s trust and seized the north as well, crowning himself king and refusing to acknowledge Khmer suzerainty.⁵⁷ Jayavarman responded by sending in another Khmer army, but it was defeated by Sūryavarman-Vidyānandana at Jai Ramya-vijaya. In celebration, the Khmer-educated Čam usurper built his victory temple to Heruka, embellished

the Mĩ-Sơn Śiva-linga with the heaviest golden cover recorded in Čam epigraphy,⁵⁸ and turned to Emperor Long Cán (r. 1176–1210) of the neighboring Đại Việt for acknowledgment of his legitimacy, which was granted in 1199. But the extraordinary military career of the Čam prince was to end in disaster. Vietnamese records show that after Jayavarman sent yet another army to defeat him in 1203, Vidyānandana fled and requested asylum in the Đại Việt. When this was rejected, he and his fleet of two hundred junks off the port of Cũu-La disappeared without trace.⁵⁹

In the context of the epigraphic conventions of the time, the 1194 Mĩ-Sơn inscription is an unusually clear historical exposition. It does not prove which royal creed was being practiced in the Khmer court in Jayavarman VII's reign, but it *does* prove that a temple to Heruka was erected in Čampā in 1194 by a Čam aristocrat who had been taught from his youth in Angkor “all sacred works and all weapons, like a native prince of Cambodia” (*sarvvāgamā sarvāyudha samāsta avih di dauk di kamvujadeśa*).⁶⁰ And as Vidyānandana was a favoured protégé of Jayavarman, there is a strong possibility that if his god was called “Heruka,” then so was Jayavarman's. The inscription may be read as holding up a mirror to what was happening in Angkor. A Heruka cult has no recorded precedent in Čampā, which strengthens the possibility that this cult in Mĩ-Sơn was a direct export from Cambodia and therefore a reflection of Jayavarman's creed. And if Hevajra was called Heruka in Čampā by Vidyānandana, then the probability is increased that Jayavarman also called his supreme wrathful eight-headed Tantric deity Heruka. The Khmer cultural imprint on the sacred art of Čampā is very noticeable in this period of invasion and annexation, so I propose that the Mĩ-Sơn inscription be seen as providing grounds for redesignating as “Herukas” the bronze and stone icons made in Jayavarman's heartland, which we call “Hevajras” on iconographic, not epigraphic, grounds.

BANTÉAY CHMÀR'S TANTRIC PANTHEON

This new light from Čampa is strong enough to prompt our looking not for *whether* but for *where* Jayavarman built his *Śri Herukaharmya*; Bantéay Chmàr, with its Hevajra and Yoginīs and its themes of the military application of Tantric powers, is the strongest candidate.

A design change immediately visible at Bantéay Chmàr suggests that the construction was divided into two phases. The temple was probably first dedicated to Lokeśvara, for his 1190s-style image is set in the lintel of



Fig. 12. Seated supreme deity with two Herukas. Bantéay Chmàr, central sanctuary, south wall

the western entrance to the central block. This central section has Devatās and false windows with blinds half drawn in the style of Praḥ Khan of Angkor, dedicated in 1191. This is in sharp contrast with the later, large, open pillared spaces of the large Yoginī hall, which was added in the east and extended out almost to the surrounding gallery wall. The change in style came with a change of pantheon; the second phase, constructed in parallel with the final phase of the Bāyon, includes face towers, the Yoginī hall, and the Mahākarunika Lokeśvaras. The Yoginis of Bantéay Chmàr are unique. They have third vajra eyes and hold flowers with outstretched, feathered arms and stand astride on Garuḍa legs. In the central sanctuary, on the southern wall, I also came across an unpublished trinity of polycephalous, multi-armed deities that also appear to belong to the late, Tantric phase of decoration. Two of the deities are dancing in Hevajra's *ardhaparyanka* posture beside a seated three- or four-headed deity with its principal arms in *dharmacakra mudrā* and four others rising in an arc behind (fig. 12). This smiling, open-eyed deity has facial features that are reminiscent of the Hevajra in the nearby lintel. He too wears heavy earrings, necklace, and diadem. I propose identifying this as the supreme Buddha Vajrasattva, the deity whose giant form, I have argued elsewhere,⁶¹ also appears in the Bāyon and Bantéay Chmàr face towers.

Heruka/Hevajra appears to have been the Tantric god honored for military victories in the Khmer sphere of influence at this period. This seems remotely related to what the Tang dynasty called *chen-kuo*, or “state protection” Buddhism, when they performed Tantras to ward off hostile armies or put down rebellions.⁶² Geoffrey Samuel sees military and political purposes as the driving force behind the development of the Tantras: “Evidence increasingly suggests that a central driving force behind this transformation was the use of Tantric ritual for political and military purposes. . . . Rulers patronised



Fig. 13. Bust of Hevajra, Angkor period, Khmer style, Bayon, late 12th-early 13th century. Stone, height 132.1 cm. From Angkor Thom (Siemreap), east gate. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Fletcher Fund, 1936 (39.96.4)

Tantric priests and established communities and colleges of Tantric ritualists, because they saw these specialists in Tantric power as an important dimension of the power of the state.”⁶³

Bantéay Chmàr, identified in its second phase with Jayavarman’s battles with Śaiva enemies, thus seems to become a metaphor that sublimates his earthly victories into a dynastic celebration of the Tantric Buddhism’s subjugation of Cambodia’s long-supreme Śiva into the dancing sway of the all-powerful *śaṣṭradhara* Heruka/Hevajra. On a far larger scale, it is the Khmer equivalent of the victory temple erected contemporaneously by Jayavarman’s former protégé, King Sūryavarman-Vidyānandana (r. ca. 1194–1203) in Čampā. Bantéay Chmàr has the best claim to being Jayavarman’s *Śrī Herukaharmya*.

HEVAJRA IN ANGKOR

But what evidence is there for a major royal cult of Hevajra in Angkor at the crossover from the twelfth to the thirteenth century? Apart from the bronzes, there are in fact several images of Hevajra in stone, the principal one being the bust in New York, which was originally a three-meter-high statue. The 132-centimeter-tall bust (fig. 13) was found broken in a mound of earth near the great East Gate (*Porte des Morts*) of Angkor Thom and is now in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In a 1980 exchange between Hiram Woodward and Bruno Dagens, who was then making the inventory of the Khmer Conservation Depot in Siemreap, it was established that the huge legs were in poor condition in the depot.⁶⁴ During a search of the Siemreap Conservatory

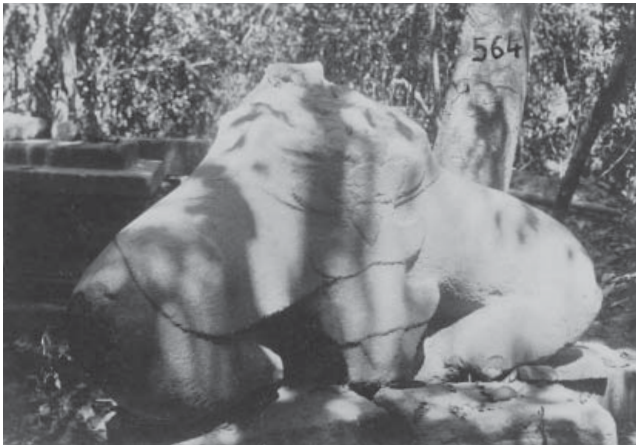


Fig. 14. Fragment of a monumental statue of Hevajra, excavated by Henri Marchal at the site of the royal palace, Angkor Thom (Siemreap)

in 2005, the staff and I were unable to locate the remains of the legs. In a 1968 article Bruno Dagens had reported: “In Jayavarman VII’s time, this dancing god [Hevajra] of the Mahāyānist pantheon enjoyed a certain popularity that is attested, if not in the epigraphy, at least by numerous representations in bronze and also in a large statue in stone: this latter, sadly very mutilated, represents the god dancing as in the bronze images. It was found in a chapel to the east of the *Porte des Morts* of Angkor Thom, where several statues of Lokeśvara were also found.”⁶⁵

A search of the electronic inventory of the *École française d’Extrême-Orient* in Siemreap did, however, bring to light photographs of the unearthing of the giant Hevajra by Henri Marchal on 8 March 1925 (fig. 14). Marchal described the giant as “squatting,” but the photograph shows the posture of the huge legs, despite being shorn of feet, to be the classical *ardhaparyanka* dance position of Hevajra. The site was a pile of earth in the bush a hundred meters from the *Porte des Morts*. The dump—for that is what it looks like in the photographs—also yielded a pedestal, sixteen hands and several Avalokiteśvaras. In a search of the depot, I identified a number of the Hevajra’s broken hands, with finely carved fingers and skins folds at the wrists that show the quality of the sculpting. They hold some of the deity’s normal attributes of animals and Buddhas.

The statue must originally have been more than three meters high (the pedestal in the photograph, which includes a measuring rod, is one meter high), making this Hevajra one of the largest icons of the late Bāyon period. The high quality of the sculpting is also seen in the rendering of the “Khmer smile” and in the tension felt in the flesh of the earlobes, stretched by the heavy



Fig. 15. Author’s conjectural reconstruction of monumental statue of Hevajra, Angkor Thom (Siemreap)

earrings. The giant Hevajra, on its pedestal, is almost equal in size to the four-meter Bāyon-style Viṣṇu that Jayavarman VII appears to have erected in Angkor Wāt, perhaps to mark *Indrābhiseka* celebrations on the occasion of the subjugation of central and southern Čampā in 1203. The exceptional scale and quality of this Hevajra image suggest a major royal purpose. I have attempted a “virtual” reconstruction of this imposing sculpture from photographs of the New York bust and the archival photographs of the legs (fig. 15). We cannot know where this large stone Hevajra was originally erected in Angkor. It appears to have been dumped outside the Angkor Thom walls, perhaps in a Śaiva reaction early in the fourteenth century.⁶⁶ Its broken state suggests that it may have been one of the thousands of icons smashed when the Buddhists were driven out of Jayavarman’s temples. None of the surviving small Bāyon inscriptions refers to Hevajra, but an icon such as this would presumably have had a central place in the Bāyon tower sanctuary.

Many more elements in the Khmer art from the seventh to the thirteenth century indicate that the Khmer Buddhists kept in close touch with the evolution of Tantric Buddhism in the great Indian monasteries of the Ganges Valley. What the Khmers made of these Indic Buddhist conceptions has still hardly been studied, but we can now affirm that the temple of Bantéay Chmâr puts it beyond doubt that a Hevajra cult was dominant there at the end of Jayavarman's reign; the New York stone Hevajra invites a profound reinvestigation of the temple art in the late Bâyon-style in Angkor. More pieces of the puzzle are falling into place, thanks to that inspired article of 1981, in which Woodward found a new vision of Khmer Buddhist art by drawing in an array of disparate threads from across ancient Asia—the article I have carried with me through this journey of discovery.

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NOTES

1. I was thinking of Bruno Dagens's rejection of arguments for seeing a Tantric Buddhist deity such as Vajrasattva or Vajrapāṇi in the Bâyon face towers on the grounds that the popularity of such a deity in ancient Cambodia was "very limited" and that "this character is never *showcased* on any pediment or lintel." B. Dagens, "The Bâyon Face Towers and Their Meaning," in *Fifth International Symposium on the Preservation and Restoration of Bâyon: Final Report* (Siem Reap, 2000), 112 (my emphasis).
2. H. W. Woodward, Jr., "The Bâyon-Period Buddha Image in the Kimbell Art Museum," *Archives of Asian Art* 32 (1979): 72–83.
3. "Tantric Buddhism at Ankor Thom," *Ars Orientalis* 12 (1981): 75–81. Many years later, Woodward was to reaffirm his view that "Tantric Buddhism was established at Phimai in the late 11th century. Under Jayavarman VII at Angkor a hundred years later, Tantric elements were incorporated into the royal Buddhist synthesis." H. W. Woodward, Jr., *The Sacred Sculpture of Thailand* (Bangkok and London, 1997), 92.
4. I kept a photocopy in my backpack during years of field trips.
5. D. Snellgrove, *Khmer Civilization and Angkor* (Bangkok, 2001), 57.
6. C. Hawixbrock, "Jayavarman VII ou le renouveau d'Angkor, entre tradition et modernité," *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 85 (1998): 76 (my translation).
7. G. Coëdès, *Bronzes khmers*, *Ars Asiatica* 5 (Paris, 1923).
8. J. Boisselier, "Vajrapani dans l'art du Bâyon," *Proceedings of the Twenty-second Congress of International Orientalists* (Istanbul, 1951), 324.
9. A. Priest, "A Collection of Cambodian Sculpture," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 9 (1937): 84–88.
10. This is consistent with the analysis of Hevajra's compound form, amalgamating multiple deities, found in the work of Lama Angarika Govinda and Wibke Lobo (L. A. Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* [Bombay, 1960], 206).
11. The text is the anonymous *hevajrasekaprakiyā* found inscribed on bamboo at the P'ou-ngan temple in Tchō-kiang province in 1914 and translated by Louis Finot ("Manuscrits sanskrits de Sādhana's retrouvés en Chine," *Journal Asiatique* [July–September 1934]: 45).
12. "La forme à une seule face et à deux mains, et celle à huit faces, seize mains et quatre pieds, semblent avoir été les plus fréquemment représentées. L'aspect à seize mains selon *NSP* 5 serait appelé Śaśradhara Hevajra, le Hevajra porteur d'armes, sans doute pour le différencier de l'aspect aux seize coupes crâniennes, Kapāladhara Hevajra." (M.-T. de Mallmann, *Introduction à l'iconographie du Tāntrisme bouddhique* [Paris, 1986], 185).
13. B. Bhattacharyya, ed., *Nispannayogāvalī* (Baroda, 1949), 40–41.
14. Lobo notes: "Le musée national de Bangkok possède une belle statue en bronze de l'Hevajra porteur d'armes datant du XIIIe siècle. Reproduction dans Piriya Krairiksch, *The Sacred Image*, Cologne, 1979, pp. 62, 145." W. Lobo, "L'image de Hejvara et le bouddhisme tantrique," in H. I. Jessup and T. Zéphir, eds., *Angkor et dix siècles d'art khmer* (Paris and Washington, D.C., 1997), 75 n. 6.
15. B. P. Groslier, *Le Bâyon*, pt. 2: *Inscriptions du Bâyon*, Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient: Mémoire archéologique 3 (Paris, 1973), 153.
16. *Ibid.*, 139.
17. "The faces of Śiva represent his five aspects. They are known as *Vāmadeva*, *Tatpura*, *Aghora*, *Sadyojāta* and *Īśāna* facing north, east, south, west and top and representing the aspects of *Īśa*, *Īśāna*, *Īśvara*, *Brahmā* and *Sadāśiva* respectively." P. C. Bagchi, *Studies in the Tantras*, I (Calcutta, 1975), 3.
18. Coëdès's ingenious unraveling of the inscription is in "Nouvelles données chronologiques et généalogiques sur la dynastie de Mahidharapura," *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 29 (1929): 297–300.
19. G. Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (Rome, 1949), 216.
20. H. Maspero, "Rapport sommaire sur une mission archéologique au Tchō-kiang," *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 14 (1914): 69.
21. A Javanese Sanskrit version of the *hevajrasekaprakiyā* is known as the *sang-hyang-kamahāyānan-mantrayāna*. Helmuth von Glasenapp compared these texts closely and concluded that although some details are different—the Javanese text, for instance, does not mention throwing a flower into the maṇḍala—"soviel ist doch sicher, daß beide Abhisekas eine Reihe von Akten gemeinsam haben." H. von Glasenapp, "Noch einmal: Ein Initiations-Ritus im buddhistischen Java," *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* no. 4 (1938): 202.
22. Finot, "Manuscrits sanskrits," 13. This is probably rice powder or rice grains, as, for instance, specified for drawing the maṇḍala "in a splendid way with rice powder" *The Vināśikhatantra: A Śaiva Tantra of the Left Current*, ed. and trans. T. Goudriaan (Delhi, 1985), 101.
23. Finot, "Manuscrits sanskrits," 13.
24. *Ibid.*, 35–37.
25. *Ibid.*, 40.
26. *Ibid.*, 46.
27. P. H. Pott, trans. R. Needham, *Yoga and Yantra: Their Interrelation and Their Significance for Indian Archaeology* (The Hague, 1966), 70.

- Alternatively, the bronzes may have been created for a performance of the *cakrasaṃvara-tantra*, for with the addition of a horse and a makara, these mounts would correspond exactly with the eight *kṣetrapāla* of this Tantra, in which Saṃvara, another Heruka-class deity like Hevajra, is described ripping open an elephant hide representing illusion. K. Dawa-Samdup, *Shrichackrasambhara Tantra* (Calcutta, 1918, repr. New Delhi, 1987), 20.
28. F. Hirth and W. Rockhill, trans., *Chau Ju-kua: His Work on the Chinese and Arab Trade in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries Entitled Chu-fan-chi* (St. Petersburg, 1911), with Hirth's notes inserted.
 29. "[The four states of purification in the Upaniṣads are] . . . received into Vajrayāna and applied to its soteriology: the states of wakefulness (*jāgrata*), sleep (*svapna*), deep sleep (*susupta*), ineffable fourth state (*turiya*), are in parallel with the four *ānanda*, four blisses which progressively intensify: *prathamānanda*, *viramānanda*, *paramānanda*, *sahajānanda*. In this symbology, which allows the initiate to realize the purity of divine experience, they correspond to the four bodies of the Buddha: *nirmāṇa*, *sambhoga*, *dharma* and *sahaja*, each of them adequate to the four planes of reality: physical, verbal, spiritual and intellectual (*kāya*, *vāc*, *citta*, *jñāna*. *Sekoddeśatikā* p. 27)." Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, 243.
 30. *Ibid.*, 249.
 31. "La participation royale au rituel tantrique est un thème qui imprègne la littérature tout entière, et ce n'est pas par accident que le mystère central du tantrisme, la consécration, a été modelé à partir de l'ancien rituel indien d'investiture royale. Il n'a pas seulement transformé les moines en rois tantriques, mais également les rois en maîtres tantriques . . . Les textes tantriques fournissent des instructions abondantes sur l'agression rituelle, pour agir sur l'esprit et le corps de l'ennemi. . . . Les objets de ces actes peuvent s'appeler «démons», et l'exorcisme était une fonction thérapeutique importante pour les maîtres tantriques. Mais les ennemis humains étaient facilement assimilés aux démons, et, lorsqu'il bénéficiait de l'assistance d'un ritualiste habile, un souverain ou un général ne craignait personne." M. Strickmann, *Mantras et mandarins: Le bouddhisme tantrique en Chine* (Paris, 1996), 40–41
 32. See Chou Yi-liang, "Tantrism in China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 8 (1945); R. Orlando, *A Study of Chinese Documents concerning the Life of the Tantric Buddhist Patriarch Amoghavajra (A.D. 705–774)* (Princeton, 1981); S. Weinstein, *Buddhism under the Tang* (Cambridge, 1987), 78; P. Berger, "Preserving the Nation: The Political Uses of Tantric Art in China," in M. Weidner, ed., *Latter Days of the Law: Images of Chinese Buddhism, 850–1850* (Lawrence, Kans., and Honolulu, 1994), 91; and C. D. Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom: The Scripture for Humane Kings in the Creation of Chinese Buddhism* (University Park, Pa., 1998);
 33. Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, 147.
 34. See A. Getty, *The Gods of Northern Buddhism* (Oxford, 1914), 48.
 35. Boisselier sees tell-tale signs of Cambodia's Mahīdhara dynasty: "L'influence khmère aide à comprendre l'accent nouveau de l'épigraphie tant dans sa volonté de préciser les fondements du pouvoir royal que dans des tendances syncrétiques, souvent axées sur le Mahāyāna, qui rappellent celles de la plupart des souverains de la dynastie khmère de Mahīdharapura." *La statue du Champa: Recherches sur les cultes et l'iconographie*, Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient 54 (Paris 1963), 303.
 36. M. L. Finot, "Les inscriptions," in H. Parmentier and L. Finot, *Le cirque de Mi-Son (Quang-Nam)*, *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 4 (1904): 168.
 37. *Ibid.*, 169.
 38. Mallmann, *Introduction à l'iconographie*, 182. "Formulas take on an aspect, *vidyās* take on a body, they become Vidyārāja, Vidyādhara; Hevajra, 'O vajra', a common invocation of the Tantric ritual, becomes a hypostasis of Akṣobhya and expresses his omnipotence by the multiplication of his heads and arms." Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, 216. "Hevajra itself seems to be associated with the naming ceremony (see *STTS* 256a2), but it alternates in the text with Heruka." D. Snellgrove, "The Notion of Divine Kingship in Tantric Buddhism," in *La regalità sacra/The Sacral Kingships. Contributions to the Central Theme of the Eighth International Congress for the History of Religions*, Studies in the History of Religions 4 (Leiden, 1959), 204–18.
 39. This phrase is borrowed from the title of Rob Linrothe's exemplary 1999 study of wrathful deities of Indo-Tibetan esoteric Buddhist art.
 40. It is not, however, the earliest Tantric Buddhist inscription in the area. Edouard Huber pointed to the "the piece of Tantric theology contained in stanzas VIII–X" of stela C.138, dated 902 and found in the ruins of An Thai (Quảng Nam). The stone talks of Vajradhara, Lokeśvara and Vajrasattva being emitted in meditation in three spheres of the body called *vajra*, *padma* and *cakra*. E. Huber, "Études indo-chinoises," *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 11 (1911): 259–311. The Čam Buddhists in this period, including those at the large sanctuary site of Đông-dүүng, where a large stone icon in Vairocana's mudrā was found, seem to have been practicing a cult based on the middle-period Yoga Tantras of Vajrayāna.
 41. Boisselier (*La statue du Champa*, 324) later commented on the mention of Heruka in the inscription but, overlooking the virtual identity of Heruka, Hevajra and Saṃvara in Tantrism, concluded that as no image of Heruka was known in Cambodia, the Čam prince must have had contacts with Java: "Il s'agit, évidemment, d'une divinité mahāyānique mais elle révèle aussi une tendance tantrique très nette. Il ne semble pas que Heruka soit attesté au Cambodge où l'on n'en connaît aucune image isolée. Le «dharma du Mahāyāna» de Suryavarmadeva [Vidyānandana] semblerait quelque peu différent de celui de Jayavarman VII et inviterait à penser à celui pratiqué à Java avec une ferveur croissante vers la fin du XIII^e siècle."
 42. *Ibid.*
 43. E. Guillon, *Cham Art* (Bangkok, 2001), 67.
 44. "He also built a sanctuary in the name of Śrī Herukaharmya, which he dedicated to a powerful protective deity of esoteric Buddhism whose cult was very important in Sumatra during the 11th and 12th centuries, though it seems to have been unknown in other countries of the Indochinese peninsula." Nandana Chutiwongs, "Le bouddhisme du Champa," in P. Baptiste and T. Zéphir, eds., *Trésors d'art du Vietnam: La sculpture du Champa* (Paris, 2005), 75. She made a similar comment in *The Iconography of Avalokiteśvara in Mainland South East Asia* (Leiden, 1984), 431.
 45. F. M. Schnitger, *Forgotten Kingdoms in Sumatra* (Leiden, 1939), 85–108.
 46. F. A. Khan, *Architecture and Art Treasures in Pakistan: Prehistoric, Protohistoric, Buddhist and Hindu Periods* (Karachi, 1969), 170.
 47. N. K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum* (Dacca, 1939), 35. "Images of Hemka are extremely rare, and it was an agreeable surprise to meet with an almost life-size image of the deity in black chlorite stone, in a good state of preservation, in the outlying district of Tippeva, the ancient Samatāṭa."
 48. A Tanjore inscription dated 1030–31 records the occupation of a state called Panai: see D. Chihara, *Hindu-Buddhist Architecture in Southeast Asia* (Leiden, 1996), 216.

49. R. Mulia, *The Ancient Kingdom of Panai and the Ruins of Padang Lawas (North Sumatra)*, Bulletin of the Research Centre of Archaeology in Indonesia 14 (Jakarta, 1980), 9.
50. Chihara, *Hindu-Buddhist Architecture*, 190.
51. J. Guy, "Échanges artistiques et relations interrégionales dans les territoires Cham," in Baptiste and Zéphir, *La sculpture du Champa*, 126.
52. Chihara, *Hindu-Buddhist Architecture*, 217.
53. Guy, "Échanges artistiques," 152.
54. Boisselier, *La statuaire du Champa*, 96.
55. This is a translation of Finot's French rendering of: "pu pō tana raya Kamvujadesa mvoh pu pō tana rayā nan madā traitrinśa laksana sampūrna pu pō tana rayā Kamvujadeśa sneha mānasa śiksā putau va sarvvāgamā sarvāyudha samāsta avih di dauk di kamvujadeśa" (Finot, "Les inscriptions," 168, 170).
56. Ibid., 170.
57. G. Maspéro, *Le royaume de Champa* (Paris, 1928), 167.
58. Boisselier, *La statuaire du Champa*, 324.
59. Maspéro, *Le royaume de Champa*, 167.
60. Finot, "Les inscriptions," 170.
61. P. D. Sharrock, "The Mystery of the Bāyon Face Towers," in J. Clark, ed., *Bāyon: New Perspectives* (Bangkok, 2007), 232–78.
62. See Orzech's account of the esoteric turn of the mid-Tang court in the eighth century in *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, 135–46.
63. G. Samuel, "Ritual Technologies and the State: The Mandala-Form Buddhist Temples of Bangladesh," *Journal of Bengal Art* 7 (2002): 39–56.
64. Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., in conversation with Bruno Dagens in "Tantric Buddhism at Angkor Thom." *Ars Orientalis* 12 (1981): 57–67 (57 n. 9).
65. B. Dagens, "Étude sur l'iconographie du Bāyon," *Arts Asiatiques* 19 (1968): 143.
66. Sharrock, "The Mystery of the Bāyon Face Towers," 233.

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS: N. K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum* (Dacca, 1939), plate XII: fig. 10; École française d'Extrême-Orient, fonds Cambodge, réf 08461: fig. 14; © John C. and Susan L. Huntington Archive, Columbus, Ohio: fig. 5; Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: fig. 13; Nālandā Site Museum, Bihar: fig. 6; National Museum, Phnom Penh: fig. 3; P. H. Pott, trans. R. Needham, *Yoga and Yantra: Their Interrelation and Their Significance for Indian Archaeology* (The Hague, 1966), plate vii. Photographed by E. E. Schlieper: fig. 7; F. M. Schnitger, *Het grootste Hindoe-beeld van Sumatra* (Amsterdam, 1937), pl. 34: fig. 9; Peter D. Sharrock: figs. 1, 2, 4, 8, 11, 12, 15.

Avalokiteśvara in Javanese Context: *Gaṇḍavyūha*, *Kūṭāgāra*, and Amoghapāśa

NANCY TINGLEY

Artisans throughout the Buddhist world probably created more images of the compassionate bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (or Lokeśvara as he was called in Java) in his various forms than of any other bodhisattva.¹ Certainly the multitude of manifestations of Avalokiteśvara—Padmapāṇi, Mahākaruṇa Lokeśvara, Khasarpaṇa, Cintāmaṇīcakra Lokeśvara, and Amoghapāśa—found in Javanese art of the ninth through thirteenth centuries indicates a wide knowledge of the iconography of the bodhisattva and of the *sādhana*s, texts, and rituals surrounding him.² Most of these images are bronzes, but absent the context within which bronze images were worshipped, it is not possible to fully comprehend the individual object's import. Rather than seeking meaning

in isolated images (identifying and cataloguing iconography), a focus on Javanese in situ stone carvings of Avalokiteśvara may prove more useful in furthering our understanding of Javanese Buddhism as it was practiced in ninth- through thirteenth-century Java. The temples of the greatest interest in this regard are the three ninth-century monuments of Borobudur, Caṇḍi Mendut and Plaosan, and the thirteenth-century Caṇḍi Jago.³

The Indonesian monks, architects, and patrons of the *caṇḍi*s of the Central and Eastern Javanese periods looked closely at texts when they developed the iconographic programs of their temples. This is not a new assertion; in the nineteenth century, scholars began to identify the texts illustrated at Borobudur.⁴ More recently,



Fig. 1. Borobudur



Fig. 2. Borobudur, second gallery: Avalokiteśvara seated in a temple (II 47)

scholars of later Eastern Javanese (twelfth- to sixteenth-century) material have demonstrated the role of texts (both Hindu and Buddhist) in the decoration of *caṇḍis*, most notably Caṇḍi Jago and Caṇḍi Sumberwana.⁵ It is through a close look at the images on the monuments that we are able to identify the texts which provide a key to our understanding of Buddhist practices.

Though the temples of the Dieng plateau represent the earliest effluorescence of the Hindu-Buddhist influence in Central and Eastern Java, it is the early ninth-century Borobudur (fig. 1) that gives rise to a proliferation of Javanese stone monuments. The monument's overall form—a stūpa composed of square terraces and broad corridors, circular and elliptical terraces, decorated with reliefs and Buddha images—is unique. Depicted on the interior walls and balustrades of the corridors surrounding the square terraces of Borobudur are episodes from a series of texts: the *Mahākarmavibhaṅga*, the *Jātakamālā*, the *avadānas*, the *Lalitavistara*, the *Gaṇḍavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī* (included in the *Avataṃsaka sūtra*). The *jinas* placed on each of the four sides and the Buddhas of the circular terraces probably indicate a knowledge of the *Mahāvairocana sūtra*, which espouses a five-Tathāgata (*jina*) family system.⁶ Robert N. Linrothe has characterized the *Mahāvairocana sūtra* and the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* as the most important of the early esoteric texts “in terms of recognized impact and widespread acceptance.”⁷

Scholars have suggested that the upper elliptical and circular terraces of Borobudur represent the *dharmadhātu* as it is espoused in the *Avataṃsaka* texts, which include the *Gaṇḍavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī* illustrated on lower square levels of the monument.⁸ Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., has recently proposed an alternate interpretation of and explanation for the presence of Daoist elements on

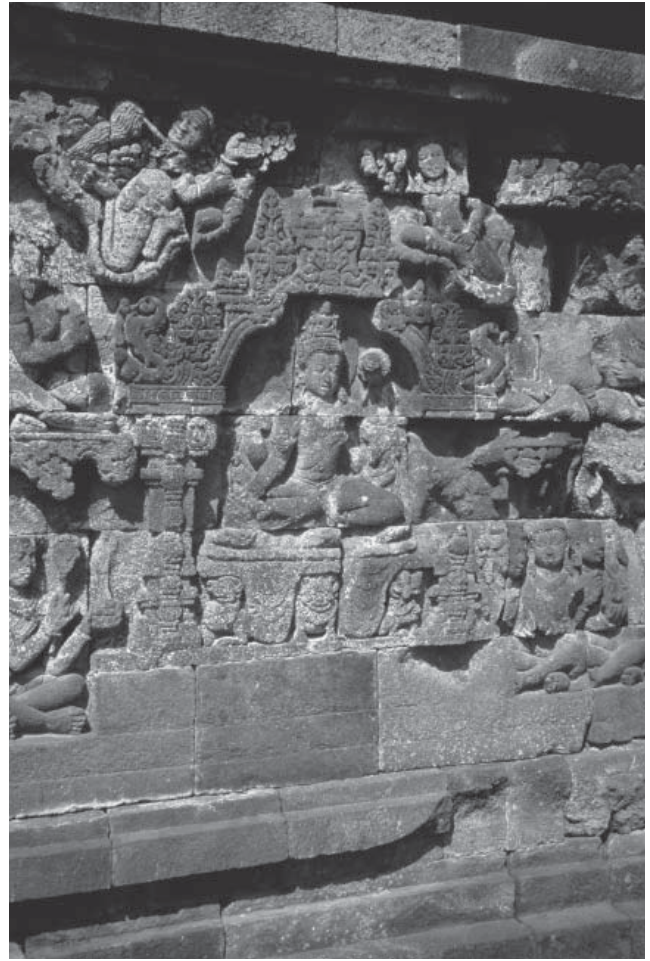


Fig. 3. Borobudur, second gallery: Avalokiteśvara seated among enlightening beings (II 100)

the upper portion of the monument, based on the numbers of Buddhas on the various terraces.⁹

The building is the physical manifestation of a complex religious system that the pilgrim experiences through the representations of life-stories of the Buddha, then the pilgrimage of Sudhana. The major roles of Mañjuśrī, Maitreya, and Samantabhadra are emphasized in the telling of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* and *Bhadracarī*, while Avalokiteśvara is present both in the story and on the monument in his role of *kalyāṇamitra*, or teacher, and as attendant to the Buddha—in a dozen sculptural reliefs among more than fourteen hundred. Like Holmes's dog who didn't bark in the night, the lack of images of the bodhisattva of compassion speaks more than if images of him punctuated the surface of the monument.

A number of authors have variously identified the reliefs that represent the *Gaṇḍavyūha* on the second and third galleries; Jan Fontein's analysis seems to be the most valuable.¹⁰ Much of the confusion in identification



Fig. 4. Borobudur, second gallery: Avalokiteśvara within Mount Potalaka expounding his teachings (II 101)



Fig. 5. Borobudur, second gallery: Avalokiteśvara directs Sudhana to the bodhisattva Ananyagāmin (II 102)

has been due to apparent omissions, duplications, and inconsistencies of Sudhana's visits, which Fontein clarified by pointing out that the story of the pilgrimage is duplicated on the monument. He suggested that the sculptors or planners found this repetition necessary, as the text alludes to 110 stops or visits that Sudhana made.¹¹ One hundred and ten reliefs at Borobudur are dedicated to Sudhana's travels, thus following the text.

Avalokiteśvara is depicted in both series of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* reliefs on the second terrace (figs. 2–5 [Krom and van Erp, vol. 2, II 47 and II 100–102]) and on the fourth gallery (fig. 6 [Krom and van Erp, vol. 2, IV 1.2]). The text states that Sudhana approached Mount Potalaka, where he found Avalokiteśvara sitting wakefully on a diamond boulder, surrounded by a group of enlightening beings.¹² The *Gaṇḍavyūha* does not specify Avalokiteśvara's attributes, although its account of the dialogue between Sudhana and Avalokiteśvara and its description of the setting are clear.¹³ The relief in the first series (fig. 2 [Krom and van Erp, vol. 2, II 47]) portrays Avalokiteśvara seated within a temple, lotus in his left hand and his right hand in (probably) *vitarka mudrā*,¹⁴ an appropriate gesture for a teacher but one not mentioned in the text. The prominence of teaching on the monument dictates that he be depicted thus.

In the second, expanded relief series on Borobudur, Sudhana approaches Mount Potalaka, where Avalokiteśvara is ensconced on a lion throne among enlightening beings (see fig. 3 [Krom and van Erp, vol. 2, II 100]). "I have undertaken a vow to be a refuge for all



Fig. 6. Borobudur, fourth gallery: Avalokiteśvara seated in *mahārājājalāsana* (IV 2). Reproduced from Krom

beings from all these fears and perils.” Avalokiteśvara’s enlightening practice (as distinguished from that of the other *kalyāṇamitras*) is called “understanding great compassion without delay.”¹⁵ This is the first of three reliefs of Avalokiteśvara depicted in the second series. The second of the three reliefs (fig. 4 [Krom and van Erp, vol. 2, II 101]) may well represent the bodhisattva as he is described expounding his teachings, if we can assume that the artists adhered closely to the text.

The passage in the *Gaṇḍavyūha* referring to Avalokiteśvara ends with the descent of the bodhisattva Ananyagāmin from the eastern sky; Avalokiteśvara directs Sudhana to him. I would suggest the third relief of Sudhana’s visit (see fig. 5 [Krom and van Erp, vol. 2, II 102]) may refer to this passage, with Sudhana to one side and Ananyagāmin to the other.¹⁶

The final depictions of Avalokiteśvara are in the fourth gallery. The first finds him seated in *mahārājājalāsana* (royal ease; see fig. 6 [Krom and van Erp, vol. 2, IV 2]) in the company of bodhisattvas and Buddhas at the opening section of the *Bhadracarī* text of the *Gaṇḍavyūha sūtra*.¹⁷ The *Bhadracarī* presents the ten great vows of the bodhisattva Samantabhadra. Nandana Chutiwongs has discussed the iconography of this relief in relation to a group of bronze and clay images.¹⁸ Although it is difficult to distinguish a Buddha in this bodhisattva’s headdress, the fact he is mentioned in this portion of the text and holds a *padma* seems to indicate that this identification may be correct. Claudine Bautze-Picron identifies Avalokiteśvara in the group of eight



Fig. 7. Borobudur, fourth gallery: Buddha in *dhyana mudrā*, between Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāṇi [IV 50]

great bodhisattvas in the adjacent relief (Krom and van Erp, vol. 2, IV 3; Bernet Kempers, fig. 93). The figures, as might be expected, do not relate to the standard group of bodhisattvas found in texts.¹⁹

Avalokiteśvara is also found in sections of six other panels (Krom and van Erp, vol. 2, IV 8, IV 12, IV 17, IV 20, IV 47, and IV 50 [fig. 7]) accompanying the Buddha and Vajrapāṇi. Hudaya Kandahijaya interprets the group as representing the triad in the Sukhavati paradise, positing that the group follows the description in the *Amitayurdhyāna sūtra*, with the Buddha explained as Amitābha.²⁰ However, Amitābha is not accompanied by Vajrapāṇi in the *Amitayurdhyāna sūtra*. (Hudaya



Fig. 8. Candhi Mendut

reads his inclusion in the relief as a misinterpretation of the text.) Vajrapāṇi and Avalokiteśvara accompany Śakyamuni in the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*. According to Linrothe, Vajrapāṇi is also paired with Avalokiteśvara in attendance to Śakyamuni in the Tibetan version of the Mahayana *Buddhabalādhana-prātihāryavikurvāṇanirdeśa sūtra*.²¹ They accompany Vairocana in the *Sarvatathāgat-atattvasaṃgraha* and the *Mahāvairocana sūtra*; hence their inclusion may refer to one of those texts.

Although Avalokiteśvara's role on the monument is limited to his minor position in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, it is worth looking closely at his depictions, as they tell us more than a cursory glance might suggest. In the second series of carvings, where he is the central figure in three reliefs, we first see a four-armed Avalokiteśvara seated within a mountain (see fig. 4)—clearly Potalaka—surrounded by animals, trees, and humans. His lower right hand is held in *varada mudrā*, his upper right holds a rosary while his lower left holds the *padma* and the upper left an *aṅkuśa*. In the second relief, Avalokiteśvara is again shown four-armed, with only the *varada mudrā* and the *padma* remaining. Four-armed forms of Mahā-

karuṇa Lokeśvara are not uncommon in Southeast Asia, although the *aṅkuśa* would be an unusual attribute for that form. Still, iconography was not set at this point, so it is possible that this figure might represent that common type. In the third relief Avalokiteśvara is six-armed, his lower-right hand in *varada mudrā*, and holding a rosary in his upper right and a *kamaṇḍalu* and *padma* in his two remaining left hands.

One might hope to be able to identify the iconography with the text of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* or specific sādhanas, but it is not possible. Given the prominence of Amoghapāśa in contemporary northeastern India, one might expect that iconography to apply here. Contemporary representations of Amoghapāśa in India were generally four- or six-armed.²² The clearly identifiable *aṅkuśa* in the upper left of the second image is an attribute of Amoghapāśa, though the absence of a *pāśa* is unusual.

These three images of Avalokiteśvara are the only multiarmed figures (other than Śiva) depicted on Borobudur. What do the reliefs tell us? Both more and less than the text. The *Gaṇḍavyūha* does not describe the iconography of Avalokiteśvara beyond his association with



Fig. 9. Caṇḍi Mendut: Cundā

Mount Potalaka. Clearly the sculptors of Borobudur felt confident in incorporating a more complex iconography than they had used in depicting other *kalyāṇamitra* or than that found in the *Gaṇḍavyūha* into the depiction of this particular bodhisattva. In other words, a great deal was known and understood of the bodhisattva, as illustrated by his multiarmed forms as *kalyāṇamitra*, his possible inclusion among the eight great bodhisattvas, and his association with the Buddha and Vajrapāṇi.

Images of Lokeśvara appear only in the *Gaṇḍavyūha* and *Bhadracarī* section of reliefs on Borobudur. In fact, the bodhisattvas Mañjuśrī, Maitreya, and Samantabhadra are (rightly) given greater prominence on the monument because of their roles in these two texts. Those overseeing the extensive religious program did not deviate from that larger task.

Caṇḍi Mendut (fig. 8), a temple built in alignment with and contemporary to Borobudur, differs radically from that grand stūpa.²³ Rising above a high base, the exterior walls of the temple display eight standing bodhisattvas (see Bernet Kempers 52) and three reliefs of figures identified as Cundā (fig. 9),²⁴ Prajñāpāramitā, and Mahākaruṇa Lokeśvara (fig. 9).²⁵ The interior of the *caṇḍi* includes three large and extremely beautiful figures of the Buddha with legs pendant and in *dharmacakra mudrā*, Vajrapāṇi, and Avalokiteśvara (fig. 10).

It has been argued that this temple represents a *Garbhadhātu maṇḍala*.²⁶ Various authors have pointed out that the oldest known tantric text in Java, the (approximately) tenth-century Javanese *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, includes sections of the *Mahāvairocana sūtra*, of which the *Garbhadhātu maṇḍala* is a part. To

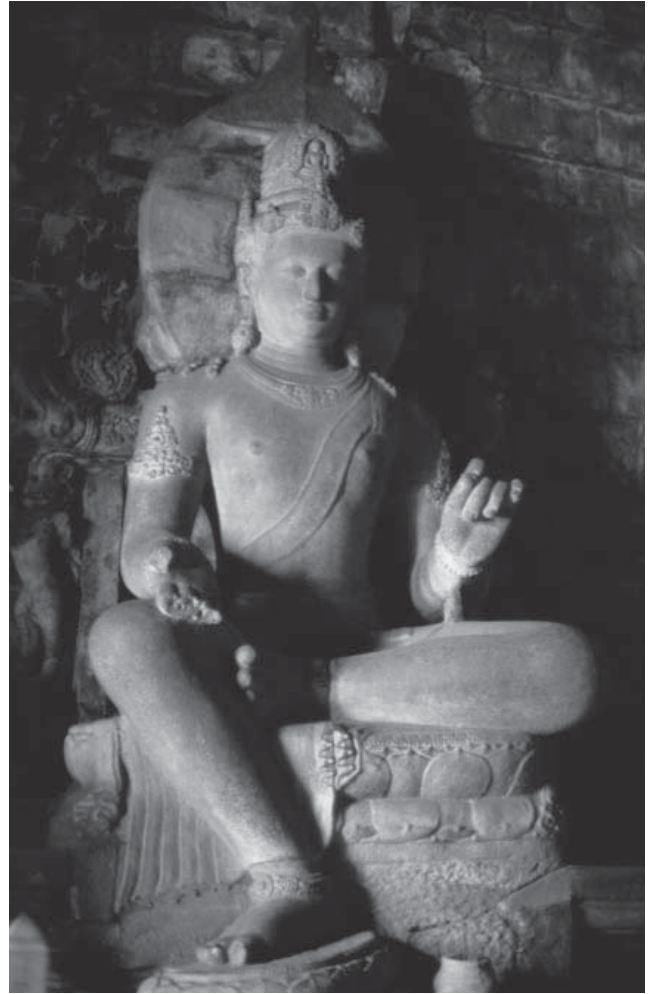


Fig. 10. Caṇḍi Mendut: Avalokiteśvara

my knowledge the two texts that describe Vairocana accompanied by Vajrapāṇi and Avalokiteśvara are the *Mahāvairocana sūtra* and the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*.²⁷ There is debate as to whether excerpts of the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* are included in the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*.²⁸ It is through the pairing of Vajrapāṇi (*jñāna*, knowledge) and Avalokiteśvara (*karuṇa*, compassion) that one achieves enlightenment.²⁹

As always, Avalokiteśvara is included among the group of eight bodhisattvas.³⁰ According to one author, the large relief of Mahākaruṇa Lokeśvara on the exterior of Caṇḍi Mendut can also be explained in terms of the *Garbhadhātu maṇḍala*, as it is from that bodhisattva that the *maṇḍala* originates,³¹ a fact made clear from the full name of the *maṇḍala*, the *Mahākaruṇāgarbhadhātu maṇḍala*. In the Japanese version of this *maṇḍala*, Mahākaruṇika is depicted with a thousand arms.³²

Woodward has suggested an alternative reading of the monument, identifying Cundā, Prajñāpāramitā,



Fig. 11. Caṇḍi Mendut: Mahākaraṇa Lokeśvara

and Avalokiteśvara with the *Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra*. He notes that in that text Cundā personifies a *dhāraṇī* for the obtainment of wisdom, while “the lotus pond from which the four-armed Prajñāpāramitā rises would be the pond into which Avalokiteśvara transforms the flaming stoves of hell in chapter two of the *sūtra*; the eight-armed Avalokiteśvara on the southeast wall [fig. 11] would be its saving, all-loving Avalokiteśvara, and the Buddha inside the sanctuary Shakyamuni delivering the text.”³³ It might be possible to ascribe a multivalent meaning to the figures at this monument and assume that both texts played a role at Mendut. As noted above, the association of Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāṇi with Vairocana seems to reflect knowledge of the *Mahāvairocana sūtra* or possibly the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha sūtra*, both of which are found in the later *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*. However, if the eight bodhisattvas on the exterior of Caṇḍi Mendut are associated with the *Mahākaraṇa garbhadhātu maṇḍala*, as Claudine Bautz-

Picron has suggested, then the *Mahāvairocana sūtra* is the likely text to have been consulted, a theory supported by the association of Vajrapāṇi and Avalokiteśvara with the central Buddha.

If Borobudur is an indication of the early ninth-century Javanese planners’ close reliance on texts, and if we can accept the *Mahāvairocana sūtra* as a possible source, Avalokiteśvara appears at Caṇḍi Mendut in three roles defined within the parameters of that *sūtra*. He is one of the eight bodhisattvas; he is the compassionate member representing the *padma* family of the central triad; and finally he is Mahākaraṇa from whom emanates the *Garbhadhātu maṇḍala*. At the same time, the three primary figures on the exterior of the monument might also be read in the context of their roles within the *Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra* and supported by the Buddha in the interior.

Luis Gómez, in a discussion of the role of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* on Borobudur, proposed that the builders



Fig. 12. Caṇḍi Plaosan

intended the building to represent the *kūṭāgāra* (palace) of Maitreya from the *Maitreyavimokṣa* section of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* that is so prominently depicted on the monument.³⁴ His suggestion is an intriguing one that may find application elsewhere as well—in particular, at the two central ninth-century temples of Caṇḍi Plaosan (fig. 12). Hudaya Kandahijaya, in his recent dissertation, expands on the interpretation of Borobudur as a *kūṭāgāra* and furthers the argument for considering the two main Plaosan Lor temples as *kūṭāgāra*.³⁵

The identical plans of the two Plaosan temples include an entryway leading to a central cell with an identical cell on either side that one must enter through the central cell (figure 13). A second story (with a wooden floor) was accessed from within, probably by means of a bamboo ladder like the one sometimes seen in place today. The presence of a second story suggests that these temples were intended as *vihāra* (living quarters), important to their identification as *kūṭāgāra*.³⁶ Scholars have never offered a plausible explanation for the architecture

of these temples, as they differ from other known Buddhist architecture.

As Gómez has pointed out in reference to Borobudur, “It is clear . . . from all of its uses in Buddhist literature that a *kūṭāgāra* is always an inhabitable structure; that is, it must have an inner chamber.”³⁷ Though this point argues against the identification of Borobudur as a *kūṭāgāra*, it supports an identification of the two main temples at Plaosan, and possibly that at Sari, as *kūṭāgāra*, where the upper level of these temples is thought to have served as living quarters.³⁸ Further evidence may derive from the tripartite plan of the temples.

Gómez goes on to say:

In the *Lalitavistara* the quarters (*paribhoga*, lit. ‘property’) occupied by the Bodhisattva before and during his descent into the womb are a square structure resting on four pillars and crowned by a *kūṭāgāra*. Within this *kūṭāgāra* was a second one, exactly like the first, and within the second there was a third.

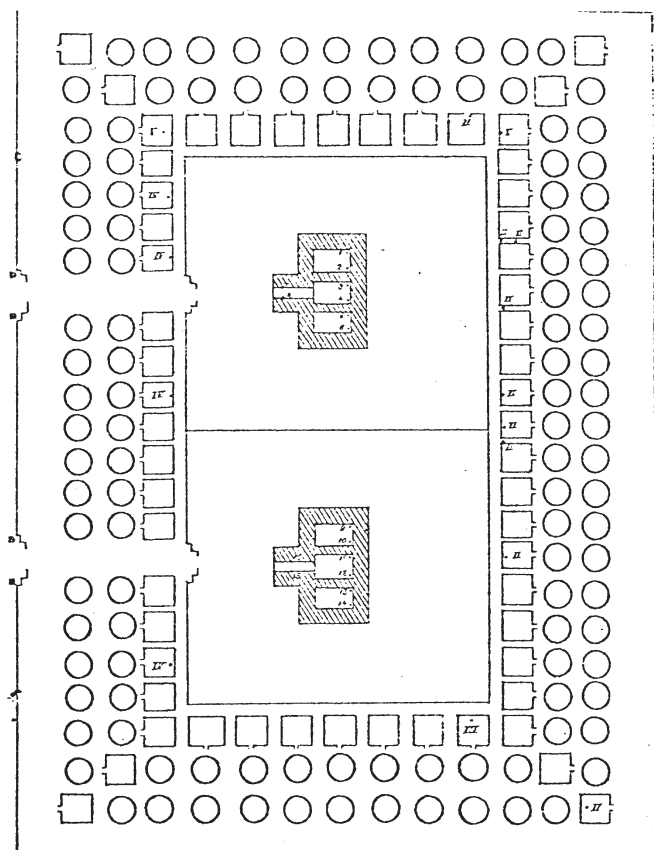


Fig. 13: Plan of Caṇḍi Plaosan. Reproduced from J. G. DeCasparis, *Short Inscriptions from Tjandi Plaosan-Lor* (Djakarta, 1958)

Inside this third *kūṭāgāra* sat the Buddha. The Buddha's chamber was as hard as diamond (*vajra*), and in it one could see all the habitations of the gods of the *kāmadhātu*, all the world systems, the previous acts of the bodhisattva, etc.³⁹

In other words, a three-fold architectural division was necessary for the *kūṭāgāra*. Although Plaosan is not divided into diminishing cells—a challenging architectural plan—each of the two main temples is divided into three cells (see fig. 13), a fact that may provide further indication that they were intended as *kūṭāgāra*.

If we consider the *Mahāvairocana sūtra* to be a text used at Borobudur and Mendut and hence available in ninth-century Java, the idea of creating Borobudur or Plaosan as a celestial palace is given further textual support by that *sūtra*, for in the *Mahāvairocana*, the Buddha Mahāvairocana preaches to a large audience at the center of the *maṇḍala* “at the vast palace of *Vajradharmadhātu*.”⁴⁰

J. C. de Casparis, in his analysis and translation of the important pre-Nagari inscription from Caṇḍi Plaosan, argues that the Buddhist tenets found in the inscription allude to the *Daśabhūmika*, or ten-fold bodhisattva path included in the *Avatamsaka texts*.⁴¹ He interprets the first strophe as a description of the main image of the temple: “Bearing the burden of consecration as the lord of men, he shineth forth, the Brilliant One, as the incomparable sunrise in the form of an image adorned with the equipment of Dharma.”⁴² Through a lengthy analysis of various metaphors that refer to the image, de Casparis concludes that the main image at the temple was a bodhisattva and that this specific bodhisattva may well have been Maitreya.⁴³ An inscription from Caṇḍi Sewu records an enlargement of a Mañjuśrigrha, support for the suggestion that temples in the area were dedicated to bodhisattvas. It is also an indication that Mañjuśrī, who along with Maitreya held primary place at Borobudur, was important throughout the eighth and ninth centuries.⁴⁴

While minor celestial beings embellish the exterior of the two main Plaosan temples, eight bodhisattvas are arrayed in the interior of each of the temples.⁴⁵ Their individual identifications may support the suggestion identifying the temples as a *kūṭāgāra*, specifically Maitreya's palace of the *Gaṇḍavyūha*.⁴⁶ The eight bodhisattvas (found in each temple) are paired, two in the entryway and two in each of the cells. (No central images are extant in the cells; one might surmise that bronze images were placed between each of the three interior pairs.)

In the central cell of each of the Plaosan temples, Vajrapāṇi is paired with Avalokiteśvara (see fig. 13), who, as one of the bodhisattvas mentioned in the *Gaṇḍavyūha* and as the representative of the *padma* family of the central triad, fulfills a multivalent role.⁴⁷ It is possible that the unknown central image, surrounded by eight bodhisattvas, also indicates the *Garbhadhātu maṇḍala*, a *maṇḍala* with Vairocana at the center. Vajrapāṇi is not included in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, although we have already seen him paired with Avalokiteśvara at Caṇḍi Mendut.⁴⁸

One pair of bodhisattvas, Mañjuśrī and Maitreya (fig. 14), is of particular importance at the Plaosan temples, as each is depicted twice in the groups of eight bodhisattvas. In the entryway one encounters Maitreya and Mañjuśrī, who are represented again at the far ends of the three cells. In their first representation in the entryway, they are distinguished from the six other bodhisattvas in their *asana* (the lotus position) and by their smaller size. They may well provide a clue to the meaning of these temples.



Fig. 14a–b. Caṇḍi Plaosan: Mañjuśrī and Maitreya. Reproduced from N.J. Krom, *Inleiding tot de Hindoe-Javaansche Kunst* (The Hague, 1923)

The duplication of the two bodhisattvas may allude to their central role in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, as they are both included in that text in the beginning and at the end. Theirs are the primary voices in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*. The other bodhisattvas that one would anticipate finding in connection with the *Gaṇḍavyūha* and *Bhadracarī* are Samantabhadra, whose role in the *Bhadracarī* is pre-eminent both in that text and in the iconography of Borobudur; Avalokiteśvara, whose role is minor; and Ananyagāmin, who is the one other bodhisattva mentioned in the text, although he finds little mention elsewhere in Buddhist scripture and is absent from Buddhist art. I would suggest that these three do find a place at the Caṇḍis Plaosan and thus support the suggestion that these temples were intended as the *kūṭāgāra* of Maitreya.

The second Mañjuśrī is placed in the right-hand cell, while the bodhisattva accompanying him was identified by N.J. Krom as Sarvanivaraniviskambhin on the basis of his attribute, a flaming triangle.⁴⁹ This is an unusual

attribute for a bodhisattva; to my knowledge the flaming triangle (in Japanese Buddhism) signifies Dainichinyorai (Vairocana), not a bodhisattva.

There is an alternate identification, however, for this bodhisattva. Could this be Ananyagāmin, the one other bodhisattva named in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, whose attribute is neither described in that text nor in the standard iconographic texts?⁵⁰ In the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, he is described as having attained an “enlightening liberation, ‘speeding forth in all directions.’”⁵¹ Appearing before Sudhana and Avalokiteśvara, “the body of that enlightening being gave off such a light that the sun and moon were overwhelmed, the lights of all realms of being, fire, jewels, and stars were obscured.”⁵² In Chinese art Ananyagāmin is portrayed radiating light, much as the flaming jewel carried by the bodhisattva radiates.⁵³

Lokesh Chandra, in his discussion of the *Garbhadhātu maṇḍala*, discusses the *maṇḍala*’s quarter of Universal Knowledge and its identification with the flaming triangle.



Fig. 15. Candī Jago

Immediately below is the quarter of Universal Knowledge (*Sarvatathāgata-jñāna-jñāna-mudrā*) with the triangle, *jñāna-mudrā* in its centre. The triangle is called *dharmodaya* (Tib. *choshbyun*), that is, the source of *dharma*. . . . It is in contradistinction to the void of *dharmadhātu*. . . . Flames of Light issue forth from the triangle. These flames are the extraordinary light that bursts from the *urna* of Lord Śākyamuni in *samādhi*, to illumine every quarter of this World and all the worlds beyond. The illumined triangle becomes the origin of the new illumination that is the emanate as Mahāvairocana.⁵⁴

This description is not so different from that of Ananyagāmin, who “radiates auras of light,” and “proceeds in the south, west, north, northeast, southeast, southwest, northwest, the nadir and the zenith.”⁵⁵ Might the sculptors of Plaosan have considered a jewel radiating light an appropriate attribute for a figure described in this manner?⁵⁶ Samantabhadra, the fifth important bodhisattva in

the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, carrying a bouquet of three jewel-like buds, is paired with the second Maitreya in the left-hand cell.⁵⁷

The problems with the identification (of Ananyagāmin) should not detract from the importance ascribed to Maitreya and Mañjuśrī at Plaosan and the association of these two figures with the *Gaṇḍavyūha*. Krom noted the large number of Mañjuśrī images at Plaosan.⁵⁸ Does their significance relate to the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, a text whose importance in Java was established by the construction of Borobudur just fifty years earlier? Might not the patron of Plaosan have looked to Borobudur for inspiration; might not the practitioner of Buddhism in 850 adhere to the same texts as the practitioner in the first quarter of the ninth century? Or does their importance point to other texts in which Mañjuśrī and Maitreya play an expanded role?⁵⁹ Suffice it to say that Maitreya, Samantabhadra, Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, and (as a tentative identification) Ananyagāmin—the five bodhisattvas specifically mentioned in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*—appear at the temples.

The iconographic program of Candī Jago (fig. 15), built in 1268 or 1280, the year that a *śraddha* ceremony was held for the Singasari king Visnuvardhana by his son King Krtanagara (r. 1254–92),⁶⁰ utilizes both Hindu and Buddhist materials. The temple’s central image, a large eight-armed Amoghapāśa (a form of Avalokiteśvara), was installed along with smaller images that were placed around him and other figures that were placed in niches on the exterior of the cella. The group was intended as a *maṇḍala*.⁶¹ (The piece is badly damaged; an image now in the Jakarta Museum [fig. 16] gives a better sense of the original appearance of the Amoghapāśa *maṇḍala*.) These figures included Amoghapāśa’s usual attendants, Bhṛkuṭī, Hayagrīva, Tārā, and Sudhanakumāra, also in three-dimensional reliefs, as well as Māmakī, Locanā, Pānduravasini, Akṣobhya, and Ratnasambhava. The last suggest that the set included the *jinas* and their *prajñās*.⁶² A group of bronze plaques of Amoghapāśa and attendants (and a large stone copy sent to Sumatra in 1286) gives further support to the suggestion that the group was intended as the *maṇḍala*.

Various authors have convincingly argued that the complex iconographic program of the temple was intended as an Amoghapāśa *maṇḍala*. B. Bhattacharyya and Janice Leoshko have pointed out the important relationship of Amoghapāśa with *śraddha* ceremonies. Leoshko recognized the prevalence of Amoghapāśa images in the Gaya district of Bihar, India—an important site for *śraddha* ceremonies—and noted the presence of an image of Avalokiteśvara rather than a Hindu image

on Pretasila Hill in Gaya.⁶³ The Orissan site of Ratnagiri has seven large four-armed Amoghapāśa images dating from the eighth to the tenth century. The association of these Amoghapāśa images and the numerous reliquaries at that site may reflect the importance of Amoghapāśa in *śraddha* ceremonies.⁶⁴

Whether Caṇḍi Jago was associated with *śraddha* ceremonies or only with one specific (royal) ceremony is not clear. What is clear is the importance of Amoghapāśa in that thirteenth-century setting. According to the *Amoghapāśaḥṛdaya*, if one “recites the latter seven times without speaking another word, then, O Victorious One, the twenty *Dharmas* will be won as blessings, to these one should aspire.”⁶⁵ The twenty *dharmas* that are listed are not so dissimilar to those listed in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, which brings us back to Borobudur and the interpretation of Avalokiteśvara at that monument.⁶⁶

It is possible that the Borobudur interpretations of Avalokiteśvara (in the second series of Sudhana’s pilgrimage) are to be identified with Amoghapāśa.⁶⁷ He is shown in one four-armed version with the *aṅkuśa* generally held by Amoghapāśa and in the six-armed version with four of the six attributes (the rosary and the *varada mudrā* in the right, and the *kamaṇḍalu* and the *padma* in the left) that he commonly holds in contemporary Orissan and Bihar images.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, the *pāśa*, which is his characteristic attribute, is nowhere apparent at Borobudur, though it may have been held in one of his broken hands.

A few extant portable remains indicate that Amoghapāśa was known in Java from a relatively early period.⁶⁹ Focusing on this point, however, would be to miss the significance of the images in their respective contexts. Nothing in the *Gaṇḍavyūha* implies a funerary role such as that found in the *Amoghapāśaḥṛdaya* nor associations such as the installation of the Amoghapāśa at Jago for a *śraddha* ceremony.

This difference is clearly expressed in the portion of the *Amoghapāśaḥṛdaya* that lists the twenty *dharmas*, but then, in contrast to the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, includes an additional eight *dharmas*. The first states: “At the hour of death, the Bodhisattva, Mahasattva, Saint Avalokiteśvara will appear to him in the shape of a monk.” The text goes on to say:

He will happily end his life. His faith will not be disturbed. At the hour of death, he will neither agitate arms nor legs nor die by falling out of bed and not [soil himself with] excrements and urine. His mindfulness will be well developed. He will not die with the mouth turned downwards. At the hour of death,



Fig. 16. Amoghapāśa, 13th-14th century, National Museum, Jakarta

he will possess a never-failing self-confidence. To whatever Buddhaksetra he directs his prayer, there he will be born and not be abandoned from good friends.⁷⁰

The theme of deliverance is further elaborated in the reliefs of the monument.⁷¹ Thus the iconographic program of Jago has an entirely different emphasis than that of Borobudur, where pilgrimage and teaching appear to be the more important ideological premises.⁷² I would argue that the same concerns with pilgrimage and teaching (as told in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*) informed Caṇḍi Plaosan, and led to the minor role played by Avalokiteśvara.

Caṇḍi Mendut differs from the above; Avalokiteśvara’s function is dictated by the texts. Avalokiteśvara is represented three times, as one of the eight bodhisattvas, in the central triad, and finally as Mahākaruṇa Lokeśvara. In each of these manifestations he plays a designated role in the *Garbhadhātu maṇḍala* as described in the *Mahāvairocana sūtra*.

Avalokiteśvara’s role in the architectural iconographic programs in ninth-century Javanese Buddhist

practice was circumscribed by the *Avatamsaka* texts and the *Mahāvairocana sūtra*, although the complex iconography of his representations at Borobudur suggests a wider knowledge of these texts, and the dedication of a monastery (no longer extant) to him indicates his popularity as an independent bodhisattva. During the Eastern Javanese period, the multitude of funerary sculptures suggests increased attention to ancestor worship, the milieu within which the Amoghapāśa image was dedicated at Caṇḍi Jago. In the *Amoghapāśahrdaya mahayana sūtra*, the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara requests permission to recite the *hrdaya Amoghapāśa*, an activity that confers merit and many benefits. The narrative states that “after fasting and reciting [the *hrdaya*] only once, [the evildoer’s] *karman* shall be cleansed: all sullied actions be exhausted and expelled.”⁷³

The Javanese propensity to adhere to texts closely requires careful consideration. Not merely identification but thoughtful analysis of the textual choices made will ultimately provide us with clues to pre-Buddhist indigenous beliefs and culture. The significance placed on teaching and pilgrimage in ninth-century Java suggests a respect for and reliance on teachers in indigenous religious practice, while in the thirteenth century, the choice of Amoghapāśa as the central image of Jago seems an important indicator for understanding the role of ancestor worship. The local affinity to the *maṇḍala*, the *kūṭāgāra*, and Amoghapāśa will ultimately be further clarified, as our knowledge of Buddhist texts becomes more complete.

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NOTES

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1. The Kelurak inscription (782 C.E.), found on the Prambanan plain and probably associated with Caṇḍi Sewu, mentions Lokeśvara as either an epithet or a manifestation of Mañjuśrī. J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, “The Dvārapāla of Barabudur,” in *Barabudur: History and Significance of a Buddhist Monument*, ed. L. O. Gómez and H. W. Woodward, Jr. (Berkeley, 1981), 19. I will use the more common form of Avalokiteśvara throughout this essay.
2. It is often difficult to identify a Buddhist sculpture with a textually described example, particularly when the texts we are consulting (such as the *Sādhnamālā* or the Niṣpannayogāvali) are of a later period than the sculpture.
3. According to Lokesh Chandra, the Ratubaku inscription refers to the dedication of a monastery to Padmapāṇi, a form of Avalokiteśvara. See “The Contacts of Abhayagiri of Sri Lanka with Indonesia,” *Cultural Horizons of India*, vol. 4 (Śāta-Piṭaka Series) (New Delhi, 1990), 11 and 20. Unfortunately this monastery is no longer extant. In a paper delivered at the conference “The Ambiguity of Avalokiteśvara and Other Questions of Bodhisattvas in Buddhist Traditions,” University of Texas at Austin, 25–27 October 1996, Charles Hallisey suggested the Javanese were well aware of Lokeśvara, as is evident in the *Nāgarakṛtāgama* (*Deśawarnana*). Hallisey also noted Lokeśvara’s importance in the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyanikan*, where he is the cosmic creator.
4. For a bibliography of Borobudur, see R. Soekmono, J. G. de Casparis, and J. Dumarcay, *Borobudur: Prayer in Stone* (London, 1990). For an overview of recent scholarship on Borobudur, see H. W. Woodward, Jr., “On Borobudur’s Upper Terraces,” *Oriental Art* 45, no. 3 (1999): 41–42.
5. Recent works on Eastern Javanese art include P. Worsley, “Narrative Bas-Reliefs at Caṇḍi Surawana,” in *Southeast Asia in the Ninth to Fourteenth Centuries*, ed. D. G. Marr and A. C. Milner (Singapore, 1986); M. J. Klokke, *Tantri Reliefs on Javanese Caṇḍi* (Leiden, 1993); M. J. Klokke, “On the Orientation of Ancient Javanese Temples: The Example of Caṇḍi Surowono,” in *International Institute for Asian Studies Yearbook 1994*, ed. P. van der Velde (Leiden, 1995), 73–86; A. R. Kinney, *Worshipping Siva and Buddha: The Temple Art of East Java* (Honolulu, 2003); N. Reichle, *Violence and Serenity: Late Buddhist Sculpture of Indonesia* (Honolulu, 2007).
6. For a bibliography of textual sources, see L. O. Gómez and H. W. Woodward, Jr., eds., *Barabudur: History and Significance of a Buddhist Monument* (Berkeley, 1981), 209–14; also in that volume, L. R. Lancaster, “Literary Sources for a Study of Barabudur,” 195–207. The volume also includes an extensive bibliography of Borobudur, as does J. C. Huntington’s essay “The Iconography of Borobudur Revisited: The Concepts of *Śleṣa* and *Sarva[buddha]kāya*,” in M. J. Klokke and P. L. Scheurleer, eds., *Ancient Indonesian Sculpture* (Leiden, 1994), 133–53. Huntington stresses the importance of the *Mahāvairocana sūtra* at Borobudur.
7. R. N. Linrothe, *Ruthless Compassion: Wrathful Deities in Early Indo-Tibetan Esoteric Buddhist Art* (Boston, 1999), 149. He goes on to quote F. D. Lessing and A. Wayman, trans., *Introduction to the Buddhist Tantric Systems, Translated from Mkhas-grub-rje’s Rgyud sde spyi’i rnam par gzag pa rgyas par brjod*, 2nd ed. (Delhi, 1978), 205: “Chief of all Tantras of the Cārya Tantra class is the *Mahāvairocana-ābhisambodhitānta*.” This text was translated into Chinese by 724 (Linrothe, *Ruthless Compassion*, 151) and subsequently played a central role in Shingon Buddhism in Japan.
8. Others have suggested that the circular terraces represent a *vajradhatu maṇḍala*, although two recent authors convincingly argue this is not the case. M. Nihom, “The Mandala of Caṇḍi Gumpung (Sumatra) and the Indo-Tibetan Vajraśekhara Tantra,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 41 (1998): 245–54; D. L. Snellgrove, “Borobudur: Stūpa or Maṇḍala?” *East and West* 46, nos. 3–4 (1996): 477–83.
9. Woodward, “On Borobudur’s Upper Terraces,” 34–43.
10. J. Fontein, *The Pilgrimage of Sudhana: A Study of Gaṇḍavyūha Illustrations in China, Japan, and Java* (The Hague, 1967). See also Ryusho Hikata, “Gaṇḍavyūha and the Reliefs of Barabudur-Galleries,” in *Studies in Indology and Buddhism Presented in Honour of Professor Gishō Nakano on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday* [*Nakanokyō koki kinen ronbunshū*] (Koyasan, 1960); F. D. K. Bosch, “Une série de bas-reliefs au Barabudur,” *Arts Asiatiques* 6 (1959): 163–74; N. J. Krom and Th. van Erp, *Beschrijving van Barabudur*, 2 vols. text and 3 portfolios plates (The Hague, 1920–31) (1: N. J. Krom, *Archaeologische Beschrijving* [1920]; 2: Th. van Erp, *Bouwkundige Beschrijving* [1931]); Hudaya Kandahijaya, “A Study on the Origin and Significance of Borobudur” (Ph.D. dissertation, Graduate Theological Union [Berkeley, Calif.], 2004).

11. Fontein, *The Pilgrimage of Sudhana*, 129. It has also been suggested that this duplication of the text may best be understood as the dual aspects of knowledge (*jñāna*) and insight (*prajñā*). See A. Wayman, "Reflections on the Theory of Barabudur as a *Maṇḍala*," in Gómez and Woodward, *Barabudur*, 148.
12. All references to the *Gaṇḍavyūha* are from T. Cleary, trans., *Entry into the Realm of Reality*. (Boston, 1987), 151.
13. Cleary, *Entry into the Realm of Reality*, 151: "Climbing the mountain, he looked around for Avalokiteshvara and saw him on a plateau on the west side of the mountain, which was adorned with springs, ponds, and streams, sitting wakefully on a diamond boulder in a clearing in a large woods, surrounded by a group of enlightening beings seated on various jewel rocks, to whom he was expounding a doctrine called 'light of the medium of great love and compassion,' which concerns the salvation of all sentient beings."
14. Although the thumb and forefinger touch in the fashion typical of the *vitarka mudrā*, the other three fingers are folded over the palm of the hand.
15. Cleary, *Entry into the Realm of Reality*, 152. Avalokitesvara claims to have vowed "to be a refuge for all sentient beings, to free them from fears of calamity, threat, confusion, bondage, attacks on their lives, insufficiency of means to support life, inability to make a living, ill repute, the perils of life, etc."
16. A separate scene with Ananyagamin (Fontein, *The Pilgrimage of Sudhana*, 123) is not carved in this series, so his inclusion here would make sense.
17. The *Bhadracarī* (the conduct and vows of the bodhisattva Samantabhadra) is the last chapter of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* (or the fortieth chapter of the *Avatamsaka sūtra*), though the text also is found alone.
18. N. Chutiwongs, "An Aspect of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara in Ancient Indonesia," in Klokke and Scheurleer, *Ancient Indonesian Sculpture*, 98–115, specifically 100 and pl. 7.
19. C. Bautz-Picrone, "Le groupe des huit grands bodhisattva en Inde: Genèse et développement," in N. Eilenberg, M. C. Subhadradis Diskul, and R. L. Brown, eds., *Living a Life in Accord with Dhamma: Papers in Honor of Professor Jean Boisselier on His Eightieth Birthday* (Bangkok, 1997), 29; A. J. Bernet Kempers, *Ancient Indonesian Art* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959).
20. Kandahijaya, "Origin and Significance," 251–53.
21. Linrothe, *Ruthless Compassion*, 40.
22. See R. O. Meiszahl, "Amoghapāśa: Some Nepalese Representations and Their Vajrayanic Aspects," *Monumenta Serica* 26 (1967): 472–75, for examples of four-armed Amoghapāśa with the *aṅkuśa*, but again with the *pāśa*. The association with that figure is made greater by the fact that each is described as seated on Mount Potalaka. According to Marie-Thérèse de Mallmann ("Un point d'iconographie indo-javanaise: Khasarpaṇa et Amoghapāśa," *Artibus Asiae* 11 [1948]: 176–88), Śrī-Potalaka Lokanatha is represented with two hands in the gesture of instruction, while the stem of a lotus passes through his one hand. According to the same author (*Introduction à l'iconographie du tantrisme bouddhique*, 14), Rakta Lokeśvara is another form of the bodhisattva who holds an *aṅkuśa*, though his other attributes are the bow and arrow.
23. H. W. Woodward, Jr., "Barabudur as a Stūpa," in Gómez and Woodward, *Barabudur*, 121–38.
24. Hiram W. Woodward has brought to my attention an article that identifies the eight-armed female generally identified as Cundā as Mahāpratisarā, one of the five protective goddesses (Pañcarakṣā). See G. J. R. Mevisen, "Images of Mahāpratisarā in Bengal: Their Iconographic Links with Javanese, Central Asian and East Asian Images," *Journal of Bengal Art* 4 (1999): 99–129. This figure is identified in the *Sādhnamālā* and the *Niṣpannayogāvali*, two later collections of *sādhana*. The implications of this figure for Mendut need to be addressed.
25. S. D. Singhal, "Caṇḍi Mendut and the Mahāvairocana-sūtra," in S. Sutrisno, ed., *Bahasa Sastra Budaya: Ratna Manikan Untaian Persembahan Kepada Prof. Dr. P. J. Zoetmulder* [Language, literature, culture: A string of jewels offered to Prof. Dr. P. J. Zoetmulder] (Yogyakarta, 1985), 380, previously identified as Cundā by A. Foucher, *Étude sur l'iconographie bouddhique de l'Inde*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1900–5), 1:58. For the popularity of Cundā in Southeast Asia, see A. Le Bonheur, *La sculpture indonésienne au Musée Guimet* (Paris, 1971), 203–12; V. Moeller *Javanische Bronzen* (Berlin, 1985); R. Heine-Geldern, *Altjavanische Bronzen aus dem Besitze der ethnographischen Sammlung des Naturhistorischen Museums in Wien*, *Artis Thesaurus* 1 (Vienna, 1925), 21–22. See also J. E. van Lohuizen-Leeuw, "The Paṭṭikera Chundā and Variations of Her Image," in A. B. M. Habibullah, ed., *Nalini Kanta Bhattasali Commemoration Volume* (Dacca, 1966), 120–43; N. Hock [Tingley], "Buddhist Ideology and the Sculpture of Ratnagiri, Seventh through Thirteenth Centuries" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1987), 115–23.
26. S. D. Singhal, "Caṇḍi Mendut and the Mahāvairocana-sūtra," in Sutrisno, *Bahasa Sastra Budaya*, 702. John Huntington has argued that Cave 6 at Aurangabad, India, represents both the *Garbhadhātu* and *Vajradhātu maṇḍalas*. See his "Cave Six at Aurangabad: A Tantrayana Monument?" in J. Williams, ed., *Kalādarśana: American Studies in the Art of India* (New Delhi, 1981), 47–55; and G. H. Malandra, "Ellora: The 'Archaeology' of a *Maṇḍala*," *Ars Orientalis* 15 (1985): 67–94.
Maṇḍalas with eight bodhisattvas occur in numerous texts. See Mallmann, *Introduction à l'iconographie du tantrisme bouddhique*, 43 and 124–25, noting that the group of eight bodhisattvas around a Buddha are described in the *Sādhnamālā* 18, *Niṣpannayogāvali*, and *Pinḍikrama-sādhana*. The group of eight is also found in the *Gubyasamājatantra* and the *Pancakrama* of Nagarjuna. Phyllis Granoff lists additional texts in "A Portable Buddhist Shrine from Central Asia," *Archives of Asian Art* 22 (1968–69): 81–95, including the *Astamaṇḍalaka sūtra*, the *Garbhadhātu maṇḍala*, the *Kongokai-schichi-shu*, *Mahāvairocanaḥśambodhi sūtra* and the *Vikīrṇaśāṣa maṇḍala*. The most recent discussion is Bautz-Picrone, "Le groupe des huit grands bodhisattva en Inde."
27. The first, a *cārya tantra* and the second, a *yoga tantra*.
28. Nihom, "The Mandala of Caṇḍi Gumpung," and J. R. Sundberg, "A Buddhist Mantra Recovered from the Ratu Baka Plateau: A Preliminary Study of Its Implications for Sailendra-era Java," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 159 (2003): 163–88. Kandahijaya, "Origin and Significance of Borobudur," 96–100, gives a good summary of the literature on the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*.
29. This tenet of Mahayana Buddhism, as practiced in mainland Southeast Asia, is elucidated by Woodward in "The Bayon-period Buddha Image in the Kimbell Art Museum," *Archives of Asian Art* 32 (1979): 72–83.
30. Singhal's identification of the eight bodhisattvas ("Caṇḍi Mendut," 379–80) corresponds to the list given in the Japanese version of the *maṇḍala* rather than with previous identifications.
31. Singhal, "Caṇḍi Mendut," 71. She goes on to explain the prominence of the Prajñāpāramitā representing Paramitayana and Cundā corresponding to *dharma* *modaya*.
32. L. Chandra, "The Structure of the *Garbhadhātu Maṇḍala*," in Sutrisno, *Bahasa Sastra Budaya*, 547. Identification of this figure as Mahakarūṇa Lokeśvara may elucidate the four-armed image of him at Borobudur, which, as I have suggested (p. 69), may reflect the same iconography.

33. H. W. Woodward, Jr., "Esoteric Buddhism in Southeast Asia in the Light of Recent Scholarship," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 35, no. 2 (June 2004): 337–38. Woodward has drawn from A. Studholme, *The Origins of Oṃ Maṇipadme Hūm: A Study of the Kāraṇḍavyūha sūtra* (Albany, N.Y., 2002). He observes in his footnote, citing P. Pal, *Desire and Devotion: Art from India, Nepal and Tibet* (Baltimore, 2001), 228–29 (no. 132), that the "composition of the four-armed goddess panel is echoed by a Tibetan painting (ca. 1100) depicting Śaḍakṣarī Avalokiteśvara, the personification of the six-syllable mantra (*oṃ maṇi padme hūm*) proclaimed in the *sūtra*. Both have two similarly proportioned attendant figures and a lotus pond below."
34. L. O. Gómez, "Observations on the Role of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* in the Design of Barabudur," in Gómez and Woodward, *Barabudur*, 173–94.
35. Kandahijaya, "Origin and Significance of Borobudur," 149–62.
36. Alternately, the term *kūṭāgāra* is used to refer to the central "temple" or squared-off area of a *maṇḍala*, in contrast to the larger circular area of the *maṇḍala* that encompasses the universe (Meiszahl, "Amoghapaśa," 456). The term *kūṭāgāra* is not found in the long Plaosan inscription; instead the word *koṣa* (meaning to envelop or protect) is used. J. C. de Casparis, "The Pre-Nagari Inscription from Tjaṇḍi Plaosan," in his *Selected Inscriptions from the Seventh to the Ninth Century A.D.*, Prasasti Indonesia 2 (Bandung, 1956), 204 n. 132.
37. Gómez, "Observations," 175, and see his note 6 (p. 188) for a survey of the literature.
38. Kandahijaya, "Origin and Significance of Borobudur," 149–54, addresses this question in some depth.
39. Per Gómez, "Observations," 188 n. 6. See S. Lefmann, ed., *Lalitavistara: Leben und Lehre des Śākyabuddha* (Halle, 1902), 63–66. The *Lalitavistara* was known in Java at this period and depicted on Borobudur a mere twenty-five to fifty years earlier than the construction of Plaosan.
40. Based on Linrothe, *Rathless Compassion*, 148 n. 15 (Taisho.18.848.b) Linrothe states, "Both this new spokesperson and the transcendental site are substantial changes from previous *sūtra* literature, even from the early Esoteric Buddhist texts like the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* and the *Mahabala Sūtra*." He goes on to say that generally, Śākyamuni (in Mahayana literature) preached in earthly locations, while Mahāvairocana reveals texts in a transcendental sphere.
41. De Casparis, "The Pre-Nagari Inscription from Tjaṇḍi Plaosan," 175–206. As Woodward notes in "Esoteric Buddhism," 338, "Perfection Path Buddhism was the dominant current [in Central Java]."
42. De Casparis, "The Pre-Nagari Inscription from Tjaṇḍi Plaosan," 197.
43. Ibid., 183.
44. J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, "The Dvārapāla of Barabudur," in Gómez and Woodward, *Barabudur*, 19.
45. Bautz-Picrone, "Le groupe des huit grands bodhisattva en Inde," 29–30.
46. See J. W. IJzerman, *Beschrijving der Oudheden Nabij de Grens der Residentie's Soerakarta en Djogjakarta* (Batavia, 1891), 39–107 and 125–27.
47. Though the *vajra* is missing, the identification of Vajrapāṇi is based on the placement of the right hand to the chest; it compares well with the figure at Caṇḍi Mendut.
48. For a discussion of this possibility, see N. Fidler [Tingley], "Tjaṇḍi Plaosan: A Javanese Temple" (master's thesis, University of California, 1974), for a discussion of bodhisattva groupings. The use of images with multivalent meanings may apply in Javanese art, thus allowing us to interpret the figures at Caṇḍi Plaosan in the light of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* as well as in a *maṇḍala*. The standard list of the eight great bodhisattvas—Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, Vajrapāṇi, Kṣitigarbha, Akāṣagarbha, Samantabhadra, and Sarvaṇīvaraṇīṣ kambhi—is often altered in visual representations. In some instance the figures are duplicated (in this case, Mañjuśrī and Maitreya). See Granoff, "A Portable Buddhist Shrine from Central Asia." Caves 11 and 12 at Ellora include groups of eight bodhisattvas, all of which include duplications.
49. Krom identified one of the eight at Caṇḍi Mendut as Sarvaṇīvaraṇīṣ kambhi on the basis of this same attribute. N. J. Krom, "De Boddhisattwa's van den Mendut," *Taal-Land-en Volkenkunde van Nederland-Indie* 74 (1918): 418 ff. Sarvaṇīvaraṇīṣ kambhi is described in the *Niṣpannayogāvali* as carrying a sword or banner: B. C. Bhattachārya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography* (Calcutta, 1968), 93.
50. Chinese representations of Ananyagāmin show him descending from the sky, radiating light. In Java could this have been interpreted by means of his attribute?
51. Cleary, *Entry into the Realm of Reality*, 756.
52. Ibid., 155.
53. See Chinese woodblock prints illustrated in Fontein, *The Pilgrimage of Sudhana*, pls. 24b and 25.
54. Cleary, *Entry into the Realm of Reality*, 545 (citations omitted).
55. Ibid., 157.
56. Singhal ("Caṇḍi Mendut," 713) notes that the Cundā on the exterior of Caṇḍi Mendut is located in the quarter of Universal Knowledge in the *Garbhadhātu maṇḍala* and "is thus associated with *dharmodaya* the origination of *dharma*." This does not necessarily contradict the identification of Ananyagāmin; rather it points to the importance of this concept in these two monuments.
57. Mallmann, *Introduction à l'iconographie du tantrisme bouddhique* (Paris, 1975), 333. This is a common attribute for Samantabhadra and the one that he carries at Borobudur and at Caṇḍi Mendut.
58. A Central Javanese inscription invokes Mañjuḥṣa, while one of the most important finds of the recent renovation of Caṇḍi Sewu on the Prambanan plain was a large and pristine image of Mañjuśrī.
59. J. Huntington, "The Iconography of Borobudur Revisited," has suggested that we need to look at the Vairocana cycle of *sūtras*.
60. The *kakawin* by Prapanca, the *Nāgarakṛtāgama* (canto 41:4), refers to a temple, Jajaghu, built for this purpose.
61. Various configurations of this installation have been suggested. See J. L. A. Brandes, *Beschrijving van de ruïne bij de desa Toempang, genaamd Tjaṇḍi Djago: In de residentie Pasoeroean* (The Hague and Batavia [Jakarta], 1904); Klokke, *Tantri Reliefs on Javanese Caṇḍi*; K. P. O'Brien, "Means and Wisdom in Tantric Buddhist Rulership of the East Javanese Period" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Sydney, 1993); and for the most recent discussion of this figure and monument, Reichle, *Violence and Serenity*, esp. chap. 4. The Amoghapaśa *maṇḍala*: K. P. O'Brien, "Caṇḍi Jago as a Maṇḍala: Symbolism of Its Narratives," *Review of Indonesian and Malayan Affairs* 22, no. 2 (1988): 1–61; and "Caṇḍi Jago: A Javanese Interpretation of the Wheel of Existence?" *Review of Indonesian and Malayan Affairs* 24 (1990): 23–85; J. A. Schoterman, "A Surviving Amoghapaśa *Sādhana*: Its Relation to the Five Main Statues of Caṇḍi Jago," in Klokke and Scheurleer, *Ancient Indonesian Sculpture*, 154–77.
62. As has been pointed out previously, further support is given to this suggestion by the commission in 1286 by King Kṛitanagara of a stele with all of these images included.

63. J. Leoshko, "The Appearance of Amoghapāśa in Pala Period Art," in A. K. Narain, ed., *Studies in Buddhist Art of South Asia* (New Delhi, 1985), 133. In Orissa, neither Lalitgiri nor Udayagiri (near Ratnagiri) has the large number of images of Amoghapāśa, nor do we find the abundance of reliquary stūpas at those sites, possibly supporting the suggestion that Ratnagiri also provided this specific ritual role in this region. Stūpas were found in the recent excavation at Lalitgiri, though they are fewer than at Ratnagiri. See also B. Bhattachasya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography*, 2nd ed. (Calcutta, 1958), 141–42.
64. Hock [Tingley], "Ratnagiri," 70.
65. R. O. Meisezahl, "The Amoghapāśahṛdaya-dhāraṇī: The Early Sanskrit Manuscript of the Reiunji Critically Edited and Translated," *Monumenta Nipponica* 17 (1962): 293.
66. The *Amoghapāśahṛdaya* (*mahayanadhāraṇī*) is a *kriya tantra* translated into Chinese in 587 by Jñānagupta. Monuments of the Eastern Javanese period are viewed as esoteric, yet one of the preeminent tantric monuments (Jago) appears to be based on a *kriya tantra*, texts associated with Mahayana Buddhism. J. A. Schoterman ("A Surviving Amoghapāśa Sādhana"), suggests that the *sādhana* written by Sakyasribhadra in the twelfth–thirteenth century was the basis for the Amoghapāśa sculpture at Jago. The sculpture coincides closely, but not exactly, to the *sādhana*.
67. See P. Pal, "The Iconography of Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara, I," *Oriental Art* 12, no. 4 (1966); and idem, "The Iconography of Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara, II," *Oriental Art* 13, no. 1 (1967). For images of Amoghapāśa elsewhere in Southeast Asia, see A. Lamb, "Mahayana Buddhist Votive Tablets in Perlis," *Journal of Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 37, no. 2 (1964): 47–59. These are isolated images rather than extensive iconographic programs.
68. See Leoshko, "The Appearance of Amoghapāśa in Pala Period Art," and Hock [Tingley], "Ratnagiri."
69. See two eight-armed versions of Amoghapāśa dated to the eighth and ninth–tenth centuries in P. L. Scheurleer and M. J. Klokke, *Divine Bronze: Ancient Indonesian Bronzes from A.D. 600 to 1600* (Leiden, 1988), pls. 59 and 35.
70. Meisezahl, "Amoghapāśahṛdaya-dhāraṇī," 294.
71. See O'Brien, "Caṇḍi Jago as a Maṇḍala," and M. A. Lutzker, "Tales of Deliverance on the Caṇḍis of East Java," *Oriental Art* 22, no. 12 (1991): 50–59.
72. The importance of pilgrimage and the role of the teacher cannot be over-emphasized in Southeast Asia. We also see it in a Hindu context in Java with the importance of Bhāttara Guru, not to mention a Cambodian context with Agastya.
73. Meisezahl, "Amoghapāśahṛdaya-dhāraṇī," 270–91.

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The Earliest Viṣṇu Sculpture from Southeast Asia

MICHAEL DE HAVENON

For almost one hundred years, scholars have sought to define the chronology of early Hindu sculptures from Southeast Asia.¹ Although a general consensus has emerged on the sequence of most styles predating the Angkorian period, the dating of the very earliest sculptures remains a matter of dispute. Following a discussion of the historiography of early Southeast Asian sculpture, this essay will focus on the earliest Viṣṇu images, because their depiction in human form with attributes permits a more successful stylistic analysis than would be possible for Śiva images, which were virtually always depicted in the form of *lingas* during this period. The relative abundance of such images and their contemporaneous Viṣṇu counterparts from the Indian subcontinent enhances the opportunities to date these sculptures on the basis of typological analysis (fig. 1).

The scope of Henri Parmentier's *L'art khmèr primitif*, published in 1927, was limited to architecture and sculpture produced in Cambodia or neighboring countries under its control before Jayavarman II was crowned king of the Khmer empire on Mahendraparvata in the region of Angkor in 802 C.E.² Parmentier's basic methodology was to survey the architecture and sculpture that did not fit into his rubric of Angkorian art. Although he described the material that fell into this category, Parmentier stopped short of distinguishing specific styles or subcategories within pre-Angkorian art. The primary characteristic used by Parmentier to distinguish the sculpture described in his book from that produced during the later period was the presence of a cylindrical miter in representations of Viṣṇu and Harihara.³

Philippe Stern contributed the text for the section on Khmer art to the 1934 catalogue of the Musée Guimet's Indochinese collections.⁴ Dividing Khmer sculpture into four major periods, he defined the pre-Angkorian period as the sixth to the eighth century and distinguished its art from that of later periods by the persistence of the

tribhaṅga posture seen in Indian sculpture, the presence of a cylindrical miter in representations of Viṣṇu, and the nonvertical pleats in the figures' clothing. Among these statues, Stern noted that those framed by a supporting arc "form a substantial group, so important that it seems to constitute the principal group of pre-Angkorian art (probably seventh century)." He then distinguished from the framed sculptures a series of small statues, almost all female, and posed in a marked *tribhaṅga*, observing that "this group appears to date earlier than the principal group, because it is at the same time closer to Indian art due to the *tribhaṅga* and above all more removed from subsequent Angkorian art."⁵ Stern made no attempt in his contribution to the Musée Guimet catalogue to associate pre-Angkorian sculptures carved in the round with monuments and thus assign them specific styles.

While the initial attempts to define a chronology for Southeast Asian sculpture focused on Cambodia, French scholars soon expanded the scope of their inquiry to include Thailand. In 1928 George Coédès posited that the earliest sculptures found in Thailand might have been from Si Thep. (The hypothesis was based on the premise that these works were contemporaneous with a Sanskrit inscription found at the site and dated by Louis Finot to the fourth or fifth century. The reliance on epigraphy rather than stylistic analysis to date Southeast Asian sculpture probably reflected Coédès's training as an epigrapher.) Coédès's hypothesis never attracted much scholarly support, and the sculptures are now thought to date, at the earliest, to the seventh century. His other hypothesis—that stylistic elements like the cylindrical miter traveled from India to Cambodia across the Malay Peninsula—has been supported by subsequent scholarship.⁶ Six years later, Pierre Dupont proposed that the earliest Hindu sculptures in Thailand were based on Indian models that had reached the peninsula in the sixth century. Among the examples he cited were sculptures from



Fig. 1. Map of locations mentioned in the text

Nakhon Si Thammarat, which he described as “Viṣṇu wearing clothing draped from the hips to the ankles,” hereafter termed long-robed Viṣṇu.⁷

The stylistic homogeneity of early Viṣṇu sculptures throughout Southeast Asia persisted until the seventh century, when local styles became identified with individual polities.⁸ In “Viṣṇu mitrés de l’Indochine occidentale” (1941)—at the time the most detailed and rigorous typological analysis of early Southeast Asian sculpture—Dupont examined a group of Viṣṇu sculptures, found throughout Southeast Asia, depicting the deity wearing a miter and clad in a long robe. The iconography of these images can be reconstructed from the remaining attributes: the posterior upper-left hand held a conch shell (*śaṅkha*); the anterior lower-left hand was placed on a heavy club (*gadā*); the anterior lower-right hand held a symbol of the earth (*bhū*); and the posterior upper-right hand held a disk (*cakra*). Dupont surveyed a total of nineteen works, “different in their specific detail, but with so many characteristics in common that they certainly pertain to a single prototype, archaeologically and iconographically.” Although the majority of these statues had been found in Thailand, Dupont turned to Cambodian and Indian rather than Thai sculpture to establish his dating.⁹ Having determined that the works

did not fit neatly into the corpus of pre-Angkorian sculpture established by Stern, Dupont also compared them with their purported Pallava prototypes and decided that the Viṣṇu dated to a period beginning in the middle of the eighth and ending in the middle of the ninth century.¹⁰ Dupont maintained that the cultural influence of the Pallavas on Southeast Asia would necessarily have extended to works of art; his assumption that Hindu statues were rare in India before the early Pallava period in the first half of the seventh century was clearly erroneous. He shared with most other art historians a proclivity to date Southeast Asian sculpture far later than its most influential Indian antecedents. But if the earliest of the long-robed Viṣṇu derived from early Pallava art, a more plausible assumption would be that they were created during the same period. It is more likely that India would have exported contemporaneous sculptural styles than those of a century earlier; statues exported at the time of their manufacture, moreover, would almost certainly not have remained uninfluential for so long.

Published a decade later, “Les premières images brahmaniques d’Indochine” specifically addressed the origins of Viṣṇu sculptures from Southeast Asia. Still laboring under the misconception that virtually no fifth-century Hindu art from India had survived, Dupont concluded

that the earliest Hindu art in India was the sculpture at Ellora, which he erroneously dated to the first half of the sixth century (it is now generally accepted that the earliest Hindu sculpture at Ellora dates to the second half of the sixth century). Finding stylistic affinities between this sculpture and an eight-armed Viṣṇu and related images found at or near Phnom Da in Cambodia, he concluded that “the Phnom Da style, connected by few intermediaries to the earliest Indian style of Ellora, thus constitutes the oldest Hindu school of Indochina.”¹¹ Arguing that these stylistic affinities suggested a sixth-century date, Dupont further narrowed the time frame of the Phnom Da sculptures to the reign of Rudravarman (514–ca. 539) on the basis of an inscription (probably twelfth or thirteenth century) that linked the king to a ceremony involving statues of Hindu deities, including Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa, both of which were included among the exclusively Vaiṣṇava sculptures found at the site. In 1955 Dupont reiterated these conclusions with refinements in *La statuaire préangkorienne*.¹² This book also included a discussion of the long-robed Viṣṇus, some of which were redated as early as the sixth century.¹³

In a review of Dupont’s book, Philip Rawson argued that several long-robed Viṣṇus predated the Phnom Da style.¹⁴ Believing that costume was perhaps the single most important stylistic criteria in dating, Jean Boisselier distinguished sculptures with a short garment (*samṇot*), which he characterized as “Khmer,” from the long-robed Viṣṇus, which he called “Indian,” on the basis of the resemblance of their robes to those of mid-sixth-century Indian statues. Boisselier accepted Dupont’s dating of the Phnom Da style with reservations, maintaining that Dupont’s typological analysis relied excessively on sculptural technique at the expense of other stylistic criteria.¹⁵ By 1978, Boisselier had revised his dating of the Phnom Da Viṣṇu to the seventh–eighth century.¹⁶

Although some subsequent scholars, such as Stanislaw Czuma, continued to accept Dupont’s dating of the Phnom Da style, a general consensus seems to have emerged that his dating of the sculptures to the first half of the sixth century was too early. In commenting on Dupont’s chronology, Thierry Zéphir noted: “Today that hypothesis looks shaky. Stylistically isolated in the spread of pre-Angkorean art, these masterpieces are indeed very difficult if not impossible to date in the context of the period in question.” He then suggested a date of “possibly 7th century” which he modified three years later to “6th (?)–7th century.” Subsequently, Nancy Dowling contended that the style dated to the middle of the seventh century, based primarily on her observation that the eight-armed Phnom Da Viṣṇu held in one hand

a baton on which a bande à chatons pattern had been carved and on Mireille Bénisti’s unpersuasive dating of the earliest examples of this motif in Cambodia to the late Sambor style.¹⁷ An additional argument advanced by Dowling was that the form of the lotus base of the Balarāma image did not appear on Cambodian lintels until the middle of the seventh century; this is suggestive but hardly conclusive: the appearance of this motif on the base of a sculpture in the round could well have predated its appearance on lintels. Hiram Woodward generally agreed with Dowling’s dating, but not necessarily her arguments. In support of his dating, Woodward suggested that “By and large, the Phnom Da style can be seen as a regional tradition made possible in part by the absence of a strong central monarch in the years between the death of Īśānavarman (628?) and the accession of Jayavarman I (before 657).” With limited supporting arguments, Nadine Dalsheimer dated the Phnom Da style to the late sixth–early seventh century, as did Helen Jessup, a conclusion with which I concur.¹⁸

Since the early twentieth century, most scholars, including Stern, Dupont, and Boisselier, have accepted that the first Southeast Asian Hindu sculptures were those that most closely resembled their early Indian prototypes. The long-robed Viṣṇus discussed thus far all attest to some degree of Indian influence, but in no case is that influence as evident as in a sculpture found near Chaiya (Jaiyā) in peninsular Thailand (fig. 2).¹⁹ Perhaps the most striking feature that sets the Chaiya Viṣṇu apart from these other works is its iconography. The posterior upper-left hand is missing, but it presumably held a disk (*cakra*); the anterior lower-left hand holds a conch shell (*śaṅkha*) on the hip; the anterior upper-right hand is in the assurance mode (*abhaya-mudrā*); and the posterior upper-right hand holds a heavy club (*gada*). The most distinctive iconographic anomaly is the conch on hip, which appears on only six documented Viṣṇu images from Southeast Asia. The figure is clothed in a long robe (*dhōṭi*) that is lightly incised to indicate folds, with a central pleat falling almost to the ground. It is held in place by a sash (*kamarband*) that falls in a loop across the thighs. The tall four-sided miter (*mukūṭa*) is decorated on the front in relief with a pattern of leaves, vines, and rosettes at the corners. Included in the jewelry is a necklace (*ekāvalī*), armbands, bracelets, and long earrings (*kuṇḍala*) with tassels that fall down to the front of the shoulders. The sculpture seems to have barely evolved from high relief; only the head and upper torso are carved on the reverse. Viewed in profile, it is clear that the relatively shallow figure was not conceived in the round. That it was intended for a frontal viewing is



Fig. 2. Viṣṇu, from Wat Sala Tung, Chaiya District, Surat Thani Province, Thailand, second quarter of the 6th century. Sandstone, height 67 cm. National Museum, Bangkok

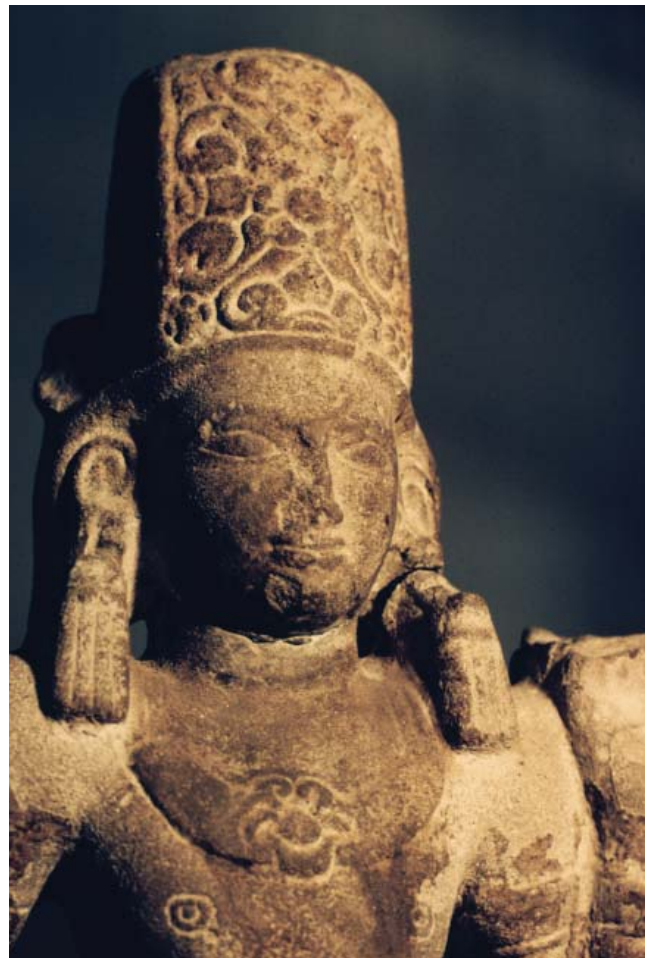


Fig. 2a. Head and upper torso of Viṣṇu, from Wat Sala Tung, Chaiya District, Surat Thani Province, Thailand

attested by the decoration on the miter, which does not continue on the sides. The modeling of the stolid figure's upper body and arms is well defined, even though the musculature is not indicated. Compared with the Viṣṇu images discussed in Dupont's article, the Chaiya Viṣṇu has squat proportions and, at 67 cm, is relatively small. I intend to establish that the Chaiya Viṣṇu dates to the second quarter of the sixth century and confirm that it is the earliest Viṣṇu sculpture from Southeast Asia.

The Chaiya Viṣṇu was first published in 1928 by Cœdès, who, while noting its closeness to Indian prototypes, neither specified which prototypes he was considering nor sought to establish a date for the image.²⁰ Dupont noted in *La statuaire préangkorienne* that a Viṣṇu torso found at Tuol Koh in southeastern Cambodia, which he considered an anomaly (*"une image isolée"*), resembled figures found in peninsular Thailand and Vietnam. He remarked on the shallow carving of the Tuol Koh and Chaiya Viṣṇus and noted the shared attribute of a

conch shell, poised on the hip and held in the lower-left hand. To reconstruct the missing arms and head of the former, he used the latter as a model. In discussing the Tuol Koh Viṣṇu, Dupont observed: "Faced with such an image, one might begin by asking whether it is exceptionally archaistic or, to the contrary, an imitation made by clumsy artists. One of the axioms of the archaeology of Southeast Asia is that the statues closest to the classical Indian tradition are also the oldest." Whereas the Tuol Koh Viṣṇu clearly falls into his archaistic category, Dupont placed it in his second category, arguing that it derived stylistically from local images and contained elements of Indian sculpture dating to earlier periods.²¹ Implicitly he dated the Tuol Koh Viṣṇu and, hence, the Chaiya Viṣṇu, to the eighth century. But Dupont's chronology of Khmer sculpture, like that of other early French scholars, was based on a typological analysis of the Khmer tradition that did not adequately take into account its Indian antecedents. Shortly after



Fig. 3. Viṣṇu, from Mathurā, Uttar Pradesh, India, 3rd–4th century. Red sandstone. Mathurā Museum



Fig. 4. Viṣṇu, from Yēlēśwaram, Andhra Pradesh, India, 3rd century. White limestone, height 61 cm. State Museum, Hyderabad

Dupont's death, Boisselier reviewed *La statuaire préangkorienne*, noting in the context of discussing the Tuol Koh Viṣṇu that the attribute of the conch on the hip "does not appear in India, to my knowledge, until the eighth century at the earliest," misinformation that colored his dating.²² In an article written in 1959, Boisselier saw the Chaiya Viṣṇu as evidence of a decadent style, dating it later than the Tjibuaia Viṣṇu and therefore no earlier than the eighth century. Although he provided little discussion of how the statues in his essay related to comparable examples from India, Boisselier did suggest that the most likely influence on the style and iconography of the Tjibuaia Viṣṇu was Pallava (Māmallapuram) because of the similarity of the miters.²³

Stanley O'Connor's seminal analysis of the Chaiya Viṣṇu and related examples in *Hindu Gods of Peninsular Siam* (1972) remains the most exhaustive and illuminating work on the subject.²⁴ His study was innovative in not limiting the search for Southeast Asian sculpture's

Indian prototypes to the Pallava style. O'Connor found his earliest iconographic prototypes in Kuṣāṇa Viṣṇus from Mathurā; of the five images he discussed, the closest to the Chaiya Viṣṇu was in the late Kuṣāṇa style dating to the third or fourth century (fig. 3). To support his dating, O'Connor also considered a two-armed Viṣṇu torso (fig. 4) excavated at Yēlēśwaram in Andhra Pradesh. He noted that the loop in the sash "was not found on any Kuṣāṇa images from Mathurā which [he had] been able to study. The inference [was] that the immediate prototype for the Southeast Asian images under examination [was] likely to be found in one of the sites of the Andhradeśa."²⁵ O'Connor accepted the fourth- or fifth-century dating proposed for the Yēlēśwaram Viṣṇu by A. W. Khan, who was in charge of the excavations. A relief containing a complete standing Viṣṇu from Koṇḍamoṭu in Andhra Pradesh (fig. 5) was also used for purposes of comparison.²⁶ Finally, he found numerous iconographic and stylistic affinities between the Chaiya



Fig. 5. Viṣṇu. Detail of Narasimha relief, from Koṇḍamoṭu, Andhra Pradesh, India, 3rd century. White limestone. State Museum, Hyderabad



Fig. 6. Viṣṇu, from Bhinmāl, Rajasthan, India, 500–510. Greenish blue schist, height 44 cm. Baroda Museum

Viṣṇu and one from Bhinmāl in Rajasthan (fig. 6); it was only in its clothing that the Bhinmāl image differed meaningfully, particularly in the lack of a loop formed by the sash falling across the thighs. In dating the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu, he relied on the opinion of U. P. Shah, who dated it ca. 400.²⁷ Another Viṣṇu of similar style and date is now in the Mandasor Circuit House (fig. 7). O'Connor concluded his discussion by observing that "the Viṣṇu from Jaiyā [Chaiya] is probably the most ancient Hindu image discovered in Southeast Asia. . . . Since Gupta images of Viṣṇu are different in style and iconography from the Kuṣāṇa prototypes, the Jaiyā image, which is unaffected by these changes, should be dated no later than 400 A.D."²⁸

Other scholars soon endorsed O'Connor's dating. In revising his dating from the eighth to the fifth century, Boisselier said, "this image may well be the earliest Brahmanic idol in Southeast Asia. In spite of a certain awkwardness in the execution, faintly reminiscent of so many decadent works, various features vouch for its antiquity; for example, the right hand raised in *abhaya*

and the indicator of the sex hark back to pre-Gupta Indian traditions."²⁹ Boisselier had abandoned a typological analysis based almost entirely on Southeast Asian examples and substituted a dating based in large part on Indian prototypes. Strongly influenced by French scholars, Thai art historians seemed to accept O'Connor's early dating of the Chaiya Viṣṇu without demur.³⁰

H. G. Quaritch Wales agreed with O'Connor's date for the Chaiya Viṣṇu, and, unpersuaded by the argument that the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu constituted an important precursor, observed that "there is ample evidence that cultural influences have overwhelmingly traveled to the peninsula from India's east coast, from Venji at the period with which we are here concerned. To my mind the most that can really be said of the Gujarat image is that it represents a parallel development of the Chaiya Viṣṇu from the same Mathurā source." He considered the Yelēśwaram Viṣṇu to be a clearer antecedent for the Chaiya Viṣṇu; virtually paraphrasing O'Connor, he observed that, "of greatest interest is the sash which falls in an arc in front of the legs, exactly as in the Peninsular



Fig. 7. Viṣṇu, from Mandasor, Madhya Pradesh, India, 510–520. Greenish blue schist, height 29 cm. Mandasor Circuit House

Viṣṇus, but not so far found in the Kuṣāṇa images from Mathurā.” For additional support, he cited the Vaiṣṇava relief from Koṇḍamoṭu discussed by O’Connor.³¹

The first challenge to the redating of the Chaiya Viṣṇu appeared in a 1973 review of O’Connor’s book by Hiram Woodward. Although he agreed that the Chaiya Viṣṇu was the earliest such sculpture from Southeast Asia, Woodward questioned “whether a date before 400 A.D. has been necessarily established,” but did not offer an alternative.³² Approximately twenty years thereafter, Robert Brown pointed out that several scholars had dated the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu and a similar example from Mandasor to the early sixth century. Brown also noted the presence of a looped sash in sixth-century Viṣṇus from Elephanta and observed that the tasseled earrings could be found on other Viṣṇus from northern India dating to the Gupta period.³³ Finally, he concluded, “while arguments can be made that the Chaiya Viṣṇu is fourth century with Andhran sources, suggestions can also be made that it is sixth century with north Indian relatives.” The range of dates was subsequently narrowed by Brown,

who concluded that “the preponderance of the evidence would place the Chaiya Vāsudeva in the fifth century, with North Indian relationships.”³⁴ Surprisingly, several subsequent articles by other scholars failed to address the questions that Woodward and Brown had raised regarding O’Connor’s dating.³⁵ In 2003 Woodward observed: “It is probable that the work was produced after rather than before 400 and that a northern Indian model played a role. Some of the motifs are very early in type; the earrings, for instance, are somewhat similar to those on fourth-century images from Gaya district. But the necklace and the placement of two belt-ends on the left thigh are more satisfactorily paralleled in Gupta images of around 400 or later. A fifth- or even sixth-century date seems probable.”³⁶ Most recently, after reiterating the arguments made by Brown and Woodward, Paul Lavy proposed that the Chaiya Viṣṇu dated to ca. 500.³⁷

In reappraising the date of the Chaiya Viṣṇu, it may be best to begin the analysis by comparing the work with the Kuṣāṇa Viṣṇus from Mathurā discussed by O’Connor.³⁸ There are, at the outset, significant differences in iconography. Whereas the Chaiya Viṣṇu holds the conch vertically by inserting four fingers of the left hand into the opening, two of the Viṣṇus from Mathurā are holding what seems to be a nectar flask rather than a conch in the left hand. The conch of the other three Viṣṇus is cupped in the upraised left palm. None of the Kuṣāṇa sculptures has a loop in the sash or folds in the clothing. The earliest Kuṣāṇa Viṣṇu discussed by O’Connor wore turbans and later examples wore crowns, with the crown having become cylindrical on the sculpture that O’Connor assigned to the late Kuṣāṇa period on the basis of V. S. Agarawala’s dating (see fig. 3). Most closely resembling the Chaiya Viṣṇu, this piece is unfortunately so worn that it is impossible to tell whether it wears the same complement of jewelry as the other Mathurā figures: a necklace, armbands, bracelets, and earrings. The condition of this sculpture makes dating difficult, and it could equally well fall into the Gupta period. Unlike the Chaiya Viṣṇu whose modeling is flat and linear, the Kuṣāṇa figures are muscular and modeled more extensively in the round. Dissimilar to the turbaned or crowned Kuṣāṇa figures, the Chaiya Viṣṇu has a tall, foliated miter, which is more consistent with images dating to the late Gupta period. While the Kuṣāṇa Viṣṇus are the genesis of the iconography of the Chaiya Viṣṇu, they are so different in other ways that they can best be seen as distant antecedents rather than proximate prototypes. This conclusion is further supported by the lack of Kuṣāṇa material from Mathurā found in peninsular Thailand.

The link with pre-Gupta period sculpture from Andhra Pradesh is scarcely more compelling. Boisselier, who was involved in the excavations in peninsular Thailand, asserted that no Andhran remains had been found.³⁹ Although the Yēlēs̥waram and Chaiya Viṣṇus have several iconographic features in common—the lower-left hand holds a conch on the hip in a similar manner and the upper-right hand holds a club—they differ markedly in that the Yēlēs̥waram torso (see fig. 4) has two rather than four arms. Not surprisingly, the two-armed Viṣṇu is the earlier form; if the Chaiya Viṣṇu had been based directly on such a counterpart, it would almost certainly have had two arms.⁴⁰ It is unlikely that a sculptor from peninsular Thailand would have added two arms with attributes to a two-armed prototype absent a model for iconographic change. The stylistic similarities between the sculpture from Yēlēs̥waram, which is located in a valley contiguous to the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa Valley, and a male torso from Tilmulgiri are so great that surely they must not be far apart in time, both dating, at the latest, to the third century. While the breakage makes it impossible to tell whether the Yēlēs̥waram Viṣṇu had tasseled earrings, they are clearly evident on a bodhisattva from Amarāvātī, suggesting that the unusual tasseled earrings of the Chaiya Viṣṇu had a counterpart in the early sculpture of Andhra Pradesh.⁴¹ However, a comparison of the clothing and jewelry of the two Viṣṇu images also suggests that the Yēlēs̥waram figure is at best a distant precursor of the one from Chaiya. Although the Yēlēs̥waram figure has a looped sash, there are no folds in the clothing. Furthermore, the most conspicuous element of jewelry—the carefully carved necklace—is missing. Unlike the Chaiya Viṣṇu, this sculpture is animated and powerfully modeled. Had O'Connor not accepted Khan's unsupportably late fourth- or fifth-century date for the Yēlēs̥waram Viṣṇu, he would presumably have been far less willing to accept it as an immediate prototype for the Chaiya Viṣṇu.⁴²

The only other documented early Vaiṣṇava stone sculpture from Andhra Pradesh is the relief from Koṇḍamoṭu, which is located near the coast. The second figure from the left is Viṣṇu, depicted with his left hand holding a conch on his hip and his right hand in *abhaya-mudrā*, differing from the Yēlēs̥waram Viṣṇu, whose right hand holds a club (see fig. 5). This would suggest that during this period the two-armed form of Viṣṇu prevailed, but that within this constraint some iconographic variety was permitted. The absence of the two-armed Vaiṣṇava iconography elsewhere in India and throughout Southeast Asia argues against an Andhran antecedent for the Chaiya Viṣṇu.⁴³ Like the Yēlēs̥waram

Viṣṇu, the Koṇḍamoṭu figure is depicted with a loop in the sash and a carved necklace, but without folds in the clothing. Dissimilar to the Chaiya Viṣṇu's tall foliated miter, the crown worn by the figure is similar to that worn by one of the Mathurā sculptures. Khan, who led the excavations, observed that the figures on the relief were "analogous to some of the sculptures of Nagarjunakonda, carved in the 3rd century A.D. during the Ikshvaku period," but he nonetheless dated the relief ca. fourth century on the basis of the rather tenuous argument that Viṣṇavism "became popular in coastal Andhra during the early fourth century."⁴⁴

As both Andhran Viṣṇus almost certainly date to the third century—too early to have been models for the Chaiya Viṣṇu—it is worth considering whether works of a later Andhran style might have served as prototypes. In dating what he called the Later School of Amarāvātī, Douglas Barrett proposed that the earliest of these sculptures, which he compared with those in Cave I at Badami, probably dated to the middle of the seventh century after the Cālukyan king Pulakeśin II (r. ca. 610–42) had conquered parts of Andhra Pradesh.⁴⁵ Moreover, no Andhran images have been convincingly dated to the period from the middle of the fourth to the middle of the seventh century; in a period of such political disarray, it is unlikely that, even had they existed, such works would have been exported to Southeast Asia. Since the earliest securely dated Southeast Asian Hindu sculptural style, that of Sambor Prei Kuk, predates the Later School of Amarāvātī, one must look elsewhere in India to find antecedents for the earliest Viṣṇu sculpture from Southeast Asia.

Hence it is to the Gupta period in northern India that one must turn to find a proximate antecedent for the Chaiya Viṣṇu. Unexpectedly, the images that most closely resemble the Chaiya figure come from Bhinmāl and Mandasor in the northwest (see, respectively, figs. 6 and 7) rather than less distant sites in northeastern India. Other than the personification of the Mandasor Viṣṇu's attributes, the two figures share the iconography of the Chaiya Viṣṇu. Both are carved out of the greenish blue schist mined from quarries in the Duṅgarpur area and used at Śāmalāji and other sites in the region.⁴⁶ The upper arms of the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu are connected to the head by a strut, a rare feature in India but common to most of the long-robed Viṣṇus from Southeast Asia, suggesting another link between the two sculptural styles. The ears on the Indian sculptures have been pushed forward from the side of the head in the same manner as on the Chaiya image. Their crowns are logical precursors of the Chaiya Viṣṇu's miter. Both figures wear long

robes secured by well-delineated sashes, which, however, lack the loop found in the sash of the Chaiya sculpture; moreover, the robes are incised to indicate folds, and the two ends of the belt rest in almost the same fashion on the left thighs of the three sculptures. Although the arm-bands and bracelets are similar, the necklace and tasseled earrings of the one from Chaiya are dissimilar to those that appear on the two other images. The two Indian sculptures are relatively flat and static with little indication of musculature (of the two, the Mandasor Viṣṇu is the more subtly modeled). All three sculptures are small in scale, the two sculptures from northwestern India being even smaller than the Chaiya Viṣṇu. Although they were probably intended for domestic worship, it is possible that they were designed as models to be used for exporting the style to other parts of India or even Southeast Asia. The similarity of these stylistic elements makes a strong case for the close relationship between the Indian sculptures and the Chaiya Viṣṇu, but perhaps as compelling an argument for the connection is the overall conception of the deity. The kinship between the three Viṣṇu sculptures is apparent at first sight; the impression is further corroborated by iconographic and stylistic analysis.

In his dating of the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu, on which O'Connor relied, Shah concluded: "looking to the modeling of the face and the torso with heavy shoulders, I am inclined to assign the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu to the period of transition from the art of the Kshatrapa age to that of the Classical Gupta Art. The sculpture may date from ca. 400 A.D." In fact, the face lacks the round form common to virtually all Kuṣāṇa sculpture and, unlike the Kuṣāṇa norm, the head is quite small in proportion to the body. The heavy shoulders are almost certainly due to the sculptor's ineptitude rather than a desire to emulate Kuṣāṇa figures. For Shah, the most interesting aspect of the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu was the crown, which he inexplicably found similar to one on a figure of the Kuṣāṇa period from Mathurā. He also noted a resemblance between the shape of the crown and the crown of the figure on the left side of the door of Cave 6 at Udayagiri (fig. 8), but conceded that the decoration was dissimilar.⁴⁷ However, Shah failed to note perhaps the most important distinction: that the tufts representing the ends of the band holding the crown, present in the Kuṣāṇa period figures and continuing into the early Gupta period, as seen in the Viṣṇu images of Udayagiri, were no longer present in the one from Bhinmāl. Five years later, Shah reconfirmed a late fourth-century date for the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu, but, after observing that a Viśvarūpa from Śāmalājī evinced stylistic similarities with the Maheśamūrti at



Fig. 8. Viṣṇu, from Cave 6, Udayagiri, Madhya Pradesh, India, ca. 400. Buff sandstone

Elephanta and that its crown was an elaboration of the one on the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu, ultimately concluded that the Viśvarūpa dated to the sixth century.⁴⁸ Given the similarities between the sculpture from Śāmalājī and that from other sites within a two-hundred-kilometer radius and the slow pace of stylistic change in sculpture in other parts of northern India during this period, a disparity of more than a hundred years in the purported dates of the two sculptures is implausible; rather, the two works were likely created several decades apart, which would date the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu to the beginning of the sixth century. Although J.C. Harle dated the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu to the fourth century, having accepted with reservations Shah's elongated dating in a 1974 study of Gupta sculpture, he subsequently changed his dating of the images from northern Gujarat and southern Rajasthan to the sixth and early seventh century.⁴⁹

Having concluded that the major sculptures from the Mandasor area dated to "525 or later and that they form

one of the few datable bodies of sculpture from the sixth century,” Joanna Williams assigned, on stylistic grounds, slightly earlier dates of 510–20 to the Mandasor Viṣṇu and 500 to the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu.⁵⁰ The most comprehensive and compelling analysis in support of a similar date for the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu was presented by Sara Schastok, who, after rebutting Shah’s extended chronology for Śāmalājī and surrounding sites, compared the Bhinmāl sculpture with the Viṣṇu figures that flank the entrance door to Cave 6 at Udayagiri, concluding that those figures, which had been dated on the basis of an inscription to ca. 400, were much earlier.⁵¹ Her observation is also supported by iconographic differences; for example, the Udayagiri Viṣṇus hold a *cakra* and a *gadā* in their posterior lower-left and lower-right hands, respectively; in the case of the figure on the right side of the door, the *cakra* and *gadā* are personified. Moving forward to the sixth century, Schastok compared the Śāmalājī sculptures with figures from both Mandasor and Elephanta, concluding, after accepting Williams’s date of the early second quarter of the sixth century for the former and Walter Spink’s date of 535–50 for the latter, that the vast bulk of Śāmalājī sculptures should be assigned a date of ca. 520–35. She inferred that these sculptures constituted a terminus ad quem for the Bhinmāl and Mandasor Viṣṇus, which she dated ca. 510–20.⁵²

What ultimately induced O’Connor to find the most direct antecedents for the Chaiya Viṣṇu in Andhra Pradesh rather than Rajasthan was the absence of the circular fold of cloth on the thighs of the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu. However, numerous other sculptures from Gujarat that date approximately twenty years later, including a Viśvarūpa sculpture, dated by Schastok to ca. 535–40 and now housed in the Viśrāmaghāt shrine at Śāmalājī (fig. 9), have the same looped sash as that found on the earliest Southeast Asian representation of Viṣṇu.⁵³ This stylistic convention also appears on a Viṣṇu torso from Elephanta (fig. 10), which Schastok dated to ca. 525–30.⁵⁴ Introducing the Chaiya Viṣṇu into the analysis, she noted that “the conch shell held at an angle on the left thigh is strongly reminiscent of both the Bhinmāl and Mandasor Viṣṇus of ca. A.D. 520 and the Jaiyā (Chaiya) Viṣṇu from Southern Thailand,” which she dated to the sixth century.⁵⁵ This dating of the Chaiya Viṣṇu is corroborated by the rarity of the looped sash among Hindu images in northern India until the early sixth century, when it appeared frequently in the northwest. The crowns of the Bhinmāl and Mandasor Viṣṇus, with their crossed bands and central rosettes surrounded on both sides with flames, evolved into the taller miter of the Viśvarūpa, with its more complex decoration and lack of

flames. It is this miter that most closely approximates the tall foliated miter of the Chaiya Viṣṇu.⁵⁶ Precedents for the Chaiya Viṣṇu’s necklace and earrings can be found in sculptures from other sites in the Gupta heartland. For example, the Viṣṇu from Pipariya, which was found approximately 500 kilometers to the east of Śāmalājī and dated by Williams to 510–20, has a necklace in almost the same form; it also has a foliated miter and a robe decorated with a similar pattern around the waist. Likewise, certain of the figures on the Parel stele from the Bombay region that was dated by Schastok to ca. 525–30 display almost the same earrings.⁵⁷ Hence the model for the Chaiya Viṣṇu almost certainly fused the iconography and general style of the Bhinmāl and Mandasor Viṣṇus with the loop in the sash and the taller, more complex miter found among the Vaiṣṇava images from Śāmalājī, while incorporating the necklace and earrings found on contemporaneous sculptures from other sites in northern India. This leads to the conclusion that the Chaiya Viṣṇu belongs in the second quarter of the sixth century, displacing the Phnom Da Viṣṇu, which Dupont had erroneously assigned to the same period, as the earliest Viṣṇu sculpture from Southeast Asia.

Although on stylistic grounds an extremely close affinity can be established between the Chaiya Viṣṇu and certain sculptures from northwestern India that can be relatively securely dated to the first half of the sixth century, a compelling argument that such a sculpture was the model for the Chaiya Viṣṇu also requires an examination of the relationship between India and Southeast Asia from the beginning of the Common Era to the end of the fifth century. The prevailing view at the beginning of the twentieth century, informed by nascent Indian nationalism, was that Indians had transported their culture to Southeast Asia as part of a process of colonization, a premise that characterized Southeast Asia as the passive recipient of a dominant “other” culture. Radhakumud Mookerji, who described “the expansion of India and of much colonizing activities towards the farther East from Bengal, the Kalinga coast and Coromandel,” maintained that the Coromandel coast was the most important of those regions in terms of maritime activity with Southeast Asia.⁵⁸

This notion of the “Indianization” of Southeast Asia was slow to change. Cœdès, writing in 1968, claimed that “Indian colonization was intense in the second and third centuries of our era,” basing his dating primarily on the Chinese annals.⁵⁹ K’ang T’ai, the Chinese envoy, supposedly visited Funan, the first kingdom in Southeast Asia, in the middle of the third century and was told that Kaundinya, a Brahmin immigrant, had



Fig. 9. Viśvarūpa, from Śāmalāji, Gujarat, India, ca. 535–540. Greenish blue schist, height 102 cm. Viśrāmaghāt Shrine



Fig. 10. Viṣṇu Torso, from Elephanta, Maharashtra, India. 525–30. Volcanic stone. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (formerly Prince of Wales Museum of Western India)

thrown a javelin to mark the location of his future capital and then married the daughter of the local king of the Nagas, thereby creating the earliest Funamese royal line. (Cœdès noted that this apocryphal union was identical to that described as the origin of the first line of Pallava kings.) Given their reliance on Cœdès's historical and cultural context as the basis for their own art historical analysis, it is not surprising that Dupont and Boisselier looked to Pallava prototypes for early Hindu sculpture from Southeast Asia. Trained as an epigrapher, Cœdès exaggerated the connections with the Pallavas, because the vast majority of early Sanskrit inscriptions found in Southeast Asia were carved in a script resembling that used in the Pallava kingdom. An examination of seventh-century Hindu sculpture from Southeast Asia immediately establishes how little was borrowed from sculpture being produced contemporaneously in Tamil Nadu. For Cœdès, the earliest epigraphic evidence of "Indianization" was the Sanskrit inscription on a stele found at Vo Canh in Vietnam, which he dated to the

middle of the third century. In rather convoluted reasoning, Cœdès attempted to establish a correlation between Funan in the middle of the third century and the waning Kuṣāṇa Empire. Conclusions about meaningful pre-Gupta period Indian trade with Southeast Asia were a natural outgrowth of "Indianization" theories. If it is assumed that India was the mother culture in a mode of aggressive cultural export, one might reasonably conclude that "Indianization" began not long after India had begun to trade with the Roman Empire—a much more clearly documented interaction. The hypothesis that the early contacts between India and Southeast Asia involved the eastern coast of India, particularly the southern segment, was also based on the assumption that India was a colonizing power; under that scenario, it was unlikely that India's western coast would have been involved.

Once this theory of "Indianization" had been effectively challenged, modern scholars began to envision a far more limited Indian role in the early history of Southeast Asia.⁶⁰ As Janet Stargardt observed, "Indian

influences were selectively assimilated into a pre-existing, well developed cultural base.”⁶¹ Also, as Monica Smith convincingly argued, meaningful trade and cultural exchange were unlikely to have occurred before the fifth century during the Gupta period, when India for the first time had a political dynasty with sufficient wealth, structure, and continuity to engage in significant seafaring trade with Southeast Asia. Questioning the literary evidence used by earlier scholars, she noted the large disparity between the volume of available information referring to Indian trade with the Roman Empire and that concerning trade with Southeast Asia during the early centuries of the Common Era. Smith dated the Vo Canh stele, which had been considered the earliest epigraphic evidence of significant pre-Gupta period contacts, to the fifth century or later. When concluding, she observed that “archaeological evidence supports the interpretation that Southeast Asia sustained indigenous traditions of manufacturing and political developments until the fourth century C.E.; the recovery of Indian items of this early period in Southeast Asian contexts should be regarded as evidence of contact but not ‘trade’ or cultural expansion in any meaningful sense.”⁶²

If Smith’s assertion is accepted, the earliest Hindu sculptures in Southeast Asia would almost certainly have had Gupta rather than Kuṣāṇa or Andhran antecedents; furthermore, these prototypes would in all likelihood have originated in the Gupta heartland of northern India. The most prolific production of Hindu images during this period seems to have occurred in northwestern India, which almost certainly conducted the bulk of its international trade through nearby ports. As northwestern ports played a pivotal role in India’s trade with the Mediterranean during the early centuries of the Common Era, when Roman objects, which almost certainly passed through these ports, were transported to Southeast Asia; it is reasonable to posit that these ports played an important role in India’s trade with Southeast Asia during later centuries, when they could well have served as a point of disembarkation for sculptural prototypes in the regional Gupta style.⁶³ This hypothesis is supported by the fact that, as is discussed in note 54 of this essay, the looped sash and other sculptural conventions were exported a distance of more than 500 kilometers from northwestern India to the Bombay region in the second quarter of the sixth century.

Further corroboration of the proposition that the model for the earliest Viṣṇu sculpture from Southeast Asia came from western India is offered by modern epigraphical analysis. The French scholars’ assumption that the prototypes for the earliest Hindu images in Southeast

Asia originated in the Pallava kingdom was derived in part from Coëdès’s belief that the alphabets in Southeast Asia had originated in southern India, with the Pallava script having predominated. While noting that scholars had called the script used after the Vo Canh inscription “Pallava” because of its general similarity to the script used in the Indian kingdom of the same name, J. G. de Casparis “admitted that there is little *direct* evidence linking the Pallavas with the early inscriptions of South East Asia.” Using textual analysis to further distance those inscriptions from Pallava antecedents, Sheldon Pollock observed that “the assumption of Pallava or east-coast Indian influence. . . has hidden what may be the more important provenance: the Kadamban and later Cālukyan controlled regions of the western coast.” In support of this contention, he noted that the dating on the inscription from Mi Son in Vietnam was based upon the Śaka year as was used by the Cālukyas but not the Pallavas, who dated exclusively in regnal years. Also, he observed that verse, which had been included in early Southeast Asian inscriptions, had appeared in Cālukyan, but not Pallava, texts.⁶⁴

Three primary routes connected various centers in India to points in Southeast Asia and perhaps ultimately in China. Voyagers to Southeast Asia from northeastern India would probably have used a route that went entirely overland; those from central eastern India would most likely have used a route that went partly overland; and those from southeastern or western India would almost certainly have traveled virtually entirely by sea. Exposure to piracy in the Malacca Straits encouraged voyagers to disembark on the western coast of peninsular Thailand and portage across to the eastern coast, where other boats were available to move goods further east. It is likely that the route from Takua Pa to Chaiya was the most commonly used, as the then-navigable rivers dramatically reduced the extent of portage. Hence one would expect that the earliest sculptures in Southeast Asia would have been found in this region, and such has been the case.

The earliest stone sculpture of Indian origin discovered in Southeast Asia that can be dated with conviction is a small Buddha found at Vieng Sra in peninsular Thailand.⁶⁵ Although Alexander Griswold concluded that this stele was of local manufacture, it was almost certainly exported to Thailand from Sarnath during the last quarter of the fifth century.⁶⁶ Given the lack of remains from Mathurā or Andhra Pradesh in peninsular Thailand, the Vieng Sra Buddha may well be the first indication of Indian sculptural influence. The absence of Buddha images of local manufacture based directly



Fig. 11. Viṣṇu, from Wat Phrapheng, Muong District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, Thailand, second quarter of the 6th century. Sandstone, height 65 cm. Wat Phra Borommathat, Nakhon Si Thammarat



Fig. 12. Viṣṇu, from Nakhon Si Thammarat, Muong District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, Thailand, second quarter of the 6th century. Sandstone, height 78 cm. Nakhon Si Thammarat National Museum

on a Sarnath prototype argues that there probably was no local sculptural tradition at the time, suggesting that the Chaiya Viṣṇu, now dated to the second quarter of the sixth century, was the beginning of such a tradition. Although it is the cornerstone of our understanding of the early Viṣṇu images, Brown somewhat overstated the case when he asserted that the “Chaiya image appears to be the single extant seed from which all other Southeast Asian mitred Viṣṇu images spring.”⁶⁷

The date now assigned to the Chaiya Viṣṇu places it far more coherently into a chronology for sixth-century Southeast Asian representations of Viṣṇu. An uninterrupted sculptural tradition is hereby proposed, beginning with the Chaiya Viṣṇu and related sculptures in the second quarter of the century; encompassing certain other examples of long-robed Viṣṇus in the second half of the century; and ending with the Viṣṇu in the Phnom Da style at the end of the sixth or the beginning of the seventh century.⁶⁸ The hiatus of more than a century in the Southeast Asian sculptural tradition that results from O’Connor’s dating of the Chaiya Viṣṇu to no later than 400 need no longer be rationalized. Similarly, the

proposed chronology avoids the interruption of more than half a century between Dupont’s dates for the end of the Phnom Da style and the beginning of the Sambor style.⁶⁹

The sculptures that most closely resemble the Chaiya Viṣṇu iconographically and stylistically are two images discovered approximately 100 kilometers south-east of Chaiya at Wat Phrapheng (fig. 11) and Nakhon Si Thammarat (fig. 12). Their affinities with the Chaiya Viṣṇu are so great that at the very least they suggest the presence of a regional school or perhaps even a single workshop. Like the Chaiya Viṣṇu, the other two figures hold a conch on the hip in the anterior lower-left hand; both appear to be holding a *bhū* in the anterior lower-right hand; the posterior upper hands of both figures are missing, but it appears that the Nakhon Si Thammarat Viṣṇu once held a *gadā* in its posterior upper-left hand.⁷⁰ All have foliated miters and virtually identical clothing, with incisions to indicate folds in the robe and the same looped sash falling across the front of the thighs; however, unlike the other two images, the Wat Phrapheng sculpture does not wear any jewelry other than earrings.

Only the Nakhon Si Thammarat figure has a fluted halo. Although their proportions differ somewhat, all three sculptures are flat and somewhat crudely carved. Attesting to their early and roughly contemporaneous date, these works are the only documented long-robed Viṣṇu sculptures from Southeast Asia that share the four features that link them to their late Gupta antecedents from India: the conch on hip, the tall foliated miter, the circular loop of cloth, and the carved jewelry.⁷¹ The conclusions presented in this essay have been derived in large part from a topological analysis of these four features.

Consistent with the earlier French scholars' general inversion of the dating of the long-robed Viṣṇu, Boisselier identified the sculpture from Nakhon Si Thammarat as the prototype for the Chaiya Viṣṇu.⁷² Correctly noting that the Chaiya Viṣṇu was the earliest of the three sculptures, O'Connor assigned the other two sculptures to the fifth century, because they did not have their anterior right hand in *abhaya-mudrā*—the earlier iconographic convention.⁷³ Accepting O'Connor's ordering, but not his dates, Brown assigned both sculptures to the sixth century, arguing that the fluted halo on one of the figures did not appear in India in any profusion until that time. Lavy also dated both images to the sixth century, proposing that the Nakhon Si Thammarat Viṣṇu was later.⁷⁴ His proposal appears reasonable, as the image from Wat Phrapheng more closely resembles the Chaiya Viṣṇu in facial expression, carving on the miter, and overall proportions. In any case, the three figures are so similar that they all probably fall within a time span of less than twenty years.

For almost one hundred years, French scholars have generally assigned the earliest Hindu sculptures in Southeast Asia to the sixth century; disagreement has centered on which sculptures belonged in that period. Given the absence of inscriptions that could clearly be associated with specific images, scholars have used typological analysis to situate these sculptures chronologically. What is perhaps unexpected is that a similar methodology, incorporating the assumption that the earliest Southeast Asian sculpture is that which most resembles its early Indian antecedents, could yield such disparate conclusions; however, the explanation in large part lies in the earlier French scholars' incomplete knowledge of Indian sculpture and their failure to consider an adequate number of iconographic and stylistic elements in their analysis. In dating the Chaiya Viṣṇu to the eighth century, both Dupont and Boisselier correctly noted the archaizing qualities of the sculpture but assumed that it was archaizing Southeast Asian prototypes, whereas it was almost certainly modeled after sculptures from

northwestern India that themselves were archaizing earlier images from other areas of northern India. Utilizing a similar form of analysis, but different stylistic sources, O'Connor determined that the Chaiya Viṣṇu dated no later than 400. Approaching the problem with a similar methodology, but revised dating and ordering of the Indian source material, I have moved this date forward to the second quarter of the sixth century. Notwithstanding its revised date, the Chaiya Viṣṇu remains the earliest Viṣṇu sculpture from Southeast Asia.

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NOTES

1. The earliest book on Khmer art (E. de Crozier, *L'art khmer: Étude historique sur les monuments de l'ancien Cambodge* [Paris, 1875]) did not attempt to define a chronological sequence for the monuments. A quarter-century later, Étienne-Edmond Lunet de Lajonquière, the commander of a battalion of colonial infantry, did little more than describe the monuments in *Inventaire descriptif des monuments du Cambodge*, 3 vols., Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, 4, 8, and 9 (Paris, 1902–11). At approximately the same time, Henri Parmentier divided Khmer sculpture into three periods, describing works from the sixth to the ninth century as "primitive." See his "Catalogue du Musée khmèr de Phnom Péñ," *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 12, no. 3 (1912): 2.
2. H. Parmentier, *L'art khmèr primitif*, 2 vols., Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient 21 and 22 (Paris, 1927). Parmentier indicated that the name he had first chosen, but subsequently rejected, to describe this art was "préangkorique" (*L'art khmèr primitif*, 1:6), a term that in a modified form, "préangkoréen," was used by Philippe Stern that year and has since become, with minor variations in spelling, the standard term for art of this period. See Ph. Stern, *Le Bayon d'Angkor et l'évolution de l'art khmèr: Étude et discussion de la chronologie des monuments khmèrs* (Paris, 1927), 3.
3. Parmentier also noted that "this miter appears frequently in Siam and the Malay Peninsula, indicating that there is a common parent for the civilizations of western Indochina." *L'art khmèr primitif*, 1:306–7. It would appear that mitered Viṣṇu or Harihara sculptures were found in sufficient number in Cambodia between 1911 and 1927 for him to have contradicted Lunet de Lajonquière, who, having found no male statues with mitered headdresses when surveying Cambodian monuments, observed that "the statues of male divinities that we have found outside of the zone of Cambodian influence in Siam and Presqu'isle in Malaysia, attesting to a completely different artistic sensibility, are almost all distinguished by a cylindrical headdress." Lunet de Lajonquière, *Inventaire descriptif*, 3: xxxviii. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.
4. Ph. Stern, "Art khmèr: Esquisse d'une évolution de la statuaire," in *Catalogue des collections indochinoises du Musée Guimet* (Paris, 1934), 23–33. Having studied medieval European art history under Émile Mâle at the Sorbonne, Stern was the first professionally trained art historian to focus on Southeast Asia. The methodology espoused by Mâle was developed by Stern and taught in his course at the École du Louvre, where

- he became a professor in 1929. This methodology, called typological analysis, used formal analysis to explain the evolution of artistic styles. The two most important Southeast Asian art historians of the next generation, Pierre Dupont and Jean Boisselier, were both Stern's students. Seven years earlier, after putting aside the art of the pre-Angkorian period, which he defined as the "sixth, seventh, and perhaps eighth century," Stern used typological analysis to propose a revolutionary change in the dating of Angkorian period styles. See Stern, *Bayon d'Angkor*, 3.
5. Stern, "Art khmèr," 24–26. The first and principal group included the Harihara from Asram Maha Rosei; the second and earliest group included the female statue from Popél; and the third and latest group, which comprised a small number of sculptures, included the Harihara from Prasat Andet. More than fifteen years later, Gilberte de Coral Rémusat continued to follow Stern's tripartite periodization of pre-Angkorian art in *L'art khmer: Les grandes étapes de son évolution*, 2d ed., Études d'art et d'ethnologie asiatiques 1 (Paris, 1951 [1st ed., 1940]), 88–89.
 6. G. Coedès, *Les collections archéologiques du Musée National de Bangkok*, Ars Asiatica 12 (Paris and Brussels, 1928), 24. For a later corroboration of this hypothesis, see H. G. Quaritch Wales, *The Malay Peninsula in Hindu Times* (London, 1976), 46–48; and N. Dalsheimer and P.-Y. Manguin, "Viṣṇu mitrés et réseaux marchands en Asie du Sud-Est: Nouvelles données archéologiques sur le 1er millénaire apr. J.C.," *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 85 (1998): 104.
 7. P. Dupont, "Art siamois: Les écoles," in *Catalogue des collections indo-chinoises du Musée Guimet* (Paris, 1934), 47–48. Although the date then assigned to these sculptures is consistent with the conclusions of this essay, it was later amended by Dupont without addressing his earlier observations.
 8. As Nadine Dalsheimer and Pierre-Yves Manguin observed: "Rather than to one specific 'national' polity, the production of this family of statues is therefore associated with a trade network regrouping a number of archaeological sites on the Western maritime façade of Southeast Asia." See Dalsheimer and Manguin, "Viṣṇu mitrés," 110.
 9. P. Dupont, "Variétés archéologiques, 1.—Viṣṇu mitrés de l'Indochine occidentale," *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 41 (1941): 233–34, 244. This decision in part reflected the paucity of Hindu images in what Dupont called the Dvāravati style; however, it is curious that he did not compare these images with those from Nakhon Si Thammarat that he had mentioned in an essay seven years earlier. For Dupont, the five most important characteristics in establishing dating were "the modeling of the body, the absence of sculpted jewelry (which had been replaced by this time with real jewels of bronze or gold), a cylindrical tiara, clothing generally rendered with a great deal of naturalism, [and] the support system used to keep the statue standing." Using these five characteristics, he concluded that these statues were earlier than those that, in an article published five years earlier, he had established as being in the Kulen style, which he therefore considered a terminus ad quem. See *ibid.*, 245. While contending that the Takua Pa Viṣṇu was much earlier than the other images, Dupont did not assign it a date. See *ibid.*, 248.
 10. After drawing comparisons between pre-Angkorian sculpture and Indian art, Dupont noted "the result is that the Viṣṇu studied herein derive from Indian statues, dating approximately to the seventh century, coming from the west (Ellora, Mavalipuram), and belonging to Pallava art." *Ibid.*, 250, 253. Dupont's limited knowledge of Indian art (Ellora is not an example of Pallava art, and Māmallapuram is not located in the west of India) continued to distort his dating of Southeast Asian sculpture. In concluding the article, Dupont stated that no Southeast Asian stone sculpture predated the sixth century.
 11. P. Dupont, "Les premières images brahmaniques d'Indochine," *Bulletin de la Société des Études Indochinoises* 26, pt. 2 (1951): 139.
 12. P. Dupont, *La statuaire préangkorienne, Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 15 (Ascona, Switzerland, 1955), 21–50 and pls. I–XIa. The sculptures that Dupont had discussed in the earlier article were redefined as the Phnom Da A style; another group was assigned to the Phnom Da B style and dated to a period from the middle of the sixth to the early years of the seventh century. The Phnom Da B sculptures are stylistically so similar to their predecessors that it is highly unlikely they would have extended the style, assuming Dupont's dating were accepted, beyond the middle of the sixth century. Since no convincing arguments were advanced to date the Phnom Da B style, it may well have been created to bridge the hiatus between the Phnom Da A and Sambor styles. As used in this essay, the Phnom Da style will refer to Dupont's earlier style.
 13. *Ibid.*, 122–34. Dupont observed that "one supposes the coexistence in the beginning of Bhramanical sculpture in Indochina, that is to say in the sixth century, of two types of images, one with a short robe and another with a long robe. The first constitutes the style of Phnom Da . . . The second is represented at its origins by the Viṣṇu of Takuapa." *Ibid.*, 128. Although he believed that long-robed Viṣṇus had been sculpted in other parts of Southeast Asia in the sixth century, Dupont thought that such images were not created in Cambodia until the start of the seventh century. Stanley J. O'Connor, Jr., in dating the Takua Pa Viṣṇu to between 650 and 800, convincingly argued that it was the culmination of an early sculptural tradition in peninsular Thailand, not the beginning as Dupont had proposed. See his *Hindu Gods of Peninsular Siam, Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 28 (Ascona, Switzerland, 1972), 41–51.
 14. Discussing the Viṣṇu of Tuol Chuk and Tuol Koh, Rawson stated, "I believe them to be related, not perhaps by an immediate contact, but by definite formal links, to the art of Mathura and Western India of the 2nd–4th centuries A.D." Ph. Rawson, review of *La statuaire préangkorienne*, by Pierre Dupont, *Oriental Art* n.s. 3, no. 1 (Spring 1957): 33. In this observation he foreshadowed certain of O'Connor's conclusions fifteen years later in *Hindu Gods*, 33–37.
 15. J. Boisselier, *La statuaire khmère et son évolution*, 2 vols., Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient 37 (Saigon, 1955), 227–28. In the second volume of this book, which contained the plates arranged in chronological order, the first statues to be illustrated were the long-robed Viṣṇus.
 16. J. Boisselier, *La grammaire des formes et des styles: Asie* (Paris, 1978), 253.
 17. After recognizing the bande à chatons pattern in the jewelry of the Avalokiteśvara from Rach Gia, Bénisti specifically rejected Dupont's proposal that the statue belonged to the extension of the Phnom Da style in favor of a later date, suggesting that she would have been compelled to assign an earlier date to this motif had she been aware that it existed on the Phnom Da Viṣṇu. See M. Bénisti, "Recherches sur le premier art khmèr: La 'bande à chatons,' critère chronologique?" *Arts Asiatiques* 20 (1969): 109–11, 117 fig. 18.
 18. S. Czuma, "The Cleveland Museum's Kṛṣṇa Govardhana and the Early Phnom Da Style of Cambodian Sculpture," in S. Markel, ed., *Ars Chachaji: Walter M. Spink Felicitation Volume, Ars Orientalis Supplement* 1 (2000), 129; T. Zéphir et al., *Art of Southeast Asia*, trans. J. A. Underwood (New York, 1998) [translation of *L'art de l'Asie du Sud-Est* (Paris, 1994)], 161, 209; H. Jessup and T. Zéphir, eds., *Sculpture of Angkor and Ancient Cambodia: Millennium of Glory* (Washington, D.C., 1997), 142; N. H. Dowling, "A New Date for the Phnom Da Images and Its Implications for Early Cambodia," *Asian Perspectives* 38, no. 1 (Spring, 1999): 54–59; H. Woodward, *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Thailand* (Leiden, 2003), 59; N. Dalsheimer, *Les collections du musée national de Phnom Penh: L'art du Cambodge ancien* (Paris, 2001), 71–73; and H. I. Jessup, *Masterpieces of the National Museum of Cambodia: An Introduction to the Collection* (Hong Kong, 2006), 26, 27 fig. 2.
 19. Although Robert Brown identified this figure as Vāsudeva on the basis of its iconography and presumed date, and Paul Lavy subsequently

- confirmed this observation, this essay will continue the convention of referring to it as Viṣṇu, a term that had probably supplanted Vāsudeva by the date that is being proposed herein for the sculpture. See R.L. Brown, "The Early Viṣṇu Images from Southeast Asia and Their Indian Relationships," paper presented at "Crossroads and Commodifications: A Symposium on Southeast Asian Art," 25–26 March 2000, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 4–7; and P. Lavy, "Viṣṇu and Harihara in the Art and Politics of Early Historic Southeast Asia" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 2004), 264–66. For simplicity, images from India used for comparative purposes will be referred to as Viṣṇu even if their earlier dates suggest that Vāsudeva would be a more accurate identification. Also, this sculpture will be called the Chaiya (rather than the Jaiyā) Viṣṇu, as the modern toponym is more broadly recognized.
20. Coedès, *Musée National de Bangkok*, 25. This sculpture was next published by Reginald le May, who described it as "pure Indian style" without attempting to date it. See R. le May, *The Culture of South-East Asia: The Heritage of India* (London, 1954), 80 and fig. 48.
 21. Dupont, *La statue prékambodjienne*, 133. It is difficult to understand why such an esteemed scholar as Dupont would make such a convoluted and unconvincing argument. Perhaps he was so invested in the primacy of the Phnom Da style, which he had been the first to delineate, that he was reluctant to raise the possibility that other Cambodian sculptures were earlier.
 22. J. Boisselier, "La statue prékambodjienne et Pierre Dupont," *Arts Asiatiques* 6, no. 1 (1959): 67.
 23. J. Boisselier, "Le Viṣṇu de Tjibuaia (Java occidentale) et la statue du Sud-est Asiatique," *Artibus Asiae* 22 (1959): 223–26.
 24. O'Connor, *Hindu Gods*, 19–40.
 25. *Ibid.*, 37–38.
 26. A. W. Khan, *A Monograph on Yelēśwaram Excavations*, Andhra Pradesh Government Archaeological Series 14 (Hyderabad, 1963), 14; and *idem*, *An Early Sculpture of Narasimha*, Andhra Pradesh Government Archaeological Series 16 (Hyderabad, 1964).
 27. U. P. Shah, "Some Early Sculptures from Abu and Bhinmāl," *Bulletin of the Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda*, 12 (1955–56): 54.
 28. O'Connor, *Hindu Gods*, 39.
 29. J. Boisselier, *The Heritage of Thai Sculpture*, trans. J. Emmons (New York and Tokyo, 1975) [translation of *La sculpture en Thaïlande* (Paris, 1974)], 225.
 30. M. C. Subhadradis Diskul proposed a fourth–fifth-century date, while both Chira Chongkol and Piriya Krairiksh dated the Chaiya Viṣṇu to the fourth century. See Pisit Charoenwongsa and M. C. Subhadradis Diskul, *Thailand* (Geneva, 1978) [translation of *Thaïlande* (Geneva, 1976)], 107; Chira Chongkol, "Thailand's National Museum of Art Treasures," *Arts of Asia* 8, no. 3 (May–June 1978): 106; and Piriya Krairiksh, *Art in Peninsular Thailand Prior to the Fourteenth Century A.D.* (Bangkok, 1980), 80. As late as 1991, M. C. Subhadradis Diskul wrote of the Chaiya Viṣṇu: "This image can be compared to those in late Mathura art of northern India or late Amaravati style in the south. The date would be about the 4th century A.D. So in Southeast Asia it would be about 4th–5th century and is not only the earliest Hindi image found in Thailand but also in the whole of Southeast Asia." M. C. Subhadradis Diskul, *Indian Religious Influences in Arts in Thailand* (Kuala Lumpur, 1991), 4.
 31. Quaritch Wales, *Malay Peninsula*, 43–46.
 32. H. Woodward, review of *Hindu Gods of Peninsular Siam* by Stanley J. O'Connor, Jr., *Journal of the Siam Society* 61, pt. 2 (1973): 210. In another review that appeared several years thereafter, Forrest McGill reiterated Woodward's views, referenced similarities between the Chaiya Viṣṇu and a Gupta sculpture from Gwalior produced after 400, but did not advance his own dating. See F. McGill, review of *Hindu Gods of Peninsular Siam* by Stanley J. O'Connor, Jr., *Artibus Asiae* 37, no. 1/2 (1975): 142–45. These views were not shared, however, by other reviewers, who failed to question O'Connor's dating.
 33. When referring to sculpture, the Gupta period typically begins in the late fourth century and ends in the middle of the sixth century.
 34. R. L. Brown, "Indian Art Transformed: The Earliest Sculptural Styles of Southeast Asia," in E. M. Raven and K. R. van Kooij, eds., *Indian Art and Archeology: Panels of the Seventh World Sanskrit Conference 10* (Leiden, 1992), 47; and *idem*, "Early Viṣṇu Images," 4.
 35. In their 1998 article, Dalsheimer and Manguin also dated the Chaiya Viṣṇu "to the extreme end of the 4th century," having determined that it followed immediately the late Kuṣāṇa prototypes from Mathurā and should be compared with the Viṣṇu at the entrance to Cave 6 at Udayagiri. At about the same time, O'Connor's dating was also accepted by Michel Jacq-Hergoualc'h and Virginia Dofflemyer. Betty Gosling has since dated the Chaiya Viṣṇu to ca. 400. See Dalsheimer and Manguin, "Viṣṇu mitrés," 92; M. Jacq-Hergoualc'h et al., "La région de Nakhon Si Thammarat (Thaïlande péninsulaire) du Ve au XVe siècle," *Journal Asiatique* 284 (1996): 366; V. S. Dofflemyer, "Viṣṇu Images from Ancient Thailand and the Concept of Kingship," in R. L. Brown, ed., *Art from Thailand* (Mumbai, 1999), 34, 47 n. 4; and B. Gosling, *Origins of Thai Art* (Bangkok, 2004), 84.
 36. Woodward, *Art and Architecture*, 41.
 37. Lavy, "Viṣṇu and Harihara," 271. In the captions to figs. 6–8, however, Lavy dated it less precisely to ca. fifth–sixth century.
 38. O'Connor, *Hindu Gods*, 33–34 and figs. 6–10.
 39. J. Boisselier, "Recherches archéologiques en Thaïlande, 2: Rapport sommaire de la Mission 1965 (26 juillet–28 novembre)," *Arts Asiatiques* 20 (1969): 59.
 40. "In all probability the earlier Viṣṇu images were two-handed as the early texts have described him with two hands only. The earliest reference is in the *Ādiparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* where Nārāyaṇa is described as holding the disc and the mace only, implying thereby the possession of only two hands." K. S. Desai, *Iconography of Viṣṇu: In Northern India, Upto The Mediaeval Period* (New Delhi, 1973), 7.
 41. I. D. Mathur, *Rare Sculptures: Selections from some Indian Museums exhibited in Japan* (New Delhi, 1984). Mathur dated the Tilmulgiri torso (see *ibid.*, fig. 10) and a stylistically similar bodhisattva from Amarāvati (see *ibid.*, fig. 9) to the second century.
 42. Khan said that "on stylistic grounds this [the Yelēśwaram Viṣṇu] may be assigned to the 4th or 5th century A.D. The sculpture closely [resembles] late *Amarāvati* Carvings." Khan, *Yelēśwaram Excavations*, 14. It is difficult to know what Khan had in mind, because the style typically called late *Amarāvati* ended with the waning of Sātavāhana power at the end of the first quarter of the third century. Equally unconvincing was Sara Schastock's contention that the Yelēśwaram figure belonged in the sixth century on the basis of similarities she found with sculpture of that period from Elephantia and Mandasor. See S. Schastok, *The Śāmalājī Sculpture and Sixth Century Art in Western India*, Studies in South Asian Culture 11 (Leiden, 1985), 34 n. 60.
 43. The rarity of this two-armed Viṣṇu was noted by Wayne Begley: "For approximately two hundred years at Mathura and other sites, this basic iconographic type of four-armed Viṣṇu prevailed. Recently, however, there was discovered at Kondamotu in Andhra Pradesh an unusual Vaiṣṇava relief, dating to the late third or early fourth century, which

contains a unique two-armed representation of Viṣṇu." W.E. Begley, *Viṣṇu's Flaming Wheel: The Iconography of the Sudarṣana-Cakra* (New York, 1973), 40.

44. Khan, *Sculpture of Narasimha*, 1, 4, 6. That the Ikṣvāku rulers were Śivite and that most of the Hindu remains produced during their reign reflected those beliefs does not preclude the possibility that Viṣṇu images were created during this period. Elizabeth Stone found that the decoration on a pair of maṇḍapa pillars which had been excavated in conjunction with the Vaiṣṇavite Aṣṭabhujsvāmin temple at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa had more in common with the decoration found at Ajanta than that found on sculptures of the Ikṣvāku period, causing her to date them to the second quarter of the fourth century. In turn, this establishes a terminus ad quem and suggests that the Viṣṇu from Koṇḍamoṭu, which evinces an extremely close affinity with sculpture in the Ikṣvāku style (an affinity recognized by Stone) dates, at the very latest, to the first quarter of the same century. See E. R. Stone, *The Buddhist Art of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa* (New Delhi, 1994), 8–9, 81–82, 104 n. 61, and figs. 236–39. Susan Huntington dated this sculpture ca. late third century in *The Art of Ancient India: Buddhist, Hindu, Jain* (New York, 1985), 181 fig. 9.30.
45. D. Barrett, "The Later School of Amarāvati and Its Influences," *Art and Letters: India Pakistan Ceylon* 28, no. 2 (1954): 42.
46. U. P. Shah, *Sculptures from Śāmalājī and Roḍā (North Gujarat) in the Baroda Museum, Bulletin of the Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda*, 13, special number (1960), 16, 18.
47. Shah, "Sculptures from Abu and Bhinmāl," 52–54. The Kshatrapa age as defined by Shah was contemporaneous with the Kuṣāṇa period of the first–third century.
48. Shah, *Sculptures from Śāmalājī and Roḍā*, 69, 71, 126 fig. 48.
49. J. C. Harle, *Gupta Sculpture* (Oxford, 1974), 24–26, 48–50; and idem, *The Art and Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent* (London, 1986), 115.
50. J. G. Williams, "The Sculpture of Mandasor," *Archives of Asian Art* 26 (1972–73): 63; and eadem, *The Art of Gupta India* (Princeton, 1982), 142–43.
51. Schastok, *Śāmalājī Sculpture*, 23–56. As Schastok noted: "the all-over patterning of the *mukuta* and their fluttering ribbons, the broad and flat necklaces emphasizing broad chests, the awkwardly conceived, gangling added arms are features absent from the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu. This image is characterized by features that are later ones including a *mukuta* having a central crest and crossed diagonal bands. . . . The Bhinmāl Viṣṇu wears an *ekāvalī* typical of 6th century pieces from Śāmalājī and different from the Udayagiri necklaces. . . . Udayagiri Viṣṇus wear long *vanamālās*, different armbands and plain *dhōṭīs* with no folds shown on the lower abdomen or legs to indicate the characteristics of cloth draped and tied on the body." Ibid., 37.
52. Ibid., 43–44, 101. See Williams, "Sculpture of Mandasor," 52–53; and W. M. Spink, "The Great Cave at Elephanta: A Study of Sources," in B. L. Smith, ed., *Essays on Gupta Culture* (Delhi, 1983), 235–40. For discussions and illustrations relating to two other sculptures which are similar to the Bhinmāl and Mandasor Viṣṇus, see M. R. Majumdar, ed., *Historical and Cultural Chronology of Gujarat: From Earliest Times to 942 A.D.* (Baroda, 1960), 209 and pl. XLIV (B); O'Connor, *Hindu Gods*, 35 n. 19; M. Sinh, "Treasures of Mandasaur," *India Today*, July 1–15, 1978, 54–55; and Schastok, *Śāmalājī Sculpture*, 91 n. 2.
53. See Schastok, *Śāmalājī Sculpture*, 18–22 and figs. 34–37. Harle's dating of this sculpture to the early seventh century is far too late. See Harle, *Art and Architecture*, 146 fig. 111, 148. Citing illustrations in Shah, *Sculptures from Śāmalājī and Roḍā*, 67 fig. 48, 69 fig. 50, O'Connor recognized the presence of the same looped sash among certain Vaiṣṇava sculptures from Gujarat. However, he did not suggest that these sculptures were antecedents of the Chaiya Viṣṇu, perhaps because Shah had dated them ca. sixth century, at least one hundred years later than his dating of the Bhinmāl Viṣṇu. See O'Connor, *Hindu Gods*, 35 n. 17; and Shah, *Sculptures from Śāmalājī and Roḍā*, 126.
54. The Elephanta Viṣṇu torso was one of five freestanding figures from the area around Bombay that Sadashiv Gorakshakar termed the Shivadi Group; all five sculptures evidenced the looped sash, which, however, did not appear on the sculptures of the rock-cut excavations in the same region. See S. Gorakshakar, "The Parel Mahādeva Reassessed and Two Newly Discovered Images from Parel," *Lalit Kala* 20 (1982): 19–21. This led Schastok to conclude that the Śāmalājī sculptures were a precursor of the Shivadi images, which themselves predated the carvings at Elephanta. See Schastok, *Śāmalājī Sculpture*, 50.
55. Schastok, *Śāmalājī Sculpture*, 51 and fig. 115. It is noteworthy that, even approaching the Chaiya Viṣṇu from the perspective of a South Asian art historian, Schastok recognized its close affinity with the Bhinmāl and Mandasor Viṣṇus and the Viṣṇu torso from Elephanta.
56. Also quite similar to the miter of the Chaiya Viṣṇu is the miter found on a figure from Bhumara that has been dated to the early sixth century. See Harle, *Gupta Sculpture*, fig. 110. When making a similar comparison in order to challenge O'Connor's dating, Woodward did not denote the figure as Viṣṇu, an identification subsequently proposed by R. N. Misra. See "The Gupta Art of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh" in K. Khandalavala, ed., *The Golden Age: Gupta Art—Empire, Province and Influence* (Bombay, 1991), 71 fig. 15.
57. Williams, *Art of Gupta India*, fig. 177; and Schastok, *Śāmalājī Sculptures*, 50–51 and figs. 112–113. Similar earrings can be found on a sculpture of Śiva that also belongs to the Shivadi Group. See Gorakshakar, "Parel Mahādeva Reassessed," pl. XVa.
58. R. Mookerji, *Indian Shipping: A History of the Seaborne Trade and Maritime Activity of the Indians from the Earliest Times* (Bombay [Mumbai], 1912), 11. The Coromandel coast runs along the eastern seaboard of India from the Kṛṣṇa river to the southern tip.
59. G. Coëdès, *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, ed. W. F. Vella, trans. S. B. Cowing (Honolulu, 1968) [translation of *Les états hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie* (Paris, 1964) 2nd ed., revised], 19. The original narratives have been lost, and what we have are later accounts that must be viewed with some skepticism.
60. For an extensive historiographical discussion of the many viewpoints regarding "Indianization," see I. W. Mabbett, "The 'Indianization' of Southeast Asia: Reflections on the Historical Sources," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 8, no. 1 (1977): 143–61. Mabbett's own view was that the "Indianization" of Southeast Asia was not caused by colonialization, trade, or religious dispersion, but by cultural permeation or "Sanskritization" over the centuries, as had, he believed, taken place in India itself. Brown advanced sound arguments that Mabbett's thesis of "Sanskritization" did not apply to the development of sculpture in Southeast Asia, which, in his opinion, had been virtually devoid of ongoing stimulæ from India. See R. L. Brown, "Rules for Change in the Transfer of Indian Art to Southeast Asia," in M. J. Klokke and P. L. Scheurler, eds., *Ancient Indonesian Sculpture* (London, 1994), 10, 19–20.
61. J. Stargardt, *The Ancient Pyu of Burma* (Cambridge, 1990), 43.
62. M. L. Smith, "'Indianization' from the Indian Point of View: Trade and Cultural Contacts with Southeast Asia in the Early First Millennium C.E.," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 42, no. 1 (2002): 4–8, 18–19. In dating the Vo Canh stele, Smith found Sheldon Pollock's textual analysis more persuasive than J. G. Casparis's paleographic analysis. See S. Pollock, "The Sanskrit Cosmopolis, 300–1300: Transculturation, Vernacularization and the Question of Ideology," in J. E. M. Houliien, ed., *Ideology and Status of Sanskrit* (Leiden, 1996),

- 219; and J. G. de Casparis "Paleography as an Auxiliary Discipline in Research on Early South East Asia," in R. B. Smith and W. Watson, eds., *Early South East Asia* (New York, 1979), 382.
63. A description of contacts between northwestern India and peninsular Thailand can be found in O'Connor, *Hindu Gods*, 35–37.
64. Coedès, *Indianized States*, 31; de Casparis, "Paleography as an Auxiliary Discipline," 382; and Pollock, "Sanskrit Cosmopolis," 218–19.
65. It is unlikely that any other sculpture found in Southeast Asia, whether of South Asian or local production, predates this image. The so-called Amarāvati-style bronze Buddhas found in different parts of Southeast Asia were dated by Dupont to the second–fourth century, but modern scholars have almost universally supported dates no earlier than the sixth–eighth century. See Dupont, "Premières images brahmaniques," 131; and S. Schastok "Bronzes in the Amarāvati Style: Their Role in the Writing of Southeast Asian History," in Klokke and Scheurler, *Ancient Indonesian Sculpture*, 47.
66. Griswold's argument was based on the observation that the *uṣṇiṣa* of the Vieng Sra stele was flatter than the one on the Buddha from Sarnath in the National Museum, Bangkok. See A. B. Griswold, "Imported Images and the Nature of Copying in the Art of Siam," in Ba Shin et al., eds., *Essays Offered to G. H. Luce, Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 23, 2 vols. (Ascona, Switzerland, 1966), 2:62–63. The flatness of the *uṣṇiṣa*, however, can be explained by the diminutive size of the Vieng Sra Buddha (16.5 cm); in such a small image it would have been exceedingly difficult to carve a raised *uṣṇiṣa* on a head covered with curls. Other than the *uṣṇiṣa*, the stylistic similarities between the two images are so compelling that more recent scholarship has supported the work's Sarnath origin and late fifth-century date. See P. Pal, *The Ideal Image: The Gupta Sculptural Tradition and Its Influence* (New York, 1978), 67; and Piriya Krairiksh, *Art in Peninsular Thailand*, 86.
67. Brown, "Early Viṣṇu Images," 1. While his assertion is generally correct and the evolution of Southeast Asian Hindu sculpture seems to have taken place almost entirely without reliance upon later prototypes from India, there are examples of sculptures appropriating stylistic conventions, such as the bande à chatons on the baton of the Phnom Da Viṣṇu, which had clear antecedents in Gupta India. For example, this motif occurs in the headdress of the fifth-century Gupta Vaikuṇṭha Viṣṇu from Mathurā in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (acc. 17.1015). See *Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin* 16, no. 104 (1919): 60.
68. Although the Sambor style has been convincingly associated with the reign of Īśānavarman (617–28?), no such conviction can support the dating of the Phnom Da style. A late sixth- or early seventh-century date seems most plausible, as it is likely that the sculptural styles moved inland when new urban centers were formed at Angkor Borei and then Sambor Prei Kuk. However, new research into the nature of political organizations in seventh-century Cambodia suggests that there could have been two political regions with different rulers in which works in different styles, both at the apex of Khmer sculpture, were produced concurrently.
- As Michael Coe noted in *Angkor and the Khmer Civilization* (London, 2003), 68: "It is clear that during the two centuries or so preceding A.D. 802—the founding date of the Khmer Empire—there were a number of independent states in Khmer territory, not the one or at most two of the so-called 'Zhenla' of the Chinese annals." Arguments can also be advanced that the Phnom Da style postdated the Sambor style, but if that were the case, it almost certainly would have dated no later than the middle of the seventh century.
69. It is unlikely that a hiatus of more than fifty years, during which nothing of similar quality is known to have been sculpted, would have separated so fully developed a style as that of Phnom Da from the Sambor style, which also produced some of the greatest sculptures in all of Khmer art.
70. Lavy proposed that, if this had been the case, the Nakhon Si Thammarat Viṣṇu would have been the only known example of a Viṣṇu from Southeast Asia with Śrīdhara iconography. Alternatively, he postulated that the sculpture may have been unfinished, the original intention having been to carve the remaining piece of stone into an arm that would have held a *cakra*. See Lavy, "Viṣṇu and Harihara," 257–59.
71. The conch on hip Viṣṇus from from Tuol Koh, Oc Eo, and Ba The have been discussed by numerous scholars, who, other than Boisselier, have generally recognized that they postdated the three Viṣṇu sculptures with similar iconography from peninsular Thailand. A variant of the earlier images almost certainly served as the prototype for these conch on hip Viṣṇus from the Mekong Delta, which are, with the possible exception of the Ba The Viṣṇu, best dated to the middle of the sixth century. See Dupont, *La statuaire préangkorienne*, 133–34; L. Malleret, *L'Archéologie du delta du Mekong*, 4 vols., 1: *L'exploration archéologique et les fouilles d'Oc-èò*, Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient 43 (Paris, 1959), 391–96 and pls. LXXXII and LXXXIII a and b; Boisselier, "Viṣṇu de Tjibuaaja," 225; O'Connor, *Hindu Gods*, 26–29, 38–39, 43 n. 9; Dalsheimer, *Collections du musée national*, 44–45; and Lavy, "Viṣṇu and Harihara," 245–49, 275–79, 301.
72. Boisselier, "Visnu de Tjibuaaja," 224.
73. O'Connor, *Hindu Gods*, 39. O'Connor's date for the two images was accepted by Quaritch Wales (*Malay Peninsula*, 46), Piriya Krairiksh (*Art in Peninsular Thailand*, 82–84), and M. Jacq-Hergoualc'h (*The Malay Peninsula: Crossroads of the Maritime Silk Road*, trans. Victoria Hobson [Leiden, 2002], 119).
74. Brown, "Early Viṣṇu Images," 8; and Lavy, "Viṣṇu and Harihara," 272–75.

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Thai Painting in the Walters Art Museum

HENRY GINSBURG

In recent decades, what began as a modest collection of Thai Buddhist paintings on cloth, wood, or paper at the Walters Art Museum has grown into a major resource for the study of Thai art. This was the result of gifts from two major collections. The first was that of Alexander B. Griswold (1907–1991), presented in the late 1970s and following his death; the second, a gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation in 2002, consisted of objects collected by Doris Duke (1913–1993).

Alexander Griswold was a distinguished and pioneering historian of Thai art. A Baltimore banker, he was sent to Thailand at the end of World War II as an army intelligence officer. Within a short time, he became devoted to the study of Thai art and history and was able to make it a full-time occupation, spending considerable time in Thailand over the next forty years.

Griswold's acquisition of Thai sculpture, paintings, and other objects during the late 1940s and 1950s reflects his profound knowledge of Thai Buddhism and Thai history. His bequests to the Walters have made the museum a primary resource for the study of Thai and Cambodian classical sculpture. The gifts invited the attention of a full-time curator, and the appointment of Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., to the position in 1986 was an inspired one. Thanks to the 1995 exhibition of Griswold's collection of Thai art (titled *Unearthly Elegance*) and the publication in 1997 of Woodward's *Sacred Sculpture of Thailand*, the Griswold collection of Thai sculpture is now well known. The collection of paintings, including ten large banner paintings, seven illustrated manuscripts, three gilt-and-lacquer manuscript chests, and a painted altar of carved wood, however, has not yet been explored. These objects had never been presented by Griswold to his foundation (the Breezewood Foundation). Instead of coming to the Walters at the direction of the Breezewood Trustees in 1992 (and termed "bequest of A. B. Griswold" by the museum to honor the collector), they were inherited by Griswold's heir, Yoshie Shinomoto. It is

because of Mr. Shinomoto's generosity that they are now part of the Walters' permanent collection.

In 2002 an important expansion of the Thai collections came unexpectedly in the form of objects collected by Doris Duke, a gift that dramatically increased the Walters' holdings. Sixty paintings on cloth and wood, four illustrated manuscripts, and a group of eight fine lacquer- and gilt-manuscript cabinets were given to the Walters at that time. In 2001 the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation decided to distribute the paintings and other works to museums in the United States and Britain with existing collections of Thai and Burmese art; Hiram Woodward was invited to select works for the Walters from the collection.

In 1925, at the age of twelve, Doris Duke inherited an immense fortune from her father, James Buchanan Duke, founder of the American Tobacco Company (later the British-American Tobacco Company), which operated as a monopoly until 1906, when it was broken up by U.S. antitrust legislation. The Duke Power Company, which survives to this day, was another of James Duke's business interests. Half of his fortune went to the founding of Duke University and the remainder to Doris, his only child.

Doris Duke was drawn to Thailand and to its art, more as a collector than as a scholar. On her first visit to Thailand during her honeymoon in 1935, she began to acquire art. By the late 1950s she undertook to build up a collection of Southeast Asian art on a very large scale, comprising mainly nineteenth-century Thai and Burmese works. Her principal agent was François Duhau de Bérenx, a Belgian dealer living in Bangkok who specialized in Southeast Asian decorative arts. Duhau had a keen appreciation of quality and succeeded in assembling for Miss Duke the largest collection of old Thai paintings in the world. The paintings, together with the other works, were shipped to Honolulu. Miss Duke's hope was to create a large "living museum" of Thai and



Alexander B. Griswold in his study at Breezewood, Monkton, Maryland



Doris Duke, ca. 1930–35. Photo by Cecil Beaton, courtesy of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation Archives, Duke Farms, Hillsborough

Southeast Asian art, displayed in the traditional Thai wooden buildings that she had acquired and shipped to Hawaii to house the collection. No suitable location in Hawaii could be found for this ambitious project, however, and in 1972 the entire collection was sent to Duke Farms, Miss Duke's estate in New Jersey. There it remained for more than thirty years, occupying several buildings. Less than a decade after Miss Duke's death in 1993, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation began to distribute her collection among several U.S. and British museums.

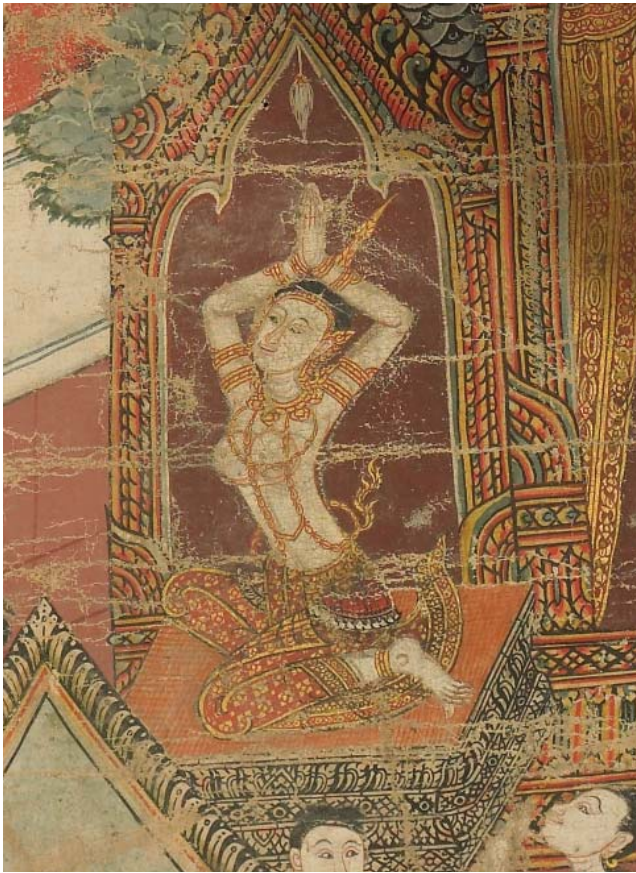
As a consequence of these two major gifts, as well as other donations of Thai paintings and illustrated manuscripts, the Walters Art Museum now houses one of the finest Western collections of Thai paintings.

Thai paintings on cloth and on wood, both called *phra bot* in Thai (from the Pali word *pata*: "cloth"), probably have a very long history, but few examples dating earlier than the end of the eighteenth century have survived—a result in part of the inherent fragility of their ground, but also because of the region's hot and

humid climate, voracious insects, and successive wars. As a consequence, our knowledge of these paintings and their development is limited primarily to the last two centuries.

These paintings, whether painted on cloth or on wood, fall under the general rubric of "banner paintings." The ground is generally cotton, and until machine-woven cotton was manufactured in Europe and exported to world markets in the early nineteenth century, the best-quality cotton available in Thailand was made in India. Expensive textiles, including Buddhist paintings, were often donated to temples for ceremonial use. Cotton fabric, including resist-dyed cottons (chintzes) produced in India for the Thai market, was occasionally reused for banner paintings, as is sometimes evident from an examination of the reverse (although no such examples are thus far in the Walters' collection).

Thai museum collections of banner paintings are quite small, due in part to a limited appreciation for these beautiful works; the largest group is in the National Gallery of Art, Bangkok. The number of paintings



Detail of Thai banner painting with scenes of the Buddha's life, tempera on prepared cotton, ca. 1850–70. Walters Art Museum, bequest of A.B. Griswold, 1992 (35.300)

remaining in Thailand today is nonetheless probably considerable, but they are hard to locate, and losses through damage over the years have undoubtedly been extensive. Paintings brought to Europe or America have survived better, thanks to these regions' temperate climates and more stable storage conditions.

The subject matter of Thai paintings on cloth and wood is for the most part Buddhist. Large-scale cloth paintings, made primarily to hang on temple walls, are vertical in format, averaging three to four meters in height and one to two in width. Smaller-format cloth and wood paintings are horizontal, oblong, or approximately square; these often compose sets that illustrate the thirteen sections of the Vessantara tale, the ten previous lives of the Buddha, or the life of Gautama Buddha. Horizontal scroll paintings of great length were created for a specific purpose, and are treated in detail by Leedom Lefferts in this volume. Together with the mural paintings that adorned many Thai temples, painted banners, commissioned by wealthy members of the community, served to instruct in and glorify the Buddhist



Detail of folio from Thai *Treatise on Elephants*, pigment on paper, ca. 1825. Walters Art Museum, gift of the Doris Duke Foundation's Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (W.893)

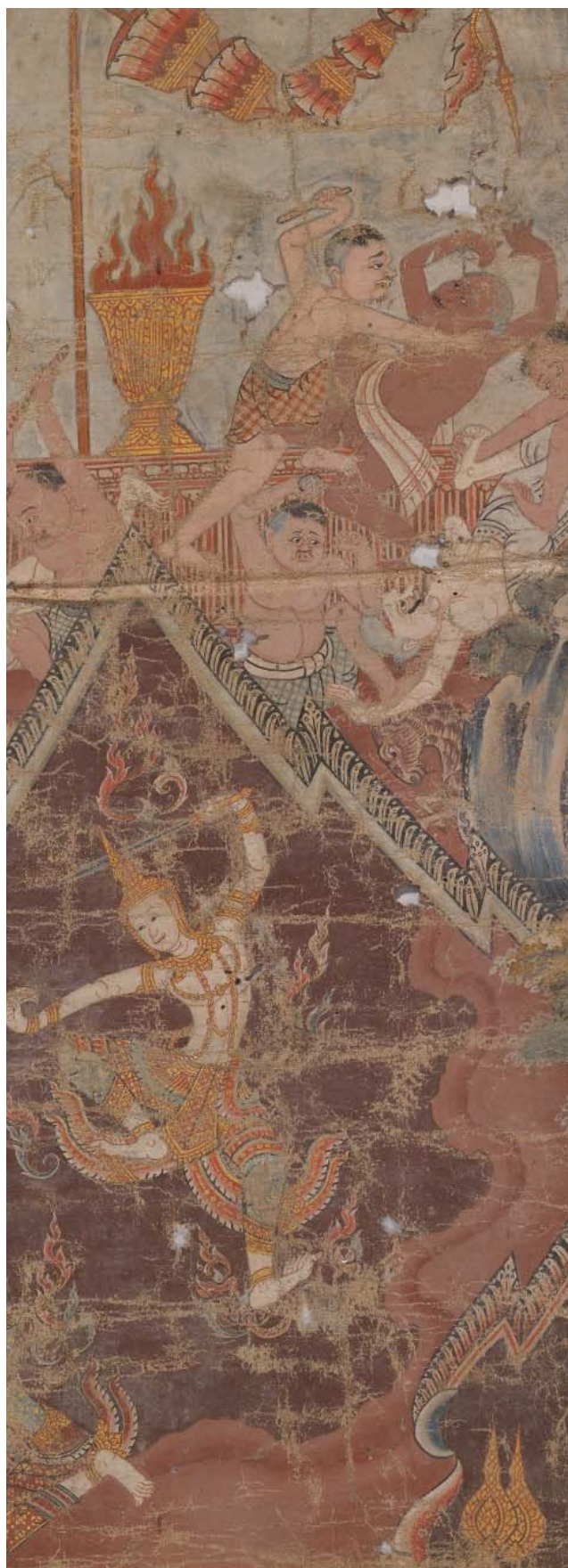
faith. These donations brought merit to the donor and to the family of the donor, and the donors are sometimes recorded in colophons (occasionally dated) inscribed on the paintings.

Traditional Thai painting also survives in the form of murals and manuscript illustrations. Paintings on manuscript storage cabinets and chests, generally executed in gold and lacquer, constitute a smaller but important category. Secular paintings include medical handbooks and treatises on divination, astronomy, and zoology. Portraiture, although common in neighboring Asian lands such as India, China, Korea, and Japan, was unknown in Thailand until the advent of photography in the mid-nineteenth century, when photographic portraits were enthusiastically sought by those who could afford it. By the later nineteenth century, secular subjects, including historical and genre scenes, were common, although they did not displace traditional Buddhist themes. All of these forms of Thai painting are represented in the Walters' collection. What follows constitutes a descriptive list of all the paintings and manuscripts.

BANNER PAINTINGS

Large-scale vertical paintings, often reaching a height of four meters, constitute the most impressive type of Thai banner painting. They are sometimes divided into sections. The upper section usually portrays the Buddha standing with his two principal disciples, Moggallana and Sariputta. Below them, one or two sections usually contain scenes from the life of the Buddha, either before or after his enlightenment. Sometimes the banner paintings are composed of several small scenes, usually illustrating the life of the Buddha.

BELOW & RIGHT: 35.299, details





NARRATIVE PAINTINGS, WITH SCENES

Ten Birth Tales of the Buddha

Pigment on cotton

ca. 1790–1810

270 × 93 cm

Bequest of A. B. Griswold, 1992 (35.299)

Although the condition of this painting is poor, its great quality can still be appreciated despite the losses and torn areas. Many areas retain their delicate coloring, and the sensitivity of the artist's hand is still readily apparent. One of the most impressive examples of Thai painting to survive to our day, it may date from the very beginning of the Bangkok period, at the end of the eighteenth century, and reflects the superb painting that was previously common in the Ayutthaya period.

The ten birth tale scenes are presented in their usual order. The earlier stories are at the bottom and the last ones at the top. From the bottom, reading left to right, the identifications are as follows:

Temiya	Mahājanaka
Sama	Nimi
Mahosadha	Bhuridatta
Candakumāra	Narada
Vidhura	Vessantara

The stories are divided by zigzag or ribbonlike bands. These devices for dividing scenes within a painting were probably used at an earlier stage in Thai painting; Conventions in Indian painting may have had some influence on its development.

The artist has used the space in each of the ten divisions with consummate skill, so that each scene is full of character and life. Every figure is rendered distinctively, with a high level of individual characterization, even to the point of caricature. Their finesse contrasts strongly with later Thai painting, where the figures are usually far more static.

The ethereal representation of mountains in the story of Vidhura, near the top, and the figure types resemble elements of the mural painting at Wat Chomphuwek in Nonthaburi. It is possible that this painting and the murals at Wat Chomphuwek are close in date.

Scenes of the Life of the Buddha

Pigment on cotton

ca. 1800

171 × 215 cm

Gift of Mrs. G.A. Gibson, Williamsville, N.Y. (35.143)

Exhibited: *Unearthly Elegance*, Baltimore,

The Walters Art Gallery, 1995

Despite the poor condition of this very large painting, it is a fortunate survival of a large-scale Thai banner painting of the early nineteenth century. A number of areas are obliterated through wear, but it originally presented nearly twenty scenes from the Buddha's life distributed over a large surface. The scenes are in chronological order, with the earlier scenes at the bottom of the painting. At the lower left there is a complex assemblage of city walls and palace buildings. At the lower right is the birth of Gautama, but in an unfamiliar format. Traditionally the birth scene was shown in the garden at Lumbini, often within an enclosure, with Queen Mahamaya grasping the branch of a tree. Here, however, she stands on a moving chariot in the posture of holding the tree, but there is no tree in this scene and no garden, although there is an curtained area that often encloses the event. Perhaps the artist has intentionally conflated the queen's journey on the chariot with the birth scene itself, omitting several other usual elements.

Just below, the newborn infant Gautama takes seven steps. To the left there may have been scenes of Gautama's life in the palace, but they cannot be discerned. In the aureole-shaped panel at the center of the painting, Gautama is flying away from the palace, mounted on his horse and escorted by the gods. Near the left border,

Gautama cuts off his long hair by the bank of the Narmada River, where he has resolved to undertake a holy life. He is attended by his grieving horse and groom.

At the top of the painting is another crucial scene, in which the Buddha-to-be sits enthroned above the earth goddess Nang Thorani. She has created a miraculous flood, by wringing out her hair, in order to drown the forces of illusion and evil, helping to achieve enlightenment. The remaining scenes cover the years of the Buddha's teaching and the end of his life. By the right border, above, the Buddha preaches in Tavatimsa heaven and descends from heaven on the triple staircase of gold, silver, and copper.

This banner painting is similar in scale to early nineteenth-century mural paintings, but details in this painting are unrefined compared with other Thai painting of the period. Figures are very stiff and repetitive. Some costume details, such as the striped shirts worn by the soldiers, may provide further clues as to its date and origins.

If it is fairly close in date to the exquisite banner painting of the Ten Birth Tales (35.299, pp. 102–3), which seems likely, the difference in sophistication between the two paintings is remarkable. It may be that the larger painting was produced in a provincial school.





Scenes of the Buddha's Life

Tempera on prepared cotton

ca. 1850–70

93 × 248 cm

Bequest of A. B. Griswold, 1992 (35,300)

This elaborate and elegant painting depicts the Buddha in Tavatimsa heaven, at the top, then his descent from heaven, and, further below, a scene on earth after his return. The Buddha in heaven is represented in a rich palace setting with many attendants. He is seated in a pavilion, flanked by the gods Indra and Brahma; food offerings and devas surround them. Monks and devas flank the Buddha as he descends the three-part staircase, while one deva supports a three-tiered umbrella over the Buddha. A group of people are depicted on the ground, including some beggars and a corpse.

A zigzag divider separates the lowest scene, in which the Buddha stands on the left with his two main disciples, while a collapsed tower on the right depicts the failure of his enemies to discredit him. The enemies are depicted as Westerners, a popular convention. A border with floral motifs on yellow ground surrounds the painting. The painting is extremely delicate and refined, and is in the best style of the mid-nineteenth century.



Departure of Gautama

Tempera on cotton prepared with plaster

ca. 1850–70

299 × 97 cm

Bequest of A. B. Griswold, 1979 (35.120)

The events depicted in the painting begin at the bottom with Prince Gautama's departure from the palace. His concubines are fast asleep behind screens, while two older female attendants are awake. The prince is shown three times: stepping through the door, descending the steps toward his horse, and finally mounted and going out the gate. Below his horse there is a large water jar and a guard, his head covered by a checked cloth, who rests in a pavilion on the right. Just above, Gautama flies through the air on his horse. Next, the prince cuts off his hair in preparation for an ascetic life, by the Narmada River, attended by his groom and horse. Indra hovers above, holding a vessel to collect the hair. The god Brahma also attends, holding a bowl and robes. At the top left, Indra plays the three-stringed lute to indicate the Middle Path to a recumbent bodhisattva.

The donors are named in the colophon: Ta In and Yai Hong and their two daughters, Nang Si and Nang Yu. The border incorporates feathery shapes.

This is a highly engaging painting. The details are not as refined as in the most sophisticated Thai workmanship, but the coloring and details are rendered vividly and imaginatively.



The Departure of Gautama

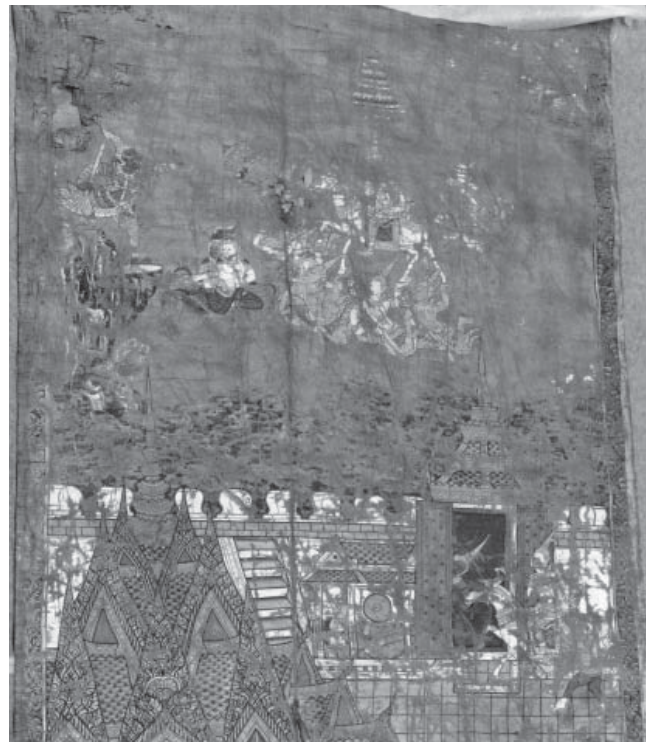
Tempera on cotton prepared with plaster

ca. 1880–1910

207 × 95 cm

Bequest of A. B. Griswold, 1979 (35.119)

The upper part of the painting, now almost entirely worn away, depicted the flight of Prince Gautama from his palace, mounted on his horse, with the gods supporting the hooves to muffle any sound. The lower parts of the painting are better preserved, though some areas are rubbed and cracked. At the bottom, several guards are asleep in two pavilions outside the palace walls, at a corner of which rises a domed and faceted tower. Inside the palace, to the left, the concubines are asleep. The departing prince looks back at his sleeping wife and child as he steps out from the enclosing curtains. The painting style is typical of the late nineteenth century, with rather hard outlines. An inscription at the bottom is dated, but only two digits are still legible, the first and last, 1[]7 in the Chula Era.



Descent of the Buddha from Heaven

Tempera on prepared cotton

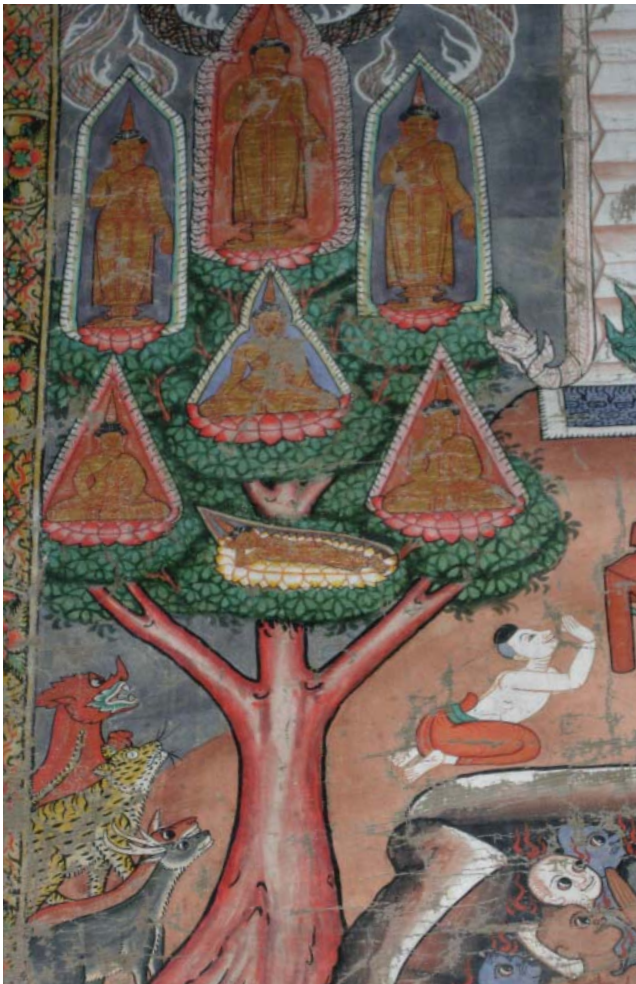
Dated 1247 Chula Era (A.D. 1885)

345.4 × 94 cm

Gift of Mr. Yoshie Shinomoto, 1993 (35.187)

The scenes in this elaborate painting are vividly realized in vibrant colors. It seems likely that many or most of the pigments are chemically synthesized paints. By the late nineteenth century most artists were using these new colors, which could be bought easily. The Buddha is preaching in Tavatimsa heaven, seated in an elaborate palace structure and attended by a host of heavenly beings. Below, the Buddha descends the three-part ladder from heaven, attended by monks and heavenly beings. A table with offerings stands at the base of the staircase.

At the bottom are hell beings, notionally concealed underneath a flap. The artist has represented them with some humor, an approach often used by Thai artists.



The lower section shows the Sravasti miracle, in which the Buddha miraculously reduplicates his image, on the left. On the right is the tower of the Buddha's enemies, which was constructed to discredit him, but it has collapsed. The heretics are represented here as Westerners, who often appear in old Thai painting as undesirable characters.

A three-line inscription at the bottom of the painting is dated 1247 in the Chula Era, year of the Cock (*rakaa*), equivalent to A.D. 1885. The name of the sponsor was Mrs Daeng (Sika Daeng).



BANNERS WITH THE STANDING BUDDHA

Standing Buddha

Tempera on cotton prepared with plaster

ca. 1830–60

Height 90 cm

Bequest of A. B. Griswold, 1979 (35.121)

The Buddha stands alone on a lotus base, with two large jars holding lotus blooms. Four heavenly beings hover in the air beside and above him. A ribbon divider separates him from the hovering beings. The border contains a beautifully drawn and colored floral pattern.





*The Buddha's Great Departure,
and Victory over Mara*

Pigments on cotton

ca. 1830–70

386 × 132 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.253)

At the top of the painting the Buddha stands with his disciples Moggallana and Sariputta. Above this main group two hermit figures hover in the air on the left and right. Beneath a zigzag divider, a large middle section of the painting depicts the victory over Mara, with the flood on the left and the assault by Mara's forces on the right. European, Chinese, and other foreign figures are included among Mara's forces. A further zigzag divider separates the lowest section, which shows the departure of Gautama from his palace, below. The coloring is subdued, and the quality of the painting is excellent, although the overall condition is rather poor.

Standing Buddha with Two Disciples

Tempera on cotton prepared with plaster

ca. 1880–1900

299 × 88 cm

Bequest of A. B. Griswold, 1979 (35.118)

The Buddha stands with Sariputta and Moggallana, his disciples. At the bottom of the painting the Buddha is attended by a group of monks on the porch of a temple building, with four Brahmins, to the left, paying respect to him. This painting is distinguished by its rich and meticulous detail and warm coloring. The rendering of the aureole and base for the upper group is of very fine quality.





Standing Buddha

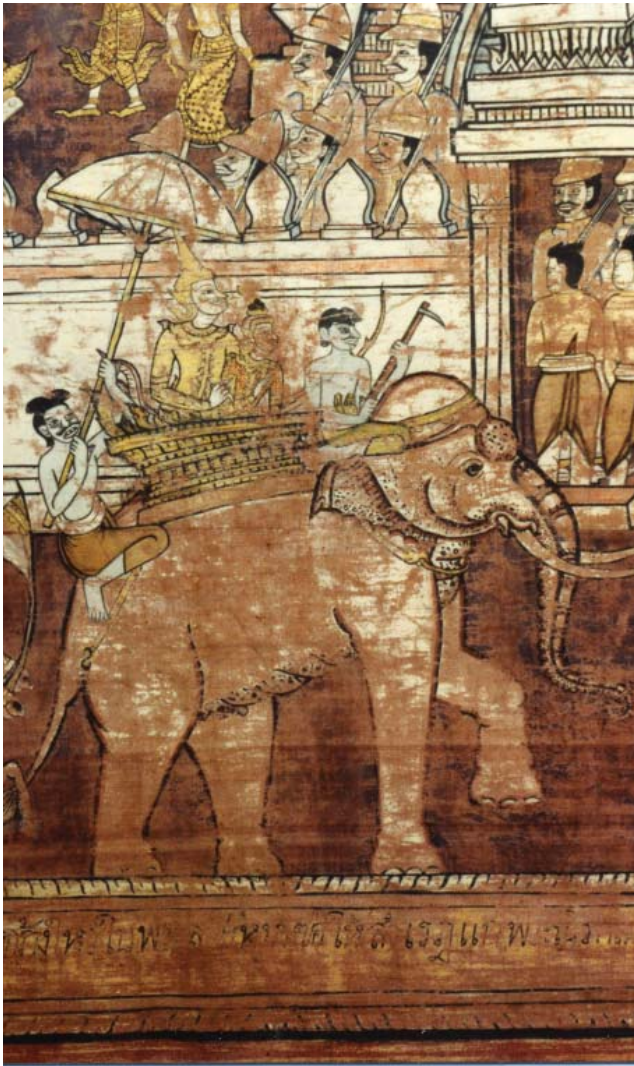
Pigments, lacquer, and gilt on wood and paper
ca. 1880–1900

70 × 32 × 39 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.260)

Published: N. Tingley, *Doris Duke: The Southeast
Asian Collection* (New York, 2003), 62, 64 (pl. 40).

An elegant depiction of the Buddha standing with his two disciples Moggallana and Sariputta. They stand on altar tables of Chinese type, and the base is set with offerings, vases, and aromatic “Buddha’s hand” citrons (*Citrus medica* var. *sarcodactylus*). The carved gilt frame and stand, which contains two openwork gilded panels, are also Chinese in style.



The Buddha with Disciples; Vessantara

Banner painting on cotton

ca. 1890–1910

299 × 92 cm

Gift of Mr. Yoshie Shinomoto, 1993 (35.185)

At the top of the painting, the Buddha and his two disciples Moggallana and Sariputta stand on an elaborate structure, with heavenly beings hovering in the air above them.

In the lower section Prince Vessantara and his family are departing from their palace with attendants paying respect to them. A group of soldiers observes from the right. A one-line inscription names the donor, Mrs. En. The painting style is somewhat crude, and the colors, particularly an acidic blue, suggest the use of chemically synthesized paints.





Standing Buddha with Disciples

ca. 1880–1910

Tempera on prepared cotton

323 × 90 cm

Gift of Mr. Yoshie Shinomoto, 1993

Exhibited: *Unearthly Elegance*, Baltimore,
Walters Art Gallery, 1995 (35.186)

The Buddha and his two disciples Moggallana and Sariputta stand on an elaborately decorated structure. Heavenly beings hover in the air above them, and two demons support them from below. At the bottom of the painting the death of the Buddha is depicted. A large group of grieving monks mourn the Buddha. All the elements in this painting are beautifully realized, and the colors are particularly rich.

Standing Buddha with Two Disciples

Pigments on cloth

ca. 1880–1900

297 × 84 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's

Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.255)

Published: N. Tingley, *Doris Duke: The Southeast Asian Collection* (New York, 2003), 57, pl. 32

In the upper section the Buddha stands with his two disciples Moggallana and Sariputta, on a base supported by three demon figures in dramatic postures. The demons wear elaborate brocades and jewelery. The Buddha stands above a kala monster face. Below is a depiction of heaven, with two stupas representing the Chulamani stupa, which houses a relic of the Buddha. Two serpent banners hang from standards. Four angels hover at the top of the painting, framed by a floral border of rosettes and scrolling foliage.





Standing Buddha

Pigments on cloth

ca. 1900–20

216 × 81.5 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's

Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.255)

The Buddha stands against a plain blue background with the disciples Moggallana and Sariputta. Four angels appear above, each in a cloud.

SCENES AND POSTURES OF
THE BUDDHA, IN PANELS

Postures of the Buddha

Tempera on cotton

1887

365.7 × 128.3 cm

Gift of Mr. Yoshie Shinomoto, 1993 (35.184)



The enumeration of the postures of the Buddha was important in Thai Buddhism. A Thai text called *Tamnan Phrapang* identified thirty-seven postures, each one referring either to an incident in the life of the Buddha or to attitudes such as meditating, standing, or walking. When the postures are illustrated, they are iconlike images of the Buddha standing or sitting, differentiated simply by the positions of the arms and hands, and by the gestures made by one or both hands.

This painting is badly rubbed and generally in poor condition, but it is the only banner painting so far known that illustrates the postures of the Buddha, so it is of historical importance. Seated or standing images are set in seven rows of seven. One of the rows is almost entirely obliterated. The standing images are higher up on the painting, and the lower images are all seated. Each posture is identified by a caption below the image, although many of the captions are too rubbed to read. Some of the subjects that are legible include: the Buddha walking (*Phra lila*), the Buddha forbidding his relatives from quarrelling (*Phra ham yat*), the Buddha floating a tray in the river (*Phra loi that*), standing Buddha (*Phra yuen*). On the reverse of the banner painting there is a date corresponding to 1887. The border contains a floral scroll.

This painting bears obvious comparison with the impressively large banner painting 35.257 (p. 119) from the Duke collection, where fifty-eight scenes of the Buddha's life are depicted, far more realistically and within natural settings.



Scenes from the Buddha's Life

Pigments on cloth

ca. 1880–1910

333 × 250 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.257)

The painting is divided into fifty-eight panels of equal size, each with a scene from the life of the Buddha set within a decorated and gilded arch. There is a landscape setting for each scene, and a caption underneath in gold

script identifies the scene. Two of the panels are of double width to accommodate the image of the Buddha lying down without distorting the scale. The panels are set in six horizontal rows.

This splendid and very large painting is of superb quality. It dates from the end of the nineteenth century and demonstrates the very high-quality work still achieved at this period by some artists. The painting is fairly well preserved although there is some rubbing to the surface.



35.259

Scenes from the Buddha's Life

Pigments on canvas

ca. 1920–40.

293.5 × 179 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.259)

The events of the Buddha's life are set in five tiers, separated by a blue ground. The birth of Gautama appears at the top, in the center, with his youthful feats depicted to the right, and a princely figure with a group to the left. Below this, Gautama's encounter with four sufferings is in the center, the great departure from the palace is on the right, and an unidentified assembly on the left. In the middle section, the cutting of the prince's hair is to the left, his austerities and receiving offerings on the right. Below that, the victory of Mara, with the first assembly of monks on the right, and at the bottom of the painting are the descent from heaven, nirvana, and funeral scenes. A floral border of rosettes and scroll surrounds the painting. The painting is in quite good condition. The figures are wooden and stiff, yet they provide an eloquent account of the events. An inscription at the bottom names the donors, Mae Nuam and Pho Won, as well as Nai Wat and another illegible name.



35.261

Unidentified scene

Pigments on wood

ca. 1890–1910

114.5 × 183 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.261)

This large painting depicts an elaborate scene in the style of traditional narrative painting, but none of the individual elements is specific enough to be securely identified. A procession with elephants occupies the left side, and on the right a scene in a large palace includes dancers, musicians, a prince, and many other figures. The artist was adept at depicting traditional narrative subjects but produced this painting apparently only for decorative effect. It marks a turning point in Thai painting, when the religious subject ceased to be central to the creation of the painting.

Buddha Tames the Elephant Nalagiri

Pigments and gild on wood

ca. 1890–1910

127 × 157 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.262)

Published: N. Tingley, *Doris Duke: The
Southeast Asian Collection* (New York, 2003),
62, 63 (pl. 39)

The incident of the Buddha calming an enraged elephant is frequently depicted in paintings of the Buddha's life. Here the Buddha leads a group of monks setting out to collect alms. The pacified elephant is before them. Groups of people fighting with each other appear on the side and below may allude to the elephant's anger, dispelled by the Buddha.



Descent of the Buddha

Pigments on wood

ca. 1890–1910

122 × 204 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.263)

The composition is in horizontal format. The main episodes, the sermon in heaven and the descent from heaven, are relegated to minor positions on the left side. An elaborate palace setting on the left contains much activity, but none of it involves the Buddha directly. The transition at this period from traditional painting, which always had specific meaning, to more decorative paintings in the traditional styles is clear here.

Scenes from the Buddha's Life

Pigments and gilt on wood

ca. 1910–20

Each 72 × 91.5 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.230 and
35.231)

These two paintings on wood probably belong to a set of paintings of scenes from the Buddha's life. The specific subjects here are not readily identifiable. In each, the Buddha is in an elegant pavilion, surrounded by lay people who are paying respect to him or engaged in other activities. The first painting may be intended to be a night scene, as there is a large star at the top of the painting. Although the painting style is quite traditional in format and organization, the details of the figures suggest a date in the early twentieth century.



35.263



35.230



35.231

SMALLER PAINTINGS: THE LIFE OF THE BUDDHA



Buddha on Naga

Pigments on cloth

ca. 1850–80

64 × 47 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.278)

The Buddha is seated upon the coiled serpent, Mucalinda, who protects him, under a single tree in a nearly empty blue ground. The horizon line is high up in the painting. The border contains floral rosettes.



Birth of the Buddha

Pigments and gilt on cloth

ca. 1880–1900

63.5 × 49 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.279)

Queen Mahamaya grasps the branches of two bowed trees set within a curtained enclosure. The infant Prince Gautama stands on an offering vessel that is held by a male figure. An attendant holds a five-tiered umbrella over the child. Outside the enclosure are soldiers and guards in sleeveless shirts bearing swords.



Demon and Monk

Pigments and gilt on cloth

ca. 1880–1900

63.5 × 47.5 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.280)

A demon figure, with the form of Ravana from the Thai Ramakian, is set against a blue rock formation on the left, while a monk is seated on the right. Two birds in the sky and a square in the lower right complete the scene. The caption reads *Malaphanti*, which Peter Skilling identifies as a Thai variant of Pali Marabandhana, indicating the story of Upagupta, which is included in the *Pathom Somphot*, the Thai version of the life of the Buddha. The borders of the illustrations contain flowers and a meandering floral scroll.



Phimpha niphana [?] (*The Nirvana of Phimpha*)

Pigments and gilt on cloth

ca. 1880–1900

63.5 × 48 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.285)

The subject of this painting is unclear. The title below, *Phimpha niphana*, suggests that it shows the nirvana of Phimpha, but such a theme militates against traditional doctrine, nor does the picture accord with that title: Phimpha (Pali, Bimba) was the wife of the Buddha, and she did not achieve nirvana. It is possible that the title was meant to read *Phimpha philap*, the lament of Phimpha, which is a popular Thai Buddhist text recounting the complaints made to the Buddha by Phimpha when he returned to Kapilavastu and she taxed him with failing his duty to his family. The reclining figure attended by monks may be the Buddha; his wife is kneeling before him in the foreground.

SMALLER PAINTINGS: VESSANTARA SETS

The Walters owns five sets of smaller paintings that depict the revered birth tale of Vessantara. This crucial narrative in Thai Buddhism recounts the last incarnation of the Buddha prior to his birth as Prince Gautama. The story embodies the supreme Buddhist merit of giving (*dana*). A full set of thirteen paintings, one for each section of the story, provides a visual account of Vessantara's life. The recital of the Vessantara birth tale was the occasion for a major Buddhist festival in Thailand, called Thet Mahachat. In northeastern Thailand and Laos the celebration differed, and long horizontal scrolls, called Phra Wet, played a central role in the celebration. Three examples of the Phra Wet horizontal scrolls in the Walters from the Duke collection are discussed in detail by Leedom Lefferts in this volume.

None of the Walters sets is complete.

Seven Vessantara paintings

Pigments and gilt on cloth

ca. 1830–60

Average dimensions: 110 × 90 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's

Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.270–

35.276)

Seven scenes remain from the original set of thirteen paintings. This is the earliest of the Vessantara sets at the Walters, and it probably dates from the mid-nineteenth century. The paintings are traditional in layout, and in the depiction of landscape, architecture, and figures. Each painting is complex in organization. Events occur simultaneously in many different parts of the painting. The artist uses an expressive figure style that is both charming and affecting. The borders contain lozenge shapes on a yellow ground.

The scenes that survive from this set are the following:

- Phusati asks Indra to allow her to be reborn as Vessantara's mother
- The gift of the elephant
- Four brahmins ride away with the horse
- The arrival at the hermitage in the forest
- Jujaka takes the children away
- Madri returns to the hermitage
- The return of Vessantara's family to the city.

Four Vessantara paintings

Pigments and gilt on cloth

ca. 1880–1910.

Average dimensions: 70 × 50 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's

Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002

(35.281–35.284)

The scenes are:

- Phusati asks Indra to allow her to be reborn as Vessantara's mother
- The gift of the white elephant to the brahmins
- The gift of the chariot
- The gift of Madri.

The backgrounds are very plain, some of them entirely blank, in a gray color.

Six Vessantara paintings

Pigments and gilt on cloth

ca. 1850–70

Average dimensions: 47 × 36 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's

Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002

(35.264–35.269)

This handsome set is distinguished by its rich, warm colors.

The scenes are:

- Phusati asks Indra to allow her to be reborn as Vessantara's mother
- The gift of the white elephant to the brahmins
- A brahmin asks for the chariot
- Jujaka and his wife Amitta at the bridge
- Jujaka takes the children away
- Indra asks for Madri at the hermitage.

Nine Vessantara paintings

Pigments on wood

ca. 1880–1900

Average dimensions: 44 × 55 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002

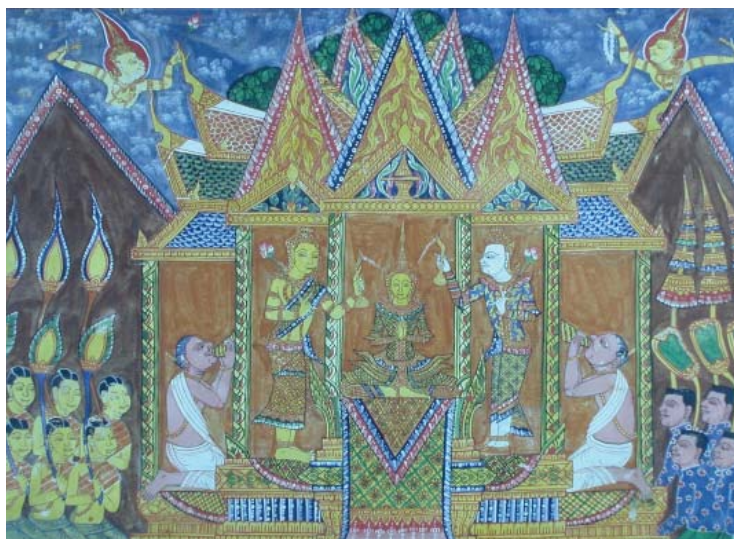
(35.232–35.240)

Published: N. Tingley, *Doris Duke: The Southeast
Asian Collection* (New York, 2003), 60–61, pl. 34
(35.232), pl. 35 (35.233), and pl. 36 (35.240).

Although the treatment is quite traditional, the set is likely to date from the late nineteenth century, a conclusion based on the details of figures and the modernized landscape settings. The range of colors is somber, with browns and blues predominating. Inscriptions at the bottom of some of the paintings give the name of the donor or donors.

The scenes are:

- Eight brahmins ask for the elephant
- Vessantara sets forth for the forest in the chariot
- The children are carried into the forest
- A dog chases Jujaka up a tree
- Achutta shows the way to Jujaka
- Jujaka's wife at home
- The children beg Vessantara not to send them away
- Jujaka sleeps in a tree while the gods comfort the children
- The return to the city in procession.



35.241. Chapter 1: Queen Phusati as Queen Sudhamma, in Indra's heaven (?)

Eleven Vessantara paintings

Pigments on paper

ca. 1920–40

Each 52.5 × 66.5 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002

(35.241–35.251)

This set is nearly complete, and a twelfth painting from the set is in the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco. It is the work of a highly imaginative artist. Although he retains many elements of traditional style the artist employs many new elements, new figure types, and a new range of colors based on chemically synthesized commercial paints. Some of the costume details would suggest a date in the 1920s or 1930s.

The scenes are:

- The anointing of Vessantara (?)
- Six brahmins ask for a gift
- Eight brahmins ask for the elephant
- Four brahmins ask for the horses
- Jujaka's wife is teased by the neighbors for her poverty
- Jujaka asks for the children
- Madri returns to the hermitage
- Jujaka sleeps in a tree
- Jujaka at court
- Indra asks for Madri
- The return to the city in procession.



35.270. Chapter 1: The God Indra grants ten boons to Phusati



35.281. Chapter 2: The gift of the white elephant to the brahmins



35.282. Chapter 3: The gift of the chariot to the brahmins



35.244. Chapter 4: The princes implore Vessantara to remain in Ceta



35.234. Chapter 4: The children are carried into the forest



35.267. Chapter 5: The brahmin Jujaka with his wife, Amittapana



35.245. Chapter 5 and 6: Cetaputta's dogs send Jujaka up a tree; Cetaputa sends Jujaka to Accata



35.236. Chapter 7: Accata directs Jujaka



35.268. Chapter 8: Vessantara gives Jali and Kanha to Jujaka



35.237. Chapter 8: Jali at Vessantara's feet



35.238. Chapter 8: As Jujaka sleeps, Jali and Kanha dream of Vessantara and Maddi comforting them



35.247. Chapter 9: Wild beasts prevent Maddi from joining the royal children



35.248. Chapter 10: Indra, in the form of a brahmin, requests Maddi



35.250. Chapter 11: The enjoyment of Jujaka's reward



35.284. Chapter 12: *Above*: Vessantara and King Sanjaya; *Below*: Maddi, Kanha, Jadi, and Phusat



35.240. Chapters 12 and 13: Jali's army recovers Vessantara and returns to the capital

SMALLER PAINTINGS: HISTORICAL SCENES

Battle Scene; A Surrender

Pigments on canvas

ca. 1900–10

35.228: 90 × 107.5 cm

35.229: 91.5 × 109 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (35.228 and 35.229)

These two handsome history paintings probably date from the first decade of the twentieth century. They are entirely Western in style. Prince Naris, half-brother of King Chulalongkorn (r. 1868–1910), himself an artist, was in charge of public works, and he employed numerous European architects and artists, many of them Italian, to create new buildings in Bangkok in this period—palace buildings, residences, and government buildings. He also introduced paintings in completely western style, some painted by European artists and others by Thai artists.

The re-creation of scenes from Thai history illustrated the valor and bravery of Thai warriors in past times to foster a sense of national pride in the glorious past. The Thais emulated Europe in this kind of historical painting. The aim was to help unite the very disparate people living in the Thai state. King Mongkut (r. 1850–1868) and his son Chulalongkorn created a new nation that Europeans could regard with respect, thanks to modernization policies, the creation of a centralized administration system, and a great deal of “window dressing.” Historical paintings such as these were part of this process.

The artist of these two scenes is probably a Thai who may in time be identified. Both paintings depict the wars with Burma, which caused devastating damage in central and northern Thailand in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Only after 1800 was central Thailand finally free of invasions by the Burmese. One painting shows a full-scale elephant battle (35.229). It attempts to include accurate clothing and weaponry of an earlier period. In the second painting a large Burmese force surrenders to a Thai general (35.228). Historical paintings of excellent quality and well preserved, as these are, are important documents from a period of great change in Thai painting and society. They helped to create a national history for the modern Thai state.



35.229: Battle Scene



35.228: A Surrender

ILLUSTRATED MANUSCRIPTS

Ten birth tales from Abhidhamma scriptures

Folding book manuscript

Pali text, written in Mon script; written in gold on red ground at start of each tale, thereafter in black ink on uncolored ground, with annotations in red

ca. 1790–1820

Overall (folded): 12.5 × 67 cm

Gift of Mr. Yoshie Shinomoto, 1993 (W.825)

The Mon people were accomplished artists and scribes in central and western Thailand. The Mon script used here (the text is composed in Pali) is distinctive, rounded in form, and quite similar to Burmese script. The Mons had fled from Burma after repression in the late eighteenth century and as a result of the Thai-Burmese wars. Skilled Mon workmanship can be identified in manuscripts throughout the nineteenth century, although their painting style was basically close to the central Thai idiom. The tales depicted in this manuscript include Temi (fol. 1), Janaka (fol. 16), Sama (fol. 24) Mahosadha (fol. 33), Bhuridatta (fol. 37), Candakumara (fol. 40), Narada (fol. 50), and Vessantara (fol. 66). Illustrations fall on fols. 1, 16, 24, 32, 33, 37, 41, 51, 52, and 61.

While the manuscript probably dates from the beginning of the nineteenth century, the figure style and the solid color backgrounds derive from Ayutthaya-period painting of the eighteenth century. The border patterns, with geometric lozenges, are characteristic of a late eighteenth-century style in central Thailand. The illustrations are very simple in organization with figures on a plain background.



Abhidhammavarāṇapitaka

Folding book manuscript

Watercolor on paper in black lacquer covers

ca. 1800–40

Overall (folded): 66 × 137.8 cm

Acquired by Henry Walters (W.716)

This unusual manuscript with its fascinating illustrations suffered from moisture, insect, and rodent damage. The text is written in Cambodian Mul script in Pali, with some commentary in Thai. It was identified in 1938 in Horace Poleman's *Census of Indic Manuscripts in the United States and Canada* with the title *Abhidhammavarāṇapitaka*, a commentary on the Abhidhamma scriptures.

Sixteen pairs of paintings depict monks meditating on different stages of the decomposition of human corpses, ranging from swollen bloated bodies not long dead, to skeletons and dry bones. A few paintings depict lay people.

The study of corpses is a primary focus of Buddhist meditation, compellingly teaching the impermanence of our corporeal existence. While meditation on corpses is often included in illustrated Buddhist manuscripts, particularly Phra Malai manuscripts, it is here extensively treated in many scenes. The last opening depicts the lighting of a funeral pyre. The subjects include the following:

- Fol. 1: Two monks (left), two monks (right)
- Fol. 3: Men in the forest (left), monk with corpse (right)
- Fol. 4: Monk with bones (left), monk cutting a corpse with a knife (right)
- Fol. 5: Monk tests a corpse with a probe (left), lady with two men (right)
- Fol. 6: Cutting up a body, with some dogs (left), monk and skeleton (right)
- Fol. 7: Old couple and a younger woman (left), wrapped corpse (right)
- Fol. 8: Seated monk with corpse (left), corpse eaten by birds, labeled Vikhatiyam (right)
- Fol. 9: Seated monk in the forest with animal (left), corpse eaten by birds (right)
- Fol. 10: Two seated figures (left), standing monk with seated man (right)
- Fol. 11: Two men tending a fire (left), four seated musicians (right)



Detail of folio 11

- Fol. 15: Monk, woman, two men, and dog (left), nine demons around a cauldron filled with heads (right)
- Fol. 33: Man harvesting lotuses (left), man presenting lotuses to a standing monk (right)
- Fol. 49: Deva and man in front of a stupa (left), monk with lotuses and two men with feathered arms in a cloudy sky (right)
- Fol. 63: Devas and seated monk around a stupa (left), devas, including four musicians (right)
- Fol. 77: Kneeling woman with large blossoms and smaller kneeling figure (left), kneeling man with large blossoms and smaller kneeling figure (right)
- Fol. 94: Two seated monks (left), two seated monks (right).

The borders of the illustrations have geometric patterns of repeating x's and o's.

Treatise on Elephants

Pigment on paper; lacquer

ca. 1825

Overall (folded): 12.2 × 35.8 cm

Gift of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's

Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (W.893)

Published: N. Tingley, *Doris Duke: The Southeast Asian Collection* (New York, 2003), 66, pl. 42.

This manuscript is one of a group of Thai court manuscripts of fine quality that were produced during the first years of the Bangkok dynasty. These manuscripts illustrate a traditional court treatise describing elephants and probably continue a tradition of Thai elephant manuscripts extending back to the Ayutthaya period, although no examples from that period are known to survive.

An official at the Thai court was responsible for the Department of Elephants, which maintained royal elephants, mainly 'albinos' with light skin pigmentation, believed to ensure the prosperity of the kingdom. The production of elephant manuscripts was also his responsibility. Like other manuscripts in this group, the Walters elephant manual opens with a series of divine or mythic elephants with characteristics drawn from or based largely on Hindu mythology. The remainder of the elephant manuscript depicts a profuse variety of natural elephants, shown on plain backgrounds, or in natural forest settings. The accompanying text, in Thai verse, describes these elephants according to an elaborate typology that also relates to Indian manuscripts on elephants.

Three of the known surviving elephant treatises date to the second decade of the nineteenth century, including one in the Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin, dated to 1819. The group, as a whole, can reasonably be attributed to the period 1790–1850. The earliest of the known Thai elephant treatises (a late eighteenth-century work in the Hofer Collection at the Harvard University Art Museums) is somewhat larger in scale than this one.

Other notable examples are in the British Library, London, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, dated to 1816, and the National Library in Bangkok where there are several examples, one dated to 1815. The Chester Beatty manuscript is signed by three artists, which is unusual. A second elephant manuscript in the Chester Beatty Library appears to date from the end of the nineteenth century.

The Walters elephant manuscript is superbly illustrated in the finest style of Thai court painting. It is also unfinished, so the last section of the illustrations is progressively less complete in each succeeding painting, offering fascinating insights into the working methods of the artists. The Walters manuscript has no colophon, and it is not dated, which would be explained by its incomplete state. The text is written in yellow script on a red ground. Fols. 3–8 depict celestial elephants and devas; on fols. 9–52, two elephants are depicted in profile on the upper portion of each opening, with the text in the lower portion; the rest of the manuscript is unfinished, but many of the sketches appear to follow the same layouts as fols. 9–52.





Ten Birth Tales of the Buddha

(Abhidhamma scriptures)

Folding book manuscript

Pali text in Cambodian Mul script

ca. 1830

Overall (folded): 11.5 × 34.5 cm

Gift of the Mr. Yoshie Shinomoto, 1993 (W.830)

Only six of the ten tales appear in the manuscript, and one cover is missing, so it is probable that the manuscript is incomplete. The representation of each tale has been reduced to only two figures, one on each side of the illustrated page. This creates a shorthand version of the story, with fewer visual clues to the contents than usual.

The first illustration depicts two devas, as introductory figures, a common feature of Buddhist manuscripts in the nineteenth century. The story of Bhuridatta appears on fol. 6, Candakumara on fol. 13, a hermit on fol. 15, and a full-page opening at the end of the first side. A demon is below on the right, while a princely figure hovers above in the air. The subject of this full-page scene is uncertain, though it may illustrate the tale of Vidhura.



Phra Malai

Thai text in Cambodian Mul script,
with some Pali scripture excerpts

Folding book manuscript

B.E. 2476 (Year of the Monkey)/A.D. 1833

Pigments, ink, and gold on paper

Overall (folded): 7.5 × 68.5 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (W.895)

Published: N. Tingley, *Doris Duke: The Southeast
Asian Collection* (New York, 2003), 67, pl. 44

A Phra Malai manuscript of superb quality is illustrated
with these subjects:

Fol. 2: Two pairs of devas

Fol. 5: A man reciting from a manuscript

Fol. 25: Hell scene

Fol. 26: Lotus pond with wood cutter offering
lotus flowers to Phra Malai

Fol. 40: Worshipers in the sky

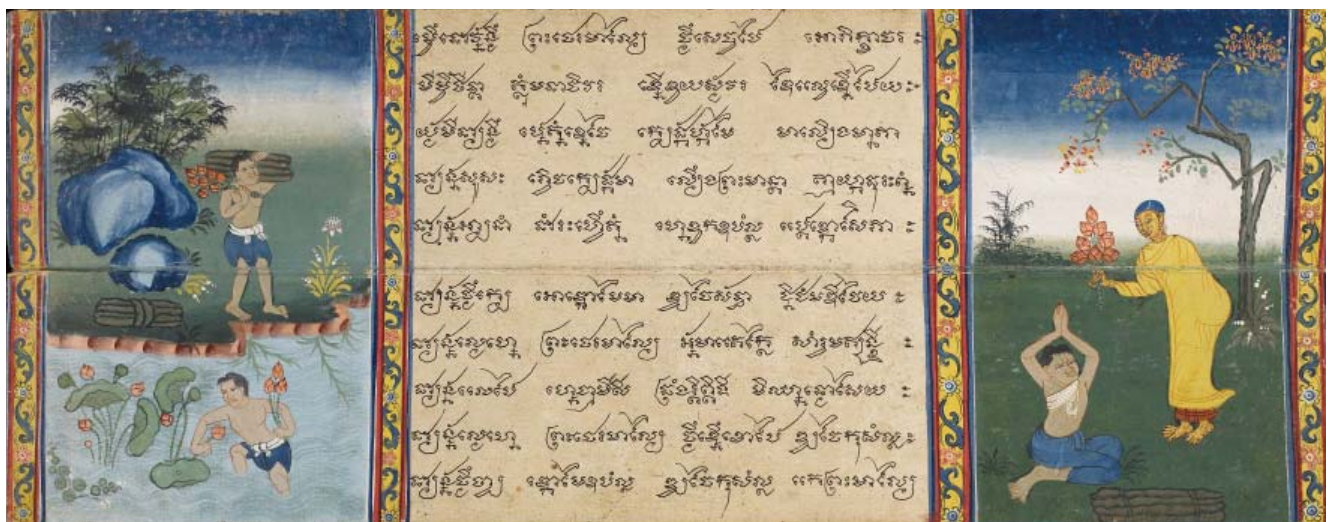
Fol. 41: Chulamani stupa in heaven

Fol. 60: Chulamani stupa with Indra
on the right

Fol. 76: The age of evil, with fighting

Fol. 77: Phra Malai with lay people.

The illustrations have yellow floral borders. The sponsor,
named Nai Khli, is mentioned three times in the course
of the text.



Folio 26

Hermits from Wat Pho

Folding book manuscript

Black lacquer covers, the front cover inscribed with the title in gold, in Thai Chrieng script; Thai verse and prose text written in Thai script in a court scribe's hand.

Dated Chula Era 1200/A.D. 1838

Overall (folded): 15.5 × 39 cm

Gift of Mr. Yoshie Shinomoto, 1993 (W.831)

In the 1830s eighty life-size sculptures made of tin and zinc were commissioned and cast at the royal temple of Wat Pho in Bangkok. The sculpted figures depicted hermits in exercise postures effective for the treatment of various ailments. Hermits (or rishis, from the Sanskrit word) in old Thai culture were credited with special powers achieved during their yogic practices. The eighty sculptures made for the temple were originally painted in naturalistic colors. Wat Pho was renovated and expanded by King Rama III, and the king made the temple into a center for traditional knowledge about subjects such as medicine, religion, literature, and astrology. The casting of the metal sculptures was a part of the medical program. Court poets, including the king, wrote verses to accompany each image, and these verses were inscribed on plaques placed behind each image. Very few of the sculptures survive, as they deteriorated and were eventually discarded. To accompany the casting of the images, the king also commissioned a number of manuscripts to

mark the event, so we have a good record of the hermits. This manuscript is a court product of superlative quality, and it survives in excellent condition. It depicts in one of the illustrations the Chinese craftsmen who produced the sculptures and names the court artists who produced the manuscript—the scribe named Khun Wisut Aksorn, and two painters, Khun Rocanamat and Muen Chamnan Rocana. Khun and Muen are lower-ranking court titles. Thai artists only rarely record their names on their work, though banner paintings are occasionally inscribed with the artist's name.

Beginning on folio 3, each of the eighty hermits is depicted in the upper half of the opening, with the text written below in gold on a red ground. Each hermit is sensitively painted, with a simple setting behind it, sometimes including animals, architecture, spiritual beings and other figures. Superbly painted borders, relating closely to textile patterns of the period, frame the illustrations and text.



Phra Malai

Folding book manuscript

Gold lacquer covers

Thai text in Cambodian Mul script,
with some Pali scripture excerpts.

ca. 1840–60

Overall (folded): 10.4 × cm 60.8

Gift of Martha and Earl Galleher in memory of
her uncle, James H. W. Thompson, 1991 (W.819)

Phra Malai manuscripts recount and illustrate the history of the monk Phra Malai, who traveled to heaven and hell, thanks to supernatural powers he acquired through meditation. He returned to earth to preach about what he had seen. In heaven he conversed with the god Indra and saw Maitreya, the Buddha of the future. Phra Malai manuscripts were produced in large numbers beginning in the late eighteenth century. The reason for the growing popularity of this subject during the early Bangkok period has not yet been adequately explained.

This superb example includes most of the conventional subjects depicted in a Phra Malai manuscript:

Fol. 2: The gods Brahma and Indra

Fol. 5: Phra Malai with fan (left), supplicants in hell (right)

Fol. 25: A supplicant present lotuses to Phra Malai (left), a supplicant picking lotuses from a lotus pond (right)

Fol. 43: Chulamani stupa in heaven (left), seated monk with fan and two kneeling figures with food (right)

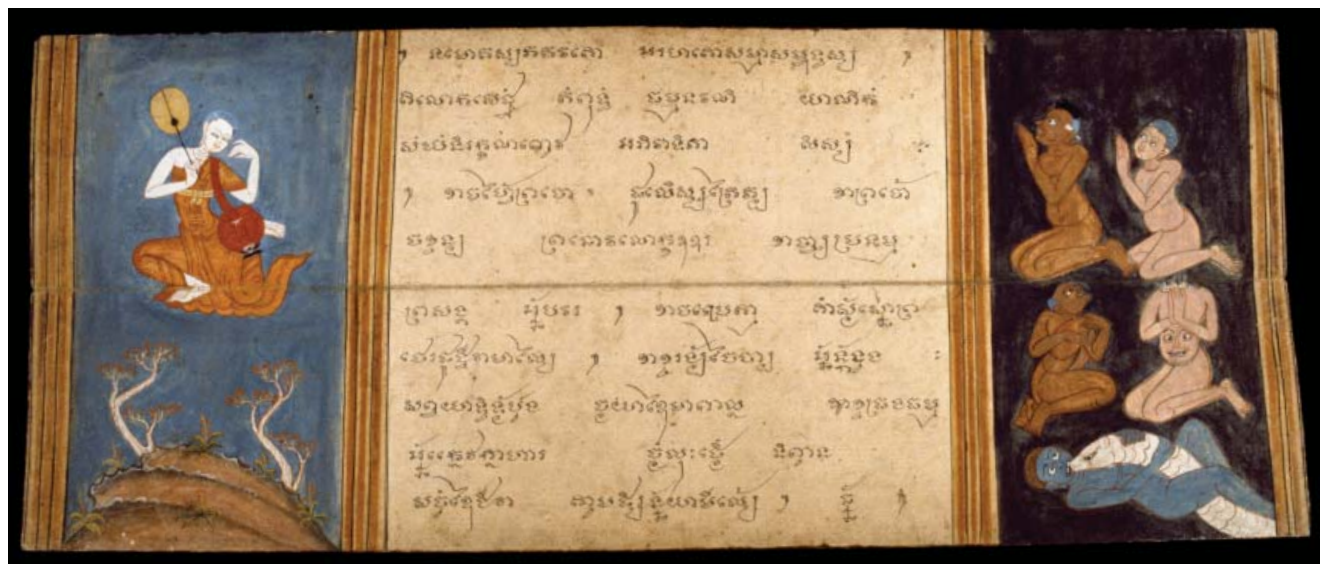
Fol. 58: Two male devas (left), one male and two female devas (right)

Fol. 72: Meditation in a cave (left), three figures by a house (right)

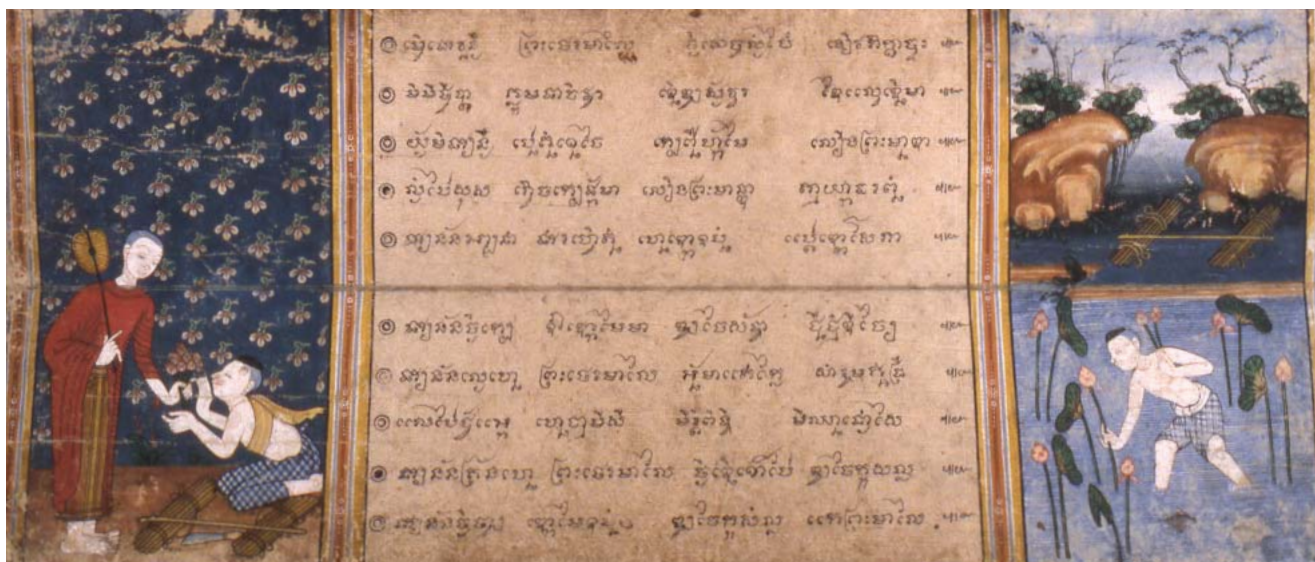
Fol. 84: Phra Malai pointing to a stupa with a green deva (left), one male and three female devas (right)

Fol. 93: Reclining monk and two monks praying (left), man and woman in landscape with animals (right).

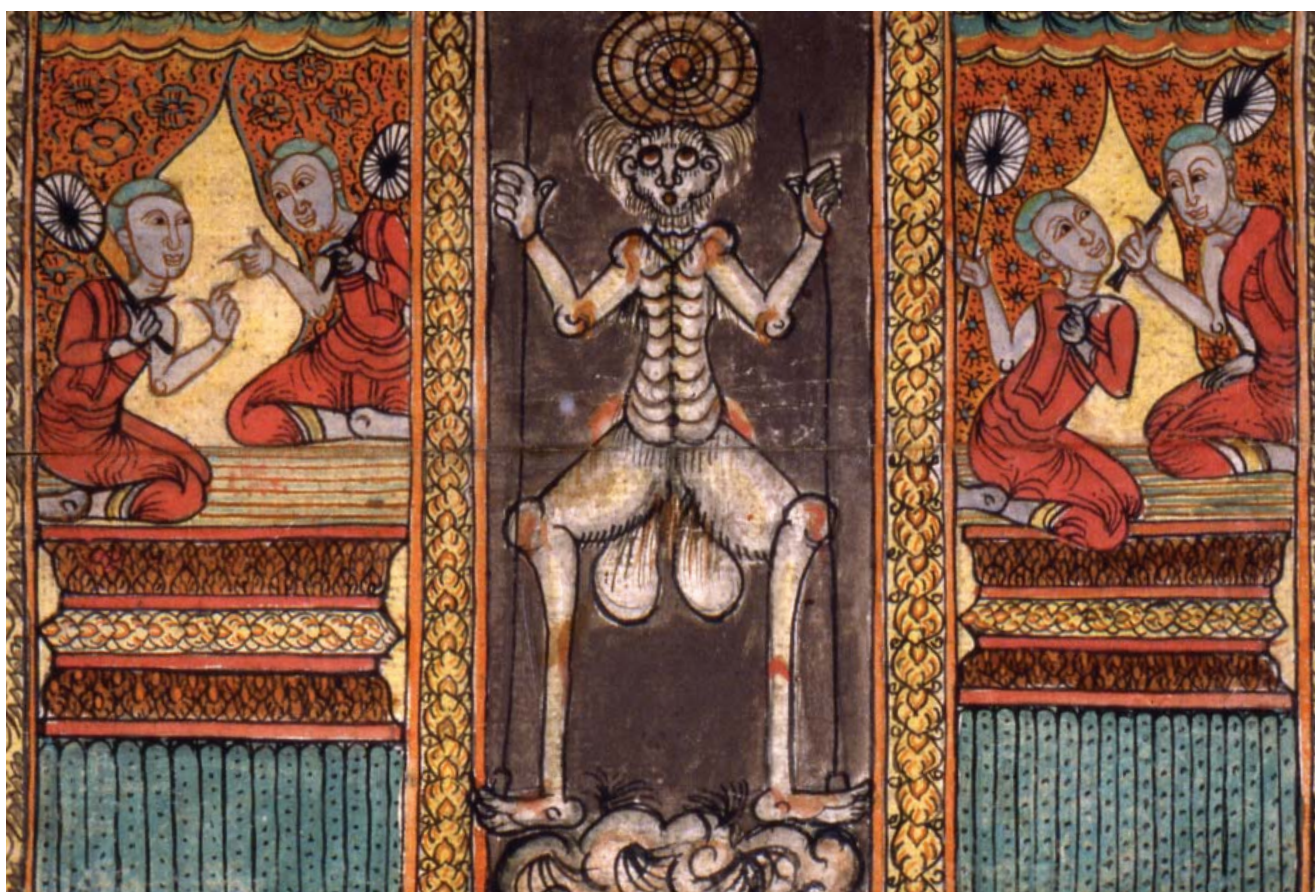
There are striped borders on the illustrations in red and yellow. A colophon at the end of the text names the donors: Nang Khli and Nai Pho.



Folio 5



W.824: folio 27



W.820: folio 42

Phra Malai

Folding book manuscript

Pigment on paper, black lacquer cover

ca. 1840–70

Overall (folded): 14 × 67.5 cm

Gift of Mr. Yoshie Shinomoto, 1993 (W. 824)

A Phra Malai manuscript of average quality, in poor condition due to extensive rubbing. The illustrations that are included here are the usual ones in a Phra Malai manuscript—a hell scene, a corpse, picking lotuses to give Phra Malai to carry to heaven, the Chulamani stupa in heaven, and hovering angels.

The illustrations are arranged in pairs, with one on each end of the illustrated folios:

- Fol. 1: White heavenly being (left), green heavenly being (right)
- Fol. 8: A man with a spear and a dog attack a man climbing a tree; a woman is in the tree branches and another woman is suspended by her ankles from the tree, a pot of skulls is next to the tree (left), a monk with a fan (Phra Malai?) hovers above four demons (right)
- Fol. 27: A man presents lotuses to Phra Malai (left), a man gathers lotuses (right)
- Fol. 41: Heavenly beings, a male hovering above two females kneeling in clouds (left), heavenly beings, a male hovering above three females kneeling in clouds (right)
- Fol. 61: Phra Malai and two heavenly beings at Chulamani stupa in heaven (left), heavenly beings, a male hovering above three females kneeling in clouds (right)
- Fol. 77: Two seated men with a corpse (left), four men gather objects from a tree (right).

Pali scriptures

Folding book manuscript; one cover missing

ca. 1840–1870

Overall (folded): 11.5 × 35 cm

Gift of Martha and Earl Galleher in memory of her uncle, James H. W. Thompson, 1991 (W.820)

The illustrations in this unsophisticated but very exuberant manuscript, with a text in Cambodian Mul script, are most unusual. In one large illustration four monks bearing fans are seated on either side of a ghoul with huge testicles and a strange circular object on his head. Another scene depicts a monk in a cave, a corpse outside, birds, a tree and a small pavilion. In a further scene a furious elephant is throwing off its rider. In another a man shoots a tiger. The last folio contains a tree, bird and a house on the left. The meaning of these curious illustrations is obscure.

Phra Malai

Folding book manuscript

Thai text in Cambodian Mul script,
with some Pali scripture excerpts

ca. 1860–80

Overall (folded): 13.5 × 66.7 cm

Gift of Mr. Yoshie Shinomoto, 1993 (W.832)

The illustrations include:

Fol. 1: Phra Malai in a landscape, with a corpse
(damaged)

Fol. 2: Indra and Brahma on an orange
ground (damaged)

Fol. 5: Hell scenes

Fol. 22: Heavenly being on top of a kala
head (left), a green demon (right)

Fol. 23: Lotus scene (very rubbed)

Fol. 39: Old man and girl

Fol. 40: Nineteen naked boys pulling a dark-
skinned mendicant

Fol. 41: Two seated figures with a stupa.

Fol. 55: Man with bow and dog (left); Jujaka (right)

Fol. 71: A hermit points the way to Vessantara's
forest dwelling

Fol. 72: Two heavenly beings.



Folio 22



Folio 40

Phra Malai

Thai text in Cambodian Mul script,
with some Pali scripture excerpts

Folding book manuscript

Pigments on paper

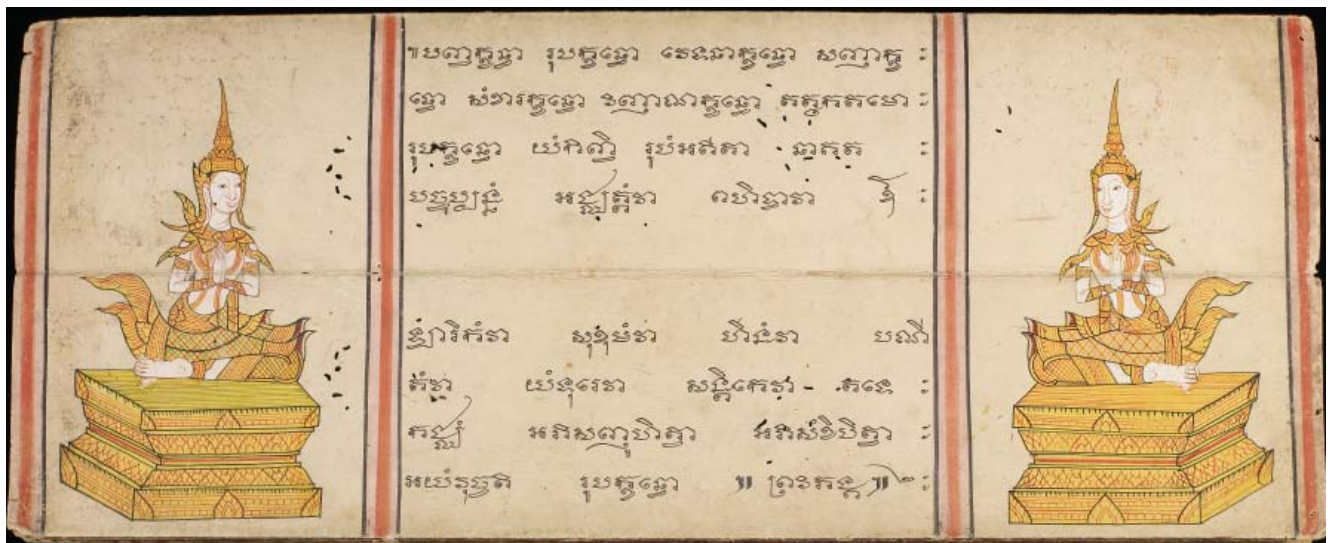
ca. 1860–80

Overall (folded): 13.7 × 68 cm

Gift of Mr. Yoshie Shinomoto, 1993 (W.833)

The illustrations are:

- Fols. 2, 4–11: Pairs of devas, one on left and one
right side of page
- Fol. 31: Food on left, preaching on right
- Fol. 32: Lotus scene
- Fol. 46: Heavenly beings paying homage to
Phra Malai
- Fol. 47: Food (left), sexual(?) scene (right)
- Fol. 65: Hell scene
- Fol. 66: The age of evil with people fighting
- Fol. 81: Corpses, four men and a woman;
house and eight figures on the right,
one with a knife
- Fol. 82: Monk and corpse.



Folio 5

Phra Malai

Thai text in Cambodian Mul script,
with some Pali scripture excerpts

Folding book manuscript

Pigments and gold on paper

ca. 1880–1900

Overall (folded): 14.5 × 68 cm

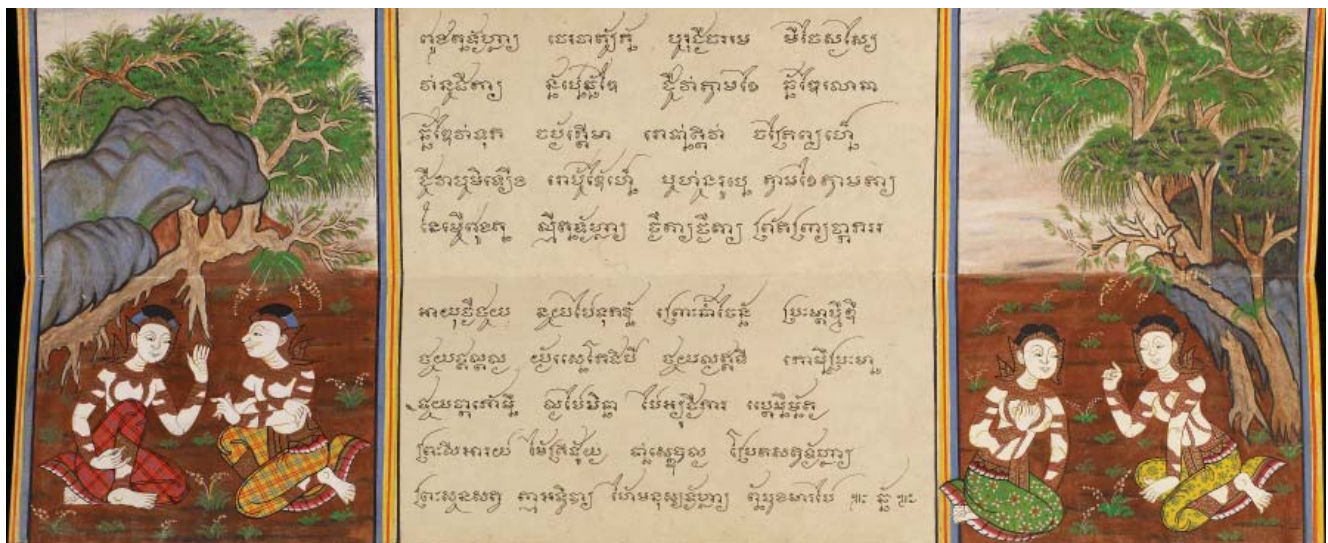
The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's Southeast
Asian Art Collection, 2002 (W.894)

A Phra Malai manuscript of very fine quality, containing
the following in green- and red-striped borders:

- Fol. 1: Monks paying respect
- Fol. 2: Heavenly beings on a blue ground
- Fol. 5: Hermits
- Fol. 6: Devas on blue ground
- Fol. 24: Food offerings with supplicants (right)
- Fol. 25: Picking lotus blooms to present
to Phra Malai
- Fol. 39: Male devas with lotuses (right),
female devas with lotuses (left)
- Fol. 57: An assembly of devas, with Phra
Malai and Indra at the Chulamani
stupa in heaven
- Fol. 73: An unidentified subject, with two
girls and two boys in a wood.



Detail of folio 57



Folio 73

Extracts from Abhidhamma Buddhist scriptures

Folding book

Text in Pali written in Cambodian Mul script

ca. 1880–1900

Overall (folded): 14 × 38 cm

Gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's
Southeast Asian Art Collection, 2002 (W.892)

This very refined manuscript includes fourteen openings, richly illustrated with pairs of heavenly beings on the left and right sides of the page. The elaborate clothing and adornments are beautifully executed. The illustrations are on fols. 3, 5, 7, 9, 13, 23, 33, 34, 47, 65, 66, 69, 74, and 75. The painting style is typical of the most elegant work of the late nineteenth century. The illustrations have striped border of red with blue on either side. The illustrations have striped border of red with blue on either side. An index on fol. 79 lists nine Pali texts that are included in the manuscript.





W.822: Detail of folio 4

Medical divination text

Folding book manuscript; black covers, with some gold adhering to surface

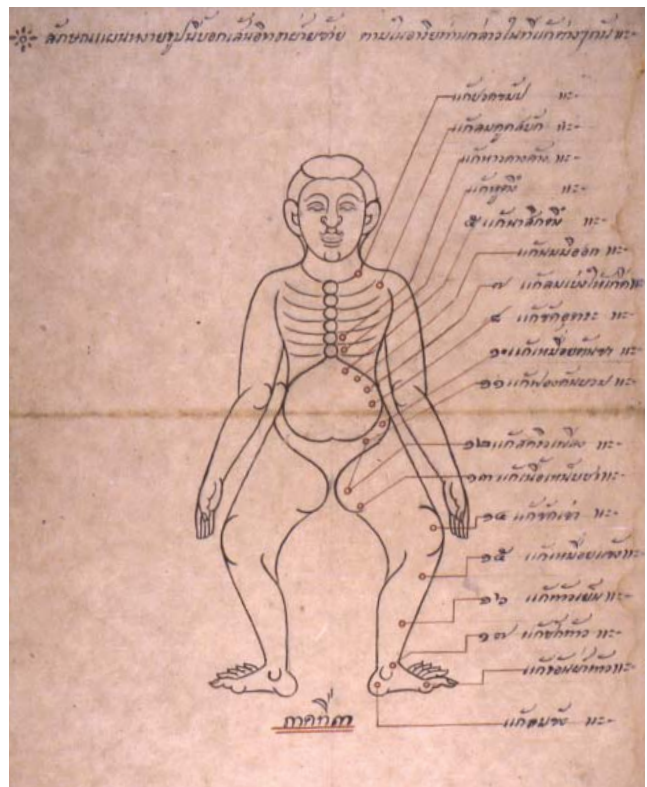
ca. 1880–1910

Overall (folded): 12.5 × 37.1 cm

Gift of Martha and Earl Galleher in memory of her uncle, James H. W. Thompson, 1991 (W.822)

Each of the eighteen illustrated openings of this manuscript is painted with a large mascot figure (fols. 3–20). The mascots accompany the medical interpretation of symptoms that are described in the text, composed in Thai written in Thai script. Each mascot is handsomely painted in a striking and dramatic dance posture. The last of the figures has been half torn off. The second side of the manuscript has text only and no illustrations.

Henry Ginsberg (d. 2007) was curator of the Thai and Cambodian collections at the British Library. Dr. Ginsberg was the author of Thai Manuscript Painting (Hawaii, 1989), a subject on which he was a leading authority. The text of this article was substantially completed before Dr. Ginsberg's death, and appears here with minor corrections.



W.826: folio 5

Medical Text

Folding book manuscript

B.E. 2475 (Year of the Goat)/A.D. 1919

Overall (folded): 23.7 × 37.3 cm

Gift of Mr. Yoshie Shinomoto, 1993 (W.826)

The modern form of Thai script used in this manuscript gives a clear indication of its production in the twentieth century. The colophon also states that it was written by the monk Phrakhrū Samuhawet of of Wat Suthat in Bangkok. The illustrations depict points on the human body for use in determining illnesses and the treatment of illnesses.

Fol. 1: Three monstrous figures in a landscape

Fol. 3–15, Diagrams of the human body, frontal

18–30: Views (odd numbered folios) alternating with rear views

Fol. 31: Incomplete drawing of one half (right side) of a headdress, perhaps a later addition.

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS: © 2002 The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, New York: 35.228–31, 35.234, 35.236–8, 35.240–1, 35.244–5, 35.247–8, 35.250, 35.253–5, 35.257, 35.259–63, 35.267–8, 35.270, 35.274, 35.277–82, 35.284–5; Walters Art Museum, Susan Tobin: 35.118–21, 35.143, 35.184, 35.299–300, W.716, W.819–20, W.822, W.824–26, W.830–3, W.893–5; Walters Art Museum, Hiram W. Woodward, Jr.: 35.185–7, 35.257 detail.

The *Bun Phra Wet* Painted Scrolls of Northeastern Thailand in the Walters Art Museum

LEEDOM LEFFERTS

The gift to the Walters Art Museum from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation of three of four scroll paintings illustrating the *Vessantara Jataka* acquired by Miss Duke as part of her collection of Thai art and artifacts is an inestimable contribution to the museum's collection.¹ These scroll paintings—the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco owns the fourth—may be the only examples of this art form in U.S. art museums. To my knowledge, only one such scroll painting is preserved in a Thai museum, in the Ubon Rachathani branch of the national museum system (formally named the Ubon National Museum).²

It is unfortunate but symptomatic of the widespread neglect of folk art that such important paintings remain relatively unknown. Even today, almost every village temple in northeastern Thailand owns at least one of these scrolls, rendered in ink and mineral (or synthetic) pigments on cotton muslin. Because of the wear and tear these paintings suffer during their annual use, they must be replaced every few years. Even a scroll in fairly good condition may be replaced with a newer one, since the donation of these paintings is one of the ways by which devout members of a Buddhist temple congregation “make merit.” Over the thirty-five years that I have attended the ceremonies of one temple in northeastern Thailand, I have recorded the successive use of four different scrolls. As new ones are donated, older ones are set aside and eventually discarded, usually by burning. The periodic renewal of the scrolls, while understandable, deprives succeeding generations of the opportunity to appreciate the color, composition, and configurations by which past generations viewed and conceived a story that remains central to Theravada Buddhism.³

Scroll paintings preserve in visual form a story that is read or recited annually in every Thai temple. In mainland Southeast Asia, the scroll form is distinctive to northeastern Thailand and lowland Laos, across the

Mekong River; in central Thailand sets of individual paintings, on cloth or wood, accompany recitations of the *Vessantara Jataka*.⁴ In northeastern Thailand and Laos, the *Vessantara Jataka* is usually recited during the fourth lunar month (February–March), after the harvest and before the heat of summer (April–June). In the kingdom's central plains, the story is recited in the twelfth lunar month (mid-October–mid-November), following the end of the Theravada Buddhist Rains Retreat.

Northeastern Thailand and lowland Laos are inhabited primarily by speakers of Lao (in the Kingdom of Thailand, Thai-Lao) who once formed a single ethnic group, but now are separated by the Mekong River. The area is known geographically as the Khorat Plateau, a gently undulating landscape cut by a few rivers. Growing their crops of wet-rice in paddy fields, the Thai-Lao and Lao depend on annual monsoonal rains, which generally fall from June through September. During the period following the rice harvest, from January through May, the region's farmers engage in supplementary employment, such as taxi-driving and construction work in Bangkok and elsewhere; it is also an opportunity to restore kin- and friendship ties.⁵ Most villages comprise a number of related households and a temple complex, or *wat*, in which monks and novices reside. The annual festival of the *Bun Phra Wet* draws on the distinctions between the area outside the village, the collection of houses in which the villagers live, and the *wat* to define the landscape in which the re-creation of the *Vessantara Jataka* takes place. This essay focuses on events in a single northeastern Thai village; however, research conducted throughout the area and in Laos generally confirms these findings.⁶

In each village, temple and village committees organize and manage an extravagant annual festival called *Bun Phra Wet* (Thai, Lao: *Bun*, merit-making; *Phra*, monks, royalty; *Wet*, short for *Wetsandaun*, *Vessantara*).

Village residents devote considerable time to making baskets and thousands of other requisite objects to celebrate the event. For many, the festival is a homecoming: the dispatch of messages (nowadays most often effected through cell phones) ensures that villagers residing and working in distant places are informed of the dates so that they can return. Often returning villagers bring friends and coworkers to participate in the festival—the most important merit-making event of the ritual calendar—to make new friends, and, for the unmarried, to meet eligible partners. This celebration of the penultimate birth of the Buddha provides a focus by which members of a village establish their own importance as merit-makers and the importance of their village on the local, regional and, increasingly, on the national landscape as a meritorious community drawing in sponsors from Bangkok and elsewhere in the kingdom. While this ceremony has been treated in some detail by various observers, those commentaries usually focus on the textual aspects of the event; the scrolls themselves and their role in the ceremony remain largely unexamined.⁷

THE *VESSANTARA JATAKA*

The *Vessantara Jataka* (Thai, Lao: *Maha Wetsandaun Chaadok*), the birth story of Prince Vessantara, recounts the life of the prince whose good karma, amassed over more than five hundred previous lives, will be reborn as the Buddha. These birth stories, or *jataka*, came into the Theravada Buddhist canon as South Asian tales purportedly told by the Buddha to explain how, in past lives, his karma acquired sufficient merit so that it could be reborn as Siddhārtha Gautama, who would become the Buddha, the Enlightened One.

The tale provides a charter for many activities. It stresses the Buddhist ideal of perfect generosity (giving without thought of self) intertwined with giving in the context of the family, resulting in the donor's inheriting the kingdom. A contrasting subplot, the story of the Brahmin Chuchok, graphically illustrates the reward of immoderate consumption. Finally, the tale provides ways for the members of a community to celebrate themselves as participants in the success of the perfect donor and their community. The *Vessantara Jataka* as recited in the Thai context is composed of thirteen chapters (*kan*) of varying length, totaling a thousand stanzas (*khaathaa*) (see table 1).

The tale begins with Sakka, the king of the gods, offering his wife, Phusatti, about to be reborn, ten wishes. Among others, she asks that she give birth to “a child who will become a generous and respected king.”⁸ She

TABLE 1: THE COMPOSITION OF THE *VESSANTARA JATAKA*

<i>KAN</i>	ROMAN- IZED TITLE	TRANSLATION	NUMBER OF <i>KHAATHAA</i>
1	<i>Thotsaphaun</i>	Ten Blessings	19
2	<i>Himaphaan</i>	Himalayan Forest	134
3	<i>Thaannakan</i>	Donations	209
4	<i>Wan Phrawet</i>	Entrance into the Jungle	57
5	<i>Chuuchok</i>	The Brahmin	79
6	<i>Chulaphon</i>	Sparse Forest	35
7	<i>Mahaaphon</i>	Thick Forest	80
8	<i>Kumaan</i>	The Children	101
9	<i>Matrii</i>	Maddi (Vessantara's wife)	90
10	<i>Sakkabap</i>	Indra's Words	43
11	<i>Mahaaraat</i>	The Great King	69
12	<i>Chaukrasat</i>	The Six Royals	36
13	<i>Nakonakan</i>	Return to the Kingdom	48
Total number of <i>khaathaa</i> :			1,000

NOTE: After G. E. Gerini, *Retrospective View and Account of the Origin of the Thet Maha Ch'at Ceremony* (Bangkok, 1892), 19.

is granted these wishes, is reborn a princess, and marries King Sanjaya of Sivi. After a ten-month pregnancy, while traveling in the city, Phusatti gives birth to a son in Vessantara (merchant) Street. When he is twenty, Prince Vessantara marries Princess Maddi, from the country of Ceta, and fathers two children: a son named Chaalii and a daughter, Khanhaa.

Eight Brahmins from the drought-ridden country of Kalinga come to Sivi to ask for a white elephant, known for bringing rain, that belongs to Vessantara. Vessantara gives away the elephant, to the great distress of the residents of Sivi. They complain to the king, who orders Vessantara into exile. As he and his family leave Sivi for the Himalayan forest, Vessantara gives away all his possessions—seven hundred objects in every category—to the kingdom's people. Another group of Brahmins approaches Vessantara and asks for the two horses pulling his chariot. He gives these away, and they are replaced by two stags (angels in disguise). Further on, another Brahmin asks for the chariot; Vessantara gives this away, and the royal couple proceeds onward on foot, carrying their two children. The family arrives in Ceta and the king, Maddi's father, asks them to stay; after seven days they continue on their way. They eventually

reach two hermitages in the forest built by the gods for Vessantara and his wife and children, where Vessantara can meditate while his wife gathers food for the family.

Meanwhile, an elderly Brahmin in Kalinga, Chuchok, marries a beautiful young girl, Amitthida. Other women tease Amitthida for marrying an old man with no servants; she in turn nags Chuchok mercilessly until he sets out to secure Vessantara's two children as servants for his wife. He goes into the Himalayan forest where he meets a hunter, Cetaputta (from the country of Ceta), who first threatens him then points the way to Vessantara's hermitage. Chuchok continues and meets a hermit, Acchuta, who, after first doubting his story, also directs him onward. Chuchok eventually arrives at Vessantara's hermitage when Maddi is away and asks for the two children. The prince willingly grants the request; Chuchok binds the children's hands with rope and leads them away. When he stumbles, the children escape and return to hide in the pond in front of Vessantara's hermitage. Chuchok accuses Vessantara of renegeing on his gift, an accusation that Vessantara counters by calling his children out of the pond and commanding them to go with Chuchok.

In the meantime, so that Vessantara can fulfill his quest for perfect generosity, Maddi has been detained in the forest by gods, disguised as three fearsome wild animals. She is finally released and returns to the hermitages. She searches for hours for the children and, not finding them, asks Vessantara of their whereabouts. When he does not answer, she faints; Vessantara takes her head in his lap and pours water on her to revive her. When she revives, he tells her what happened while she was gone and "exhort[s] her to repress her grief and put her heart at peace, as immense merit would accrue to her also from that act of supreme abnegation."⁹ Maddi recovers and consents to Vessantara's gift of their children to Chuchok. Shortly thereafter, Vessantara's generosity is put to the final test when another Brahmin (the god Indra in disguise) appears and asks Vessantara for Maddi, a request to which the prince again willingly accedes. As Indra walks away with Maddi, he announces that Vessantara, in giving away all his possessions and all those dearest to him, has fulfilled his destiny of perfect generosity and returns Maddi to him.

Chuchok, leading the two children by a rope, finds his way to the kingdom of Sivi. Vessantara's father, King Sanjaya, recognizes the two children and buys them from Chuchok for an extravagant amount of money and jewels. While the grandparents and grandchildren are reunited, Chuchok uses his newfound wealth to engage in a celebratory orgy—he overeats to such an extent that

his stomach explodes. The citizens of Sivi celebrate his death by using the food prepared for him to hold his funeral. Then, accompanied by the citizens of Sivi, the grandparents and grandchildren go to the Himalayan forest and reconcile themselves with their son and daughter-in-law, father and mother. Accompanied by the welcoming citizens of the kingdom, the six royals—King Sanjaya and Queen Phusatti, Prince Vessantara and Princess Maddi, and Chaalii and Khanhaa—return to Sivi, where a great festival ensues.

CELEBRATING THE *VESSANTARA JATAKA*

In northeastern Thailand the *Vessantara Jataka* is illustrated on a cotton cloth scroll, 20 to 40 meters long by 1 meter high, that is carried in procession into the meeting hall (*sala*) of the village temple and displayed there for the duration of the *Bun Phra Wet*. The scroll's display is in part didactic: it illustrates the virtue of perfect generosity that leads to karmic success and the types of behavior that lead to excess, dissolution, and death. The scroll thus constitutes a material, exoteric counterpart to the monks' transient, esoteric reading and recitation. The dynamic interaction between the text, its recitation, and the pictorial representation is made manifest in the laity's unrolling of the scroll, bringing it into the village and the temple compound in procession, and hanging it in the temple's meeting hall.

The scroll has meaning beyond its immediate function of visually recounting the *Vessantara Jataka*. The act of carrying the scroll into the village and placing it in the meeting hall, which has been decorated and defined as sacred space, brings Prince Vessantara to the recitation, imbuing this location with his presence to commemorate the life of the individual who will be reborn as the Buddha.¹⁰ The scroll itself becomes the prince and his family, invited by the villagers and guided by them from the forest to which they had been exiled into this village, transformed into a city (*muang*), and into the *wat*, transformed into a palace (*wang*). In other words, the scroll provides continuing visual evidence for a core mystery of Buddhism: the means by which a blessed person can achieve merit in order to be reborn as enlightened and assist in the salvation of others.¹¹

THE PAINTING AND ITS CONTEXT

Consideration of the scrolls in their own right, rather than simply as illustrations of the text recited by the monks, sheds light on their meaning. While all the *Phra Wet* painted scrolls that I have examined contain

inscriptions, the scrolls also contain a wealth of visual data that elaborate on the recitation. In other words, while *Phra Wet* scrolls are narrative, because of their visual nature and because of their role in bringing Prince Vessantara and his family to the ceremony, their impact is beyond mere narration.¹²

The text of the *Vessantara Jataka* is made meaningful to speakers and listeners by its annual reading or recitation and commentaries upon it. Similarly, the scroll makes manifest the story that is the focus of the festival and serves as a backdrop so that listeners can make constant reference to the story's important events.

While scrolls follow the chronology of the *Vessantara Jataka*, they elaborate and comment not only on the text but also on the lives of the people who look at the pictures and listen to the recitation. The images on the scroll sometimes depict dress and behavior that are familiar from everyday village life or known to villagers from other stories. As with other forms of Thai paintings, scrolls seek to elicit interactions between the painters, the viewers, and the figures represented. Sandra Cate has pointed out these dynamics in the recently painted murals of the Royal Thai Temple in the London suburb of Wimbledon.¹³ This essay's discussion of the painted scrolls shows that the same kinds of interactions and recourse to multiple interpretations are necessary in order to understand the continuing power of these scrolls.

The scrolls depict the sequence of thirteen sections in a mysterious drama; they also provide a means for this drama to become present in the daily lives of the people. This is not "just" art on a wall, but art that moves in procession and inspires individuals to recognize possible goals as it brings the potential for redemptive action to each person.

A scroll commences its dynamic role and reaches fruition in two short days annually as a community mounts its *Bun Phra Wet*. The movement of this scroll through the community and its subsequent presence as a constant backdrop to the recitation defines the festival. The *Bun Phra Wet* requires extensive planning: the temple and village committees agree on a date a month or more in advance and discuss the amount of monetary assessment to be levied on each household; a contract is signed with one or more performing groups; and the lay head of the *wat* committee (*tayok wat*) contacts monks from outside the community and invites them to participate. At least two weeks before the festival, specific groups of people begin to prepare the requisite accouterments: elderly men weave bamboo baskets; elderly women prepare a thousand betel nut chews, a thousand hand-rolled cigarettes,

a thousand balls of rice, and other prescribed items. The *tayok wat* pulls out of storage the nine long flags that are flown in the *wat* and locates the bamboo poles that hold them. As recently as thirty years ago, men of the village constructed wooden platforms for *Bun Phra Wet* performances and other events; today performers bring their own stages, loud-speaker systems, and curtains. Central to the festival are three ways by which the temple makes money: raffling objects donated by villagers, merchants, and others (*soi daaw*, drawing stars); selling gold leaf to provide opportunities for attendees to perform the merit-making act of applying it to a statue of the Buddha (*tit thong Phra Phut*); and soliciting donations of money for a specific undertaking on behalf of the temple, such as fixing the roof or buying equipment, usually by collecting change in monks' alms bowls (*saay baat*).

As the day of the festival nears, the temple grounds acquire a festive air: the nine flags are raised, one at each of eight points around the *sala* and the ninth near the *wat*'s entrance gate; bamboo stands are erected at the base of each flagpole; display stands are put out to hold the goods to be raffled; the *sala* is cleaned; and the scroll that begins the ceremony is unpacked. Attendees at a service prior to the festival draw names (*yok chalaat*) of those responsible for inviting monks and important people in neighboring villages to the *Bun Phra Wet*. Villagers also vie to sponsor parts of the service.

The *Bun Phra Wet* is also designated as the annual festival for each village, *Bun Pracham Pii*, and in this way becomes a celebration of the village itself. It is a major occasion during which villagers extend invitations to relatives, friends, work associates, and acquaintances to visit and see the village at its best (fig. 1). Houses are cleaned and special foods prepared, especially *khaaw tom*, a sweet made of sticky rice around a core, such as bananas, wrapped in a banana leaf. Gifting of these sweets to visitors is an indication of the generosity of a household. Often guests arrive with small bags of uncooked rice or other gifts, for which *khaaw tom* is given in exchange.

Within the *sala* a floor plan specific to the festival is laid out. A large rectangular space in the center is defined under a scaffold that supports a narrow platform, *haan Phra Phut*, attached to the four central pillars of the hall. The *haan Phra Phut* demarcates a boundary (*khēt parimonthon*) within which things are sacred (*sak sit*); Mara, the devil (*Phra Yaa Maan*) cannot enter (*khaw bau day*). The scaffold and platform are usually permanent structures in the *sala*. Special decorations are prepared and hung from the platform. Many of the



Fig. 1. Village Temple Gate, with a sign, in Thai: “Nay Ngaan Thesakaan Phrachampii— P.S. 2515—Yin Dii Thaun Rap Thuk Thaan” (To the annual village festival—B.E. 2515 [C.E. 1972]—All people are welcome)

decorations, such as bamboo models of birds and flowers, allude to the forest in which Vessantara and his family reside during their exile. Other items, such as long, dangling strings to which grains of uncooked white rice are glued, are said to be solely decorative. On the day before the festival, each household prepares or commissions a plate on which two conical structures made of banana leaves (*khan maak beng*), thirteen pairs of small flowers and incense sticks (*khan haa* and *khan baet*) and two long candles are arranged.¹⁴ These plates of offerings are placed on the *haan Phra Phut* and define the sacred space within the *khet parimonthon* as the space in which the community comes together.

Two tubs half-filled with water are placed in the center of the bounded area (fig. 2). One tub, called *sra bookkaaranii*, holds a turtle, fish, and other creatures, as well as lotuses, swamp plants, and mud taken from a nearby pond. It represents the pond in which Vessantara’s two children hide after escaping from Chuchok’s clutches until Vessantara commands them to leave with Chuchok, and alludes to the trials that the royal family undergoes so that Vessantara may succeed in his quest for perfect generosity. The other tub, called *ang nammon*, produces sacred water when candles are burned over it during the recitation of the *Vessantara Jataka*. At the festival’s conclusion, householders dip pitchers and bottles into this water to take home and use while bathing so that they will be assured of good health.

Four preaching chairs are brought out and placed at the four corners of this space. Alternatively, a single canopied pulpit is used. At the four corners of the pulpit space are tied a banana tree (*ton kluey*), sugar cane stalk



Fig. 2. *Sra bookkaaranii* and *ang nammon* in the central sacred area of the *sala* with sponsors of a recitation, 12 March 2005

(*ton oy*), coconuts (*mak phraw*), and wooden flowers. One villager explained that banana trees and sugar cane, both of which grow rapidly, are planted by the citizens of Sivi to guide Prince Vessantara and his family back home from the forest. The return of Vessantara and his family to this home—the city and the palace—is a core meaning of the festival, established by the villagers as they carry the scroll from their rice fields to the temple.

The first day of the festival, when guests and relatives arrive at the village, is called the day for coming together (*muu hoom*).¹⁵ In the morning the *tayok wat* and laity assemble in the *sala wat* to invite Phra Uppakut, the festival’s guardian, to emerge from a water source and take his place in the *sala* overlooking the sacred space that has been set up in its center.¹⁶ Preparations continue while visitors and relatives arrive at the community’s households, to be welcomed and feted. However, this is a liminal period; the event that begins the festival in the afternoon is the invitation to Vessantara and his family to return from their exile and take up residence in the meeting hall.

As the day begins to cool, monks, older women carrying flowers, laymen and laywomen, the men of the village drum ensemble, and the *tayok wat*, who brings the rolled scroll, make their way to a predetermined spot outside the village, near a water source (an allusion to the pond near the hermitage). There, with monks and audience sitting on mats, the usual Buddhist service begins, with the invocation of the Triple Gems and the receipt of the Five Precepts by the laity. The rolled scroll is placed on a tray with flowers, two candles are lit, and the *tayok wat* gives a short recitation, inviting Vessantara to return



Fig. 3. A rolled *Phra Wet* scroll on a tray with candles, during the ceremony welcoming Prince Vessantara into the village, 8 April 2006

to the village (fig. 3).¹⁷ The monks and the audience rise, unroll the scroll, and form the procession in which the scroll brings Vessantara and his family back to the village, now become a city.¹⁸

The procession is described, in Thai-Lao and Lao, as welcoming Phra Wet and his family (*soen Phra Wet*; Thai: *choen*) back to the kingdom (*khaw nay muang*), from which they were exiled. The humble community in which the villagers live their daily lives is reconceptualized as a major city (*muang*), vibrant and important, and its modest local *wat* becomes the palace of a king who in his next life will be reborn as a Buddha. Usually a row of Thai national and Buddhist flags, the latter bearing the symbol of the wheel of the law, lines the main street on which the procession enters the village. The long banner that hangs near the *wat* gate welcomes the family and signifies that this is the end of Vessantara's exile. Members of the procession hold up the scroll for all to see as they walk into the village; householders put out buckets of clean water so that members of the procession can drink and throw water on each other in celebration (and to cool themselves) following their long walk from the forest. Sometimes a villager has enough money to hire elephants and important members of the community dress up as Sanjaya, king of Sivi, Queen Pursatti, the mother of Vessantara, Prince Vessantara, and his wife, Maddi, and make their grand entrance seated on these elephants. Vessantara and Maddi's two children sometimes appear tied to the wicked Brahmin Chuchok, who carries a stick with which to beat them. The procession thus duplicates major episodes represented in the painted scroll while juxtaposing temporally different

sections of the story. Villagers dance to the lively music of drums, cymbals, and mouth organs (*kaen*) in celebration of their success in welcoming Phra Wet.¹⁹

When the procession arrives at the temple, it circles the *sala* clockwise three times (fig. 4), a standard ceremonial gesture when approaching or entering an important Buddhist structure. The villagers holding the scroll enter the *sala* and hang it on the wall so that the painting is visible within the hall. The scroll is thus the formal signal that Vessantara has entered his palace. Following the hanging of the scroll and extending into the early evening, monks read two sutras, *Phra Malai Muun* and *Phra Malai Saen*. Phra Malai, as he journeys to hell, heaven, and back to the human world, enjoins villagers to listen to the Vessantara story so that they can become better people. It is often said that Phra Malai provides the charter for understanding the significance of Vessantara.²⁰

The scroll's appearance energizes the festival. The glorious conclusion of Prince Vessantara's story—his return to the kingdom—provides the festival's beginning and end points. As we shall see, this is replicated by the paintings on the scroll.

BACKGROUND AND PRODUCTION OF SCROLLS

The gift of the *Bun Phra Wet* scrolls to the Walters Art Museum and the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco is noteworthy in part because of the scarcity of these objects in museum collections. Although little is known of their date and place of manufacture, and their artists are unrecorded, the preservation of these scrolls is important.

This essay is an initial attempt to analyze these scrolls and to place them in the context of their display and the performances that occur around them. The analysis that follows is based on a study of the three Walters scrolls using digital photographs provided by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, some of which are reproduced here.²¹ Conclusions based on an analysis made at some remove from the objects are thus somewhat tentative. My study of the Walters scrolls has been supplemented by examination of the Ubon Ratchathani scroll presented in the 1992 exhibition *Textiles and the Tai Experience in Southeast Asia* at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., and its accompanying catalogue.²² (The scroll is now on permanent exhibition in the Ubon National Museum.) A Thai scholar, Prasong Saihong, who has taken photographs of several scrolls, shared these with me, as did Dr. Sandra Cate. Over years of research I have



Fig. 4. Procession with the *Phra Wet* scroll circumambulating the *sala wat*, 1982

discussed scrolls with many Thai-Lao and examined and taken photographs of several. Finally, I have had the opportunity to devote intensive study to two scrolls in the *wat* of the village where I have based my research, referred to here by the dates of their donation, Buddhist Era 2537 (1994 C.E.) and B.E. 2544 (2001 C.E.). This material forms the basis of the descriptions and analysis that follow.

My inquiries in northeastern Thailand to ascertain the identities of scroll painters have yielded little information. Recently I attempted to make contact with contemporary manufacturers. The manager of the most important store selling Buddhist paraphernalia in a large northeastern Thai city declined to give me the address of the village family that makes scrolls. Ten or fifteen years ago, he told me, he used to resell scrolls sold to him by itinerant peddlers, but that source has now dried up and he relies on the nearby family-based workshop for the scrolls that he sells. The manager told me that he sells four to six scrolls a year, depending on the strength of the economy, but he noted that demand is steady: every *wat* needs a scroll, the scrolls wear out with use, and artistic styles change. Finally, since this is a way for people to make merit (*tham bun*) publicly, he observed, scrolls are donated even when a *wat* does not need a replacement (such was the case in the village I surveyed). While the local, family-based workshop from which he obtains his scrolls has standardized its production, he does not try to force a particular scroll on a consumer. The scroll that a person buys is determined by what connects with the purchaser or donor's heart (*thit chay*).

Scrolls are donated by a person or persons making merit, as are all *wat* objects. The names of donors are

often inscribed on their gifts to the temple, ranging from sections of the fence to preaching thrones, as well as on buildings. The names of donors are only rarely noted on scrolls, however, although villagers, especially those connected with *wat* business, may remember who gave a scroll and how much it cost. I am aware of only one scroll, the B.E. 2537 scroll currently held in the village *wat* I know best, that bears the name of the donors, prominently displayed in a panel at the scroll's end:²³

Paw Khamphaung Mae Tii
Khaamphithak
thawaay Wat Tharaat
29 Tulaakhom 37
Father Khaamphaung [and] Mother Tii
Khaamphithak
donate [this to] Temple Tharaat [People's Harbor]
29 October 2537 [1994]²⁴

The donors (a husband and wife) reportedly paid 2,500 *baat* (approximately \$100 at the exchange rate of the time) for a scroll almost 24 meters in length and the standard 94.5 cm wide painted on white cotton cloth (fig. 5).²⁵ This donation was superseded only seven years later by that of another donor, who gave the temple a longer (32 meters long, same standard width), more ornate scroll, bought for 4,500 *baat* (\$112.50 at the current exchange rate). This donor's name does not appear on the scroll.

Scrolls rarely indicate their maker, perhaps because they are apparently most often produced by workshops. In my research on many scrolls, only once have I seen the name of an individual, Naay Suwaan Aanchuu, written on a scroll in a village in Roi-et Province. Since this name is at the lower left of the introductory Phra Malai

scene and comes with no further identification, I suspect that it is the name of the head of the workshop that produced the scroll. None of the local villagers recognized the name.²⁶ I have been unable to distinguish any donor's or maker's name on the Walters scrolls.

Within the past ten to twenty years, several aspects of the style of Phra Wet scrolls have changed noticeably. In earlier scrolls, the background of white cotton was left unpainted, throwing the figures and other elements into relief, as in wall paintings documented by Ajaan Pairote Samosorn in his masterful catalogue of extant murals on temple walls in northeastern Thailand.²⁷ Given the striking similarities between temple murals and scrolls in their color, design, and placement around the upper edge of the building's walls, it seems reasonable to posit that scrolls and temple murals had a common aesthetic source. Temple murals were probably always a rare feature in northeastern Thailand, since Lao temple structures were small and often did not have walls suitable for painting.²⁸ The painting of the backgrounds of scrolls (usually made with a broad brush, with blue pigment to represent sky, and brown for earth [see fig. 5]), a trend evident in the last twenty years, has accompanied a reduction in the visual complexity of each panel and an increase in the size of the figures. The older scrolls at the Walters, presumably collected in the early to mid-1960s, fill the panels with actions and scenery; today, completeness consists in filling the background with color.

In all three Walters scrolls, as in contemporary scrolls, each chapter (*kan*) of the story is demarcated from its surroundings by a border. I have never seen a borderless scroll, painted to the edges of the cloth. Borders in contemporary scrolls are generally red and otherwise undecorated (see fig. 5). Walters scroll 35.258 is distinctive in its use of light green to define the borders along the scroll's perimeter and between sections. One of the scrolls (35.256) uses a complex flower-and-leaf design, another (35.287) a fretted leaf design. With Ajaan Pairote (personal communication), who noted that extensive use of red was not a characteristic of northeastern Thai-Lao temple murals and that red is extensively used as a background as well as border color in central Thai art, I attribute the recent shift to red borders as evidence of central Thai influence on northeastern Thai-Lao art.

Ajaan Pairote associates the use of frames and a perimeter border in wall paintings with an attempt to imitate cloth scrolls. Behind the main Buddha statue in the hall for monks' ordinations (*ubosot*) of Wat Sanuan-waariiwatthanaaraam, Amphoe Baan Phai, Khon Kaen Province, Pairote photographed a double band of the *Vessantara Jataka*: the first twelve chapters in the upper



Fig. 5. B.E. 2537 *Phra Wet* scroll with a donor panel and portion of last panel

band are oriented left to right; the action in the last scene underneath moves in the opposite direction, from right to left, occupying the entire bottom register. (I will consider the significance of this reversal later.) Most of the painting is executed in shades of indigo, with details rendered in yellow, brown, and green. The border consists of an arrangement of entwined vines similar to those of the Walters scrolls.²⁹

Following the text, both contemporary and older scrolls divide the *Vessantara Jataka* into thirteen chapters, or sections. The title of each section usually appears in the panel or in the lower border, sometimes rendered in a flamboyant script. Sometimes the inscribed titles seem like afterthoughts; sometimes the writing is carelessly rendered, with words misspelled or spelled phonetically and squeezed into available space. Panels are sometimes filled with explanations of the episode depicted, as if the recitation of the text were superfluous or redundant. In Walters scroll 35.256 the title of each section is inscribed in Thai in the borders, as are the identities of the actors and sometimes a description of the activity.

While the Thai-Lao and Lao peoples speak a common language, albeit with subregional differences, the Thai-Lao of Thailand do not have a recognized writing system that accurately reflects their language's sounds. The Thai alphabet, based on central Thai usage, is sufficiently different that some Lao words cannot be accurately transcribed. The Lao alphabet, used on the northern and eastern sides of the Mekong River, contains characters that reflect the spoken language, but it is not taught on the Thai side. The script in two of the Walters scrolls (35.256 and 35.258) is Thai; that of the third (35.287) is Lao. The latter scroll's connection to Laos is unknown; what is known of its provenance indicates only that it was purchased by Miss Duke in Bangkok in the early 1960s.³⁰

Outside observers of the Phra Wet recitation have often remarked that monks add local color as they recite the story.³¹ In recitations I have attended, the name of the village and some of its particularities, which visiting monks might observe while being driven into the village or talking with its inhabitants, were incorporated into the performance. Divergences from the basic story line—local color and sometimes even erotic elements—occasionally appear in the scroll paintings as well.³² In other words, scrolls are a commentary on familiar village life, not simply “paintings on a wall.”

In addition to the depiction of the standard thirteen chapters of the *Jataka*, each scroll standardizes character portrayal. Palaces, elephants, some faces, and figures—particularly figures that appear repeatedly over the length of the scroll or in episodes such as Vessantara’s homecoming in panel 13, generally populated with ranks of soldiers and celebrants—are sketched in using some sort of block printing or stencil technique (see figs. 19 and 20). This becomes clear when examining a scene such as panel 13 on each scroll. Armies of figures and elephants march in the same direction. Indeed, these same stencils or blocks appear to be used in panel 12, in which the populace accompanies Vessantara’s and Maddi’s parents and children to the Himalayan forest to bring them back to the city.

The use of mechanical reproductive techniques is not limited to the depiction of figures. Scroll 35.256 makes copious use of the same block to print the large flowers that appear in some of the trees; another block was used to print the tightly bunched leaves, whereas the tree trunks and branches are drawn free-hand (see figs. 9 and 19). Such techniques appear both within a single scroll and among several different scrolls.

Still another iconic convention has become clear in this study. In the three scrolls acquired by the Walters, as well as the example preserved in the Ubon National Museum, the faces of women and girls, including Maddi, Vessantara’s wife, and Khanhaa, their daughter, nearly always look outward, toward the viewer, while men’s faces are usually represented in profile (see figs. 10, 12–15). Such gendered distinctions are absent from contemporary scrolls, where all principal figures face the viewer.

THE WALTERS SCROLLS

Each of the scrolls given by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation to the Walters Art Museum (as well as the one given to the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco) contributes to our understanding of the Vessantara story,

even as each emphasizes different aspects. While all scrolls share the standard thirteen chapter (*kan*) format (see Table 1), the differences in their treatment of the story are noteworthy.³³

Introductory Panels

In most of the older scrolls and in all contemporary examples that I have surveyed, the *Vessantara Jataka* is preceded by a series of introductory panels. Such is the case in the three Walters scrolls, although they do not uniformly present the Phra Malai story, which is today considered the requisite introduction. The text and the reading are divided into two sections, Phra Malai 10,000 (*Phra Malai Muun*), and Phra Malai 100,000 (*Phra Malai Saen*.) The scrolls present Phra Malai in two different episodes: in hell, preaching to those who have descended there, and in heaven, at the Chulamani stupa, watching as celestial beings arrive with thousands upon thousands of attendants (the source of the numbers in the titles).³⁴ Both episodes provide inherently picturesque themes. Contemporary scrolls graphically depict the agonies of those who have committed adultery and are forced to climb up thorn trees. Of the three Walters scrolls, only scroll 35.258 shows Phra Malai in hell (fig. 6), where he addresses beings, including animals, in a boiling cauldron. All three Walters scrolls depict the opportunity that Phra Malai offers for release from suffering at the Chulamani stupa when the celestial beings arrive. He is attended by Indra and, at the end of the story, meets Maitteyya, the future Buddha. Maitteyya gives Phra Malai a message for humanity: if humans wish to meet Maitteyya in his rebirth and achieve release, they must listen to a recitation of the entire *Vessantara Jataka* in a single sitting, usually taken to mean a day and a night.

The third panel, which appears in the B.E. 2537 (1994 C.E.) and B.E. 2544 (2001 C.E.) scrolls that I examined in Thailand, but only on Walters scroll 35.258 (fig. 7), is glossed as *Sangkaat* in the panel titles and represents the moment in the Buddha’s achievement of enlightenment when he calls the Earth to witness, *Mahavijaya*. This reading begins in the early morning, about 4 am, following the afternoon and evening in which the scroll was brought into the *sala* and the Phra Malai passages read. The inclusion of this panel at the beginning of the *Vessantara Jataka* foreshadows the tale’s conclusion: Prince Vessantara, because of the merit made during this life, will be reborn as the Buddha. The devotion that Vessantara showed in making this merit will redound to his benefit in the next life, as the Buddha calls the Earth to witness to help him succeed in his quest. In depicting



Fig. 6. Panel. Phra Malai visiting hell, panel from scroll 35.238



Fig. 7. Panel. *Mahavijāra*, the Buddha attaining enlightenment, panel from scroll 35.238.



Fig. 8. Panels 1–4, from scroll 35.287



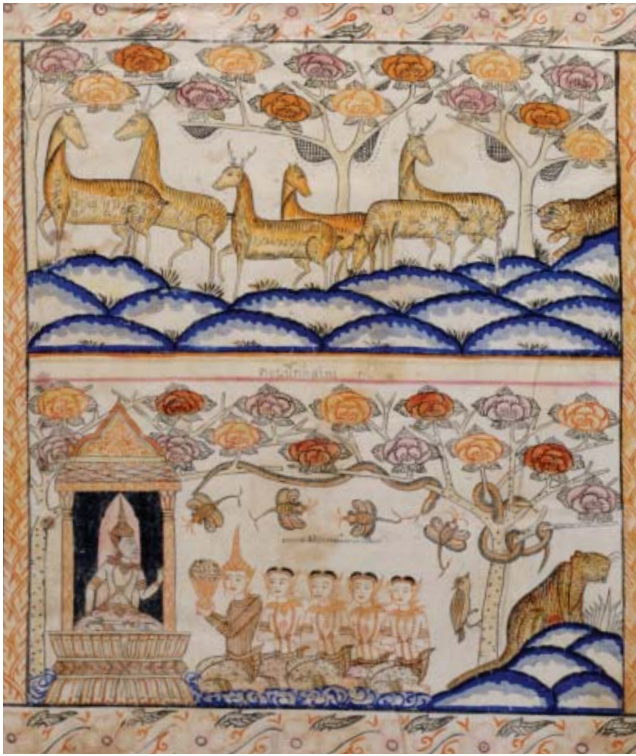


Fig. 9. Panel 2, from scroll 35.256

the end of Vessantara's quest before the *Vessantara Jataka* itself, these scrolls provide the viewer with knowledge of the story's conclusion to reinforce the significance of Vessantara's trials.

Following this early morning recitation, a double recitation takes place that is not presented in any scroll. *Kaathaaphan 1* and *Khaathaaphan 2*, recitations of a thousand stanzas each, are delivered by two junior monks sitting across from each other simultaneously reading as rapidly as possible from their manuscripts. This reading of double a thousand stanzas resonates with and presages the thousand stanzas of the *Vessantara Jataka* itself, as well as the various items specifically produced in quantities of a thousand each to accompany the recitation. Gifts are given to these monks (as they are to every reader), but few people listen to the reading. Since this occurs at about the time of the monks' morning meal, much other activity goes on simultaneously. Next the reading of the *Jataka* commences.³⁵

Sections 1–4: Phusatti, Vessantara, His Family, and Gift-Giving

Following the introductory exhortations, the Walters scrolls take different approaches to recounting the *Jataka* narrative.³⁶ Scroll 35.287 conflates the first four

sections, from the Ten Blessings bestowed on Princess Phusatti to the entry of Vessantara and his family into the Himalayan forest, into a single panel (fig. 8). While these sections use two pieces of cloths for this scroll, no border separates them: Phusatti is granted her wishes; Vessantara gives away the elephant and pours water over the upraised hands of the Brahmins to signal that the gift is complete; he discusses the gift of the elephant and his further obligations for giving with his wife, Maddi; and the couple and their children leave the kingdom, even as Vessantara gives away his horses and chariot. The panel concludes with the family's entry into the forest and their brief visit to Maddi's parents in their palace.

Scroll 35.256, in contrast, presents each of the four episodes separately (as they are most often treated in contemporary scrolls), but its approach is unusual. While the two Phra Malai panels each fill the full height of the scroll, the first panel of the *Vessantara Jataka* initiates a "split screen" treatment that is sustained in horizontally divided panels until the last panel, which again fills the entire height of the scroll.³⁷ In the first *Vessantara Jataka* panel, the lower half illustrates the episode in which Phusatti, with her four attendants, asks Indra to grant her wishes; the upper half, separated by a blank band, depicts stags menaced by a tiger in a grove of trees (fig. 9). The tiger appears in the lower half as well, under a large flowering tree in which two snakes are wrapped around branches and birds and bees play. There is no indication of menace, and whatever the meaning of the upper band, it is a departure from the text.

The second panel of scroll 35.256 continues the divided-panel format as it takes the story from the donation of the elephant through the departure of the family for the Himalayan forest. The third panel begins with Vessantara and Maddi and their children in the palace talking with the king and queen. The remainder of the lower half of the panel follows the story closely, with the family leaving the palace, giving the chariot horses to the four Brahmins, giving the chariot itself to four other Brahmins, and walking further into the forest, as Vessantara carries their son and Maddi their daughter. The upper portion of the panel shows the Brahmins leaving with the horses and then pushing and pulling the chariot; the two stags (gods in disguise) that pulled the chariot now stand idle under great flowering trees.

Panel 4 of this scroll continues the story with an almost exact duplication of the elements illustrated in the third panel. The palace is again on the left, this time with Vessantara and his family seated within; three royals are seated before him, presumably beseeching Vessantara to stay in the kingdom of Maddi's parents.



Fig. 10. Panels 2-4, from scroll 35.258.



Fig. 11. Panel 7, from scroll 35.258

The family leaves and Vessantara and Maddi carry their children as they did in the previous panel (these may not be identical block prints: those in panel 4 seem slightly larger than those in panel 3). The family proceeds and asks directions from Cetaputta, the hunter. (Cetaputta is shown setting out with an associate immediately to the right of the palace.) Since the palace roofs intrude into the upper register of this panel, only half the space is available for additional narrative. It shows two farmers with oxen, figures that do not appear in the conventional story. On the far right of the upper panel, however, Vessantara and his family are seated, clothed in tiger skins and peaked hermit headdresses, Maddi and the children facing Vessantara with hands clasped. This vignette is an indication that the family has arrived at the hermitages where Vessantara's goal will be fulfilled.

Scroll 35.258 takes a freer approach to the depiction of the *Vessantara Jataka*. The boundaries between early panels are somewhat porous. In panel 2, for example, the tusks of the elephant that Vessantara gives away and on which he rides project into the next panel (fig. 10), in which Vessantara pours water on the upraised hands of the Brahmins. There are eight Brahmins here, whereas nine were shown in panel 2 asking for the gift. Five Brahmins are shown dancing in the upper portion of panel 3, as two of them ride the elephant away. The gifts of the horses and the chariot, in which Vessantara rides alone, are depicted in the lower center, while at the upper right, the family proceeds, as if prancing, toward the kingdom of Ceta, where they are united with Maddi's parents in a palace at the extreme right. The function of the structure in the center is unknown. Titles appear in the lower border of both the left and right portions of this combined panel;³⁸ further to the right an inscription in the lower border may name the artist or donor.

Sections 5–7: Chuchok

Whereas sections 1 through 4 of the *Vessantara Jataka* define the work's moral theme, sections 5 through 7 establish the subplot. Section 5 introduces Chuchok and his young wife; sections 6 and 7 describe Chuchok's journey into the Himalayan forest to find Vessantara's hermitage. In each of the Walters scrolls, these sections are depicted in separate panels.³⁹

Scroll 35.256 continues its elaborate double-panel arrangement, crowding significant amounts of "additional" information into the representation. As in several other panels in this scroll, the action does not consistently proceed from left to right. Section 5 begins in the panel's lower-right corner with village women teasing

Chuchok's wife, establishing a right-to-left narrative sequence. Amitthida reproaches her elderly husband in the middle of the panel, while, on the left, the necessary depiction of Chuchok fondling her occurs. The upper portion of this panel initiates Chuchok's quest, in which he is first threatened by the hunter (introduced in the previous section) and then directed by him to Vessantara's hermitage.

Scroll 35.258, in addition to its other peculiarities, is noteworthy for its elaborate depiction of forests and accompanying flora and fauna. The Himalayan forest depicted in panel 7, through which Chuchok makes his way, is a verdant landscape in which Chuchok, Cetaputta, and the hermit Acchuta inhabit the margins (fig. 11), while the forest itself contains an abundance of fauna that dominate the field, including deer, wild oxen, lion cubs, and mythical maned beasts. Perhaps the most startling animal is a blue-bodied, red-ridged snake coiling its way through a quarter of the panel, juxtaposed with a wonderful green tree with a wasp's nest hanging from a leaf. On the right, approaching Acchuta's hermitage, magical plumed birds cavort above multicolored trees. The depictions of Acchuta and Chuchok pale beside the finery of the animals and plants of the forest.

Sections 8–11: Vessantara Gives Away All His Possessions

Sections 8 through 11 bring about the results of Vessantara's quest for perfect generosity with the help of Chuchok and Indra. These sections define the dramatic and emotional crux of the story. During the recitation of these passages the *sala* audience tends to fall silent and the recitations become increasingly focused and emotional. The scrolls, because of their two-dimensional nature, lack the emotional impact of oral storytelling. However, both text and scroll have a problem: because the focus of the action is on Vessantara, Chuchok, and the children at the hermitage, Maddi must not return and spoil the gift. Maddi's role thus becomes relegated to section 9 of the text; however, each scroll deals with this issue differently.

Scroll 35.287, the plainest of the three Walters scrolls, preserves the simultaneity of Maddi's predicament with Vessantara's donation of their children by depicting all the actors in the same panel (fig. 12). The story commences in the panel's lower left, with Chuchok kneeling and saluting Vessantara, seated in his hermitage, as the children look in through a back window. (The title of this section is written in Lao under the hermitage.) Maddi appears above the hermitage, in the panel's upper left, kneeling before three gods disguised as wild beasts



Fig. 12. Panel 8, from scroll 35.287

while carrying baskets suspended from a shoulder pole (a posture difficult to maintain).

The action moves to the lower center, as Chuchok leads the children away, having bound their hands with ropes. To Chuchok's right are three stags, one, with an enormous penis, mounting another. The position of the stags and the tree to their right directs the viewer to the upper half of the panel, where the story continues; however, it reverses movement, going from right to left. Chuchok slips and loses his grip on the ropes. The children escape and hide in a pond, the replica of which, the *sra bookkaaranii*, has been placed in the middle of the sacred space in the center of the *sala*. At this moment the scroll, the objects in the *sala*, and the recitation become congruent, focusing attention on the emotional crux of the story, in which Vessantara's quest for perfect generosity brings about the destruction of his family and the enslaving of his children.

The panel concludes on the far right: Chuchok climbs a tree to sleep in a hammock, holding ropes attached to the hands of the children to prevent their escape. Two gods see the children's predicament, descend, and comfort and protect them while holding the ropes taut so that Chuchok will not realize that the children are free.

The treatment of the same narrative in scroll 35.256 adheres more closely to the text. Interestingly, the position of Maddi in these two panels is almost identical. However, in scroll 35.256, Maddi is shown simply walking and collecting forest products. The threatening beasts have not yet arrived.

Scroll 35.258 deals in a different way with the representation of simultaneous events in a linear narrative. Events taking place at Vessantara's hermitage are treated in panel 8 (fig. 13). In the lower right, Chuchok asks Vessantara for the children, who kneel. Vessantara pours water as a sign of his sincerity in giving this gift. This is not represented in the other scrolls. Above and to the left, Chuchok leads the children away, while Vessantara sits with his hands in a blessing position. In the far upper left, Chuchok is upside down, a clear sign that he has stumbled, giving the children the opportunity to escape. However, the children are not depicted running away; their heads appear in the water of the pond, threatened by a crocodile. Maddi does not appear in this panel. She returns home and discovers the children are missing, addresses Vessantara in her sorrow, and faints. Vessantara "raised her head and held it on his lap, and sprinkled her with water."⁴⁰ All three Walters scrolls show Maddi's head on Vessantara's lap, and two show him sprinkling water to revive her.

Scroll 35.258, however, varies the sequence of the narrative in the panels following panel 9. This discontinuity makes apparent the disjunction between the events at the hermitage and the children's story. Following Vessantara's gift of the children to Chuchok, the text and two scrolls (35.287 and 35.256) focus on Maddi's return, her discovery that the children are missing, her fainting, and Vessantara's steps to revive her (fig. 14). The scrolls continue to focus on the couple in panel 10: Indra's determination to ensure that Vessantara gives the ultimate



Fig. 13. Panel 8, from scroll 35.258



Fig. 15. Interpolated panel 9a, from scroll 35.258



Fig. 14. Panel 9, from scroll 35.287

gift, his wife, without the threat of Brahmin interference which might actually result in Maddi's permanent loss. When Vessantara gives him his spouse, Indra "reveals his identity and returns Maddi."⁴¹ Thus, the text and these two scrolls continue to emphasize the sequence of Vessantara's "perfect generosity" and the fulfillment of his goal. In so doing, they neglect the emotional drama of the children.

Scroll 35.258 adheres closely to the text in bringing Maddi back to the hermitage and reuniting her with Vessantara, but it defers the account of the perfection of Vessantara's quest, his last gift, to illustrate the episode of Chuchok and the children. An extra panel joins two apparently distinct actions that are recounted in the same text section (fig. 15). In the upper left Chuchok has climbed into a hammock suspended from a tree branch to evade the forest beasts. He leaves the children below and

ties the rope securely around a branch, making the children (who cover their faces in fear) fend for themselves on the forest floor; two angels come to their rescue, holding the children in their arms. Chuchok's treatment of the children is balanced in the lower right by the appearance of a coffin containing Chuchok's body carried by two men. While a small space exists between the two photographs from which this reconstruction is made, the partially decipherable title in the lower frame conveys some of this interpolated panel's meaning, *mahaa . . . song-sakaan*, "great . . . paying of last respects." Moreover, the treatment by the gods in the left part of the frame visually foreshadows the royal treatment accorded the children when Chuchok sells them to their grandfather. Chuchok's death and the purchase of the children are the themes of this scroll's panel 10. Scroll 35.258 continues this emphasis on the children's journey, thus delaying Vessantara's fulfillment, by reversing sections 11 and 10.

The focus of all three Walters scrolls in panel 11 is twofold: the ransoming of the children and Chuchok's gluttony, death, and funeral. Of the three, scroll 35.256 adheres most closely to the text, in its double-panel arrangement, which moves from lower left to right and then upper left to right (fig. 16) (as distinct from other panels in this scroll, which illustrate the narrative in other directions)

In the lower left, Chuchok sleeps in the tree while the children are below. Next he leads the children by the rope and asks two hunters for directions (they resemble the hunters who showed him the way to Vessantara's hermitage in panel 6). Chuchok is next shown with the children in King Sanjaya's palace; the man on the palace's rear porch may be counting money with an abacus. The right half of this lower part of the panel depicts Chuchok's feast and his ensuing death.

The upper left half of the panel balances the lower right, showing the celebration that ensues following



Fig. 16. Panel 11, from scroll 35.256

Chuchok's death due to gluttony. The panel's upper right treats Chuchok's funeral and cremation. The funeral procession is led by two individuals, one of whom may be a monk, the other a novice, wearing robes that resemble those worn by the Buddha and Phra Malai at the beginning of this scroll.⁴² The men following the coffin hold flags that will be placed in the ground to help the deceased's spirit find its way to the body, while two men, one of them apparently drunk, carry a jar of rice beer. The cremation scene itself is explicit, showing Chuchok's body (including his exploded stomach) on a bed of flaming coals.

The depiction of the episode in scroll 35.287 is not nearly so graphic or detailed. At the lower right the children are presented to the king in his palace, which extends into the upper part of the panel; in the center men supervise Chuchok's funeral; wrestlers compete in the lower left; and, in the upper left, as the funeral procession takes Chuchok to be cremated, birds fly in to partake of the feast of his body.

The depiction of the episode in scroll 35.258 is the least detailed of the three; it includes only two episodes: Chuchok's death and the presentation of the children to their grandfather (fig. 17). (Chuchok's funeral was alluded to in interpolated panel 9A.) Indra's request for Maddi, which one would expect to see represented in panel 9, is represented out of sequence in panel 11. While



Fig. 17. Panel 10, from scroll 35.258

this leads directly into the two panels of celebration that follow, it also delays the depiction of Vessantara's supreme act of generosity until a late stage in the narrative. Panel 11 in scroll 35.258 represents the episode more economically than do the other Walters scrolls: a Brahmin asks Vessantara for the gift of Maddi, but the Brahmin's identity is not explored, and the consequences of the gift are not alluded to. The barrenness of this depiction accentuates the "left over" position of the scene and this part of the story as far as this scroll is concerned.



Fig. 18. Panel 12, from scroll 35.256

Sections 12 and 13: Reconciliation

Section 12 of the *Vessantara Jataka* reunites the Six Royals: King Sanjaya and Queen Pusatti reunite with their son, Prince Vessantara, and daughter-in-law, Maddi; Vessantara and Maddi are reunited with their children, Chaalii and Khanhaa. However, in addition and more directly, the text and all of the scrolls describe the reconciliation of the kingdom's inhabitants with their prince. Thus, panel 12 plays an important role in accounting for the presence of the villagers in the procession that follows.

The episode of the reconciliation, at which King Sanjaya asks Vessantara to return to his rightful home at the palace, takes place in the forest at Vessantara's hermitage, to which the grandparents bring the children. While King Sanjaya is at the forefront in two scrolls, paying homage to his son, scroll 35.256 shows four men approaching Vessantara sitting in his hermitage while the royal family—grandparents and grandchildren (and one other unidentified royal)—are seated to the right in the lower half of the frame (fig. 18). The upper half (annotated with indecipherable writing) seems to depict the same four men, half-concealed by indigo rocks representing the Himalayas, presenting their four bouquets to Maddi, who approaches them while Vessantara holds her wrist.

The two other scrolls populate the scene with masses of citizens or attendants of King Sanjaya. Scroll 35.258 shows the citizens massed opposite the hermitage; in scroll 35.287, the citizens are depicted as frenetic dancers, while King Sanjaya's procession with soldiers and four elephants marches toward the hermitage. Scroll 35.287 is the more elaborate of the two representations, depicting a procession led by four elephants entering from the right followed by soldiers and dancers, while on the left, the king and queen bow before Vessantara.

In the final panel, each of the three Walters scrolls depicts elephants carrying royals, soldiers on horseback and marching, and groups of citizens making music, dancing, and drinking. In all three a white elephant is part of the procession.⁴³ In two (35.287 and 35.256), Vessantara rides on this elephant, while in 35.258 the elephant is without a rider. In 35.287 only four elephants are shown, each with one rider (the children are not present in this scroll's final panel). However, 35.256 shows five elephants, the last with the two children on it. Vessantara rides on the middle, white elephant (fig. 19)

In scroll 35.258, the riders are somewhat oddly distributed among the three elephants; the first carries two, King Sanjaya and Queen Pusatti, while the second and third elephants each carry three personages (fig. 20), segregated by gender, as indicated by the form of their crowns. Vessantara and Maddi must have the child of



Fig. 19. Panel 13, from scroll 35.256

their gender riding with them, paralleling their travel to the forest (panel 3) with an unidentified angel.

In all three of the Walters scrolls, the scroll in the Ubon National Museum, the wall painting referred to earlier at Wat Sanuanwaariwatthanaaraam, Amphoe Baan Phai, and all other scrolls I observed and photographed that were produced between 1970 until approximately 1985, the last panel presents a seeming paradox. The procession in panel 13 reverses the overall direction of the scroll. The procession marches *into* the scroll, that is, right to left, as distinct from the direction of the rest of the painting, which generally proceeds from left to right. This iconographic convention seems to have changed in scrolls produced over the past fifteen years; contemporary scrolls have the procession marching from left to right, “off” the scroll, continuing the left to right narrative of the scroll.

The most elaborate example of this apparently older style occurs in the Ubon scroll, in which the procession reverses at panel 12, as King Sanjaya and Queen Pursatti ask Vessantara to return to Sivi. The Ubon scroll has no formal panel 13; rather the whole scroll becomes panel 13. The procession wends its way beneath the scroll’s

upper border back to the city and palace where the story began. The procession is led by Chuchok’s funeral cortege, which continues back through the gates of Sivi so that the cremation can be held outside the city walls (as would normally take place) under trees marking the beginning of section 2. Above and behind them the royal elephants, military forces, and celebrating citizens follow. Mattiebelle Gittinger has interpreted this feature of the Ubon scroll as an indication that it was intended, like most scrolls, to be mounted around the meeting hall of the monastery; in this instance the initial and concluding scenes would be joined in a single panel.⁴⁴

The current display of this textile, high on the wall of the central room of the old Ubon provincial headquarters, permits this effect. While I have never seen a scroll completely encircle the inside walls of a *sala*, Gittinger’s observation that the scroll and the story end where they begin is an apt observation. Steven Collins notes, “In the abstract perspective of Buddhist systematic thought the real tragedy of everyday happiness is simply to be in time, to be in a story at all.”⁴⁵ The circularity in these scrolls emphasizes that. To follow through on the implications of Collins’s point, nirvana does not occur in the



Fig. 20. Left half of panel 13, from scroll 35.258

Vessantara Jataka, either in the story or in any scroll. However, while the people present at the end (except for Chuchok) are the people that began the story, they have changed and the potential for humanity's future has changed. Some scrolls allude to this possibility by depicting the Buddha's calling the earth to witness in the panels that precede the *Vessantara* story.

The representation of one element of the procession seems to have changed recently. The last scenes in the two most recent scrolls used in the village in which I work depict the celebratory procession oriented to the right, marching off the scroll, thus continuing the linear thread of the painting. If these scrolls were mounted so that the end joined the beginning, the *Phra Malai* and *Sangkhaat* panels would intervene. I am unsure of the implications of this reversal and do not wish to over-read the evidence, but this change alters the way in which these scrolls are carried in the welcoming procession. My photographs taken during the 1970 and 1982 processions show the scroll held by the paraders on their left side as they bring it into and through the village. Thus, the *Phra Malai* panels and those of the ten boons lead the procession; panel 13 depicting celebratory procession that marks the end of the story, is last, and the participants move in the same direction in which the scroll is carried. Stationary viewers would see the story unfold in front of them as the scroll was carried in the procession. Today, the scroll is carried by the paraders to their right, with panel 13 at the front; the procession on the scroll thus marches directly ahead, leading the way to the *wat*. Viewers now see the story in reverse, with the story's beginning coming at the end of the procession.

When I asked about this, I was assured that scrolls had always been carried as they are now. Unfortunately, I did not have the photos of earlier years to show my friends how they have changed. In one sense the villagers haven't changed: the procession on the scroll continues

to march forward, regardless of whether it is on the old or new scrolls. In another sense, however, the circularity of the story apparent in the village procession has been broken.

CONCLUSIONS

As monks recite each section of the *Vessantara Jataka*, a layman retrieves and lights long candles contributed by the households in the community, which had been placed on the *haan Phra Phut*: the platform within the *sala*. He also lights shorter candles, each made with wicks composed of strands equal in number to the number of *kaathaa* in each *kan*. The lay sponsor of the section sits nearby as the recitation takes place (fig. 21). When the reading ends, another attendee strikes the temple's gong and the sponsor gives gifts to the reader. That monk steps down and a new monk takes his place for the next section. Usually one person, household, or kin group sponsors a chapter, and its representatives give gifts to the monk at the conclusion of the recitation.

When the recitation, sometimes taking as long as twenty-four hours, is finished, either in the short or long version, the audience is exhausted. Elements associated with the recitation of the *Vessantara Jataka* are eagerly sought as souvenirs, relics, or charms. Foremost among these is the water that has been sanctified by the candles burning above it; sometimes there is competition among the audience to see who can get the most. Members of the laity also remove some of the dangling decorations. They take these home as decoration and, in the case of the strings of rice, feed the rice to chickens and tie the string around the wrists of family members as good luck.

The next morning *Phra Uppakut* is returned to the water source from which he came. The *tayok wat* leads a small procession of attendees at the morning service to



the water source from which he called Phra Uppakut. He delivers a short blessing as he and others place the disposable items that were kept with Phra Uppakut's things in the water. His non-disposable items, such as monks' robes, bowl, and umbrella, remain in the *sala*, kept for next year. At one *wat* a short funeral service for Chuchok is conducted; I have not heard of this elsewhere. After the morning service, the painted scroll is taken down, rolled up, and stored until next year. No special ceremony is connected with this. Sooner or later the flags and other outside material are retrieved and stored. Very quickly, the *sala* and *wat* grounds return to their normal state, ready for the next major ceremony, usually Songkran, the Thai and Lao mid-April New Year, when the *wat* will again be the center of attention. Life in the village continues.

With the exception of the three scrolls now at the Walters Art Museum, the scroll at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, the two European scrolls, and one scroll at the Ubon National Museum in Thailand, little attention has been paid to the Vessantara Jataka scrolls of northeastern Thailand and lowland Laos. They are rarely collected and, apparently, rarely preserved. Moreover, while they may be part of a great tradition of narrative painting in scroll format extending throughout Asia, no recognition of this association seems to have been made.⁴⁶

However, the Vessantara scrolls have great meaning in each village's annual celebration. They "act" in this performance; the pictures painted on them provide an essential charter for welcoming Prince Vessantara back into the city/village that holds the festival in his honor. At the same time, the cloth scroll draped around the *sala* walls provides proof of Vessantara's presence during the telling of his story. The materiality of the scroll is reinforced through the other objects in and around the *sala*, such as banana and sugar cane stalks, flags, and decorations which signal the villagers' welcome to him and his family. The communal nature of the decorations, with contributions from every household, allows all citizens to participate in his achievement, even as they reflect on the difficulty of "perfect generosity." Finally, the pond with turtle, fish, and lotuses, which becomes a place of refuge for Vessantara and Maddi's children, illustrates that the artifacts, not just the story's telling, have an impact on everyone, parents and children, and especially on parents who have seen their children mature and move away.

The Jataka story is complicated. Its recitation deserves to be understood and analyzed as performance. The artifacts that accompany the festival and, in the case



Fig. 21. Sponsors attending *Hok Krasat* presentation, 9 April 2006

of the scroll, bring it about, should be understood in this context. Their purpose is not to "recite" the story, but to bring Vessantara, his times, his success, and his family, to the celebration. The close examination of these scrolls, together with the close examination of the text and its recitations, give us a more accurate understanding of the role of Theravada Buddhism in the lives of the inhabitants of northeastern Thailand and lowland Laos. The Walters Art Museum and Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., are to be congratulated on having initiated this exploration.

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NOTES

My deepest thanks go to the members of the northeastern Thai village in which I live—monks, novices, *tayok wat*, and laity—who have so generously shared their lives and knowledge with me and assisted in this and other research. I also wish to thank the National Research Council of Thailand, which granted research permission. Thanks also are due to the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation for providing digital copies of photographs for analysis and publication, Dr. Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., for sharing his notes of the scrolls, the editors of this journal, who have paid close attention to the argument of this paper, and Dr. Forrest McGill for his close reading of the text.

1. The Duke scrolls have been described briefly in Nancy Tingley's presentation of the collection: N. Tingley, *Doris Duke: The Southeast Asian Art Collection* (New York, 2003), 61–62.
2. At least two others exist in Europe: Henry Ginsburg sent me pictures of one in the British Museum (inv. no. 1926.0217) and Christine Hemmet has sent photographs of three fragments of another now held by the new Musée du Quai Branly in Paris (inv. no. 71.1978.23.172–74).

3. For Burma, see M. Spiro, *Buddhism and Society: A Great Tradition and Its Burmese Vicissitudes* (Berkeley, 1971), 107–8; for Sri Lanka, see M. Cone and R. F. Gombrich, *The Perfect Generosity of Prince Vessantara* (Oxford, 1977), xxxv–xliv; for Thailand, see C. F. Keyes, *Thailand: Buddhist Kingdom as Modern Nation-State* (Boulder, Colo., 1989), 179–81.
4. Songsri Praphatthaung, *Moradok Sing Thau Nay Phraphuttasaatsanaa* (Heritage of woven things in the Buddhist religion) (in Thai) (Bangkok, 2537/1994), 19, in a comprehensive listing of Thai textiles used in Buddhism, notes that long scrolls are a northeastern Thai phenomenon, while individual Vessantara paintings, on cloth or wood, are characteristic of central Thailand. Forest McGill, “Painting the ‘Great Life,’” in J. Schober, ed., *Sacred Biography in the Buddhist Traditions of South and Southeast Asia* (Honolulu, 1997), 195–217, has written an important article on four Vessantara paintings held by the Phoenix Art Museum, including an appendix listing the locations of “several scenes from the *Vessantara Jataka* dating from the seventeenth through the nineteenth century.” Henry Ginsburg, in *Thai Manuscript Painting* (London, 1989) and in his essay in this volume, wrote extensively on Thai painting. None of the works cited by these authors, however, are about painted scrolls.
5. While many things have changed in the past fifty years in northeastern Thailand, the basic distinction between the rice-growing season and the festival/kin-strengthening, money-making season persists. W. J. Klausner, “*Nàk aw, Bao sú*: The Work Cycle in a Northeastern Thai Village,” in *Reflections on Thai Culture: Collected Writings of William J. Klausner* (Bangkok, 2509/1966; reprinted 1993), 53–69, presents a succinct description of this distinction.
6. S. J. Tambiah, *Buddhism and the Spirit Cults in North-east Thailand* (Cambridge, 1970), 160–75 and pl. 3; W. J. Klausner, “Ceremonies and Festivals in a Northeastern Thai Village,” in *Reflections on Thai Culture*, 46–48; W. J. Klausner, *Reflections: One Year in an Isaan Village circa 1955* (Bangkok, 2000), 96–101.
7. Tambiah (*Buddhism and the Spirit Cults*, 160–75 and pl. 3), and Klausner (“Ceremonies and Festivals 46–48, and *Reflections*, 96–101) describe the scrolls as paintings, giving the impression that they are discrete panels. The photographs that accompany the descriptions show that these are scrolls.
8. S. Collins, *Nirvana and Other Buddhist Felicities: Utopias of the Pali Imaginaire*, Cambridge Studies in Religious Traditions 12 (Cambridge, 1998), 503.
9. G. E. Gerini, *A Retrospective View and Account of the Origin of the That Mahà Ch’at Ceremony (Mahà Jàti Desanà): Or, Exposition of the Tale of the Great Birth as Performed in Siam* (Bangkok, 1892; repr. 1976), 25.
10. Robert Brown shows that the visual representations of *jatakas* on South and Southeast Asian architectural monuments are intended to “locate the Buddha and his teaching, not to tell a story,” but he does not consider contemporary northeastern Thai/Lao scrolls in his argument. The present essay contends that the behaviors of villagers with and toward the Vessantara scrolls in the context of village and temple, “even [as] the visual images are organized to reflect the narrative nature of a verbal text [events related through time],” are primarily meant to make Vessantara and his achievements locatable and manifest, not simply to retell the story. R. L. Brown, “Narrative as Icon: The *Jātaka* Stories in Ancient India and Southeast Asian Architecture,” J. Schober, ed., *Sacred Biography in the Buddhist Traditions of South and Southeast Asia* (Honolulu, 1997), 80.
11. P. Lévy, *Buddhism: A ‘Mystery Religion’?* (New York, 1968; first ed., 1957).
12. This formulation agrees with that of M. I. Cohen, T. E. Behrend, and T. L. Cooper in their discussion of “The *Barikan* Banner of Gegesik,” *Archipel* 59 (2000), 97–144. “There was said to be a ‘power’ (*pribawa*) attached to the banners, and, once they were put up, the space they demarked” (107).
13. S. Cate, *Making Merit, Making Art: A Thai Temple in Wimbledon* (Honolulu, 2003).
14. These thirteen pairs of objects do not seem related to the thirteen sections of the *Vessantara Jataka*. The number thirteen is used on many other occasions in northeastern Thai-Lao ritual.
15. The day prior to *muu boom* is termed *muu khaaw tom*, the day for making *khaaw tom*, but this is often abbreviated because most festivals today accommodate a two-day weekend. I have previously discussed how this festival has changed over the more than thirty-five years during which I have been in attendance: H. L. Lefferts, “Evolving Rituals: Globalization and the Cycle of Festivals in a Northeast Thai Village,” paper presented at *Crossroads and Commodification: A Symposium on Southeast Asian Art*. Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, 25–26 March 2000; H. L. Lefferts, “Problematising Traditional Ritual in a Modern Northeast Thai Village: Transformations in the Bun Maha Chat,” paper presented at the *Annual Meeting of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, Bangkok, 2002. In the present essay, I focus on the festival as it now takes place over a weekend. Villages in a small area attempt to rotate their festivals between February and April, so that they do not overlap. However, because the Thai work week is becoming increasingly standardized on a European-American model with Saturday and Sundays “off,” the choice of days on which to hold the festival is becoming increasingly narrow.
16. For further information on Uppakut, see Tambiah, *Buddhism and the Spirit Cults*, 168–78; and J. Strong, *The Legend and Cult of Upagupta: Sanskrit Buddhism in North India and Southeast Asia* (Princeton, 1992).
17. The *tayok wat* reads from a published volume of collected invocations.
18. Patrick Jory has written insightful articles on some of the political meanings behind the act of welcoming the person who will become a Buddha in his next life into the village. “The *Vessantara Jataka*, *Barami*, and the *Bodhisatta*-Kings: The Origin and Spread of a Premodern Thai Concept of Power,” *Crossroads: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 161(1) (2002), 152–94; and “Thai and Western Buddhist Scholarship in the Age of Colonialism: King Chulalongkorn Redefines the *Jatakas*,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 61(3) (2002), 891–918. Certainly these meanings persist in the northeastern Thai celebrations that I have attended.
19. Sandra Cate (personal communication) coined a felicitous phrase, “murals on the move,” for this grand procession, in which the actions of people duplicate the painted pictures. She was moved to this description as she saw a *Bun Phra Wet* procession held in Roi-et City in northeastern Thailand’s geographical center. In this procession villages cooperate and compete, each village illustrating a section of the *jataka*. The villagers use floats, thus providing active, moving stages that duplicate the progression of the cloth scroll.
20. B. P. Brereton, *Thai Tellings of Phra Malai: Texts and Rituals Concerning a Popular Buddhist Saint* (Tempe, Arizona, 1995).
21. Each scroll is identified by a number from the Duke collection and a Walters accession number: Duke 30.36.1–5 is Walters 35.287–291 (this scroll is in five pieces but one continuous scroll), Duke 30.65 = Walters 35.256, and Duke 30.76 = Walters 35.258; Walters numbers are used in this paper.
22. M. Gittinger and H. L. Lefferts, *Textiles and the Tai Experience in Southeast Asia* (Washington, D.C., 1992), 124–29.
23. Note that although this donation information is at the “end” of the scroll, given that the scroll is carried with the end of the story at the front, the donation panel would have been first; see below.

24. This donation was made in October, probably part of a *Bun Katin* at the end of the Rains Retreat as one of several important gifts by this couple. It would not have been used then, but kept until the next *Bun Phra Wet* before it was carried in procession.
25. This donation parallels those noted by McGill, "Painting the 'Great Life'."
26. This situation is unfortunate and deserves further research. Recent work on Bengali scrolls has made comparative work potentially quite productive. See P. Ghosh, "Story of a Storyteller's Scroll," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 37 (2000), 166–85; idem, "Unrolling a Narrative Scroll: Artistic Practice and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Bengal," *Journal of Asian Studies* 62(3) (2003), 835–71; B. Hauser, "From Oral Tradition to 'Folk Art': Reevaluating Bengali Scroll Paintings," *Asian Folklore Studies* 61 (2002), 105–22. However, even Sharma in his comprehensive introductory chapter, "Scroll Painting in Ancient India and Asian Countries," in *The Indian Painted Scroll* (Varanasi, 1993), does not mention the Thai-Lao or Lao painted scroll. For his information on Thailand he relied on S. Diskul (see *ibid.*, 9–10). Unlike Indian practices, there is no indication that northeastern Thai-Lao or lowland Lao scrolls have been used as backdrops for itinerant storytellers (although it might be said that Theravada Buddhist monks fulfill that role).
27. Pairote Samosorn, *Chitrakaam Faa Phanang (E-sarn Mural Paintings)* (in Thai and English) (Khon Kaen, Thailand, 2532/1989).
28. Few of these older buildings remain from the push to modernize and for individuals to make merit by donating new and more ostentatious structures, often in imitation of central Thai temple buildings. This was a major reason for Ajaan Pairote's research and his handsomely illustrated book.
29. Pairote, *Chitrakaam Faa Phanang*, 202–3.
30. Tingley, *Doris Duke*, 15–16.
31. See above, note 6.
32. Even the most colorful of the Walters scrolls does not equal a scroll photographed by Ajaan Prasong Saihung, which is also the scroll referred to earlier with copious amounts of writing.
33. I also use the word "panel" to describe a section's scene in a scroll.
34. B. P. Brereton, *Thai Tellings of Phra Malai*, 54–55.
35. The recitation of the story can be in either a long form in which monks read the complete text, or a shortened form, called *Hok Krasat* (Six Royals), with three to six monks reciting and singing (*lam*). This shortened form, which can take place over the course of an afternoon, seems better suited to the busy lives of many northeasterners who must return to work, sometimes as far away as Bangkok, the next day. This shortened presentation is called *thet siang*. Wajuppa notes that this assists in preserving forms of old Thai-Lao language and oral recitation. Wajuppa Tossa, "Isaan Storytelling," in C. Borden and P. Seitel, ed., *1994 Festival of American Folklife* (Washington, 1994), 52. Audio-tapes and CDs of famous monks reciting and in *lam* are available. Whether the short or long recitation is used, the welcoming of Phra Wet and his family to the kingdom remains an essential act carried out to initiate the festival.
36. While I pay detailed attention to each panel of the three scrolls in this section, it is possible to assert that the most important aspect is not these details, but rather the "iconic" nature of the scroll as an aspect of the total festival. See Brown, "Narrative as Icon." While I agree with that approach, having seen the lack of attention accorded the scrolls during the recitation but noting the acknowledgement of Vessantara's presence throughout the performance, it is also important to note the artistic conventions that seem to prevail in the Vessantara scrolls. This essay attempts to begin that discussion. My analysis follows the text in emphasizing some sections—those with greater emotional impact—over others that are given more emphasis in the scrolls themselves.
37. Plate 3 in Tambiah, *Buddhism and the Spirit Cults*, opposite page 160, shows a scroll split in three.
38. Neither of these titles is clear. The title on the left is *Thaannakan*, but it is spelled without its concluding, unsounded consonant, which would be an indication that this is a borrowed word. The title on the right includes *kan*, meaning a chapter of the Jataka and, on the right, *Phra Wet*. However, it is unclear what is between these.
39. There is a possibility that this is not true for all scrolls. The photographs for scroll 35.287 do not overlap.
40. Steven Collins, *Nirvana and Other Buddhist Felicities*, has focused on this section of the story, especially on the evolution in the relationship between Vessantara and Maddi and Vassantara's increasing "humanness."
41. *Ibid.*, 516.
42. This is a seeming contradiction, because Buddhism could not have been founded until Vessantara had died and his karma had been reborn. This same paradox occurs in both of the more recent scrolls.
43. Collins, *Nirvana and Other Buddhist Felicities*, 519–20, observes that the text gives the age of the white elephant that goes to receive Vessantara as sixty years. He notes that this could not be the white elephant that Vessantara gave away at the beginning of the Jataka. No scroll depicts a white elephant in panel 12.
44. Gittinger and Lefferts, *Textiles and the Thai Experience*, 126–29.
45. Collins, *Nirvana and Other Buddhist Felicities*, 554.
46. See note 28.

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS: © 2008 Leedom Lefferts: figs. 1–5, 21; Photo by Richard Walker. © 2002 Doris Duke Charitable Foundation: figs. 6–20.

Two Pieces of Kangxi Porcelain Decorated in Underglaze Red in the Walters Art Museum

HUI-WEN LU

This note discusses two rare pieces of Chinese porcelain decorated in underglaze red and enamel in the Walters Art Museum. Inscribed with the mark “Da Qing Kangxi nian zhi” (Made during the Kangxi reign of the Great Qing), they are from the imperial court of the Kangxi emperor (r. 1662–1722), the second ruler of the Qing dynasty (1644–1911). An investigation into their style sheds light on aspects of Kangxi porcelain, including its production and periodization.

PORCELAIN PRODUCTION AND DECORATION

The first of these porcelains is a small vase with a short neck and an apple-shaped body (acc. no. 49.1099, fig. 1). A coat of clear glaze covers the entire vessel. Against the white body rise two sprays of cockscomb flowers, which also appear on the other side. The vivid red flowers were painted in copper-red underglaze, while the slender stems and leaves were painted with overglaze enamels. The second (acc. no. 49.697, fig. 2) is a vessel with a broad base and a wide mouth. Often called the “beehive” or the “horse-hoof” form, this vessel would have served as a water pot on a writer’s desk. It is decorated in the same manner as the vase. Painted on the white background on opposite sides of the vessel is a rose in underglaze red, its soft hue standing out against its leaves and spiky stems in brighter enamels. These two pieces share several stylistic features, including the same potting characteristics, the simple and sparse decoration, and the same Kangxi mark on the base. They might, perhaps, have been made as a set for the emperor’s writing desk.

Similar examples turn up in several other collections. The Baur collection in Geneva (figs. 3, 4) and the Shanghai Museum (figs. 5, 6) each has a pair. The Musée Guimet in Paris has another “beehive” water pot (fig. 7).

Each of these pieces is similarly decorated, although they vary in specific detail. A closer examination reveals several other similarities among these “beehive” water pots. Each has a large red blossom painted in underglaze. The blossoms are almost identical in their shape and position, but their stems and leaves, drawn in overglaze enamels, differ from one to another. Among the four, the Musée Guimet piece has the most complex design, depicting three flowers each in a different stage of blooming. These differences are the result of a complicated process of porcelain production.

Copper red requires high-temperature firing, while the other colors on these pots are low-fired enamels. Their production thus would have required multiple firings. The potter first used copper as a coloring agent to paint the main flowers on the porcelain body. He then covered the entire vessel with a coat of clear glaze and fired it at the temperature necessary to set copper red. After firing, enamels in black, aubergine, green, and other colors were applied over the glaze to complete the design. The enameled piece was then fired again, this time at a lower temperature. These procedures would likely have engaged different workers at each stage of decoration. A painter drew the same copper-red flower on several pots. After the first firing, the pots were then delivered to the enameler. The single red blossom against a blank background offered innumerable options in completing the design. The water pots in the Walters Art Museum (fig. 2), the Baur Collection (fig. 3), and the Shanghai Museum (fig. 6) adhere to a very similar model: a branch of rose extending along the foot of the vessel. The one in the Musée Guimet, however, shows an interesting deviation (fig. 7). The leaves and stem indicate that the red blossom is not a rose, but rather a hibiscus or peony. These variations attest to the high degree of division of labor in Qing porcelain production.¹



Fig. 1. Porcelain vase painted in underglaze red and enamels, mark and reign of Kangxi (r. 1662–1772). Height 9 cm. Baltimore, The Walters Art Museum, bequest of Henry Walters, 1931 (49.1099)



Fig. 3. Porcelain vase painted in underglaze red and enamels, mark and reign of Kangxi (r. 1662–1772). Height 9 cm, diameter 9 cm. Geneva, Collections Baur, no. 518



Fig. 2. Porcelain waterpot painted in underglaze red and enamels, mark and reign of Kangxi (r. 1662–1772). Height 12.8 cm. Baltimore, The Walters Art Museum, bequest of Henry Walters, 1931 (49.697)



Fig. 4. Porcelain waterpot painted in underglaze red and enamels, mark and reign of Kangxi (r. 1662–1772). Height 13 cm, diameter 8.5 cm. Geneva, Collections Baur, no. 484



Fig. 5. Porcelain vase painted in underglaze red and enamels, mark and reign of Kangxi (r. 1662–1772). Height 8.4 cm, diameter of mouth 3.1 cm, diameter of foot, 4.7 cm. Shanghai Museum



Fig. 6. Porcelain waterpot painted in underglaze red and enamels, mark and reign of Kangxi (r. 1662–1772). Height 7.7 cm, diameter of mouth 8.6 cm; diameter of foot 12.9 cm. Shanghai Museum



Fig. 7. Porcelain waterpot painted in underglaze red and enamels, Mark and reign of Kangxi (r. 1662–1772). 8 x 13 x 8.3 cm. Paris, Musée des Arts Asiatiques-Guimet, (G3361: collection Ernest Grandidier)



Fig. 8. Vase with poetic inscriptions on peonies and chrysanthemums, early 18th century, mark and reign of Kangxi (r. 1662–1772). Porcelain with “powder-blue” glaze, painted in gilt. Height 44.5 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, purchased by subscription 1879, 79.2.153.

DATING

Although floral patterns had long been used on Qing porcelains, the simple and sparse design seen on the Walters pieces became popular only in the second decade of the eighteenth century. During the so-called Transitional Period—the transition between the Ming and Qing dynasties, which lasted from around 1580 to around 1680—branches of flowers and plants in vibrant colors often functioned as space-fillers for landscapes and



Fig. 9. Porcelain brushpot painted with famille verte enamels, dated 1709. Height 15.3 cm, diameter 18.5 cm. Paris, Musée des Arts Asiatiques-Guimet (G4217: collection Ernest Grandidier).



Fig. 10a–b. Two leaves from *Sixteen Peonies in the Imperial Garden* (1722), by Jiang Tingxi (1669–1732).

narrative scenes from popular dramas. Sometimes they crowd the entire surface of the porcelain vessel, as they do on a jar (ca. 1650) in the Butler family collection.²

Starting around 1700, floral subjects emerged as one of the most important decorative themes in Chinese ceramics, and the style also changed to showcase individual sprays. A vase in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, dated 1709, has framed panels with depictions of birds and flowers (fig. 8). Each panel resembles a fan or a leaf from a painted album,



Fig. 11. Porcelain waterpot with “peach-bloom” glaze, mark and reign of Kangxi (r. 1662–1772). Height 12.5 cm. Baltimore, The Walters Art Museum, bequest of Henry Walters, 1931 (49.692)

popular formats for the bird-and-flower genre since the thirteenth century. On another 1709 piece, now at the Musée Guimet, the bird-and-flower scene is the only painted decoration. Along with its dated inscription, the painting wraps around the circular vessel like a scroll (fig. 9).

With respect to their decoration, the Walters pieces are a development of the 1709 piece in the Musée Guimet, but they also imitate early eighteenth-century flower paintings from the Qing court. Each leaf in the album *Sixteen Peonies in the Imperial Garden* (1722), an important model for porcelain decoration by the court painter Jiang Tingxi (1669–1732) depicts a single spray of peony (figs. 10a, 10b). The poised bloom and sinuous stalk, carefully arranged against the blank background, are remarkably similar to those painted on the aforementioned pots. This simple style continued to be popular through the following Yongzheng (1723–1735) and Qianlong (1736–1795) periods. Furthermore, the subtle hue of underglaze red, as opposed to the flat iron-red enamel, may have been chosen specifically to match the soft and attractive colors in Jiang Tingxi’s flower paintings. The underglaze copper red in these two pieces at the Walters thus not only represents a technical achievement in the Kangxi porcelain, but also points to changing aesthetics.

RELATION TO THE “PEACH BLOOM” PORCELAINS

The “Peach Bloom” type porcelains of the Kangxi period are closely related to the two Walters pieces under discussion. Treasured by Eastern and Western collectors alike, the Peach Bloom glaze is a sophisticated variant of the copper-red glaze. It is dominated by blushes of red merging into a soft pink ground, and is frequently dotted with fine “moss green” or yellow-brown spots. Our knowledge of the Peach Bloom wares, including their date of production, is very limited, but a close examination of other examples in the Walters collection, and comparisons with the two underglaze red vessels may enhance our understanding of them.

These two groups share many stylistic features. The shape of a “beehive” vase decorated in the Peach Bloom glaze in the Walters collection (acc. no. 49.1099 and 49.697: its short neck and rimmed mouth resemble the small apple-shaped vase (49.1099) while its gently curving sides form silhouettes similar to the “beehive” water pot (49.697). In addition, the round bases of the two “beehive” vessels are of the same size.

Furthermore, this “Peach Bloom” vase is also inscribed with the mark “Da Qing Kangxi nian zhi”

(Made during the Kangxi reign of the Great Qing) (fig. 11). The six characters are arranged in three columns, as they are as on 49.1099 and 49.697 (see figs. 1 and 2)—an arrangement rarely found on other Kangxi porcelains.³ The calligraphic styles are close as well. The characters have long and narrow compositions. Idiosyncratic writing habits, such as the extension of the vertical strokes and the scissorlike endings (“swallow tail”) in some sideways strokes, appear in all these cases.

Moreover, the copper red glaze of both groups shows similar characteristics. Tiny green dots appear on the flowers painted in underglaze red, resembling the “moss green” dots that distinguish the Peach Bloom porcelains. Because of these similarities, the Peach Bloom porcelains very likely date to the final decade of the Kangxi reign as do 49.1099 and 49.697. Interestingly, the Peach Bloom porcelains, appearing in eight different shapes, including six small vases, a water pot for the brush, and an ink box, were also made for the emperor’s writing desk. Intimate items for everyday use, they reflect the emperor’s personal taste and form a unique group among Kangxi porcelains.

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NOTES

1. As a Mellon Curatorial Fellow at the Walters Art Museum, I presented an early version of this paper at Collectors’ Circle on March 10, 2004. I thank Dr. Hiram W. Woodward, my supervisor at that time, for sharing his observation and insights into the Kangxi porcelain. For a detailed description of the porcelain production at Jingdezhen in the eighteenth century, see the letters of Père Francois Xavier d’Entrecolles (1664–1741) written in 1712 and 1722, quoted in W. Burton, *Porcelain: A Sketch of Its Nature, Art, and Manufacture* (London, 1906).
2. See M. Butler, M. Medley, and S. Little, *Seventeenth-Century Chinese Porcelain from the Butler Family Collection*, exh. cat. (Alexandria, Va., 1990), 169.
3. In most cases, the six characters of the Kangxi mark are arranged in two columns and circled with double rings.

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Unexpected Japanese Ceramics in the Collection of the Walters Art Museum

LOUISE ALLISON CORT

The splendid re-creation of a Victorian collector's study that Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., devised for the Hackerman House galleries of the Walters Art Museum appropriately displays the categories of Japanese ceramics that were most important to William T. Walters (1819–1894) and his son, Henry (1845–1931). The dim, lush setting frames milk-white Hirado porcelain vessels with delicate cobalt blue decoration and cream-colored Satsuma and Kyoto stonewares with pastel enamels, making their appeal to the Walterses and other collectors of the day completely understandable. Also evident is the harmony of these varieties of Japanese ceramics—in terms of the perfection of their execution—with the Chinese porcelains exhibited in nearby rooms of Hackerman House.

It is a mistake, however, to assume that William and Henry Walters restricted their collecting to these categories of Japanese ceramics. A visit to the storeroom reveals another dimension of their collection and suggests that they were not as inflexibly committed to bright, decorated Japanese wares as the conventional view of their collection suggests. The shelves in storage show that they could be captivated, on occasion, by the heftier forms and more somber coloration of Japanese stoneware. In this they followed the lead of the Massachusetts zoologist and ceramics expert Edward Sylvester Morse (1838–1925), who advocated the superior role within traditional Japanese culture of the dark, undecorated wares, especially in the guise of tea bowls and other utensils made for the aesthetic pursuit of the Japanese tea ceremony. Morse exerted strong influence on some other collectors of the day, notably Charles Lang Freer (1854–1919), whose collection almost completely excluded examples of porcelain. To the extent that William and Henry Walters occasionally acquired pieces of stoneware in addition to their Hirado, Imari, and Satsuma-style wares, they exhibited a willingness to acquire across the spectrum

of Japanese production, rather than confine themselves to one pole.¹

How did such works enter William and Henry Walters' collection? To the extent that their purchases of Japanese stoneware have been tracked by Kathleen Emerson Dell, art historian and former curatorial assistant at the Walters, quite a few date to visits to the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia and the 1887 Paris Exposition Universelle, and they may indicate a taste still in the process of formation. Other pieces may represent occasional whims or recommendations of a shopping companion or a dealer. The Japanese stoneware in the collection nonetheless shows a consistency of form: father and son chose mainly vessels meant for ornamental display or tableware use, including vases, covered boxes (containers for incense pellets), large bowls (in the Japanese context, serving bowls), and dishes. Their stonewares include very few tea bowls (*chawan*) or jars for fresh water (*mizusashi*) made for the tea ceremony—the kinds of forms that attracted Freer, for example. The majority of their stonewares were fairly new at the time the Walterses acquired them, rather than antiques. The assortment reflects various facets of the great diversity of Japanese ceramic production, especially in the nineteenth century, but in a random fashion; it is by no means as comprehensive or balanced as the collection that Morse assembled and sold to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.²

Nonetheless, the collection contains small treasures to discover. A century and more of ongoing research, notably that of archaeologists investigating kiln sites and consumer sites, has changed the way many of the pieces purchased by William and Henry Walters are identified, dated, and assessed. The collection holds pieces that would not necessarily appeal to the interests of an early twenty-first century collector, including wares made at small kilns sponsored by military rulers (*daimyo*) and

nineteenth-century revivals of respected seventeenth-century types. The pieces by well-known masters of nineteenth-century Kyoto workshops, on the other hand, have been of ongoing interest.

This essay does not pretend to be a thorough analysis of the Japanese ceramics in the collection of the Walters Art Museum. Rather, it will pick up for enjoyment some of the unexpected pieces on the storeroom shelves, including those whose date and significance have been revealed only by recent research.

TEA TASTE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Despite William and Henry Walters' apparent lack of interest in Japanese ceramics for the tea ceremony, they acquired a few early pieces made for such use. During the sixteenth century in Japan, tea drinking among the cultural elite was transformed from a refreshment served in sets of standard Chinese or Chinese-style bowls to an aesthetic pursuit focusing on intense scrutiny and appreciation of the individuality and diversity of vessels used to prepare tea in front of the guests. The new form of tea drinking called for innovation in architectural settings, and serious tea drinkers withdrew from lavishly ornamented reception rooms—sites of the mass tea services favored by warrior hosts of earlier decades—to intimate studies or self-consciously rustic “huts.” Such compressed settings, intentionally stripped of distracting

ornament, allowed the selected tea utensils to stand out in stark relief. One expression of the day described this practice as “penning a fine horse in a thatched hut.”

The “fine horse” alluded in particular to the type of small, brown- or black-glazed Chinese stoneware jar used to contain powdered green tea, which the host scooped into a tea bowl and whisked with hot water. Chinese tea caddies (*chaire*), especially antique vessels that had been passed down in warrior collections for a century or more, occupied the pinnacle of prestige, but Japanese kilns in the adjoining Seto and Mino regions (near modern Nagoya) produced satisfactory substitutes. The Walterses acquired a small Seto or Mino jar that is such a piece (49.1185, fig. 1, left). Its round-shouldered body and low, rolled rim place it in the category of jar known as “taro-shaped” (*imo-no-ko*). Recent research on Seto and Mino kiln sites has shown that the *imo-no-ko* jar was one of several shapes made most abundantly in the last several decades of the sixteenth century.³ The shape was not known among antique Chinese jars, and its popularity represents a gradual emergence of distinctive Japanese forms that was to accelerate in the early seventeenth century.

The museum record shows that this jar was identified originally as “Tamba ware.” The prominent dealer Yamanaka and Company supplied the same attribution for a jar of the same type in the collection of the Freer Gallery of Art (F1905.47).⁴ In each case the clay body



Fig. 1. *Left*: Tea caddy. Seto or Mino ware. Muromachi or Momoyama period, second half of the 16th century. Stoneware with iron glaze; ivory lid, height 6.99 cm (49.1185). *Center*: Tea caddy. Seto or Mino ware. Momoyama period, ca. 1590s. Stoneware with iron glaze; ivory lid, height 8.89 cm (49.1171). *Right*: Small utilitarian jar possibly used as a tea caddy. Seto or Mino ware, Muromachi period, mid-16th century. Stoneware with ash glaze, height 9.84 cm (49.1121)

may have been the reason; both jars were made with fine-grained dark brown clay instead of the light brown clay body associated with typical Seto ware. Archaeology and local lore show, however, that Seto and Mino potters selected special veins of dark clay for making tea caddies and larger tea-leaf storage jars (*chatsubo*) in the classic Chinese mode. A kiln making tea caddies did operate within Tamba province for a short while in the early seventeenth century, under the patronage of the local warrior domain, and its name continued to be known among later tea practitioners, but few of its products can be reliably identified. In the case of the Walters and Freer tea caddies, it is unclear whether the attribution to Tamba perpetuated older attributions recorded on storage boxes or began with the dealers in search of likely identities.

Another Seto or Mino jar in the Walters collection (49.1171, fig. 1, center) represents a further transformation of the tea caddy shape away from the Chinese model, under the influence of an innovative sense of ceramic form that was pervasive in the years around 1600. A flat, overhanging shoulder and a swollen base frame the barrel-shaped body of this jar. This elongated, sculptural form can also be found in much larger vessels of the same date, including vases and tea-leaf storage jars. It is not confined to Seto and Mino products but appears also among tea wares made at other regional kilns, including Shigaraki, Iga, and Bizen. A few decades ago, this widespread resemblance among wares from different kilns was discussed as “period style.” More recently, scholars have recognized the decisive role of Kyoto ceramic merchants in dispersing the style by placing orders at the regional kilns. Excavation of the sites of merchant shops in Kyoto dating from the 1590s to the 1620s has revealed stocks of tea wares from diverse sources bearing the imprint of a common taste in form—perhaps that of the merchant himself, who might also have been active in circles of tea-ceremony practitioners.⁵ Fragments of tea caddies of this type were recovered from such sites. The dull brown glaze of this example indicates that it was less than perfectly fired, but it was probably passed down in modest tea-utensil collections throughout the Edo period (1615–1868).

A third Seto or Mino jar in the Walters collection (49.1121, fig. 1, right) represents another dimension of ceramic production at the mid-sixteenth-century Seto and Mino kilns. This small, sturdy jar with wide mouth was made as a utilitarian container. The base still shows the spiral mark left by a twisted cord used to sever the jar from the lump of clay out of which it was formed; the potter did not go back to trim away this scar, as he

might have in the case of a tea caddy. The glazed ceramic lid that accompanied this jar into the Walters collection has the form of a Chinese lion-dog with openings suiting it to use on an incense burner; it was probably added by a resourceful dealer. More likely, the jar was once fitted with an ivory lid and “borrowed” for use as a tea caddy. Foraging among ordinary market pots for likely tea utensils was a popular activity among tea practitioners in the mid-sixteenth century, and was one of the earliest ways of expanding the existing repertory of vessel shapes.⁶ Perhaps the small bluish white spot in the otherwise basic olive green glaze (suggesting the presence of rice straw in the glaze mixture or the fuel for firing) distinguished this jar from others alongside it to someone searching for a tea caddy.

Whereas warriors had dominated the earlier form of tea drinking, merchants stepped into the role of arbiters of taste for the new mode. Not surprisingly, these men, who became known for their ability to single out appropriate vessels and arrange them in striking new combinations, were the same ones who made their wealth in the dynamically expanding international trade with China, Korea, and Southeast Asia—and, after mid-century, with Portugal, Spain, and Holland. Trade brought to Japanese markets new varieties of Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Thai, and even Dutch ceramics that invited daring experimentation with choices of tea utensils. Recent archaeology has revealed that Japanese merchants were quick to respond to the arrival of likely tea utensils by sending out orders for more of the same—or with specified improvements. Tableware bowls made at provincial kilns in southeastern Korea, for instance, were put to use as tea bowls in Japan if they were of an appropriate size. By the 1580s, Korean and Japanese scholars now suggest, some provincial kilns filled Japanese orders for tea bowls.

The Walters Art Museum owns a rare example outside Japanese collections of such a bowl (49.2097, fig. 2). Its shape is too low and shallow for tableware use but ideal as a tea bowl. It belongs to the family of Korean ceramics known as *punch'ong* ware, made of dark, coarse stoneware and decorated with white slip under a clear glaze. In the decorative format used for this bowl, white slip was brushed over two bands filled by incised diagonal lines that change direction from time to time, and over flower motifs stamped in the bottom. The white slip filled the incised and stamped patterns, and the excess was scraped off, leaving white patterns against the dark body. Japanese tea connoisseurs referred to this type of decoration as “carved slip-decorated ware” (*horimishima*). Such was its popularity that potters working



Fig. 2. Tea bowl, *hori-mishima* type. Korea, Kyongsang Namdo province, made to order for the Japanese market. Choson period, ca. 1580–1610. Stoneware with inlaid slip under glaze, diameter 13.9 cm (49.2097)

at kilns in Karatsu, in southern Japan, made copies in the early seventeenth century. (One such bowl is in the Freer collection, F1898.18.) Distinguishing the Walters bowl and other Korean prototypes is a circle of eight round scars in the glaze on the interior, left by small clay balls used for separating a stack of identical bowls for firing. This was the practical approach taken by Korean potters making utilitarian wares; potters making copies in Japan fired their bowls one at a time, so as not to scar the interior surface.

TEA-RELATED CERAMICS IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

A single small, hexagonal cup in the Walters collection (49.1196, fig. 3) represents a dynamic transformation that took place in ceramic production at the Mino kilns by the end of the sixteenth century. The cup's angular walls (shaped by the potter's fingers manipulating the wet clay of a wheel-thrown cylinder) indicate that it was made not as a sake cup but as a container for a tiny morsel of fish or vegetable (like the modern *amuse-gueule*) meant to accompany a flask of sake. The cup would have been purchased as part of a set of five, ten, or twenty like pieces. As a tableware form, it is associated with the refined cuisine known as *kaiseki* that developed in association with the new form of tea drinking. Responding to requests from Kyoto merchants and other urban connoisseurs for



Fig. 3. Hexagonal cup for food. Mino ware, Momoyama period, ca. 1600–15. Stoneware with iron and ash glazes, height 5.1 cm; maximum diameter 7.4 cm (49.1196)

new forms of ceramic tableware, Mino potters developed colorful new glazes that expanded the somber palette of the sixteenth century. This cup bears a chocolate-brown iron glaze, lightened and made translucent by splashes of wood-ash glaze, but other versions are known with copper green or amber yellow glaze. Japanese diners would have understood the six-sided shape as representing tortoiseshell—and by extension the auspicious meaning of the tortoise, which is said to live for ten thousand years.



Fig. 4. *Left*: Tea bowl. White Satsuma ware, Hiyamizu kiln. Edo period, late 17th or 18th century. White stoneware with clear glaze, height 9.9 cm (49.2116). *Right*: Tea caddy. White Satsuma ware, Hiyamizu kiln. Edo period, late 17th or 18th century. White stoneware with clear glaze; ivory lid, height 6.8 cm (49.434)

This tiny cup must bear the full weight of representing the great ceramic burgeoning of the early seventeenth century, as William and Henry Walters seemingly acquired no other ceramic works of that date. (They bought this cup at the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia.)

Especially since the first identification of Momoyama-period (1568–1615) kiln sites in Gifu prefecture (the former Mino province, the source of the ware's name) in the early 1930s, many Japanese connoisseurs have celebrated Mino ware—along with Momoyama-period wares from other kilns—as the supreme achievement of the Japanese ceramic tradition. Early American collections (including those of Charles Lang Freer) rarely included such wares, either because the large, asymmetrical forms and sensuous glazes did not appeal, or because such wares were already sequestered in Japanese tea-ceremony collections. Edward Sylvester Morse's recorded comments on Freer's collection suggest that he was not especially familiar with Momoyama-period ceramics, possibly indicating that he had not seen many in Japan. According to notes in object records, he tended to condemn the few pieces Freer owned as “modern rubbish made to fool the foreigners.”

At the end of the sixteenth century, the potential for production of glazed ceramics suddenly expanded dramatically with the arrival of Korean potters brought by regional warriors who had participated in the Japanese

military campaigns on the Korean peninsula in the 1590s. Highly valued for their knowledge of advanced ceramic technology, these potters received financial support to set up kilns in various warrior-ruled domains. They located sources of diverse clays, formulated glazes from local materials, and introduced the multiple-chamber climbing kiln—larger, more flexible, and more efficient than the single-chamber kilns then in use in Japan.

The Walters collection includes pieces that represent the output of several such kilns from the mid-seventeenth century or later, when they were well established. (Some kilns started in this way had failed and disappeared, usually as the result of larger economic problems in the domain.) The Satsuma domain in southern Kyushu sponsored two different lineages of Korean potters. One made dark-bodied, black-glazed utilitarian ware (known in Korea as *onggi*). The other lineage descended from potters who had worked at provincial porcelain kilns in southeastern Korea. They did not locate porcelain clay within Satsuma, but they did find a closely equivalent white stoneware clay, with which they produced tea wares for the domain's official use. This white stoneware developed into the enamel-decorated ware of the nineteenth century that Walters father and son collected with great fervor, both in its original Satsuma version and in the forms of “Satsuma” stoneware made in Kyoto and Kobe. But they also acquired two white Satsuma tea-ceremony utensils made at the Hiyamizu kiln, which operated from

the late seventeenth through the eighteenth century—a tea caddy (49.434) and a tea bowl (49.2116) (fig. 4). The tea bowl is plain, its only ornament a neat spiral cut into the base as an elaboration of the process of trimming the foot. The tea caddy is heavy for its size, and more mannered: its shoulder is broader than its tapered base, and its conical body is textured by diagonal grooves incised while the vessel was spun on the wheel in both directions, so that the grooves spiral across one another. Both pieces bear colorless, finely crackled glaze that shows off the dense white clay body.

The Korean potters who settled in the Hizen domain in northwestern Kyushu also exploited both light and dark clays for different types of work, but they were fortunate in finding, near the village of Arita, a mountain of fine white kaolin that could be used to make true porcelain. By the mid-seventeenth century, Arita potters were making refined and diverse tablewares (and, to a lesser extent, tea-ceremony wares) for the domestic market, at the same time as they were beginning to fill orders from Dutch merchants for export. Their major product was “blue and white”—cobalt decoration under clear glaze—but they also began using lead-silicate enamels (introduced from China) to paint decoration over the glaze or to cover the vessel completely. They also employed colored glazes of various hues, including celadon, copper green, and various iron-based shades of yellow and brown. The Walters collection includes a small dish with undulating and delicately asymmetrical rim that proves to be a rare type of Arita ware (49.2096, fig. 5). Like the Mino cup, this dish is an isolated survivor from a set of tableware vessels. Used in the *kaiseki* meal as a serving dish for an individual portion of fish and vegetables, the dish would have appeared together with lacquered bowls for soup and rice on a square lacquered tray placed before a guest.

The primary glaze on the small dish is amber yellow, tinted with iron that appears darker brown where the glaze is thin. One corner of the dish was dipped into copper green glaze, in a nod to the two-color glazing featuring irregular patches of copper green that was the hallmark of Oribe ware made in Mino at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The dish’s most unusual feature is its enamel decoration, executed in silver enamel that has become nearly invisible through discoloration and wear. The patch of copper green glaze became a pond when the decorator sketched a wading heron, reeds, and clouds. Silver enamel was used at Arita for only a short time during the earliest, experimental stage of enamel decorating, perhaps because it tarnished and rubbed off, as happened on this rare dish.

Several small dishes of this family are known in Western collections, but the variations of brown glaze concealing the porcelain body led to misidentification that has been corrected only recently. Morse called a “cake plate” in his collection (no. 1868) “Fujina ware,” believing it to be a “circa 1780” product of a kiln in Izumo province (modern Shimane prefecture). Yamanaka sold a related dish with mottled iron glaze to Charles Freer as “Kutani ware” (F1898.495), but Morse “corrected” that identification to Izumo. A dish of this type presented by Howard Mansfield to the Metropolitan Museum of Art (36.120.507) bears a label inscribed “Izumo (Morse),” indicating the widespread influence of Morse’s identifications. Still another dish is in the collection of the British Museum.

Alongside the emergence and expansion of new Japanese kilns, the popularity of Korean and Korean-style tea ceramics continued unabated. Overseeing trade with Korea had long been an economic mainstay of the So warrior house, based on the island of Tsushima in the straits between southern Korea and Kyushu. In the seventeenth century, the So house eagerly pressed to repair Japan’s political and economic relationship with Korea following the military campaigns mentioned earlier. Once official trade reopened, they built upon the old interest in ordering tea ceramics from Korea through



Fig. 5. Individual serving dish for food. Arita ware. Edo period, ca. 1650–70. Porcelain with iron and copper glazes and silver enamel, height 4.5 cm; maximum diameter 13.5 cm (49.2096)

a truly novel venture. Within the Japanese trading compound (Wakan) near the city of Pusan, they built a pottery workshop and kiln, which they staffed with Korean workers and stocked with Korean clay and fuel. Japanese potters visited periodically to supervise production. Between 1639 and 1717 they took orders from tea-ceremony practitioners—especially from fellow members of the warrior class—for tea wares and table wares to be made and fired at the Wakan kiln. The wares combined an exotic flavor with a precise match to Japanese requirements.

A low celadon-glazed tea bowl in the Walters collection was made at the Wakan kiln (49.134, fig. 6). Its heft, size, and simplicity of form suggest that it is a relatively early product of the kiln, when Korean-made bowls such as the *hori-mishima* bowl still influenced taste. The bowl is formed of dense, dark brown clay with an undulating wall and everted rim. Thick olive green glaze covers the bowl, including the base (which was supported for firing on three clay balls placed beneath the foot-rim). The decoration appears to echo stamped slip-inlaid décor on celadon-glazed bowls of the fourteenth century; such bowls were known in Japan as antiques. But the layout and execution are Japanese in style: in place of the densely stamped patterns characteristic of Korean bowls, the motifs are sparse and widely spaced. On the outside, flying cranes alternate with clouds. On the inside wall, in a curiously hybrid design, four heart-shaped leaves frame Korean-style full-face wild aster flowers. In the bottom, a square seal-like stamp bears an illegible character.

Records of the Wakan kiln's operation preserved in the So archives, as well as references in tea-ceremony

diaries and other documents, suggest that Wakan or Pusan wares were surprisingly abundant. They were ordered and presented as gifts in quantity—twenty tea bowls at a time—rather than individually. The preeminence of Momoyama-period ceramics during much of the twentieth century has obscured awareness of these wares, even within Japan, but they are numerous in older European and North American collections. Pieces like the Walters bowl document a subdued, neoclassical taste that replaced the exuberant experimentation of Momoyama-period ceramics.

LATER DOMAIN-SPONSORED WARES: “OFFICIAL KILNS” AND “GARDEN POTTERIES”

Throughout the Edo period (1615–1868) warrior-rulers with economic means followed the pattern established in the seventeenth century of supporting designated workshops of potters within larger pottery-making villages to make wares to order for the domain's official use. Such workshops (typically three) enjoyed special status. Their products were employed within the domain residences in the home province, the political capital of Edo, and the cultural and imperial center of Kyoto, and they were distributed in gift exchanges with Tokugawa government officials, other warrior domains, and local retainers. In some domains with high cultural aspirations, the official potters also operated a small workshop situated within spacious gardens surrounding a secondary residence of the ruling family. These “recreational” workshops operated intermittently, providing entertainment for the



Fig. 6. Tea bowl with slip-inlaid decoration. Korea, Kyongsang Namdo province, Pusan or Wakan ware. Choson period, 1639–1717. Stoneware with white slip under celadon glaze, height 6.3 cm, diameter 13.7 cm (49.134)



Fig. 7. Tea bowl in style of “white *temmoku*.” Seto or Nagoya, Ofuke ware. Edo period, 18th or first half of the 19th century. Stoneware with rice-straw ash glaze, height 5.8 cm; diameter 11.6 cm (49.440).

domain lord and his officials and guests, who observed and sometimes even made wares by hand themselves. Such facilities were known as “garden kilns.” Finally, official potters occasionally provided technical support for amateur ceramic production by individual retainers. The Walters collection includes all three types of wares made at, or supported by, the official potters in Seto.

Following a major reallocation of landholding under the new Tokugawa government in 1603, the kilns in both Seto and Mino lay within the domain assigned to a branch of the Tokugawa ruling family. The Owari Tokugawa favored Seto wares with their conservative stylistic links to the heirloom Chinese ceramics still of great importance in warrior collections, and they designated three workshops in Seto as hereditary official potters. (The Mino kilns, meanwhile, after their burst of glory gradually faded into production of competent if unexceptional utilitarian wares.) By 1634, the official potters prepared a pottery workshop within the Owari Tokugawa castle in Nagoya, in the residential area known as Ofuke-no-maru. In contrast to the brown glaze traditionally associated with Seto tea wares, Ofuke ware bore pale green or milky white glaze that was sometimes combined with underglaze cobalt decoration, in a clear effort to use stoneware materials to replicate the appearance of (Chinese) porcelain.⁷ The Owari Tokugawa made special use of the Ofuke-ware format to create a “brand” gift item replicating a famous tea bowl that was a star of their collection. This “Joo white *temmoku*” tea bowl had the conical shape of Chinese Jian-ware brown-glazed tea bowls, known in Japan as *temmoku*, but used pale green ash glaze; it had been made at a Mino kiln in the early sixteenth century and was owned by the most influential tea master of the era, Takeno Joo (1502–1555).⁸ Generations of official potters made Ofuke-ware versions of the “white *temmoku*” bowl, one of which is in the Walters collection (49.440, fig. 7).

The Owari Tokugawa also called upon the Seto official potters to set up a kiln in the garden of the Toyama detached residence in Edo, where the daimyo and his family lived while in regular required attendance in the capital. Taking its name from the garden, the “Rakurakuen” kiln operated in the seventeenth century and again in the nineteenth century, during another era of general prosperity.⁹ Most surviving works appear to date to the latter period of operation, including a tea caddy in the Walters collection (49.1158, fig. 8a). Following the mode of Chinese and earlier Seto tea caddies, thick iron glaze veils the jar’s high-shouldered profile. The base bears the impression of a gourd-shaped seal reading “Rakurakuen” (fig. 8b) Although official wares and “garden” wares of

the seventeenth century were typically unmarked, marks often appeared on nineteenth-century products such as this tea caddy.

In addition, the Walters collection includes a work made by an Owari Tokugawa retainer, Masaki Sozaburo (1801–1850) (49.357, fig. 9a). The diminutive box is laden with auspicious imagery, beginning with its form in the shape of a Chinese silver ingot. The Daoist immortal known in Japan as Jurojin—distinguished by his elongated bald head and associated with longevity—leans against a crane, which is said to live for one thousand years. Immortal and bird gaze down at a minute



ABOVE: Fig. 8a. Tea caddy. Edo, Rakurakuen ware. Edo period, probably first half of the 19th century. Stoneware with iron glaze; ivory lid, height 7.6 cm (49.1158)



RIGHT: Fig. 8b. Tea caddy (49.1158): seal

tortoise (famed for its ten-thousand-year lifespan). The base of the hand-modeled box bears Masaki's horizontal seal "Masaki" together with an inscription, "Made by Sobokai," referring to a silver seal he had received from the Owari Tokugawa daimyo (fig. 9b). Both Sozaburo and his son, Iori (1827–1879), fired their ceramic work at Seto and at the Ofuke kiln inside Nagoya Castle.

Another daimyo-sponsored pottery, the Agano kiln in Kyushu, owed its origin to patronage of immigrant Korean potters by Hosokawa Sansai (1563–1645), a daimyo famous for his dedication to the tea ceremony. In 1632 the Tokugawa government transferred Sansai to a domain elsewhere in Kyushu, and he took most of his potters with him; one Agano workshop established under Sansai's rule continued to operate. Three households of hereditary potters managed the Sarayama Hongama—the "main kiln" (multichambered climbing kiln) of the Agano "dish mountain" (a common term for a center of pottery production)—as "official potters"

of the Ogasawara, new rulers of the domain. These workshops marked their wares elaborately with pairs of stamped seals. One, a spiral inside a circle impressed on every piece, identified the work as Agano ware; the other mark distinguished the workshop.

The base of a tall, slender sake flask in the Walters collection (49.1967, fig. 10), a product of the Sarayama Hongama, bears the character *ho* in a rectangular frame. That seal distinguishes the work of Totoki Hosho, head of the Totoki workshop during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, at the peak of Sarayama Hongama's productivity. The bottle's complex décor



ABOVE: Fig. 9a. Incense container with sculpted figures of Jurojin with a crane and a tortoise. Seto, Masaki ware, by Masaki Sozaburo. Edo period, first half of the 19th century. Stoneware with Shino-style feldspathic glaze, height 4.7 cm (49.357)

RIGHT: Fig. 9b. Incense container (49.357): inscription and seal



Fig. 10. Sake bottle with incised and stenciled design of chrysanthemum vinescrolls. Agano ware, by Totoki Hosho. Edo period, early 19th century. Stoneware with white slip and copper, iron, cobalt, and clear glazes, height 29.6 cm (49.1967)



ABOVE: Fig. 11a. *Left*: Incense box in the shape of a mandarin duck. Oda ware. Edo period, early 19th century. Porcelain with underglaze cobalt, height 4.4 cm (49.342). *Right*: Bottle (for perfume?) with landscape design. Oda ware. Edo period or Meiji era, third quarter of 19th century. Porcelain with underglaze cobalt, height 8 cm; maximum diameter 10 cm (49.411)

RIGHT: Fig. 11b: Bottle with landscape design (49.411): inscription



reflects the variety of innovative glazes that characterize this period of Agano production. Smooth copper green glaze covers the neck, while a band of rough-textured iron glaze defines the base. A chrysanthemum motif scrolls up and down the body. The vines and leaves were incised through a coating of white slip, while the flowers were executed by brushing iron brown pigment through a paper stencil (possibly borrowed from a textile decorator's workshop). Touches of powder-blue glaze (white slip colored with cobalt) enliven the leaves.

The Higo domain (modern Kumamoto prefecture), to which Hosokawa Sansai moved, sponsored stoneware production at the Yatsushiro and Shodai kilns, as well as porcelain at the Oda kiln, which operated only from 1793 to 1877. The Walters collection included two examples of this ware. An incense box molded in the shape of a mandarin duck (49.342) bears a lengthy inscription written in cobalt on the base: "Made at Oda mountain, Uto county, Higo [province]" (fig. 11a, left). A dot of black pigment defining the eye is the only interruption to the refined white body, which is close to that of Hirado ware and made use of the same raw materials from Amakusa Island, off the west coast of Kyushu. A second piece with the same inscription is a small beaker-shaped bottle

whose shape suggests a European model (49.411, figs. 11a, right and 11b). It rests on three pointed feet, and large wing-shaped handles rise to either side of the elongated neck. Into the neck fits a hollow porcelain rod with a flower-shaped knob. If the vessel was intended to hold perfume, it may have been produced for the international exposition market in the final years of the kiln's operation. These rare pieces from a little-known kiln represent the rising interest in porcelain production at kilns throughout Japan in the early nineteenth century.

The Kairakuen kiln was the "garden kiln" sponsored by the Kii branch of the Tokugawa house, in Kii province (modern Wakayama prefecture). Like the Rakurakuen kiln, it operated irregularly (firing just four times between 1819 and 1836), drawing upon the services of potters from various Kyoto workshops. Kairakuen products reflect a marked revival of interest in Chinese ceramics in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In 1876, at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, William



Fig. 13. Vase. Wakayama, Kairakuen ware. Edo period, early 19th century. Porcelain with turquoise enamel glaze on the biscuit, height 25.1 cm (49.1668)



Fig. 14. Tea bowl. Raku-style ware. Edo period, late 17th century or later. Earthenware with black Raku-type glaze, height 9.6 cm (49.2119)

Walters bought a Kairakuen vase (49.1668, fig. 13) whose restrained shape and overall turquoise enamel glaze applied over the porcelain biscuit follow Qing dynasty ceramic models. The design of the four-character mark, “Made at Kairakuen,” imitates enamel four-character seals appearing on Qing imperial wares.

THE KYOTO CERAMIC TRADITION

In the late sixteenth century, around the time that the Mino kilns began making innovative tea-ceremony wares and shortly before Korean potters initiated tea-ware production at kilns in southern Japan, specialized tea-bowl production also began in the capital city of Kyoto. This hand-formed ware is identified with the Raku family workshop, which has continued to the present day, although recent archaeology has shown that several different workshops made “Raku ware” within Kyoto during the Momoyama period, and documentary research suggests that the technology originated with immigrant potters from southern China. A deep cylindrical Raku-ware tea bowl in the Walters collection (49.2119, fig. 14) shows the dark red flush in its pitted black glaze that is associated with the fourth head of the Raku workshop, Ichinyu (1640–1696), but the bowl is unmarked and may be a later product of one of numerous workshops (including daimyo “garden kilns” and amateur tea enthusiasts) that made Raku-style ware in the nineteenth century.¹⁰

A second important lineage of ceramics associated with Kyoto began during the 1620s, when a Seto potter is said to have built a multichambered climbing kiln to make glazed stoneware. Prosperous temples with land on which kilns could be built were quick to sponsor such workshops as commercial ventures, and by the late 1640s the products incorporated overglaze enamel decoration seemingly based on Chinese technology. A square vase in the Walters collection (49.2080, figs. 15a–e) embodies the refined materials and sophisticated design characteristic of Kyoto stoneware ceramics. On two sides (figs. 15b and 15c) the decoration rendered in thick enamels replicates the appearance of a luxurious lily-patterned binding for a calendar bearing a date corresponding to 1705. A third side of the vase (fig. 15d) shows the calendar page for the first month, while the fourth (fig. 15e) bears scattered roundels representing the twelve cyclical animals of the East Asian calendar. The vase is not marked. For an identical vase in the Baur Collection, Geneva, Switzerland, John Ayers proposed a date in the nineteenth century.¹¹ According to research by Oka Yoshiko, however, most seventeenth- and nineteenth-century Kyoto ceramics



Figs. 15a–c. Vase in the shape of a calendar dated to 1705. Kyoto ware. Edo period, 18th century. Stoneware with enamels over clear glaze, height 32.6 cm (49.2080)



bore workshop marks, whereas most eighteenth-century pieces were unmarked.¹² It is not impossible that this vase could date close to the year 1705.

Such was the fame of Kyoto stoneware that many workshop masters became known widely by name, whereas the heads of regional workshops usually worked anonymously. Nonomura Ninsei (active ca. 1647–1677), whose workshop is credited with introducing the use of enamel decoration to Kyoto wares, was famous in his own day and much imitated thereafter. (William and Henry Walters acquired several Ninsei-style pieces probably made in the early nineteenth century.) Ninsei's workshop was located on land belonging to a temple headed by an imperial prince, and his work was promoted by a leading warrior-class tea master. When the workshop, under management of Ninsei's less capable son, closed in 1698, a Kyoto merchant-class dilettante, Ogata Kenzan (1663–1743), bought both the facility and Ninsei's prized notebook of clay and glaze formulas. Kenzan drew upon his training in painting, calligraphy, and classical literature to introduce a new elegance of design to his quintessentially Kyoto ceramic wares. Like Ninsei's designs, Kenzan's ceramics were widely imitated during his lifetime and became the basis for an established style of decoration that has continued to the present day.¹³

The "Kenzan" pieces in the Walters collection represent this larger and later tradition. A cylindrical container for incense or charcoal (for lighting tobacco pipes) (49.2115, fig. 16) bears a delicate design of a willow tree and the spurious signature of Ogata Korin (1658–1716),

Kenzan's older brother and a famous painter who was known to have collaborated with Kenzan to design ceramics; Kenzan's false signature appears in iron on the base. Richard Wilson, who has made a careful study of the "Kenzan style," dates works of this type to the early nineteenth century.¹⁴ A fan-shaped container for incense pellets sculpted in Raku-type earthenware (49.1372, fig. 17, left) represents Kyoto potters' penchant, seen also in the "calendar" vase, for replicating other luxury items also made in Kyoto. Kenzan's signature is cleverly incorporated into the colophon on the fan's face, which bears a Chinese poem and a "painting" of a flowering branch. Bands of iron-brushed "mist" brushed on the box's interior reflect a mode of decoration developed by Kenzan based on decorated paper used for calligraphy handscrolls.

Another incense container (49.354, fig. 17, right) reflects not only the enduring popularity of "Kenzan" ware but also the interest, mentioned earlier, in imitating classic tea-ceremony wares. This box faithfully imitates a small iron-decorated box made at the Sawankhalok (Si Satchanalai) kilns in north-central Thailand in the sixteenth century. When imported to Japan, such boxes proved perfect as incense pellet containers. Thai potters had modeled them after the tropical fruit called mangosteen, but Japanese connoisseurs interpreted them as persimmons. "Sawankhalok persimmon" incense boxes ranked high in a list of popular incense-box shapes published in the nineteenth century. The iron pigment decoration on this box replaces Thai elements with Japanese



LEFT: Fig. 16. Incense or charcoal burner with signatures of Ogata Korin and Ogata Kenzan. Kyoto ware. Edo period, 19th century. Stoneware, white slip with iron and cobalt pigments under clear glaze, height 10.2 cm (49.2115)

BELOW: Fig. 17. *Left:* Incense box in shape of folding fan, with signature of Ogata Kenzan. Kyoto ware. Edo period, 19th century. Raku-type earthenware with iron pigment under glaze, enamels over glaze, width 7.7 cm (49.1372). *Right:* Incense box in style of Sawankhalok ware, with signature of Ogata Kenzan. Kyoto ware. Edo period, early 19th century. Stoneware with iron under clear glaze, height 3.8 cm; diameter 5.9 cm (49.354).





Fig. 18. *Left*: Vase in style of late Ming porcelain. Kyoto ware, by Nin'ami Dohachi (1783–1855). Edo period, early 19th century. Porcelain with cobalt decoration under clear glaze, height 19.4 cm (49.1471). *Right*: Charcoal burner in style of Shonzui ware. Kyoto ware, attributed to Eiraku Hozen (1795–1854). Edo period, early 19th century. Porcelain with cobalt decoration under clear glaze, height 9.2 cm (49.944)



Fig. 19. *Left*: Incense box in style of Kochi ware. Kyoto ware, by Eiraku Hozen. Edo period, early 19th century. Porcelain with enamels on the biscuit, height 5.8 cm (49.353). *Right*: Tea bowl in style of *kinrande* ware. Kyoto ware, by Eiraku Wazen. Edo period, mid-19th century. Porcelain with underglaze cobalt and overglaze enamels, height 6.2 cm (49.608)

plum-blossom shapes—a familiar Kyoto touch. The signature “Kenzan” written in iron on the base associates the piece correctly with one aspect of the “Kenzan style”—the replication of exotic ceramic objects.¹⁵ William Walters bought this box at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1878 as “Kenzan, about 130 years old.”

William and Henry Walters acquired many well-wrought products of nineteenth-century Kyoto ceramic workshops. Two pieces represent the rise to prominence

of cobalt-decorated porcelain in Kyoto as well, reflecting the broader revival of interest in Chinese-style wares. A porcelain vase (49.1471, fig. 18, left) with cobalt decoration by Nin'ami Dohachi (1783–1855) imitates the form of a Chinese Wanli-era vase with lotus-petal forms in relief. The inscription in cobalt on the base includes “Kachutei,” a studio name. Dohachi may have based his design on porcelain made in Jingdezhen for the Japanese market in the early years of the seventeenth century.¹⁶ A slightly later type of Chinese porcelain also made for Japan inspired a porcelain charcoal burner attributed to the head of another established Kyoto workshop, Eiraku Hozen (1795–1854) (49.944, fig. 18, right). William Walters purchased this vessel as well at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1878.

Products of the Eiraku workshop under successive generations of master were well represented at international expositions, as the Walters collection demonstrates. In Paris in 1878 William Walters also bought a small incense box by Eiraku Hozen (49.353, fig. 19, left) and a tea bowl by Hozen's son, Eiraku Wazen (1823–1896) (49.608, fig. 19, right). The incense box is molded from porcelain and bears a combination of vivid green, purple, and yellow enamel glazes associated with yet another Chinese ware imported to Japan and esteemed for tea-ceremony use. Known in Japan as “Kochi” ware, after



Fig. 20. *Left:* Vase with two glazes. Kyoto ware, by Eiraku Wazen (1823–1892). Edo period, mid-19th century. Stoneware with rice-straw-ash and iron glazes, height 21.3 cm; diameter 13.3 cm (49.1582). *Center and right:* Pair of sake bottles with two glazes. Kyoto ware, by Eiraku Wazen. Edo period or Meiji era, mid-19th century (before 1876). Stoneware with rice-straw ash and iron glazes, height 13.8 cm; diameter 6.4 cm (49.231, 49.232)

ports of Vietnam through which it may have traveled, this ware can now be associated, through archaeological excavation, with kilns in southern Fujian province.¹⁷ The lobed base of the Walters incense box is identical to that of a Hozen incense box in the Freer Gallery of Art (Fr899.88), but the Freer piece—whose green glaze misfired to a mottled metallic finish—was rescued by being fitted with an ivory lid to become a tea caddy.

Like the white Ofuke bowl discussed earlier, the Wazen porcelain bowl copies the form of a classic Chinese Jian-ware tea bowl. The bowl's decoration in red and gold enamels with a design of phoenixes and peonies exemplifies Wazen's well-known versions of a Chinese porcelain format of the mid-sixteenth century, known in Japan as *kinrande*. The interior of the bowl bears a standard Chinese message of good wishes: "May you live as long as South Mountain and may your blessings be as great as the Eastern Sea," together with the character *kotobuki*, "long life." The impressed mark on the bowl's unglazed foot reads "Kahin shiryu." Hozen had received this seal from the Kii Tokugawa daimyo in appreciation for his work at the Kairakuen kiln in 1827, and Wazen continued to use it.

Other Wazen pieces in the Walters collection represent the great diversity of styles associated with the prominent Kyoto workshops of the nineteenth century,

where historical Chinese, Korean, and Japanese ceramics served as models for refined and well executed interpretations. A tall vase of elegant (perhaps Chinese-inspired) form with cream and iron brown glazes (49.1582, fig. 20, left) reflects the particular glazing introduced at Kyushu kilns in the early seventeenth century and replicated in Kyoto by mid-century, notably in the work of Ninsei. The unglazed base of this vase bears an impressed round seal reading "Kahin shiryu." Next to it is an oval seal reading "Ouchiyama hatsugama"—first firing of the Ouchiyama kiln. Wazen impressed this mark on pieces he made in 1852 at the Ouchiyama kiln, which he built on the site of Ninsei's workshop in northwest Kyoto and continued to operate until 1865. This rare work thus represents Wazen's homage to Ninsei, who in turn had paid homage to early Kyushu kilns. The unctuous combination of light and dark glazes, which melted together in the firing, also appears on a pair of sake bottles made at the Eiraku Wazen workshop (49.231–232, fig. 20, center and right). Like the vase, they translate a rustic, provincial glaze format into an elegant vessel embodying Kyoto style.

Wazen's son Tokuzen (1853–1910) was responsible for a miniature display of virtuoso technique in the form of a white porcelain sake cup imitating Chinese Ding ware (49.323, fig. 21). The translucent cup bears a molded relief



Fig. 21. Sake cup in style of Ding ware. Kyoto ware, by Eiraku Tokuzen (1853–1909). Meiji era, late 19th century. Porcelain with clear glaze; copper rim, diameter 8.1 cm (49.323)



Fig. 22. Teapot for steeped tea. Kyoto ware, by Otagaki Rengetsu (1791–1875) or Kuroda Koryo. Edo period or Meiji era, mid-19th century. Stoneware with rice-straw-ash glaze, height 12.22 cm (49.891)

design of phoenixes and auspicious clouds. Following the customary treatment of Ding bowls, whose rims were unglazed, the rim of this tiny replica is edged with a band of copper. The choice of a Song dynasty Chinese ware instead of a Ming porcelain as model reflects the changing taste of Japanese ceramics connoisseurs and collectors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Whereas Ming pieces had reached Japan in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and could be found in collections, Ding ware was not exported to Japan until modern times.

Reference has been made to the role of amateur potters in making Raku ware or working alongside professional potters as daimyo-sponsored “garden kilns.” Another dimension of such activity is represented by the handmade ceramics produced by a woman named Otagaki Rengetsu (1791–1875). In 1878, at the Exposition Universelle in Paris, William Walters bought a teapot in the distinctive style associated with Rengetsu (49.891, fig. 22). The diminutive vessel combines a mold-formed base shaped like a puckered lotus leaf and hand-modeled upper body, handle, and lid. Beneath a crackled white glaze, a *waka* poem is incised into the vessel wall: “The pine wind flowing throughout my hut brushes out the dust of the world.” The Buddhist reference of Rengetsu’s poem is not coincidental: she began making pottery inscribed with her own poetry in order to support herself

after she suffered a series of personal disasters and took the tonsure as a Buddhist nun. Her surviving works are pots and cups intended for serving steeped green tea (*sencha*) rather than the whisked tea of the tea ceremony—the sort of tea favored by Japanese connoisseurs of Chinese painting and poetry from the eighteenth century onward. Research by Lee Johnson has shown that this teapot may have been the work of Rengetsu’s pupil Kuroda Koryo (1822–1894), who assisted the nun after 1855 and became Rengetsu II after her death.¹⁸

REVIVAL-STYLE TEA WARES AT NINETEENTH-CENTURY DAIMYO KILNS

Most daimyo-sponsored kilns curtailed or ceased production during the economically difficult decades of the eighteenth century. When they revived at the end of the century, their products—like those of contemporaneous Kyoto kilns—reflected a keen interest in earlier wares. Whereas Kyoto potters copied eclectically, however, potters at provincial kilns more frequently replicated the historical wares made by their own predecessors, as if to celebrate tried and true products of the past. Along with economic caution and a wish to guarantee success, this conservative revival evinced a new interest in connoisseurship of historical ceramics typified by the collecting activities of the daimyo of Izumo province, Matsudaira



ABOVE: Fig. 23. *Left*: Tea caddy. Seto ware. Edo period, early 19th century. Stoneware with wood-ash glaze, height 8.9 cm (49.1172). *Center*: Incense container in Yellow Seto style. Seto ware, undeciphered mark, early 19th century. Stoneware with ash glaze and iron pigment, height 6.3 cm (49.356). *Right*: Incense container in Decorated Shino style. Seto ware. Edo period, early 19th century. Stoneware with iron pigment under feldspathic glaze, height 7.6 cm (49.863)



LEFT: Fig. 24. Tea caddy in Oribe style. Seto ware. Edo period, early 19th century. Stoneware with wood-ash and iron glazes, height 9.8 cm (49.1176)

Fumai (1751–1818), who pursued a goal of acquiring antique tea ceramics from important sixteenth- and seventeenth-century collections.

In the case of the Owari Tokugawa domain, the three official workshops in Seto revived various glazes associated with the Mino kilns during the Momoyama period. In some instances the products so faithfully replicate known Mino pieces of the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries that the official potters must have studied heirlooms in the domain collection, although the more refined glaze materials and more efficient kilns produced a sleeker look. The Walters collection represents a range of such wares. An ash-glazed tea caddy (49.1172, fig. 23, left) replicates the style of the sixteenth-

century jar in the Walters collection (49.1121, fig. 1, left), although its fine combing and precise trimming distinguish it as a later work. An incense container with Yellow Seto glaze and dots of iron decoration on the domed lid (49.356, fig. 23, center) bears an illegible inscription on the base, possibly that of an Owari domain warrior collaborating with a Seto official potter. The well-melted Shino-style glaze on an ingot-shaped incense container (49.863, fig. 23, right) attests to its nineteenth-century origin. William Walters purchased this piece at the 1876 Centennial Exposition. Finally, an elongated Oribe-style tea caddy (49.1176, fig. 24) bears overlapping coats of wood-ash and iron glazes; its sculpted form reflects developments represented by the late sixteenth-century jar (49.1171, fig. 1, center).

The Walters collection also included some examples of revivals of Momoyama-period styles associated with Korean-descended kilns in southern Japan. A Karatsu tea bowl was described to William Walters as “500 years old” when he acquired it at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition (49.234, fig. 25, left), although the careful trimming and contrived irregularity of the glazing reveal habits of a nineteenth-century potter. The historical model could have been no more than three hundred years old as of 1876, but the chronology of Japanese tea



Fig. 25. *Left*: Tea bowl in Early Karatsu style. Karatsu ware. Edo period, early 19th century. Stoneware with ash glaze, height 12.4 cm (49.234). *Right*: Tea bowl in Early Hagi style. Hagi ware. Edo period, early 19th century. Stoneware with ash glaze, height 9.4 cm (49.2121)

wares was only vaguely understood by many dealers and connoisseurs of the late nineteenth century. A Hagi ware tea bowl (49.2121, fig. 25, right) perpetuates the conservative style of that kiln, which capitalized on its reputation for Korea-style bowls. The potter compressed the body of the just-thrown bowl into a squared oval and scooped out the foot-rim in a distinctive hemisphere; he added faintly incised vertical grooves on the wall.

REGIONAL COMMERCIAL KILNS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In the early nineteenth century the daimyo-sponsored “official kilns,” which formed the core of regional ceramic centers, followed Kyoto trends and in turn guided production of tableware and ornamental ceramics at commercial workshops within the same regions and elsewhere.

A wealthy merchant in the town of Kuwana, south of Nagoya, founded the Banko workshop in the mid-eighteenth century, and it was revitalized in the 1830s. In the Meiji era (1868–1912), commercial Banko ware produced at various kilns enjoyed great success in the export market for tea sets and vases. Earlier Banko wares, however, reflect the revival of Chinese models. William or Henry Walters bought a Kochi-style incense box bearing a small oval Banko seal on the foot (49.405,



Fig. 26. Incense box in style of Kochi ware. Banko ware. Edo period, early 19th century. Porcelain with enamels over the biscuit, height 5.3 cm (49.405)

fig. 26). The molded design of phoenixes and peonies is glazed with transparent green, pale purple, and yellow enamels and makes an interesting comparison with the Eiraku Hozen box (49.353, fig. 19) and the Kairakuen vase (49.1168, fig. 13)—both probably made around the same time.

The Ryumonji workshop in Satsuma specialized in the “Sawankhalok” style of Thai-inspired iron decoration. A small lidded jar with this mode of decoration



Fig. 27. *Left*: Covered jar. Satsuma ware, Ryumonji workshop. Edo period or Meiji era, mid-19th century. Stoneware with iron decoration under clear glaze, height 10.8 cm (49.135). *Right*: Ewer in Mishima style. Satsuma ware. Edo period or Meiji era, mid-19th century. Stoneware with inlaid slip under clear glaze, height 24 cm (49.2056)



Fig. 28. *Left*: Incense burner. Seto ware, by Kawamoto Hansuke. Edo period or Meiji era, mid-19th century. Porcelain with cobalt decoration under clear glaze; metal lid, height 10.3 cm, diameter 12 cm (49.946). *Right*: Vase. Mino ware, by Kato Gosuke (1839–1905). Edo period, mid-19th century. Porcelain with cobalt (copperplate transfer?) decoration under clear glaze, height 10.8 cm (49.969)



Fig. 29. Vase by Itaya Hazan (1872–1963), Taisho era, before 1915. Pigmented porcelain with low-relief decoration enameled over the glaze, height 36.8 cm (49.2281)

beneath a greenish glaze was probably quite new when William Walters bought it at the 1876 Philadelphia exposition (49.135, fig. 27, left); it was made to contain condiments on the table. Another 1876 purchase was a ewer, probably made at the Satsuma kilns in Kyushu, which combined a Chinese shape with Korean-style slip-inlaid decoration (49.2056, fig. 27, right).

Seto and Mino potters were quick to pick up on the interest in Chinese-style porcelain. By the opening years of the nineteenth century, alleged “industrial espionage” had enabled a Seto potter, Kato Tamekichi (1772–1824), to steal the techniques from Arita. Porcelain workshops replaced stoneware workshops as economic leaders in Seto and Mino, especially after the opening of markets in the West. The Walters acquired an incense burner made in Seto and decorated with cobalt (48.48.946, fig.

28, left). The mark on the base, “Made by Kawamoto Hansuke in Seto, Japan,” links it to a leading Seto workshop. It has been suggested that this incense burner is the work of Hansuke V (1831–1907).¹⁹ The incorporation of “Japan” into the mark suggests an eye to the international market and a date in the 1860s or later. If the bright blue of the decoration is chemical cobalt (introduced to Japan in the 1870s by a German chemist, Gottfried Waggoner), then the date is later still. The design mixes the traditional “snowflake” motif used for the sculpted base of the vessel with two naturalistically modeled chrysanthemum sprays on the shoulder (where conventional knobs would be), possibly inspired by European porcelain. Similarly, the cobalt decoration is divided between a Japanese textile-inspired motif on the base and a Chinese-style landscape on the body.

Another product of the industrializing porcelain kilns of the late nineteenth century is a small vase by Kato Gosuke (1837–1915) of Mino (49.969, fig. 28, right). Kathleen Emerson Dell has suggested that the design of butterflies and vinescrolls on this vessel was rendered using copperplate transfer printing, another technique that entered Japanese porcelain workshops in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The inscription reading “Made by Kato Gosuke in Mino province, Japan” uses the province name that disappeared in 1872 when the new system of prefectures abolished it.

CONCLUSION

This essay has looked at unexpected works in the Japanese ceramics collection formed by William and Henry Walters. These pieces suggest that the collectors’ focused interest in Hirado and Satsuma wares occasionally wavered as an odd piece captured their attention. Virtually by coincidence, these casual purchases constitute a skeletal history of trends in Japanese ceramic production from the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries. In 1915, Henry Walters would add another dimension to the collection with his bold acquisitions at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of large ceramics by leading studio potters of the early twentieth century. The masterful vase by Itaya Hazan (1872–1963), who is now honored as Japan’s first great modern ceramic artist (49.2281, fig. 29), is a rare and great example of a Hazan work in a collection outside Japan.

Turning from the sublime to the . . . whimsical, we close with an unexplained object in the collection. This small bell-shaped amulet still retains the silk cord by which it would be fastened to a traveling case for protection (49.1203, fig. 30). The molded design bell includes inscriptions naming “Munakata Grand Shrine” in “Chikuzen province.” Located near the city of Fukuoka, in northern Kyushu, this shrine has marked a sacred site since the early centuries of the Common Era. (The shrine on the mainland enables worshippers to honor the true sacred site—an offshore island to which access by ordinary people is forbidden.) The three goddesses honored in the shrine give protection to travelers over water. The bell-shaped amulet also bears a date corresponding to the year 1215 (possibly when the shrine was rebuilt with major patronage) and mentions “ninth month.” Since the shrine’s major annual festival takes place in the ninth month of the lunar calendar, this bell may have been made to sell to pilgrims visiting the shrine on that occasion.



Fig. 30. Bell-shaped amulet made for Munakata Grand Shrine. Unknown kiln, Kyushu. Edo period or Meiji era, 19th century. Stoneware with ash glaze; silk cord, height 29.8 cm (49.1203)

How and why did William or Henry Walters acquire this bell? Since neither father nor son visited Japan, this remote shrine could have had little meaning to them except by hearsay. Did a grateful dealer make a gift of the amulet in thanks for generous sales, or in anticipation of them? Why did the bell remain within the collection that William and Henry Walters included in their private gallery and, later, their public museum? Probably these questions will remain unanswered, but the preservation of the bell (how many others can have survived?) in the collection of the Walters Art Museum—indeed the presence of all the works discussed here—gives rise to gratitude for the whims and inconsistencies of collectors.

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NOTES

1. R. Wilson, “Tea Taste in the Era of Japonisme: A Debate,” *Chanoyu Quarterly*, no. 50 (1987): 23–39, describes the fierce argument between Morse and the British collector James Lord Bowes (1834–1899), who spoke for the superiority of the decorated wares.

2. E. S. Morse, *Catalogue of the Morse Collection of Japanese Pottery* (Boston, 1901).
3. Inoue Kikuo, "Kokogaku kara mita Seto chaire" [Seto tea caddies from an archaeological perspective], in Takeuchi Jun'ichi et al., eds., *Enshu no mita chaire* [Tea caddies in the Enshu tradition] (Tokyo, 1996), 168–81.
4. L. A. Cort, *Seto and Mino Ceramics* (Washington, D.C., 1992), no. 14.
5. On the recent archaeological discoveries illuminating the role of Kyoto merchants in dispersing ideas of vessel form and gathering regional products into the central Kyoto market, see L. A. Cort, "Shopping for Pots in Momoyama Japan," in M. Pitelka, ed., *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History, and Practice* (London and New York, 2003), 61–85.
6. Two such jars are in the Freer Gallery of Art collection. Cort, *Seto and Mino Ceramics*, nos. 19–20.
7. On Ofuke ware, see Cort, *Seto and Mino Ceramics*, 143–61.
8. The Joo white *temmoku* tea bowl is published in *The Shogun Age Exhibition* (Tokyo, 1983), no. 168.
9. On Rakurakuen ware, see Cort, *Seto and Mino Ceramics*, 162–65.
10. On Raku ware, see M. Pitelka, *Handmade Culture: Raku Potters, Patrons, and Tea Practitioners* (Honolulu, 2005).
11. J. Ayers, *Japanese Ceramics* (Geneva, 1982), no. E91.
12. Oka Yoshiko, "Kyoyaki no hatten" [Development of Kyoto ceramics], in Yabe Yoshiaki, ed., *Nihon yakimono shi* [The concise history of Japanese ceramics] (Tokyo, 1998), 117; and personal communication, May 2006.
13. R. Wilson, *The Potter's Brush: The Kenzan Style in Japanese Ceramics* (Washington, D.C., 2001).
14. *Ibid.*, nos. 51–52.
15. *Ibid.*, 98–123.
16. On so-called *ko-sometsuke* ware, see J. Curtis, *Trade Taste and Transformation: Jingdezhen Porcelain for Japan, 1620–1645* (New York, 2006).
17. Chado Shiryokan, ed., *Kochi kogo* [Kochi incense boxes] (Kyoto, 1998).
18. Note in the Walters Art Museum object record.
19. Unattributed note in the Walters Art Museum object record.

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS: Walters Art Museum, Susan Tobin.

A Kütahya Bowl with a Lid in the Walters Art Museum

YOLANDE CROWE

My acquaintance with Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., began at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, where our offices were close to each other; our paths crossed again on my first visit to relations in Baltimore. At the time, my research was concerned with seventeenth-century Persian blue-and-white ceramics, and Woody brought to my notice some interesting examples in the storage rooms of the Walters Art Gallery that enabled me to make better sense of certain Chinese elements visible in the decoration of Safavid vessels. In the stores we also discussed other ceramics of the world of Islam, looking at Iznik dishes and the collection's later Kütahya holdings, but these at the time were not my immediate concern. One particular piece, however, stood out: a bowl (acc. no. 48.1732 a, b; figs. 1a–e)—an unusual form for ceramics in the Ottoman world of the eighteenth

century. The opportunity to study it has now arisen in order to honor both a colleague and a friend.

The polychrome painting of the Walters bowl is of excellent quality and the decoration more refined than in most Kütahya ceramics (the clumsy composition and painting on the lid, discussed below, seem to indicate a different hand from that of the bowl). The decoration is outlined in fine black lines, possibly using chromite.¹ An identical band underlines both the interior and the exterior of the straight rim (fig. 1c); it consists of four alternating motifs: a spotted diaper of three or four black lozenges, and a panel enclosed by two green and yellow triangles, which encompass half of a red petaled flower with a trilobed leaf on either side. Two different compositions with four flowers and leaves alternate around the body itself: one with a stalk undulating upward from left



Fig. 1a–b. Kütahya bowl and lid, total height 21 cm, bowl: height 13.2cm, diam. 19.4cm. Baltimore, The Walters Art Museum (48.1732 a, b)

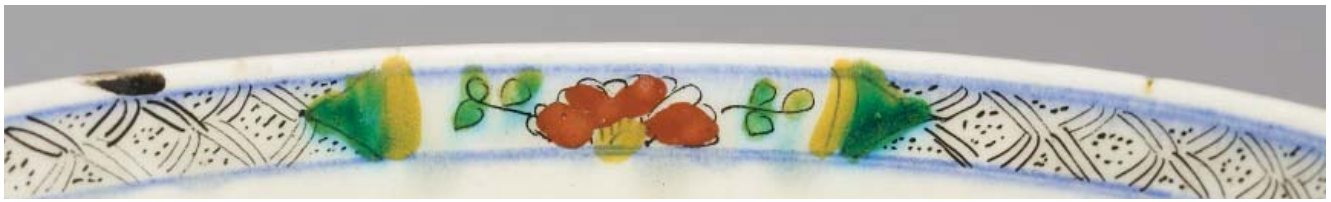


Fig. 1c. 48.1732a: detail of inner band below the rim



Fig. 1d. 48.1972a: detail of center



Fig. 1e. 49.1972b: outer lid

to right, the other with its stalk hanging downward in the same direction (see figs. 1a, 1b). Such plants bear no resemblance to any known flowers, nor do their curious elongated leaves with a single serrated edge. With the exception of the inner band below the rim, the walls of the bowl are plain. At the center, the decoration consists of a single flower, taken from the same repertoire as the flowers on the outside, encompassed by serrated green leaves, and surrounded by a double blue line (fig. 1d). Two blue lines—one thick, the other thin—surround the top of the foot ring.

A closer examination shows that the contours of the flowers and leaves are defined in black outline; smaller geometric spaces are filled with dots, stripes, or zigzags. Irregular dabs of green, blue, yellow, and deep purple, which looks almost black, overrun the fine black lines. Only the red, not unlike the earlier sealing wax of Iznik fame, remains almost within its borders or slightly hides the fine black line. But what is one to make of the sprays and their fanciful flowers? The larger sprays might have been painted first, some of the red ones upside down. The added stalks divide the spray into two groups, each

with two flowers, one predominantly blue, the other predominantly red. The tops of the blue flowers are occasionally enhanced in yellow, as are small bulges on the lower stem. The two other sprays occupy a slightly smaller space. The stalk is shorter with a double bend towards its tip. Again, four flowers form a spray. Here red dominates the composition; one of the leaves is yellow. In three instances, green leaves end in a squiggle. Finally four pairs of peculiar insects, with legs and antennae, their dotted bodies ending in a squiggle, fill the spaces between the sprays.

As noted earlier, with the exception of the inner band, the walls of the bowl are plain. A flower composition at its center is surrounded by a double circle. The V shape of the double leaf frame may indicate a direction, with the red petals hanging downward and a green plummet at the top. A touch of light purple creates a slight feeling of depth toward the base of the V. As to the lid (fig. 1e), its haphazard painting contrasts sadly with that of the bowl. Shapeless contours with messy colors and a coarse border at the base of the lid are not enhanced by the restoration of the broken areas. Two

elongated shapes separate two pairs of pseudo-trees with dotted branches and enclosed by leaves. Only the fine herringbone pattern at the base of the knob, recalling the bowl's rim bands, has been neatly painted in black with a fine brush.

The collecting of Kütahya ceramics has been an active area in the auction trade,² but the character of their exuberant design has never been clarified, though I have recently explored its origins.³ The fact that a number of pieces have Armenian texts, signatures, and dates has made it possible to situate the production of this type of Kütahya ceramics chiefly in the eighteenth century. Yet production of ceramics by Armenian potters is mentioned by John Carswell at the early date of 1444/45, when a potter in that town called Murad donated a mantle for a priest in the church named the Holy Mother of God; both name and date appear in a book listing gifts given to that church in Kütahya. Carswell was indeed the first to study methodically the production of vessels and tiles, while Charles Dowsett traced the presence of an Armenian population in Kütahya to the colophon of a manuscript dated 1391; the manuscript was a gift to the local Armenian church.⁴

Although ceramics associated with Kütahya have been collected since the nineteenth century, and their shapes and decoration have been described on a number of occasions, the origins of their decoration have not been studied. At first sight, the strange designs on their surfaces are somewhat disconcerting, and their weird outlines are difficult to connect with any known patterns of the Ottoman empire in the eastern parts of the Mediterranean. They are avidly collected, particularly in Turkey, although entries in catalogues have consisted only of descriptions.⁵

WIDER CONNECTIONS

The study of one type of material is often well complemented by inquiries into other media. All too often, however, specialists do not look beyond their own field, unaware that by restricting their research to one specific area they miss the wider geographical picture, although the world of Islam offers a great variety of cross-fertilization. And here, beyond media and geographical contexts, one more factor intervenes in the unraveling of the origins of Kütahya designs. That is the part played by a minority population, the Armenians, the oldest Christian population in the world. Over the centuries, their long and troubled history witnessed many shifts of population: from the central lands of Armenia with the Saljuq invasion of the Byzantine Empire in 1071 to

the Lesser Cilician kingdom of Armenia, centred round its capital, Sis, and the wealthy port of Ayas praised by Marco Polo.⁶ It survived until the death of its last king, Leo V, in 1375. By the end of the fourteenth century, the seaports of an *Armenia maritime*, were already scattered round the eastern parts of the Mediterranean, from the Crimea to Venice. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, more merchant communities settled in the Balkans.

Yet another forced displacement of population took place in 1603. Having been entertained lavishly by the important Armenian merchant families of Julfa, Shah Abbas I, the ruler of Persia (r. 1588–1629), decided to associate them to his realm. At a time of intense warfare against the Ottomans, he created a wasteland on his northwestern border, partly by transporting the entire population of Julfa not only to his new capital Isfahan and the lands around it, but also to the silk-producing areas south of the Caspian Sea.⁷ Through their knowledge of international trade, especially that of silk and precious stones, these wealthy merchants, about twenty families, acquired a position close to that of bankers to the Safavid dynasty.⁸

In India, the earliest Armenian church in the Mughal empire was established in Agra by 1563. Travelers, as well as agents of the Dutch East India Company (*Vereenigde Oost-indische Compagnie*) and the English East India Company, regularly mention the presence of Armenian merchants at marketplaces or landing stages around the Indian Ocean.⁹ And it is the presence of Armenian merchant communities in India that appears to link Kütahya in the Ottoman Empire and the Indian subcontinent.

Although the Armenian sea trade is mentioned in a number of contemporary documents,¹⁰ references to caravans and Armenians on the land routes are far more frequent. European travelers often praised the Armenians for their frugality and thrift, and their caravans were deemed safe to join, since Armenian merchants posed neither political nor religious threats in any of the lands they crossed. Caravans starting from Agra or Lahore reached Isfahan via Multan, Qandahar, and Birjand. From the capital, different itineraries could be followed to reach the Mediterranean. There were two routes via Tabriz. The northern route passed through Yerevan or Erzurum and ended either in Istanbul or in Smyrna. The southern route led to Van, then Diyarbakir, Urfa, and reached Aleppo and its port, Alexandretta.¹¹ A further combination of sea and land routes would have included shipment from India to Bandar Abbas, or more likely Basra, to join caravans on their way to Aleppo. The Red Sea route was apparently less popular owing to



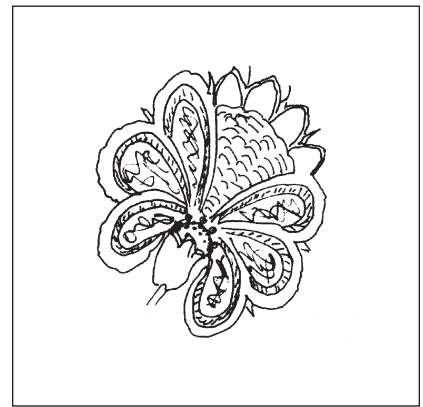
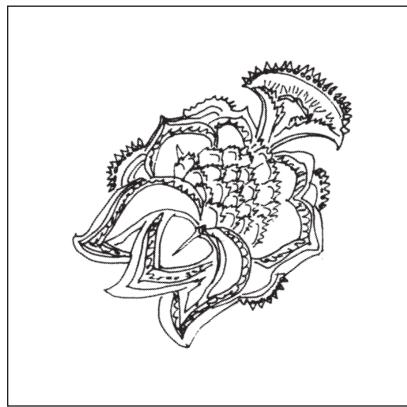
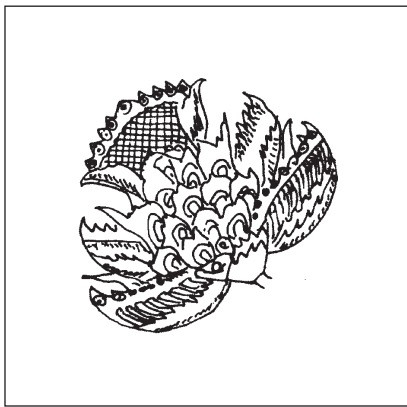
Fig. 2. Trade and manufacturing cities in Anatolia and Western Asia, 16th–19th century

local shipping shared by Gujarati and Ottoman traders bound for Cairo.¹² A well-appointed system of *caravanserais* lined the various land routes, providing shelter and food along the way.

Besides the enduring fashion for Indian painted cottons in Europe from the early days of the East India Companies, and despite protectionist laws forbidding the use of such textiles in France (1686, 1706, and 1712) and in England (1700 and 1721), the demand for them never waned. Design and colors evolved throughout the eighteenth century as taste changed from one European country to the other. The shipment of painted cottons, also known as *chintzes*, was an important part of the trading of the East India Companies, but the caravan land routes were frequently used by Armenian traders to reach the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. Armenian merchants traded *chintzes*, but they also used them in their own households; *chintzes* were even used as church hangings. Indian painted cottons can still be seen in treasuries of both the cathedral of Ejmiacin near Yerevan and the convent of the cathedral of Saint James in Jerusalem. These church hangings, such as

large curtains, are usually drawn across the altar until the celebration of the Eucharist. They often carry a representation of the crucifixion, whereas the history of the Armenian church and clergy appear on single panels as well as on polychrome tiles.

Consequently it is possible to relate the international trade in goods, such as textiles, with various Armenian communities across Asia, so that Indian painted cottons with their exotic designs could reach Kütahya and its community of potters.¹³ Church cotton hangings were only one element of the delivered textiles, and it is evident that the local population was also eager to acquire other Indian cottons, such as *palampores*, always of a better quality than those produced in Persia or the Ottoman world.¹⁴ Exuberant flowers are less a part of the decorated borders of the religious panels; these show controlled flowery scrolls. On the other hand, flowering trees and their exotic yet fanciful flowers animate a variety of hangings, as can still be seen in a number of museum collections; these would also include earlier fragments produced in Gujarat, and designed to satisfy the taste of different markets.¹⁵



TOP: Fig. 3a–c. Details of 48.1732a

ABOVE: Fig. 4a–c. Flowers after an early 18th-century Indian block-printed palampore (New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1982.66)

SOLVING THE MYSTERY

By the early decades of the eighteenth century an exotic proliferation of flowers had invaded the surfaces of chintzes; the outlines of these flowers bear no relation to any known botanical species; and it would seem to be the exuberance of these blossoms that attracted the Kütahya potters. Yet the impressionistic flowers and leaves on the pot are a far cry from the detailed designs on the cottons. The simplified brush stroke is the answer to the problem of how to master intricate details on a rounded surface with limited space. A clear transfer of the outline is as far as the copyist can deal with the design, although the slightly runny colors are as vivid as those on earlier Iznik wares. Yellow is the one color that strikes an original note, as its shade is more vibrant. On most surviving pieces of chintzes that color is no longer visible.¹⁶ Yellow, much more so than other colors, fades early in the life of an Indian painted cotton, and over the years it takes on a pale beige tint (see figs. 5 and 7).

The flowers can be divided into two categories, according to their shape (figs. 3a–c). The first consists of

blossoms with a tighter configuration, and they are usually attached to the downward branch pair. The shape of blossoms in the other group is more open, and red seems to dominate the color scheme. The intricacies of the floral designs on the chintzes (figs. 4a–c) would be difficult to reproduce on a ceramic surface, when locally there exists no tradition of minute copying similar to that of European miniaturists working on enamels. In effect the greatly simplified outline adds to the whimsical style of the Kütahya painting. A further feature typical both on textiles and the bowl is a shape comparable to a tuft of plumes. This feature appears with every flower in red, green, yellow and even in black.

Two more details on the bowl offer plausible points of comparison with chintzes. The green serrated leaves are typical of chintz design by the end of the seventeenth century and recall those on a fragment from the Victoria and Albert Museum (fig. 5). Another feature consists of the reproduction of insects, a well-established theme in Mughal and Persian miniatures and textile designs (fig. 6) derived from illustrations in European books.¹⁷ The Kütahya potter has emphasised both the legs and the



Fig. 5. Detail of a fragmentary Indian chintz palampore, early 18th century, Victoria & Albert Museum, inv. no. IM 51-1919



Fig. 6. Indian silk embroidery, detail.



Fig. 7. Larger detail of a fragmentary Indian chintz palampore, Victoria & Albert Museum, inv. no. IM 51-1919

antenna, thus creating a fanciful insect, and he has also added strange squiggles, which, on chintzes, only extend certain leaves (fig. 7). As for the borders below the rim of the bowl, they follow numerous patterns on Kangxi export porcelain. Thus both sources of design, Indian textiles and Chinese porcelain, illustrate an interesting search of the potter for renewed inspiration not only

from foreign ceramics but also from different media. As it is often the case, it is the design that takes first place, regardless of the support.

A final look should be cast at the lid that fits the bowl. The difference in the painting with the bowl itself as noted earlier, is surprising and might indicate the replacement of a broken part. Yet a search for a similar

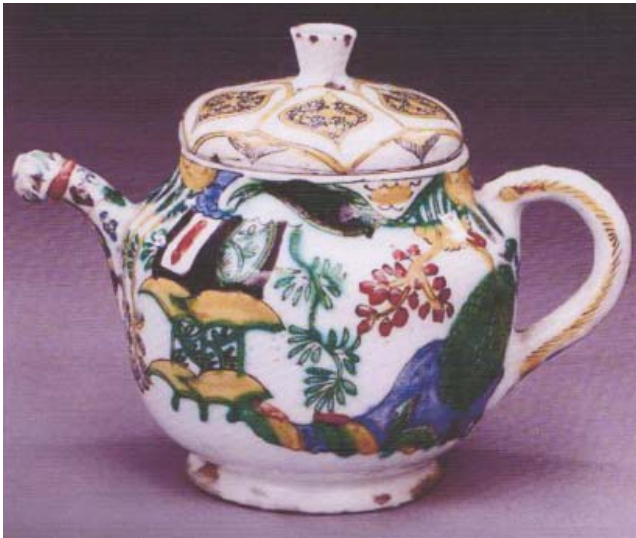


Fig. 8. Kütahya teapot, 18th century, height 11 cm, Bonham and Brooks, London, May 2nd 2001, no. 431.



Fig. 9. Detail of 48.1732b (lid)



Fig. 10. Basin, dated 1744, height 8.8cm, diameter 26.6cm, San Lazzaro Armenian Monastery, Venice.

style of painting through sale catalogues and other publications was rewarded when a teapot and a covered bowl came to light.¹⁸ The decoration of the teapot provides a few references to the motifs painted on the Walters bowl (fig. 8). The tree shapes with globular leaves are repeated four times on the Walters lid, and the green leafy branches belong to the same brush. As for the other

motifs, a thatched hut is barely distinguishable on both vessels, probably derived from models on Chinese porcelain. A fragment of a green balustrade is visible next to the springing of the handle to the teapot. This small detail recalls more elaborate imitations of Chinese balustrades painted on Persian blue-and-white ceramics of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.¹⁹ The survival of a few designs such as these small details suggests the possibility of a tie between Persian and Ottoman potters.

In this first attempt to unravel the origins of Kütahya decoration, only the main features of one polychrome bowl with its lid have been studied. Already two different brushes have been detected, and in reviewing a larger selection of Kütahya pieces, it should be possible to distinguish production between workshops. Besides, a number of blue-and-white dishes and basins warrant further investigation in this regard. An almost pyrotechnic decoration on a basin that would have had at one time a matching ewer, concludes this series of pictures (fig. 10). The Armenian/Turkish inscription conveys the date and the name of the owner:

In the Armenian year 1193/1744 on Monday May the 8th, this basin was inscribed; it belongs to Öhannes, son of David. May he use it to his benefit, *Amen*.

May this inscription convey even more wishes.

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NOTES

1. The use of chromite in ceramics has been recorded since the Middle Ages. See M. Degli Agosti and F. Schweizer, "Technical Analysis," in Y. Crowe, *Persia and China: Safavid Blue and White Ceramics in the Victoria and Albert Museum, 1501–1738*, (London 2002), 297.
2. A. Altun, J. Carswell and G. Öney, *Sadberk Hanim Museum, Turkish Tiles and Ceramics* (Istanbul 1991); R. Çini, *Kütahya Çinicilği* (Istanbul 2002), N. Kenaan-Kedar, *The Armenian Ceramics of Jerusalem: Three Generations, 1919–2003* (Jerusalem 2003), Garo Kürkman, *Magic of Clay and Fire* (Istanbul, 2006).
3. Y. Crowe, "Kütahya and Caravans," forthcoming.
4. J. Carswell and C.J.F. Dowsett, *Kütahya Tiles and Pottery from the Armenian Cathedral of St. James, Jerusalem*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1972), 2: 2.
5. For example, the sale of Haroutune P. Hazarian's collection, Bonham & Brooks, London, 2 May 2001.
6. *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, ed. and trans. H. Yule, rev. H. Cordier, 2 vols. (London, 1926), 1:41.
7. V.S. Ghougassian, *The Emergence of the Armenian Diocese of New Julfa in the Seventeenth Century* (Atlanta, 1998).
8. R.P. Matthee, *The Politics of Trade in Safavid Iran: Silk for Silver 1600–1730* (Cambridge, 1999).
9. V. Baibourtian, *International Trade and the Armenian Merchants in the Seventeenth Century* (New Delhi 2004); M.J. Seth *History of the Armenians in India* (1895, repr. New Delhi 1988).
10. M. Aghassian and K. Kévonian, "Le commerce arménien dans l'Océan Indien aux 17^e et 18^e siècles," in *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques dans l'Océan Indien et la Mer de Chine*, ed. D. Lombard and J. Aubin (Paris 1981), 155–81, 159. For a short time in the mid-seventeenth century, a few ships were flying Armenian colors, red and yellow with a symbolic lamb of God, but usually Armenian merchants relied on the shipping capacities of the English and Dutch fleets.
11. R. H. Kévorkian, "Le négoce international des Arméniens au XVII^e siècle," in *Arméniens entre Orient et Occident: Trois mille ans de civilisation*, ed. R. H., Kévorkian (Paris 1996), 142–43.
12. M. Tuchscherer, "Le commerce en Mer Rouge aux alentours de 1700: Flux, espaces et temps," *Res Orientalis* 5 (1993), 159–78.
13. For further details on the continental links between India and the Mediterranean, see Crowe, "Kütahya and Caravans."
14. K. Fukasawa, *Toilerie et commerce du Levant* (Paris 1987).
15. R. Barnes, *Indian Block-Printed textiles in Egypt: The Newbury Collection in the Ashmolean Museum*, 2 vols. (Oxford 1997).
16. A yellow background is still visible on a large spread acquired by the British Museum and illustrated in the *British Museum Magazine*, no. 33 (Spring 1999), 17–19.
17. Engraving by Nicolaes de Bruyn, 1594, in *Flowers and Plants, Drawings, Prints and Photographs in the Collections of the Rijksmuseum Print Room and Library*, comp. Peter Schatborn (Amsterdam 1994).
18. Bonhams and Brooks, 2 May 2001, no. 413, a teapot, height 11 cm; *Delights of Kütahya: The Sunna and Inan Kıraç Collection* (Istanbul 1997), and a covered bowl, no. 87, height 9 cm.
19. Crowe, *Persia and China*, nos. 413, 416.

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS: Jennifer A. Corr: fig. 2; Courtesy of Yolanda Crowe: figs. 5–8, 10; with kind permission of the Trustees of the Victoria & Albert Museum: figs. 5–7; Walters Art Museum, Susan Tobin: figs. 1, 3, 9

The Shifting Identity of a Thai *Buddha* in Seventeenth-Century Europe

JOANEATH SPICER

As a result of the greatly expanded trade routes developed by the major European maritime powers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—first Portugal, followed by Spain, the Netherlands, and England—an increased array of unfamiliar objects associated with non-European religious practices entered European collections of the time. Although by the late 1600s many publications by travelers and theologians included brief descriptions of Asian and New World religions, these were largely written from a perspective of Christianity and were preoccupied with deploring their “heathen idolatry.” In this regard, one of the most influential early published accounts of Asia including Asian religions that were available to collectors in Northern Europe was the report, one aspect of which to be discussed below, was that written by Jan Huygen van Linschoten (1563–1611), a Dutchman who shipped with Portuguese merchants to the East Indies in 1579–92, *Itinerario: Voyage ofte shipvaert van Jan Huygen van Linschoten naar Oost ofte Portugaels Indien, 1579–1592* (Amsterdam, 1596 [Voyage of Jan Huygen van Linschoten to the East or the Portuguese Indies, 1579–92]).¹ In such travel reports, a common approach to placing unfamiliar objects or imagery in a meaningful frame of reference involved categorizing them in terms of seemingly similar, more familiar cultural types, just as, when Europeans first came upon the South American plant that we know as the sunflower, they categorized it by reference to a well-known European flower, calling it a “Peruvian Chrysanthemum.”² In this regard, it is particularly intriguing to address the different identifications applied to a small Thai *Buddha* as it appeared in successive European inventories, especially as

so little has been written about the early reception in Europe of the arts of Thailand or rather Siam, as the country was then known.³

A gilded bronze Thai *Seated Buddha* (fig. 1), datable to around 1600 and now in the Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen,⁴ can be traced continuously from its initial recording—as an Egyptian idol—in the 1617 inventory of a famous collection of natural and ethnographic curiosities formed by the Dutch physician and scholar Bernard Paludanus (Berent ten Broecke, 1550–1633) in the small port city of Enkhuizen in North Holland.⁵ It has been suggested that this *Buddha* was a gift directly or indirectly from the envoys of the King of Siam who arrived in The Hague in September 1608; it is known that members of the party made a trip to Enkhuizen and also to Hoorn, another small port city in North Holland.

While first the Portuguese and then the Spanish had already been trading with the Siamese for many years, Dutch merchants established formal contacts with Siam in 1601. In 1604, representatives of the recently chartered Dutch East India Company (V.O.C. or Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie [United East India Company])⁶ were received by the king and granted permission to establish a station, completed in 1608. It was to seal official relations that in 1607 an embassy from King Ekathotsarot departed for the Netherlands (traveling on ships of the V.O.C.).

The proposal by Zandvliet⁷ that this *Buddha* could have been a gift from the envoys is attractive but most unlikely. The envoys may have visited Paludanus’s collection, one of the “sights” of Enkhuizen, but if they

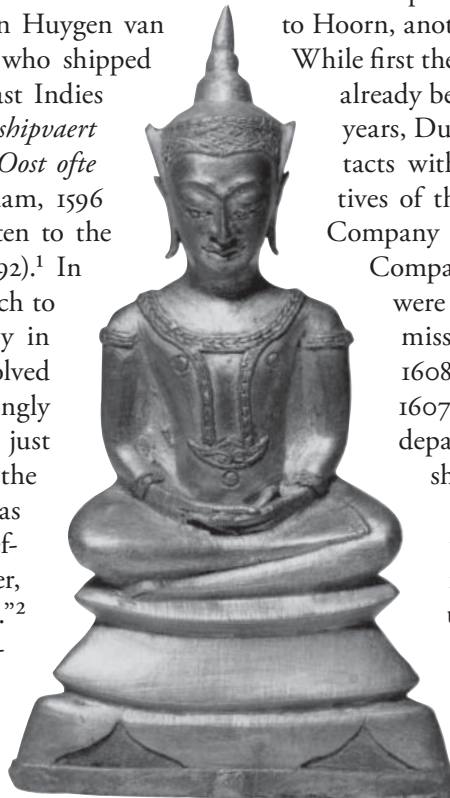


Fig. 1. Thai, *Seated Buddha*, ca. 1600, gilded bronze (Copenhagen, Nationalmuseet)

gave him the statuette, they would also have told him what it was. As it is, he inventoried it as “an idol of Isis the most ancient and highest goddess of the Egyptians.”⁸ This astonishing identification is consistent with the view developed among scholars at the time—for example Lorenzo Pignoria in a short treatise published in 1615—that saw evidence of the diffusion of ancient Egyptian writing and idolatrous religion everywhere in Asia.⁹ For European scholars, Isis was the best-known ancient Egyptian goddess; after Egypt became a Roman province in the late 1st century B.C.E., a temple to the popular goddess was established in Rome.¹⁰ The continued enthusiasm for Isis is reflected in illustrations accompanying two Dutch publications of 1700: in that year a statuette of Isis was correctly identified as the goddess in the catalogue of an Amsterdam collection of antiquities (fig. 2),¹¹ but also in that year a theological study by a Leiden university professor features an ivory cup in the shape of a kneeling woman—which now can be identified as a typical Nigerian carving—as representing Isis and reflecting the spread of Egyptian influence in southern Africa (!).¹²

The reason for the Siamese envoys making the journey to Enkhuizen and Hoorn was certainly to do business. Enkhuizen and Hoorn were home to two of the regional chambers of the V.O.C., each of which outfitted their own ships. Though not as powerful as the Amsterdam chamber, they had been aggressive in initiating trade with Asia already before all the local Dutch syndicates were amalgamated as the V.O.C. in 1602. The goals of the embassy would not have included proselytizing for their faith (as did Christian missions to Asia) and therefore it is not to be supposed that they would have brought sacred images as presents, especially for recipients with little respect for their significance, as Hiram Woodward has pointed out. The printed summary description in 1608 of the gifts brought by the envoys for the court in The Hague focuses on luxury goods, such as jewel-encrusted ivory caskets,¹³ suggesting parallels with those of other embassies from Asia to European courts.

In 1651, Paludanus's *Buddha* (with the rest of his collection of ethnographic treasures) was acquired for Friedrich, Duke of Gottorf, by Adam Olearius (1603–71), court ethnographer and, since 1649, keeper of the duke's *Kunstammer* at Schloss Gottorf in Schleswig. In 1666 Olearius inventoried the statuette as “an Indian pagode, which to some looks like an Egyptian Isis.”¹⁴ This identification may amaze modern readers; while “pagoda” is used today for an Asian temple, a usage also found in European publications from the 1500s on,¹⁵ the form “Pagode” or “Pa God,” was used for the



Fig. 2. Maria de Wilde, “Bust of Isis,” etching, from *Signa Antiqua, e Museo Jacobi de Wilde* (Amsterdam 1700), pl. 6 (Washington, National Gallery of Art)

statue of the deity as well as sometimes for the temple or shrine, according to a variety of early sources such as Jan Huygen Van Linschoten. In his hugely influential publication *Itinerario* (1596), Linchoten writes that it was the term used by the Indian “Brahmenes,” or priests, for the statues of their gods.¹⁶ A form of “pagode” appears in European inventories and travel books of the late 1500s and 1600s to mean a revered pagan idol, generally “Indian.” The designation “Indian” surely stems specifically from the early (initial?) application of “pa god” to statues of Hindu deities, and then by extension to “idols” from other religions in the wider geographical area known as the Indies, stemming from the influential usage of the Roman geographer Ptolemy, which encompassed everything from modern India to the unknown lands lying to east, eventually coming to include the New World.

Two specific examples may suffice. In *Itinerario*, van Linschoten returns often to the subject of “Pagodes or divelish Idoles” (following the English translation of 1598) which he declares to have such “fearefull, horrible and divelish shapes that it is wonderful to behold.” While he dutifully records that he has been told that at least



Fig. 3. Baptista van Deutecum after a drawing by Jan Huygen van Linschoten, "Indian Pagode and Mesquita," detail, engraving from Jan Huygen van Linschoten, *Descriptio totius Guineae tractus* . . . (The Hague, 1599), pl. following 54 (Johns Hopkins University, George Peabody Library)

some "Pagodes have been men, and because of their holy lives, and good workes done in this world, are become holy men in the other world, as by their miracles by the Diuel performed, hath been manifested unto them, and by their commandementes their formes are made in the most ugly and deformed manner that possible may bee devised," the description of misshapen monsters "such as are described in the Apocalypse"—invoking the devils of the Christian image of Hell, commonly combination of various animal and human parts—and certainly the frequently reproduced, captioned engravings (fig. 3)¹⁷ that accompany the text make clear that his visual image of the Pagode was based on encounters with statues of Hindu deities, seen through a Christian prism that associated the seemingly monstrous with the work of the devil.¹⁸ That, however, a "Pa God" need not be monstrous is demonstrated by a second example, involving an

extant statuette very similar to the statuette with which we began: a small marble *Seated Buddha* now identified as Burmese in the Ashmolean Museum (Oxford). It was listed in the 1656 inventory of the collection of the Englishman John Tradescant (1608–62) as an "Indian Pa God" and then in 1685 as a "Deus aut Idolum indicum pae God vulgo (dictum)" (God or Idol from India commonly called a "pae God").¹⁹

Then in 1775, Paludanus's *Buddha*, having by this time been acquired for the Danish royal collection, was inventoried as "a Siamese goddess."²⁰ Thus, by the time of the European Enlightenment, characteristics of national style were recognized and the statuette had escaped from the net of conventional associations based on European cultural assumptions, but the identity of the Buddha (and therefore the sex of the figure) remained elusive.

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NOTES

The present contribution was prompted by research done for my re-creation of a seventeenth-century European Chamber of Wonders in the Walters Art Museum (opened October 2005) which included, at the recommendation of my colleague Hiram W. Woodward, a fourteenth-century bronze Thai *Buddha* acquired by Henry Walters (no. 54.1578, unpublished). May I take this opportunity to say how generous Woody was in advising me on the selection and interpretation of the Asian art portion of that installation. It is therefore with great pleasure that I make my one contribution to the field of Thai sculpture in his honor. I also thank Robert Mintz for his comments on an earlier draft.

1. For the Christian reaction to Hindu deities beginning with the Middle Ages, see Partha Mitter, *Much Maligned Monsters: A History of European Reactions to Indian Art* (Chicago, 1992). For a discussion of Linschoten's moralizing agenda in his treatment of Asians in contrast to Europeans (Portuguese), see E. van den Boogaart, *Het verheven en verdorven Azie: woord en beeld in het Itinerario en de Icones van Jan Huygen van Linschoten* (Leiden, 2000) and R. Van Gelder, J. Parmentier, and V. Roeper, eds., *Souffrir pour parvenir: De wereld van Jan Juygen van Linschoten* (Haarlem 1998). For the further impact of these plates, see Van den Boogaart, "Heathendom and Civility in the *Historia Indiae Orientalis*: The adaptation of Johan Theodor and Johan Isreal de Bry of the edifying series of plates from Linschoten's *Itinerario*," *Nederlandse Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*, 53 (2002), 71–105. The spate of publications at mid-17th century included attempts at more nuanced distinctions between religious sects, for example: A. Rugerius, *De Open Deure tot het Verborgene Heydendom* (Amsterdam, 1651); A. Kircher, *China Illustrata* (Amsterdam, 1667); O. Dapper, *Beschryving des keizerrijks van Taising of China* (Amsterdam, 1670); P. Baldaeus, *Afgodererije der Oost-Indische Heydenen* (Amsterdam, 1672). Kircher's text was immensely influential even though he never visited Asia; for an introduction to it see H. Saussy, "China Illustrata: The Universe in a Cup of Tea," in D. Stolzenberg, ed., *The Great Art of Knowing, the Baroque Encyclopedia of Athanasius Kircher* (Stanford, 2001), 105–14.
2. As in Rembert Dodoens, *Stirpium historiae* ([Natural] History of Plants) (edition consulted, Antwerp, 1616), 264.

3. As far as I know, the reception of the arts of Siam has not been addressed as a category in the various studies on the collecting of “exotica” in Europe, beginning with the invaluable work by O. Impey and A. MacGregor, ed., *The Origins of Museum* (Oxford, 1985). For example, no notice has apparently been taken of the many pieces of “Indian” luxury tableware identified as “from Siam,” in the collection of Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II in Prague by 1611; for the inventory listing see R. Bauer and H. Haupt, “Das Kunstkammerinventar Kaiser Rudolfs II., 1607–11,” *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, 72 (1976), 32 (f. 542). Possibly they were gifts from Rudolf’s cousins, the Habsburg kings of Spain (then including Portugal).
4. *Seated Buddha*, ca. 1600, gilded brass over a clay core, h. 17 cm., inv. No. NO4, Da 24. See B. Dam-Mikkelsen and T. Lundbaek, eds., *Ethnographic Objects in The Royal Danish Kunstkammer 1650–1800* (Copenhagen, 1980), 138, no. EDa24 (not identified as in Paludanus’ collection). Only identified by Scheperlern 1981 (see notes 6 and 9).
5. K. Zandvliet, ed., *Maurits Prins van Oranje* (exh. cat. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, 2000), 356; H.D. Scheperlern, “Naturalienkabinett oder kunstkamer. Der Sammler Bernhard Paludanus und sein Katalogmanuskript in der Königlichen Bibliothek in Kopenhagen,” *Nordelbingen, Beiträge zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte* 50 (1981), 157–82. For Paludanus in general, L. Wagenaar, “Bernardus Paludanus” in E. Bergvelt and R. Kistemaker, ed., *De wereld binnen handbereik* (exh. cat. Amsterdam, Amsterdams Historisch Museum, 1992), 28–32; F.W.T. Hunger, “Bernardus Paludanus (Berent ten Broecke) 1550–1633. Zijn verzamelingen en zijn werk,” in C.P. Burger jr and F.W.T. Hunger, eds., *Itinerario. Voyage ofte Schipvaert van Jan Huygen van Linschoten naar oost ofte Portugaels Indien 1579–1592*, 3 vols. (’s-Gravenhage, 1934), 249–268. The statement in K. Zandvliet, ed., *The Dutch Encounter with Asia 1600–1950* (exh. cat., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, 2002), 21–22 that in the Netherlands “only an omnivorous collector such as Nicolaas Witsen (1641–1717) possessed and studied Hindu and Buddhist images,” is not correct, and the period would benefit from further study. See note 18.
6. Of the voluminous literature on the VOC, see F.S. Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company: expansion and decline* (Zutphen 2003) and C.R. Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire, 1600–1800* (London 1965).
7. Zandvliet 2000, 356.
8. Scheperlern 1981, 178 (Paludanus’s manuscript catalogue page 246: “Idolium Isidis antiquissimum ac Summi sacerdotis Aegyptiorum”). I thank my colleague Sabine Albersmeier for assistance with the translation.
9. See R.W. Lightbrown, “Oriental Art and the Orient in Late Renaissance and Baroque Italy,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 32 (1969), 228–79, esp. 242–50 on Pignoria and also Athanasius Kircher. For a further introduction to Kircher’s ideas on the Egyptian underpinnings of Asian religions and writing, see D. Stolzenberg, “Kircher’s Egypt,” and H. Saussy, “*China Illustrata*,” in Stolzenberg 2001.
10. For Isis and her cult in Rome, see S. Takacs, “Isis,” in *Der Neue Pauly Enzyklopädie der Antike*, 5 (Stuttgart, 1998), 1125–1132; S. Albersmeier, “Griechisch-römische Bildnisse der Isis,” in *Ägypten Griechenland Rom, Abwehr und Berührung* (exh. cat. Frankfurt, Städtisches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, 2005), 310–14.
11. For the illustrated catalogue of the collection of Jacob de Wilde, see Maria de Wilde, *Signa Antiqua, et Museo Jacobi de Wilde* (Amsterdam, 1700). For the plates alone, see C. Schuckman and J. de Scheemaker, “Maria de Wilde,” in *Hollstein’s Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450–1700*, 52 (Rotterdam, 1998), nos. 2–63. For other aspects of de Wilde’s collection see most recently the present author’s “An ‘Antique’ Brass Candlestick in the Shape of Hercules by Peter Vischer the Younger and Workshop,” in *Journal of the Walters Art Museum*, 63 (issue year 2005; published 2009), 65–71; and Frits Scholten, “Bronze Sculpture in the Netherlands,” in *From Vulcan’s Forge, Bronzes from the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam 1450–1800* (exh. cat. Daniel Katz Limited, London, 2005), 13–21.
12. Johannes Braunius (1628–1708) *Selecta Sacra* (Amsterdam, 1700), for which see R.M.A. Bedaux in Bergvelt and Kistemaker 1992, no. 407, 408, ill.
13. See Zandvliet 2000, 373–4.
14. Adam Olearius, *Gottorffische Kunst-Kammer* (Schleswig 1666), 4/Tab IV no. 1 “Ist ein Indianischer Pagode, der von etlichen wil fuer ein Aegyptische Isis angesehen werden.” (cited from Dam-Mikkelsen and Lundbaek, 1980, 138). For a brief introduction to that collection, see B. Dam-Mikkelsen, “The Kunstkammer, xviii–xxiv, esp. xx, in Dam-Mikkelsen and Lundbaek 1980; also R. Germer, ed., *Das Geheimnis der Mumien* (Munich 1997), 104–5, with an illustration of the title page including a glimpse of the *Seated Buddha*.
15. For example, Michel Le Blaenc, S.J., *Histoire de la revolution du royaume de Siam* [1688] (Lyon, 1692), contains references throughout to pagodas as religious precincts; J. Nieuhoff, *Het gezantschap der Neerlandtsche oost-Indische Compagnie aan den grooten Tartarischen Cham, den tegewoondigen Keizer van China* (Amsterdam, 1668), plates throughout.
16. Linschoten Ch. 36. On “pagoda,” see Mitter 1992, 21–4, 35, 38, and for sources of the term itself, 292, n. 56.
17. *Descriptio totius Guineae tractus . . .* (The Hague, 1599), from which the illustrated plate is taken, is an abbreviated translation of *Itinerario: Voyage . . .* (Amsterdam, 1596). The Latin and Dutch texts in the caption may be translated: “Terrible images of the Indian idols, called Pagodes, are placed at every street corner [crossroads], where they make their offerings, and their popes the Brahmins (who are held to be very wise there) worship them in great devotion.” For a different image of a *Pagodes Indorum*, see the illustration published by Athanasius Kircher in *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* (Rome, 1652–54, 399), described as provided by a Portuguese Jesuit and offered as evidence of the influence of Egypt in Asia.
18. Passages cited are all from Linschoten ch. 36, 44. For more on the Christian reaction to Hindu statues of deities as devils, see Mitter 1992, especially 3–30.
19. Arthur MacGregor, ed., *Tradescant’s Rareties, Essays on the Foundation of the Ashmolean Museum 1683* (Oxford 1983), 183–4, no. 79 (entry by J.C. Harle). In 1710, a German scholar Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach, visiting Tradescant’s collection referred to the piece as “a very well-wrought Indian idol, or as the *Custos* called it *Brachmanus*” (MacGregor 1983, 66). For the misconceptions of the Amsterdam collector Nicolaes Witsen (1641–1717) in regard to two figures of Buddha in his collection, see Bergvelt and Kistemaker 1992, no. 411 and 422.
20. 1775.100/b 115: “En Siamsk Gudinde af Messing-Blik, forgyldt, foeret med Jern, I en Quindes Skikkelse med Beenene sammenlagde under Sig paa Orientalisk Viis, holder Haenderne for sig tilsammen og haver meget lange Oren; I det Gottorffske Inventario kaldes same en Pagode, hvilket er en feyl (A Siamese goddess of sheet brass, gilt and lined with iron, in the shape of a woman with the legs folded beneath her in the oriental way, the hands are held together in front of her and the ears are very long; in the Gottorp Inventory same was erroneously designated as a pagoda),” cited from Mikkelsen, 138.

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