MOOKERJEE

Title of the Thesis for the
Ph.D. Examination -

"Mediaeval Illustrated Manuscripts
of Eastern India and Nepal"

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Synopsis

Indian art has been studied by different scholars from different points of view. In this thesis, for the first time, a systematic study of the Illustrated Manuscripts of Eastern India and Nepal has been attempted. Certain scholars have previously described a few manuscripts, mainly from the point of view of their iconographic interest. The Manuscripts which are here treated of have received either very scant notice, or no notice at all. Three manuscripts are described for the first time.

The thesis has been divided into two parts :-
Part I consists mainly of an introductory discussion with special reference to the distribution, nature and purpose of the manuscripts. In the First Part, also, an attempt has been made to discuss the artistic quality, the technology and other aspects of the paintings themselves. It appears that these miniature book illustrations derive their traditions from earlier mural paintings.

Part II:- Of the many manuscripts, mentioned in the Catalogue, which forms a major part of Part II of the thesis, six dated manuscripts have been selected for special study. Taken together they range from the end of the tenth to the first quarter of the twelfth century A.D., i.e. a little over a century and a quarter. One of the manuscripts discussed here, has been found to be the earliest known Indian paper manuscript. (ASutosh Museum Manuscript of Astasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā).

An attempt has been made to give a complete catalogue of the Illustrated Manuscripts of Eastern India and Nepal, including those in private collections. One map showing the geographical position of the area has been supplied. A number of plates are, also, attached in order to illustrate the quality and details of the paintings.

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MEDIAEVAL ILLUSTRATED MANUSCRIPTS OF EASTERN INDIA AND NEPAL

by

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C O N T E N T S

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(Contd.)

PART 2

A B B R E V I A T I O N S

R.A.S.B.	Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.
Chap.	Chapter.
N.S.	Newari Samvat.
Ms.	Manuscript.
Mss.	Manuscripts.
Fol.	Folio.
A.S.R.	Archaeological Survey Report.
J.R.A.S.B.	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.
C.	Circa.
Pls.	Plates.
Nos.	Numbers.
B.I.	Bibliotheca Indica.
i.e.,	That is
e.g.,	For example.
viz:	Namely.

PART 1.

CHAPTER I.

Scope of the Present Thesis.

PART 1.

CHAPTER I.

It will not be out of place to state here briefly the scope of the present thesis.

From the long list of existing illuminated manuscripts, a Catalogue of which has been given in the Second part, a selection has been made for the purpose of this study, of six manuscripts that have either received no notice or only scant notice from scholars. All these six manuscripts are dated. Taken together they range from about the end of the tenth century A.D. to the first quarter of the twelfth, that is, a little over a century and a quarter. They have been so selected as to represent adequately the character and form of book-illustrations during this period of Bengal, Bihar and Nepal. Of these the earliest is a manuscript of the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā in the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, which belongs to the sixth regnal year of Mahīpāla I. This manuscript was written at Nalanda. Separated from it by a little more than three quarters of a century is the Bodleian Library (Oxford) manuscript of the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, dated in the fifteenth

regnal year of Rāmapāla and made presumably either in Bengal or Bihar. All the other four manuscripts are of Nepalese origin and are dated in the Newari Samvat. Of these four, the manuscript of the Śivadharma was copied during the reign of Lakshmīkāmadeva in N.S. 156 - A.D. 1036. The pages of this manuscript, however, contain no illustrations; they appear only on the insides of the two wooden covers. I have tried to prove that these illustrations seem to have been executed at a date later than the writing of the manuscript itself, perhaps towards the end of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century A.D. As paintings, they already indicate a disintegration of the style and this manuscript has been specially selected both to show this and because the paintings happen to belong to the rather rare Brahmanical series. Two other Nepalese manuscripts, both of the Pañcharakshā, to which one of the chapters of this thesis is devoted, are in the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Calcutta University. The first, the earliest known paper manuscript in India, was copied in N.S. 225 - A.D. 1104, during the reign of Sihadeva, and the second during the reign of Śivadeva, whose earliest recorded date is Newari Samvat 239 - A.D., 1119. The

other Nepalese manuscript in the collection of Sri S.K. Saraswati is also noteworthy. While the six manuscripts thus cover a period of a century and a quarter, the paintings, discussed and analysed in the following pages, range from about the tenth to the beginning of the thirteenth century and thus provide a fair idea of the history of early mediaeval East Indian and Nepalese painting as recorded in manuscript illustrations.

It will be seen that while describing the illustrations, I have tried to lay some emphasis on the iconographic aspect of the subjects depicted. Foucher,(1) Bhattacharya,(2) and others have shown that a study of the iconography of these paintings throws a good deal of light on the history, nature and character of Tāntric Vajrayāna Buddhism. Moreover, the iconographic contents of the paintings to a large extent determine their linear and colouristic rendering. For this reason, I have found it necessary to describe the gods and goddesses depicted and the different scenes from the life of the Buddha in some detail in order to bring out their iconographic significance.

Except for noting the colours, the general disposition and characer of the illustrations, I have

not included in the descriptive chapters any strictly artistic considerations. Such considerations have been reserved for a separate chapter where I have tried in a general way, but with special reference to the paintings of the manuscripts discussed in this thesis, to discuss the nature and character of early mediaeval East Indian painting. In doing so I have tried to read the paintings of this period in the context of the history of Indian painting as a whole and to outline the story of the migration of the East Indian art-tradition to countries beyond the limits of Bengal and Bihar. In passing, I have, also, touched upon the small but significant line drawings on copper-plates recovered from Bengal, as well as certain late mediaeval Bengali terracottas, and pata-[illegible] paintings.

It is interesting to note, here, the variation of the script in the manuscripts. The illuminated manuscripts in the present thesis hail from two distinct regions, Eastern India and Nepal, which, though separated geographically, were linked together intimately by ties of religion and culture. This

is not the place to discuss the palaeography of the manuscripts in detail and a short note on the scripts or varieties of scripts used will be sufficient.

The Gupta script was widely in use throughout Northern India, till about A.D. 600. Towards the end of the Seventh century, however, changes and modifications begin to appear; but till about the eighth century these changes are very slight and apply to certain particular letters only. In Eastern India from the ninth century on an ornamental and somewhat fanciful variety of script, known usually as Kuṭila (Bühler would like to call it Siddhamātrikā) was extensively in use. The chief characteristics of this script are: 1. The letters slope from right to left and show acute angles at the lower ends; 2. the tops of the vertical or slanting lines carry small wedges; and 3. the lower ends of the strokes bear marked flourishes. This variety of script is found to be in use in inscriptions of Eastern India (not excluding those of the early period in Nepal) and in manuscripts of specially sacred texts. In most of the manuscripts of Eastern India belonging to the period under examination this script is found to be in use, though some of the Eastern Indian manuscripts bear evident traces of the emergence and development of shapes and forms

leading up to modern Bengali. But the manuscripts written in the Bangali variety, as far as is known up till now, have no illustrations and are outside the scope of the present enquiry. Illustrated manuscripts of Eastern India use the Kūṭila script right up to the thirteenth century A.D.

The script in use in the Nepalese manuscripts is usually called the Newari which no doubt developed from the Gupta script following a direction that is closely allied to the development of the Kūṭila and Bengali scripts. Very few local peculiarities can be traced, however, till the twelfth century. On account of the geographical remoteness of the region and of its political and religious isolation in later times, there persisted many archaisms that can be recognised even to the present day. From the twelfth century, however, we can trace the development of a distinct writing, the chief characteristic of which consists in the addition of a curve or a hook to the top of each letter. This distinctive fact becomes clearly manifest in the twelfth century, though the beginnings may be recognised in still earlier times. This curve or hook, apparently due to influence from Bengal, persists till the fifteenth century.

CHAPTER II

Background and the Geography

CHAPTER II

This chapter deals mainly with the background and the geographical source of the manuscripts.

East Indian manuscript paintings of the early mediaeval period, roughly from about the eleventh to about the thirteenth century A.D., represent a phase of Indian paintings that carries on the "classical"(A) tradition of such early centres of pictorial art as Bagh, Ajanta, Badami and Sigiriya. This "classical" trend is a throughly plastic conception characterised by a quality of modelling embodied in fluid and sinuous lines, as well as a use of pigments of varying intensity. In the course of these centuries, Eastern India interprets the "classical" tradition in its own way and exhausts its possibilities. In postulating the continuity of the tradition, it must be confessed that the application of painting to the illustrations of the manuscripts necessitates a reduction of scale which necessarily introduces new problems. In the meantime new trends and tendencies were making their appearance and breaking through the "classical" strength and

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(A) The sense in which I am employing the term "classical" here is essentially that fixed and given currency by Wölfflin(3) in his great series of works on art history.

dignity of line and modelling. These constitute the specific "mediaeval"(A) factor that can already be recognised in the wall paintings of Ellora and in a few other places in South India, and later also in a series of manuscript illustrations from Western India. The chief characteristics of the "mediaeval" factor in painting are a dry and somewhat stilted colour modelling together with a gradual weakening of the potency of the draughtsmanship. Eastern India, which was a storehouse of the "classical" sculptural tradition, resisted the "mediaeval" intrusion in so far as sculpture is concerned, but in painting its resistance was weak; and in places early mediaeval East Indian painting succumbed to the "mediaeval" manner, though in a much less pronounced way than in Western India. Chronologically and historically East Indian manuscript illustrations thus link up the "classical" tradition of the earlier centuries on the one hand and the later "mediaeval" tradition of Western

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(A) (continued from previous page)

I am aware that, since my subject is Oriental, and in background entirely different from the works with which Wölfflin dealt; but the qualities the term is meant to connote in both fields so largely coincide that I have adopted the term.

For the notes of the characteristics of the "classical" period see the discussions on art given in Chapter V

(A) For fuller discussion see post.

Indian book illustrations, Rajasthani and Pahadi miniatures and the scroll paintings and patas of nineteenth century Bengal on the other. In the history of Indian painting, therefore, East Indian manuscript illuminations occupy an important place.

These manuscript illuminations have often been referred to as miniatures which, technically speaking, they are not, that is to say, their technique and execution do not belong to those of miniature painting. The later miniature paintings depend upon meticulous overpainting in opaque colours which stress plasticity at the expense of line. On the other hand, all these paintings although small in size, have been derived from a tradition which conceived and visualised spaciously. They are, in fact, as has been pointed out by more than one scholar, such as Kramrisch,(4) Ray(5), mural paintings in reduced dimensions. Their outlines are drawn with a sure and bold sweep of the brush and the colours are applied with a strong sense of plasticity. Projected on the wall or screen by an epidiascope or by a lantern, they have the form and character of wall paintings; only they have been made to fit in within the narrow dimensions of a manuscript page or book cover, framed in most cases on two sides by bold panels of writing. Though the technique is

not that of miniature painting, these paintings, however, render the minutest details and are truly decorative in effect as well as in purpose. They cannot be compared in any way with the characteristic portfolio painting and book-illustrations which consitute a fascinating chapter in the history of art in China, Persia, and India in its Mughal and Western Rajasthani phases.

The subjects of these manuscript paintings are mostly gods and goddesses of the Buddhist Tāntric Mahāyāna pantheon, together with illustrations of the story of the life of the Buddha, and, more rarely, of representations of Brahmanical gods and goddesses in manuscripts of texts belonging to that form of religion. They are, therefore, of great iconographic importance as was first demonstrated by Foucher,(6) and later by Bhattacharya,(7) Bhattasali,(8) and a number of other scholars. Indeed, our present knowledge of the Tāntric Mahāyāna pantheon has, to a certain extent, been built up on the iconographic study of these illuminations; that is to say, on an analysis of their subject matter with reference to literal sources. But it must be remembered that only a fraction of these paintings has been subjected to a close study and analysis even from the iconographic

point of view. It is true that a few scholars have studied these illustrations from the artistic point of view and of such studies, those by Kramrisch(9) and Ray(10) are of great importance. These scholars attempt to approach the subject as a whole and to bring out the characteristics and qualities of the art of painting in Eastern India. Owing to the limitations of material, the value of their studies is limited. It is true that Ray has tried to treat the subject with sociological realism; it is felt, however, that a more detailed treatment of all the available materials is still a desideratum and should be carried out as soon as possible. It should be noted that not infrequently the illuminations represent famous Buddhist shrines in Eastern India and elsewhere and on the basis of such representations, Saraswati(11) has attempted a reconstruction of the forms and features of Eastern Indian architecture and their connection with the architecture of Greater India. Too often in Indian studies literally bias has been allowed to obscure the analysis of the objects themselves. Saraswati has couragiously studied these objects for their own intrinsic interest. It is, however, also to be noted that only in rare instances have these illuminations any inherent relation to the subject matter of the texts in which they occur, that is,

they do not usually illustrate the contents of the manuscripts in which they find their place.

Geographically the manuscripts, known so far, originate in Bihar, Bengal and Nepal; but there is every likelihood that the recent collection of illustrated manuscripts, made by Tucci in Tibet, may reveal yet another important extension of this tradition of painting. Eastern Indian art clearly travelled to the mountain fastnesses of Nepal and Tibet in the wake of the Buddhist religion, that is to say, monks and artists carried sacred manuscripts there in the course of early proselytising missions. Later many other Buddhists with loads of sacred and profane texts, found shelter thereafter the Islamic occupation of Bihar and Bengal. This is not the place to recount the details of this interesting story. However, it is necessary here to point out that except in certain Nepalese and Tibetan manuscripts of a late date, there is in the illustrations of the period very little stylistic difference that can be ascribed to geography. There is, indeed, a common denominator that distinguishes the art of these manuscript illustrations, whether they hail from Eastern India, Nepal, or Tibet, from that of all other earlier, contemporary or later schools. They can, therefore, be studied con-

veniently as a single group.

In the absence of any earlier examples, the illustrations that form the subject of this study constitute the first chapter of the history of Indian manuscript illumiations. Western Indian examples of painting mainly Gujarati book-illustrations are all of later date. While the earliest Gujarati illustrations (12) belong to a period not earlier than the thirteenth or fourteenth century A.D., the earliest East Indian illuminated manuscripts are dated towards the close of the tenth century. So far as Bihar and Bengal are concerned they have a continuous history till the beginning of the thirteenth century when everything, including the art traditions they embody, was swept away before the tide of conquering Islam. In Nepal and Tibet, however, the tradition continued, though greatly modified, till very recent times. Most of the illustrated manuscripts, that is, those which have come down complete, bear dates. In the case of those from Bihar and Bengal the dates are in the regnal years of the kings during whose regime they were copied. In the case of those from Nepal the dates are in the Newari Samvat which began in 879-880 A.D., though they usually also bear the name of the reigning king. It

should be noted, however, that while the paintings are usually contemporaneous with the writing of the manuscripts, that is, with the dates recorded in the colophons, there are instances where the paintings, particularly those on the wooden covers, appear to have been executed later. The illustrations in the manuscripts usually bear no relation to the text of the manuscripts. There are exceptions, as for example, the representations of the five Pañcharakshā goddesses in the manuscripts of the Pañcharakshā (see post. part 2). A few other examples have, also, been given in the chapter on the Bodleian Manuscript Sansk. A.7. (see post. part 2), showing instances where representations have some connection with the subject matter of the text of the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā. In the Cambridge Manuscript No. 1643 and the R.A.S.B. Manuscript No. A.15., the representations are usually accompanied by descriptive labels, which help in the identification of the panels, but the scenes or deities represented seldom have any connection with the texts of the work. With reference to undated manuscripts palaeography offers a certain approximate clue as to the date of such manuscripts. Again, accepting the dated manuscripts - the paintings of which are contemporaneous with the dates of the manu-

scripts as fixed milestones, it is possible to place the undated ones in a chronological sequence with reference to the general evolution of the composition, form and colour. Admittedly, this is not wholly a satisfactory guide owing to the consistency of the style, but it is, in the present state of our knowledge, the only thing that can be attempted with profit and at least provides a working hypothesis for further and deeper investigations. Without anticipating the results of the present study, even a casual survey of the paintings that are dateable, shows that Eastern Indian painting, during these centuries, does not show any marked stylistic evolution; indeed, the style and manner appear to have remained fixed, more or less, and neither the intrusion of the specific "mediaeval" features in isolated instances, nor the poor and rough execution of some of them offers any very clear argument as to the relative dates of those examples. However, further search will doubtless discover a wider range of new material, which may throw fresh light on the whole subject.

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CHAPTER III

Nature and Purpose.

CHAPTER III

The nature and purpose of these manuscripts and their illustrations are of great interest. The manuscripts are all religious. Except in rare instances they are Buddhist both in inspiration and subject matter, and were presumably written, and the paintings thereon executed, in the large Buddhist establishments (A) of Eastern India and Nepal for the use of the monks and pupils resident therein. Fa-hien in his account uses the Sanskrit term for a monastery - Saṅgharāma, 'gardens of the assembly', originally denoting only the surrounding part, but afterwards transferred to the whole of the premises.(1) The rare Brahmanical manuscripts must, also, have been for a very similar purpose. It is possible, though not probable, that they were, also, executed in Buddhist vihāras(2) by Buddhist craftsmen, though the absence of the names of the vihāras, which are almost invariably recorded in

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(A) These establishments were invariably monasteries and as such centres of teaching, but the application to them of the western term "University" is apt to be confusing. The mediaeval European "University" did not comprise the range of sectarian or personal teaching radical to the Indian institution.

the Buddhist manuscripts, from the colophons of the Brahmanical ones raises natural doubts as to their execution in such establishments. There is here an obvious problem. The question must be faced as to why Buddhist monastic artists should have produced Brahmanical paintings. Art history makes it plain that artists have frequently worked for more than one religion or sect. Some attention should, also, be paid to "conversions", due to academic debate, from one religion to the other. Conversion was usually based on reasoning and not always due to compulsion. Generally speaking, the manuscripts are written in bold characters of standard size whether Kūṭila, proto-Nāgari, proto-Bengali or Newari. The characters are uniformly spaced between accurately ruled lines; the margins are, also, ruled and strictly adhered to, the pagination being clearly entered either in one or both upper corners. The inking is regular and of uniform consistency and on pages, where there are illustrations, spaces respectively for the writing and the illustrations are laid out in balanced proportions. The calligraphic quality of these manuscripts cannot be compared with that of the Chinese or Persian manuscripts, but nevertheless they have an aesthetic character of their own, which is none the less praiseworthy. On the wooden covers, the

entire space is taken up by illustrations arranged horizontally along the whole length of the cover. On the folios they appear in separate panels, either singly or several uniformly spaced out and demarcated by the writing. The folios of a manuscript are bound together by strings passing through a hole in the centre or two holes which are in this case on either side of the painting. The spaces above and below the holes are filled in with decorative patterns, particularly on the illuminated folios. Usually it is clear that the manuscript was written first with blank spaces left for illustrations where they were felt necessary. Next it passed to the artist who executed the paintings on the spaces left blank. This is the invariable practice and there is no reason to doubt that the same was followed in all the manuscripts under examination. The manuscripts of the early period are on palm leaves cut into uniform sizes, arranged horizontally and written on both sides of the leaves, except on the first where the front side is left blank and sometimes on the last in cases where the manuscript ends on the first side of the page.(A) We know at least one manuscript, belonging to the beginning of the twelfth century A.D., written on paper. This manuscript is

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(A) For the size of Palm leaf see Part 2, the descriptive chapters on each manuscript. For method and technique see chapter VI, part 1. (Post).

now in the possession of the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Calcutta University, and its illuminations form the subject matter of a chapter in Part 2 of the present study. This is, up till now, the earliest known Indian paper manuscript and antedates later paper manuscripts of the same kind by several centuries. The composition of the paper has not yet been subjected to analysis and it is not known what the actual ingredients are. It is urgent that this analysis should be carried out as soon as possible.

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C H A P T E R IV.

Creation of the Manuscripts.

CHAPTER IV.

The creation of the manuscripts, with or without illustrations, is intimately connected with the story of Buddhism and the Buddhist establishments which flourished in Bihar, Bengal and Nepal in the tenth, eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In Bihar and Bengal alone we have information about a large number of flourishing vihāras and mahāvihāras, for example, at Nalanda, Bodhgaya, Vikramasila, Uddandapura, Somapura, Vikramapura, Traikutaka, Devikota, Panditavihara, Pattikeraka, Jagaddala and in many other places. In all these viharas, it would seem that there were craftsmen who were responsible for the execution of hundreds of manuscripts which were kept in the monastery libraries and studied regularly. These vihāras were intimately related to similar monastic brotherhoods in Nepal and Tibet, a relation that was already established in the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. It seems that Monks from these monasteries were accustomed to take, either on their own initiative or by invitation, long and hazardous journeys across the difficult mountain roads and passes of the Himalayas to the monasteries of Nepal and Tibet. So far as definite evidences go no contact between Nepal and China,

either direct or through Tibet, may be postulated before the middle of the seventh century A.D. King Srong-btsan Sgam-po of Tibet had intimate relations with China and he is said to have invaded and conquered Nepal. This alleged conquest of Nepal by Tibet is, however, problematic, and is not supported as a historical fact by many historians. But Nepal is known to have joined Tibet and China in the punitive expedition of Wang Hiuen-tse against Arjuna, the usurper to the throne of Kanauj after the death of Harshavardhana.(1)

Subsequent to this, there is no definite evidence of Chinese contact with Nepal till late in the 14th century A.D., when the Ming Annals refer to the opening of diplomatic relations between the Chinese Empire and the Himalayan Kingdom. In 1384 A.D. Emperor Hong-Wu sent a Buddhist priest with a seal of investiture to the King of Nepal and the latter reciprocated the courtesy by sending an embassy along with rich presents to the imperial court in 1387 A.D. Between this date and 1418 A.D., there were several exchanges of friendly greetings in course of which China conferred the official investitute, along with an imperial charter, on the King of Nepal. After the latter date, however, the relations ceased.(2)

China, Tibet and Nepal were bound together by bonds of a common religion and it is not impossible that there were frequent contacts through monks and priests even when evidence of direct official or political relations were lacking.

A regular exchange of monks both teachers and students certainly took place and this established a regular exchange of manuscripts, small bronze and stone images and terracotta tablets to these Himalayan and trans-Himalayan countries. With the coming to power of the Pālas in the eigth century, who were great patrons of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Buddhist establishments, the old sporadic relationship developed into a regular intercourse and opened up a new realm of intensive activities in the field of Buddhist religion and culture. During the four centuries of Pāla ascendancy, it was a ceaseless process which brought the secluded countries of Nepal and Tibet within the orbit of Eastern Indian life, art and culture, all centred upon Buddhism. Under Eastern Indian inspiration an all-round impetus was given to the art and thought of these Himalayan countries.

But evil days were in store for Bihar and Bengal and for their religious establishments. Islam was

slowly but steadily advancing towards the east, and with the establishment of the Turkish Sultanate at Delhi, the large monastic establishments in the east were shaken to their foundations. As the Turks advanced eastwards, plundering, pillaging, burning and destroying everything, Brahmanical or Buddhist, that lay in their way, the terror-stricken monks began to flee, with whatever property - manuscripts, images, etc., they held dear - that they could carry with them to Nepal and Tibet and also to Assam and Burma. In these Buddhist countries they were held in high esteem. Meanwhile, in India the advancing Turkish hordes fell upon the monasteries, killed the monks that were left behind, broke the images, destroyed the buildings and burut the libraries.

The story of the destruction of the Uddandapura vihāra, left to us by the Muslim historian Minhajuddin[3] illustrates what happened, also, to other monasteries of similar description. Thus were destroyed the concentrated knowledge and art-tradition of centuries, and practically nothing was left behind in India, except ruined buildings and broken images, to bear witness to the wisdom and culture of bygone centuries.

But thanks to the itinerant monks, who, through the centuries acted as travelling missionaries to the Himalayan countries and finally fled there before the Turkish terror, quite a considerable number of manuscripts found their home there in monasteries or private religious establishments[A] where they were tended and preserved with care and veneration. Thus they were saved to posterity to reveal their treasured secrets once more to the humanity of a new age and civilisation removed by centuries. Much, indeed, was lost or fell a prey to the revages of time, but still a fraction survived through the centuries awaiting to be brought to light again by modern exploration and research. Isolated from political strife and dynastic conflict and not least preserved from the destructive Indian climate, Nepal and Tibet proved to be safe shelters for these invaluable documents. There they were copied from time to time by generations of devoted students, and in Tibet, at least, translated and catalogued in detail by competent scholars who did not for-

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(A) Note the difference between the private religious establishments and established or group of monasteries such as those at Nalanda. Instances of religious endowments made by Buddhist, Jains and Hindus can be traced in various inscriptions. (3.i.)

get to include short biographical notes on the original authors as well. Two such catalogues have survived in the famous collections, known as the Bstangyur and the Kangyur. Besides these, Buddhist scholars such as Taranath and his guru the author of the Pag Sam Jon Zang occupied themselves in the preservation of many details concerning other things in connection with Buddhism and the no longer existing Buddhist establishments of Eastern India. It is to such texts as these and the invaluable Tibetan catalogues that we are indebted for our knowledge of the Buddhism of these centuries, of Buddhist authors and ācharyas and of Buddhist monasteries in India that flourished during this long period. We are told by such Tibetan authorities as Taranath(4) that the monks who fled to Assam, Pagan and Pegu also carried with them manuscripts andother materials, and there is no reason to doubt such statements . But, unfortunately, nothing has come to light so far from these areas. Burma was an active field for dynastic feuds. We read of the pillage of Buddhist establishments, especially those of the Talaing monks, and it is not likely that manuscripts of Eastern Indian origin have survived to our day. Ray, in his Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma shows that as late as 1442 A.D. there was, in Burma, a

monastic library that contained Tāntric Buddhist manuscripts. It is not unlikely that some of these manuscripts were of East Indian origin; the language of the titles of the manuscripts is Sanskritic and the subjects are definitely of Tāntric significance. Moreover, the wall paintings of Pagan supply a positive proof that the style and contents of these paintings were both derived from the book-illustrations of Eastern India. Nor have we any traces so far of Eastern Indian manuscripts from Assam and Orissa. The gradual domination of Buddhism by Hinduism, its final extinction and constant political upheavals must have contributed largely toward their destruction, but the most active factor that contributed to their ruin was probably the destructive climate of these areas. The fragments of manuscripts found by Lieutenant Bower in Central Asia, belonging to about the third-fourth century A.D., owe their preservation to the dry climate of the desert. Another manuscript of a comparatively early date is that of the Kubjikamatam (No. R.A.S.B. 8329), belonging palaeographically to the seventh century, which is now preserved in the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.(5) This is perhaps the earliest known manuscript, now in India, and this, together with the evidence of the Bower manuscripts dates back the history of manuscript-making in India to very early

times. The custom of illuminating manuscripts with illustrations is also likely to be as ancient. This is evident from the style and character of the illuminations of the manuscripts under examination; they clearly indicate that the paintings have a history of long practice and tradition behind them, not only in those of large-scale murals but also in small-scale book illustrations as well, a practice and tradition carried on in uninterrupted sequence.

It follows, therefore, that there were originally hundreds of such manuscripts in the numerous monastic libraries of Eastern India which were dispersed to various countries on the Islamic occupation of the country. Only a small fraction of these has been preserved in Nepal and Tibet. On the other hand there are manuscripts of this kind executed in Nepal, which belong to the same art-tradition.

It has already been pointed out that by far the largest number of manuscripts that have survived come from Nepal and Tibet. The story of the recovery of these manuscripts for the benefit of modern literary and historical research is in itself a romantic and fascinating chapter of the history of human striving for knowledge. The story, which centres round a band of pioneer European and Indian scholars such as Hodgson,

Wright, Bendall, Sastri, Rahula Sankrityayyan and others can profitably be followed in Cordier's Catalogue du fond Tibetian de la Bibliotheque Nationale (1908), Bendall's Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge, (1883), Mitra's Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal (1882), Sastri, Catalogue of Palm Leaf and Selected paper MSS,, belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal (2 vols., 1905 and 1915) and his very important series of Descriptive Catalogues of Sanskrit manuscripts in the Government collection under the care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1917 onwards) and in the Catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (1905). In recent years yet another interesting section has been added to this chapter by the admirable researches of Tucci in Western Tibet, the results of which are gradually being incorporated in his Indo-Tibetica, three volumes of which have already been published. The story need not be recounted in detail, but it is necessary to follow the steps so as to be able to trace the present location of the manuscripts in the various centres of learning in India and the west.

Brian Houghton Hodgson, who was for about twenty years (1822-43) in Nepal, first as Assistant to the British Resident and later as Resident, was the first

European scholar to reveal to the world that Nepal was a great repository of Sanskrit Buddhist manuscripts. "The existence of these was before his time perfectly unknown, and his discovery has entirely revolutionised the history of Buddhism as it was known to Europeans in the early part of the (nineteenth) century. Copies of these works to the total number of 381 bundles have been distributed so as to render them accessible to European scholars. Of these 85 bundles comprising 144 separate works were presented to the Asiatic Society of Bengal; 85 to the Royal Asiatic Society of London; 30 to the India Office Library; 7 to the Bodleian Library, Oxford; 174 to the Societe Asiatique, and M. Bournouf. The last two collections have since been deposited to the Bibliotheque Nationale of France.

Hodgson's important discoveries naturally raised the hope that further material for research might still be forthcoming from Nepal. Accordingly, Professor Cowell of the University of Cambridge became instrumental in requesting Dr. Daniell Wright, Surgeon to the British residency at Kathmandu, to procure specimens of such copes as could be made to order from works still extant in Nepal.(6) These were received at Cambridge from time to time, as they were procured,

from February, 1873 to May, 1876,[6] and were eventually deposited in the University Library. Dr. Wright was, also, able to acquire for the University Library quite a large number of originals which at that time (perhaps even now) were considered from an antiquarian point of view to be the most important collection of Indian manuscripts that had come into the hands of scholars in Europe. This collection has been catalogued by Cecil Bendall in his Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge (1883).

The next most important single collection of similar manuscripts was made by Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Sastri. His efforts, along with those of Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra, have gone to the making of the Government Collection, now housed in the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, "collected since the institution of the search for Sanskrit manuscripts under the order of Lord Lawrence's Government in 1868". Sastri himself undertook several excursions to Nepal and brought back with him numbers of manuscripts, of which not a few belonging to the early period were Eastern Indian in origin. To him we owe the bulk of ancient manuscripts, now in the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, including the early illu-

minated ones and the unique copy of the Rāmacharitam of Sandhyakara Nandi which is of great importance for the history of Bengal. Besides these, Sastri has left us a valuable Catalogue of Palm leaf and selected paper Mss. belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal, in two volumes, a catalogue that gives us an inventory of practically all the manuscripts that make up this very important collection. The bulk of the manuscripts brought by him from Nepal is included in his Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Government Collection under the care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. 1 (Buddhist) published in 1917.

Since Satri's collections were brought from Nepal, sporadic attempts have been made to obtain copies and originals from Nepalese sources by a number of scholars. Some libraries and museums, public as well as private, have, also, been able to acquire important manuscripts of this kind, but only casually. Nothing so important has so far been brought to light in these isolated instances as to extend the bounds of our knowledge so far as the period under review is concerned, to any considerable extent. Within recent years Pandit Rahula Sankrityayyana has undertaken the systematic collection of manuscripts

from Nepal. The collection made by this scholar still awaits closer study, as do the collections of Professor Tucci from Western Tibet, to which reference has already been made. These collections, when properly arranged, indexed and analysed, are expected to provide fresh and important materials for the study of the later phases of Buddhism in Eastern India as well as for that of East Indian painting. It should be noted that the collection of Rahula Sankrityayyana is now deposited in the Bihar Research Society, Patna, but Tucci's collections have all found their way to Italy.

R E F E R E N C E S

Chapter IV

1. Smith, V.A., The Early History of India, 1924, pp. 366-67.

2. Lévi, Sylvain, Le Nepal, Vol. II, p. 227

3. Minhaj-ud-din, Tabakat-I-Nasari, Translated from the original Persian manuscripts by H.G. Raverty.

3.1. Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XV, pp. 105-108; see also, Ibid, pp. 145-150; Ibid, pp. 329-334; Ibid, pp.337-349; Ibid, pp. 25-32.

4. Taranath's book has been translated into German under the title of Geschichte der Buddhismus in Indian (History of Buddhism in India, in English by W.L. Heely in India Antiquary, Vol. IV, pp.101-104, also pp. 361-367); Brown, P., Indian Painting pp. 10, 20, 23, 28, 35-37, 57; Ghosal, U.N., and Dutta, N., Indian Historical Quarterly.

5. Sastri, H.P., Descriptive Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Government Collection in the R.A.S.B., Vol. I; Saraswati, S., In the monthly meeting of the R.A.S.B., 6th June, 1949.

6. Vamsavali. (History of Nepal, translated from Parbatiya by Munshi Shew Shunker Singh and Pandit Shri Gunanand, pp. 305-324 (end) only, Cambridge, 1877) - Dr. Daniel Wright's note pp. 316 ff; - Catalogue of Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Possession of the Royal Asiatic Society (Hodgson Collection) by Cowell, E.B., and Eggeling, J., pp. 1 ff.

CHAPTER V

Art.

CHAPTER V

In spite of the fact that some western authors such as Lawrence Binyon have stressed the "calligraphic" qualities of the Ajanta paintings, it is their plastic qualities which strike the eye. By plasticity (1) is here meant the fully rounded, modelled treatment of the human form. This is the most significant characteristic of Indian painting up to the last phase of the work at Ajanta and its cognate centres. (A) This is a quality which may legitimately be called 'classical', and is apparent at its best at Ajanta, Bagh and in the sculptures at Badami. The most essential formal characteristics of this tradition in painting are: (a) the emphasis upon the modelling quality of the underlying brush line that, from the beginning, brings out in full the three-dimensional rounded volume of the mass; (b) the fully plastic quality of the overlying colours obtained by the employment of various shades and tones, and the laying on of white high lights, wherever necessary, to define the different planes; (c) the quality of the brush work which is always free and firm, resulting in a bold, rounded flexibility of form, especially in the outlines; and (d) a flowing and sinuous linear organization of the subject-matter. These

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(A) The term plastic (German Plastik) is used to indicate the use in art of solid forms or masses as expressive elements.

qualities are, indeed, the essential ones of early Indian painting and they impart that sculpturesque plastic rotundity which is the essential characteristic of the frescoes of Ajanta and Bagh (fifth to seventh century A.D.). It is to be noted that in these cave temples the sculptured icons and details are actually plastered and painted. This lends support to the idea that seems to me to underly the painting at Ajanta - that painting here is not so much used to represent objects directly as to translate on to a flat surface a primarily sculptural conception. It is sometimes forgotten how extensively painting was applied to mediaeval European sculpture. But these frescoes do not represent the total exhaustion or the end of the 'classical' tradition. A continuation of this tradition, albeit within a smaller range and of subdued intensity, can, for example, be seen in the paintings on the walls of the celebrated Kailāsa (eighth century) at Ellora in the Deccan, in those of the Jaina shrine at Sittanavasal (seventh century), the Vaisnava shrine at Tirumalaipuram (seventh century), the Kailāsanātha temple at Kanchīpuram (seventh century) and the Brihadiśvara temple at Tanjore (eleventh century), all in South India.(2) But it is even more pronounced in the manuscript illustrations of Bihar and Bengal, Nepal and Tibet (tenth to thirteenth centuries).

Specimens of painting datable earlier than the Pāla period have not yet been found anywhere in Eastern India or Nepal. But a casual remark in Fa-hien's account of the city of Tamralipti (4) indicates that painting as a form of creative expression was known and practised there as early as the fourth century. Indeed, from the surviving evidence at Ajanta and Bagh, it must be assumed that painting was very generally used in all the monasteries of the centuries preceding the Muslim invasion. Not only is painting referred to in the Sanskrit drama (3), but the passages referred to attest the existence of secular painting as a part of everyday life. The religious manuscript painting here dealt with must, therefore, be regarded as the sole remains of an extensive tradition. Extant specimens of early paintings in Eastern India and, also, in Nepal, up to the thirteenth century at any rate, are either illuminations for palm leaf and paper manuscripts, or on the wooden covers of manuscripts ranging approximately from the close of the tenth century, but in larger numbers, from the beginning of the eleventh century A.D. From the fourteenth century onwards the best of Nepalese painting is on banners (A) and patas, which are painted on prepared textile, either silk or

(A) Stylistically these banner paintings are clearly descended from the manuscript illuminations of earlier centuries. The palette is the same (indigo, vermillion, orpiment, white of chalk or conchshell and black or Kājjal), though the works are executed on coarse canvas over a white ground. In the later works only

(continued on next page)

cotton. Besides, these paintings, so far as Bengal is concerned, we have at our disposal the engraved drawings on copperplates (5) that belongs to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The manuscript illuminations are almost all, with rare exceptions, of Vajrayāna Buddhist inspirations, more rarely of Śivaite origin; but the engraved drawings are Brahmanical. The later paintings of Tibet - wall paintings, as well as banners or tankas - also, belong to the Tāntric Vajrayāna tradition. It is not easy to trace the origins of Tibetian painting, though Chinese and Mongolian influences are apparent. It survives up to the present as an active and continuous tradition. These paintings were almost invariably executed under the patronage of flourishing monastic organizations and, hence, are hieratic in character and subject. It is clear that the artists, some of whom were, and are, monks, worked within the canonical tradition laid down by the sect to which they belonged.

Since geographically the manuscripts, referred to above, were not all written and illuminated within the

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(A) (Continued from previous page)

the central figures retain the 'classical' character, whilst for the accessory figures and setting a special, rather sprightly specifically Nepalese style develops.

language area of the Bangali- and Bihari-speaking peoples, and quite a number are admittedly of Nepalese origin, and since there is hardly any appreciable major stylistic difference between the illuminations of Bihar, Bengal and Nepal, at least till as late as the twelfth century A.D., they may conveniently be studied, generally speaking, as belonging to one and the same school. But it must be borne in mind that the Nepalese manuscript illuminations of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, though belonging to the common class of East Indian manuscript illustrations, show certain differences in form and style (6) especially in the character of the brush line, which is one of increasing desiccation and sharpness, and in the colours used which are laid thinly and flatly, which may be taken as evidence of the weakening of the 'classical' tradition. By desiccation is meant a process by which the contours cease to convey the sense of enclosing a solid form and adopt, and are governed by a purely two-dimenstional expressive system of their own.

These miniatures, it is important to remember, do not represent a separate style of book illustrations; they are, in fact, mural paintings in reduced dimensions and can in no way be compared with the truly characteristic phase of book illustrations that constitutes a fascinating chapter in the history of painting in Persia, China, Mediaeva

Europe and late Mediaeval India.[A] Nor can they be said to have anything to do with various schools of primitive or folk painting; in fact, they reveal an already developed form and technique intimately linked with an art-practice and tradition that existed in the form of large wall paintings, in manuscript and portfolio paintings that carried on the earlier traditions of Ajanta and Bagh in an uninterrupted sequence. These small-scale paintings executed within the narrow dimensions of a manuscript page may be enlarged by means of a lantern and photographic slides on a magnified scale and yet do not suffer in the least in either the truth of the line or the completeness of the composition. Truly speaking, these paintings, so far as their style is concerned, are derived from large-scale murals, reduced in dimension.

The colours used[7] are orpiment yellow, white, indigo blue, Indian ink-black or Kājjal, cinnabar red, and green.

(A) It is the characteristic of European mediaeval mural painting that the artistic influence is carried from one centre to another, often far apart, by means of the easily transportable manuscript illustrations.

The last appears to be a mixture of orpiment and indigo, unlike the green of Ajanta, which is a terre verte. All these colours are used in different shades. The general colour arrangement, on the whole, used in the depiction of the divinities, at any rate, is mostly determined by iconographic requirements. Neither Indian red (terre rouge) or ochre, nor ultramarine seem to have been used. Tonal gradation of colours is practically unknown, but high lights are rendered by the application of white. The outline is drawn, either in black or red, and seems to have been sketched out first and later on filled in with colours. A number of problems remain to be considered. Apart from the initial drawing of the outlines, it would seem that overdrawing was made use of in rendering details over the body colours. In the case of western Indian and other palm-leaf manuscripts, it would seem likely that a stylus was used for the first layout, for which a parallel is found in European mediaeval practice on Vellum.(71)

Usually the composition of these illuminations follow certain obvious schematic principles of balance of design. In most of them the main divinity, always relatively larger, stands or is seated in the centre, against a background, either of an architectural design or of an oval aureole, flanked on both sides by lesser divinities. Architectural backgrounds are very frequent in the representations of the

Cambridge manuscript No. Add. 1643, copied in Newar era 135, that is, 1015 A.D. Sometimes the seat is a throne, directly reminiscent of those on sculptured images. Sometimes the main divinity occupies one side, and the lesser figures occupy the other. The upper corners are filled with flying semi-divine beings, floral decorations, architectural motifs or other similar devices.

With the help of the dated manuscripts, it is possible to arrange these miniatures in a rough chronological sequence. For this purpose a catalogue of the illuminated manuscripts, chronologically arranged under two heads, Eastern India and Nepal, has been given in Part 2 . Such an arrangement of the paintings, however, is not in itself, very illuminating, as the paintings themselves show hardly any stylistic evolution. Formally and psychologically, they are conventional and inevitably betray a traditional outlook. Indeed, both the content and manner of these paintings seem to have remained fixed, more or less, during three centuries, beginning from the eleventh. This is not to say that all these paintings are qualitatively on the same level of aesthetic achievement. Indeed, even in one and the same manuscript the paintings betray different levels of workmanship and taste, and hence, perhaps, indicates the employment of different hands for the work, even in a single

manuscript.

East Indian miniature paintings, therefore, embody stylistically speaking, the iconographic and formal traditions of the contemporary sculptural art patronized by the Pālas. So far as the plastically modelled mass is concerned, what the sculptor achieves by the manipulation of services at his disposal, the painter does with his colours which are applied with varying degrees of thinness or consistency, as well as with the help of linear inflexions. The main masses are outlined by definite lines, drawn with the brush; the flowing curves of the contours of the body and the lower abdomen as well as the sensitive curves of the fingers, are produced by the use of reentrant, link-curves producing a sinuous effect in the outline as a whole. East Indian painting and Nepalese share this tradition. The best specimens of this phase can be seen in the illuminations of the two manuscripts of the Ashtasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, one copied in year 15 of the reign of Rāmapāladeva (Bodleian Library Oxford, No. Sansk.a7; see part 2) and the other in the Newar year 191, i.e. 1070 A.D. (R.A.S.B. manuscript No. A. 15). The manuscript of Gandavyuha in the collection of Mr. S. Roerich is rich in illuminations which are qualitatively of a very high order, so, also, the illuminations on the two wooden covers of a

manuscript of the Ashtasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, copied in Newar year 148, that is, 1028 A.D., now in the collection of Sri S.K. Saraswati of Calcutta (see Part 2). In these examples subtle transitions in the intensity of colour are evident. There is, also, evident a skillful control of the brush-line which by its variation in thickness indicates formal variations within the contour.

The two manuscripts of the Ashtasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, one copied in year 5 of the reign of Mahīpāladeva (Cambridge No. Add. 1464) and the other in the year 6 of the reign of the same monarch, (R.A.S.B. No. G. 4713; see Part 2), represent the earliest extant specimens of these manuscript illuminations, whether from Eastern India or Nepal. Unfortunately, the colours are obscured to a certain extent by the accumulation of dirt. Nevertheless, they appear to have been consistently applied and the lines are also vital enough. The rendering of the figures of Queen Māyā and her sister in the Nativity scene of the latter manuscript clearly brings this out. Cambridge No. Add. 1643 copied in the year 135 of the Newar era, that is, 1015 A.D., is the earliest illuminated manuscript in the Nepalese series. The illuminations are rich in content, but the drawing falters, seeming to have none of the steady and uninterrupted flow that characterises the paintings

already referred to, including the slightly later wooden covers of the manuscript dated in 1028 A.D. (Saraswati Collection). In some of the panels it is even sharp and jerky. The modelling, also, is impoverished. These illuminations are interesting because of the reproductions of contemporary architectural forms and motifs, as well as for the descriptive labels which accompay the illuminated panels. There is another manuscript which has these features (R.A.S.B. manuscript No. A. 15, dated in 1070 A.D.), the painting of which are, however, of a higher artistic quality.

In the twelfth century the East Indian style remains vital, in spite of the evident thinning of the colours; this does not affect the line, which is still rhythmic and plastic. This is evident from the illuminations of the Boston Museum manuscript of the year 4 of the reign of Gopāla (III ?), and of the well known Swamura and Vredenburg manuscripts. In the Nepalese series, R.A.S.B. manuscript No. A. 15 (1070 A.D.) and the wooden covers of the manuscript of S.K. Saraswati (1028 A.D.) both belonging to the eleventh century, both demonstrate a higher artistic achievement than the Cambridge No. Add. 1643 of 1015 A.D. It is evident that in the twelfth century this quality is still maintained, at least in the earlier

productions, as we see in the Asutosh Museum manuscript of the Pañcharakshā, dated Newar year 225, i.e. 1104 A.D. (See Part 2). In colour as well as in drawing this manuscript is generally analogous to the Boston Museum manuscript of the year 4 of Gopāla (III ?), referred to above. Though bright the colours are thinner in consistency and smoother in appearance, with but faint signs of having been used for modelling. In this thinner and smoother treatment of colours these panels, however, stand apart from the contemporary productions of Eastern India. This is evident from the illuminations of another Nepalese manuscript of the Ashtasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā (R.A.S.B. No. G. 4203), dated in the Newar year 268, i.e., 1148 A.D. These seem to have a distinctively Nepalese flavour and idiom, which are marked by the absence of any trace of colour modelling. In physiognomy and features a vague Chinese element may also be perceptible to the discerning eye. The figures are more slender and in style the panels are characterised by an emphasis on the linear aspect which becomes distinctive of the Nepalese paintings of this phase.

This linear conception and treatment are undoubtedly evidence of the penetration of the 'mediaeval' into the 'classical' plastic conception and treatment. An illumination reproduced on Pl. XXXIII (right topmost panel) of Coomaraswamy's Portfolio of Indian art illustrates, even better than those

already referred to, this mediaeval element in East Indian and Nepalese painting. But the clear character of this mediaeval factor can best be seen in the few twelfth and thirteenth century copperplate drawings,[8] namely from the Sundarbans. In these drawings the modelling quality of the line is fully valid; it is still flowing, alert and sweeping in rhythm; but wherever there is the slightest pretext it indulges in sharp curves and pointed angles. The lines of the face, when shown in profile or three-quarter face, are angular with a beak-like nose or an almost pointed chin; the bow-like curves of the eyebrows or of the upper lips are extended as far as possible, much in the same manner as in contemporary West Indian miniatures.

It is necessary at this stage to explain what is meant by the 'Mediaeval' tradition. It is more complex in character than the 'classical' and more widely diffused. The essential characteristics of this tradition are: (a) an incisive line without modelling capacity and, also, without the steady flow of the 'classical' line. This line, quickly and sharply drawn, is the main feature of the 'mediaeval' tradition; (b) sharp pointed angles, particularly in the rendering of limbs, for example, the elbows, the shoulders, the sharp and beaked nose, the crescent lips with

the angles turned acutely upwards, the eyebrows and long, wide prominent eyes, which project in points beyond the contour of the figure they belong to; (c) abrupt counterposition in the angles and curves, of the body and its extended limbs, which produces a nervous animation quite different from the composed energy and latent dynamism of the 'classical' tradition; (d) total absence of colour modelling, and hence of plasticity, which results in an appearance of flatness of volume and of contour; (e) richness of variegated patterns and decorative motifs invested with sharp curves, angles and points; and (f) a marked preference for designs and decorations that are fundamentally geometrical and abstract, very different from the decorative designs and patterns composed of steadily moving, rounded curves, curls, scrolls, etc. of the 'classical' tradition drawn from the vegetable and animal world.

It seems these characteristics were the contribution of the Northern peoples to the art-styles of India, perhaps even dating even from the pre-Christian centuries, more particularly from the days of the Śakas and the Kushānas, being brought in with the recurrent waves of immigration. Hence, for the sake of convenience, I call them 'northern'. Modern researches, mainly by Strzygowski (9) and his colleagues, have sought to show that the sharp curve-and-point pattern

and the quick nervous line with their logical concommitants were widely prevalent among the nomads of Central Asia, especially among those of Turki and Mongol extraction. Intruders from the north, at any rate, seem to have been the most active carriers of this aesthetic vision and artistic tradition. But how these reached India and what were the stages through which they passed and what were their constituent elements can only be guessed, but cannot be determined as yet with any amount of certainty. That the elements which we see in India were the accumulated results of a continuous ethnic fusion of northern influences that poured into the plains of India from the steepes of Central Asia hardly admits of any doubt. The Śakas and the Yue-chi (of whom the Kushānas were a branch), the Ābhiras, the Hūnas and the Gurjaras were all Central Asian nomads.(10) In the fifth centuries A.D. the Hūnas were able to establish a dynasty in the heart of India, disturbing the social and political fabric of the whole north, and presumably introducing elements of their own culture into India, as well as into Afghanistan and Iran, with which countries India, especially Western India, maintained intimate relations for centuries. It is most likely that the heteregenous elements of more than one foreign tradition, brought in by repeated saves of immigration spread over more than half a millen-

nium, resulted in a very slow but steady fusion. Indeed, it must have taken a long time for these peoples and their cultures to send their roots deep down into the soil of the land where they settled, so enabling them to develop as an indigenous growth. The art forms that exhibit most strongly 'northern' traits are thus not exactly what one sees in 'northern' nomadic art, but are modified by the impact of and response to the 'classical' Indian mode that had hitherto been all pervasive. There are some reliefs which exemplify definitely northern conceptions; there are, for example, the sixth century Dhāmekh stūpa frieze of purely abstract geometric patterns; an early seventh century relief on a bronze bowl illustrated by Coomaraswamy in Ostasiatische Seitschrift, 1930, Pl. 33; and a number of eighth century decorative reliefs from Mandor and Rajputana. But sculpture being essentially three-dimensional and the plasticity of the fully rounded and modelled mass having been the most important element of the 'classical' tradition it resisted for a long time the infusion of the 'northern', or 'mediaeval', emphasis on the line, the stiff concave curves and the sharply cut edges and angles. On the other hand, the 'classical' tradition had by the seventh and the eighth centuries all but exhausted its potentialities and

was now ready to welcome new conceptions of form. Those were ready to hand, and were already available in stray instances and isolated regions.

The art of painting, which is inherently two-dimensional, offered much less resistance to the 'northern' or 'mediaeval' conception of form. In the eighth century murals at Ellora we find these traits asserting themselves so emphatically and exuberantly as to indicate past practice over a considerable period of time. Here the undulating, modelling lines of Ajanta and Bagh are replaced by sharp and thin lines, modulated curves by sharp and pointed angles, and roundly modelled surfaces by flat coloured areas. With Ellora the 'mediaeval' tradition came to stay and steadily through the centuries built up within the confines of India and also outside it, in Burma, Siam and Java, a future of its own. For some time after Ellora, the new tradition flowed as an under-current, influencing and transforming the 'classical' tradition by reducing the rotundity and consistency of the modelling, weakening the sense of volume and sharpening the previously rounded line, as well as by the introduction of certain geometric forms and motifs. This stage is reflected in the mural paintings of the Jaina shrine at Sittanavasal and the first layer of

paintings on the walls of the temple at Tirumalaipuram, both in the south.[11]+[12] By about the eleventh century it begins to make itself felt in some of the miniatures of Eastern India, including Nepal; but from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries the tradition is seen actively at work in different localities distributed all over the Indian Orient. In murals, so far as extant examples go, it is registered in the earlier layer of the paintings of Tirupattikunram and in the second layer of paintings at Tirumalaipuram, both in South India, and in the Pañcha-tantra paintings on the ceiling of a mandapa of the Vishnu temple at Madanpur, in the Lalitpur district of the Central Provinces, to mention only a few examples. In book illustrations it was extensively in use in West Indian, mainly Gujarati,[13] miniatures, and in East Indian manuscript illustrations and in the copperplates. Simultaneously it makes itself felt in the Javanese sculptures of the Panataran temples, of which the later Javanese Nayang Beber is a lineal descendant, and also in contemporary murals in Pagan (Burma) and in Siam.[14]

To go back to the subject of our study, it is easy to discover a superficial resemblance between this linear tradition of East Indian miniatures and drawings (inclusive of Nepalese manuscript illuminations) and that of Western

India and Rajputana. Certainly both belong to the 'mediaeval' conception and manner of treatment; but there is yet a marked difference. The line in the Western Indian tradition exaggeratedly pointed, angles are abrupt, and though there is the same predilection for brisk and extended curves, in Western India they are often broken and are drawn without any warmth of feeling or emotion. On the other hand, the East Indian line is sensitively emotional, and is expressive, even in its sharpness and dessication. This may be due to the East Indian trend towards emotionalism, which is recognizable from the Gupta period onwards. The 'Western' line has nothing but flat and hardened surfaces to control within its limits; but the 'East Indian' line with its sensitiveness demonstrates the roundness of the mass that is confined within its boundaries. The rich, glowing and contrasting colours of the West Indian miniatures have nothing in common with the subdued tones and careful gradation of the East Indian colours.

It is interesting to make a few observations here concerning some paintings of the late 18th and early 19th century from Orissa. Ghosh in his "Orissan Paintings" deals with a few newly acquired paintings and paṭas from Orissa. (14a) He traces the influence, on these art objects, from

Western Indian and Mughal schools. The flash in the eye, according to him, aided by a dot in the centre is a Deccani mannerism with Western Indian lineage. In the first painting, described by him (Pl. XIII), modelling plays but a subordinate part to the linear composition: - "The oblique, angular movements are crossed and re-crossed". In describing Plate XIV, Ghosh notes a new phase typical of Orissan school where the figures are delineated with a sensitiveness befitting the best Indian classical tradition. It seems that the trace of the remnant influence of the mediaeval manuscript paintings of Bengal and Bihar may be found in the later 'paṭas', in Orissa. (Kāliyadamana 'paṭ', (19th century, Pl. XV, Fig. 1, J.I.S.O.A., Vol. IX), which show a survival of the Classical Indian pictorial art traditions even to the present day.

Our East Indian illuminated manuscripts are dated in the regnal years of Pāla kings. A few of the manuscripts are also referred to the reign of a monarch, called Harivarman, apparently belonging to the Varman dynasty of East Bengal. Manuscripts of the Nepal series are dated in the Newar era. The Nepalese paintings comprise not only manuscript illuminations but also prabhās or painted banners (known in Tibet as taṅkas). Illuminated manuscripts with dates appear from the eleventh century and banners with dates

from the sixteenth, though their prototypes may be traced from about 900 A.D. onwards to Tun Huang.

Nepalese painting at this phase may be described as being comprehended from the elements of East Indian manuscript painting. The Saraswati Collection wooden covers of the Ashtasāhasrikā manuscript (1028 A.D.), and the R.A.S.B. manuscript No. A. 15 (1070 A.D.), already referred to, are significant examples of this phase, the Cambridge manuscript No. Add. 1643 supplying another example, though of lower artistic standard. In Eastern India the 'classical' traits appear to be persistent throughout the twelfth century A.D. in spite of the intrusion of the mediaeval concept. This is evident not only in the East Indian manuscripts of the twelfth century, already referred to, but also in R.A.S.B. manuscript No. 9989A, dated in the eighteenth year of the reign of Govindapāla who is referred to the later half of the twelfth century. Though the paintings are badly smudged on account of the accumulation of dirt, the flowing rhythm of the lines and the vivacity of colour modelling are too evident to be missed. In Nepal, however, the 'classical' concept does not appear to be so strong, nor so persistent. Already in the twelfth century there is a progressive desiccation of the colour modelling and a lessening of the modelling

capacity of the line which, moreover, has become dry and brittle. The paintings of the R.A.S.B. manuscript No. G. 4203 (1148 A.D.) supply significant examples of this phase and provide an interesting study in contrast to the contemporary East Indian manuscript illuminations.

In Eastern India the style, vital and potent in its 'classical' context even as late as the latter half of the twelfth century, suddenly becomes extinguished as a result of the Muslim invasion, and the consequent disappearance of the monastic and lay communities, who were the supporters of the tradition. Fortunately, we have an example of this disintegration and total exhaustion in the blotchy colour of the paintings of the R.A.S.B. manuscript No. G. 4078 of the Pañcharakshā executed in 1211 Śaka, that is, 1289 A.D. The style is already dead. In Nepal, however, in spite of the intrusion of the 'mediaeval' element and consequent modification of the style, the tradition does survive, though in a decadent and stagnant state, for a few centuries more. The Nepalese illuminations of the thirteenth century, for example, in R.A.S.B. manuscript No. B. 35 of the Pañcharakshā, dated in Newar year 385, that is, 1265 A.D. and on the wooden covers of the R.A.S.B. manuscripts of Śivadharma (No. G. 4077), in spite of their coarse appearance and

workmanship, still retain their connections and relationships with the earlier achievements. The sharp and broken lines and pointed angles of the 'Western' idiom, gradually intrude. Not only do the Nepalese paintings at this stage throw aside the refined elegance and exuberance of the 'Eastern' line, but in composition, too, they substitute for the continuous and sweeping rhythms of East Indian composition, one that is clipped and divided into single uncorrelated units. The colour too gradually becomes coarse and is flatly laid. The figures become stiff without any substance, accentuating their angles when bent sideways. The Durbar Library (15) (Nepal) manuscript of the Nityahnikatilaka, dated in Newar year 515, that is, 1395 A.D. illustrates this gradual decadence definitely and convincingly. The characteristic tendencies of the decadent Nepalese phase may be traced as late as the sixteenth century.

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C H A P T E R VI

Method and Technique.

CHAPTER VI

In a general dissertation like this the question of the technique involved in the execution of these paintings naturally must be discussed. "Technique", as Thompson observed "means the synthesis of many sorts of elements, physical and otherwise: and the raw materials of painting are no more than dross; but they are necessary dross, and not without influence upon other factors in the art". (D.V. Thompson; Materials of Mediaeval Painting: p. 94).

Among the materials, the support on which these paintings were executed must be discussed first. During the period under consideration all the paintings noticed were executed on manuscripts or on manuscript covers. These manuscripts, with but one exception, were written on palm-leaf. Two kinds of palm-leaf are found to have been in use in ancient days, one consisting of thick, strong-fibred leaves, commonly known as teret, and the other of more fragile leaves, the usual tāla-patra. Both belonging to the palmyra group, but the former is broader, more flexible and more durable than the latter. The first kind, hence, was a more suitable material for writing upon and manuscripts of high antiquity were on this kind of palm-leaf. Leaves of both kinds were first

dried and then treated and seasoned by boiling or by immersion in water for a time. Next they were dried again, cut into the required size and polished with a smooth stone or conch-shell. The last operation gives the leaf an even and glazed surface suitable for writing upon and for illuminations.

There is only one manuscript written on paper (cf. chapter VI, part 2) but the ingredients and composition of this paper still await scientific investigation.

Illuminations are, also, found executed on wooden covers as well as on the manuscript leaves and, with but few exceptions such painted covers are known to be contemporary with the manuscripts. The surface of the cover to be painted was smoothed and polished to receive the painting.

Colours, brushes, etc., also come within the range of the essential materials of painting and a study of these should be made as far as possible. The nature of pigments, their ingredients and composition should be studied with reference to extant examples by a process of chemical analysis of the various colours used in them. But seldom have the pigments of extant paintings been subjected to such a scientific analysis and we have to depend on mere visual examination of the paintings themselves and sub-

stantiate such observations with the information supplied by the old texts on painting. Of brushes, etc., no ancient example is extant now, but the texts describe such requisites, some in fair detail, and these are of immense help to us in visualising such materials in their physical as well as in their utilitarian aspects.

One of the earliest texts on painting is included in the Vishṇudharmottara (Venkatesvara press; sections on painting and image-making translated by Dr. Stella Kramrisch), which is usually ascribed to about the seventh century A.D. The Abhilāshitartha Chintāmani or Mānasollāsa, composed in 1131 A.D. and attributed to Someśvara Bhulokamalla of the Western Chālukya dynasty, has a long section on painting (ālekhya-karma). The text (Mysore, G.O.S.) supplies valuable and important data regarding the technical propesses of painting in ancient India and has been translated by Dr. A.K. Coomaraswamy in Technical Studies, Vol. III, No. 2, under the title, 'Technique and Theory of Indian painting'. This particular work, though of South Indian origin, belongs approximately to our period and is expected to be of great help in determining the various technical aspects of the paintings under examination. The Śilparatna of Śrī Kumāra, a sixteenth century work, contains a detailed chapter on painting (Chitralakshana; T.O.S., chap. 46). This text has also been

translated by Coomaraswamy in Sir Asutosh Mookerjee Memorial Volume, Patna, 1924. Besides, the art of painting and its technical processes have often been referred to in other works. All these texts, whether treating specifically of painting or referring to it casually, deal mostly with wall-paintings, but the technique and processes, detailed therein, can be taken as also applicable to manuscript-paintings in their essentials.

Eastern Indian manuscript-paintings are chiefly concerned with religious and mythological subjects and to hieratic divinities and hence the colours are, to a great extent, determined by canonical prescriptions. The colours mostly in use are white, red, yellow, blue, black and green. Of these the first five constitute the primary, basic or pure colours (suddha-varna according to the Abhilāshitartha chintāmani which, however, omits the blue from the category of pure colours). For white the texts usually prescribe powdered conch-shell (Abhilāshitartha Chintāmani, Śilparatna). In connection with the preparation of the wall for painting and the priming the former text, also, alludes to white clay and a mineral produced in the Nilgiris, called naga, which is said to be as white as moon-shine. Mr. E. Vredenburg takes the white used in these paintings to be white lead (Rupam, No. 1, p. 9), a view that has been objected to by Mr.

Ajit Ghosh on the ground that the same does not lend itself to tempera work (Ibid., No. 39, pp. 80-81). He thinks that the white used in these paintings was the kaolin. Kaolin may have been meant by the terms "white clay" in the Abhilāshitartha Chintāmani and "white earth" in the Śilparatna is probably meant kaolin, but these terms were only mentioned in connection with the processes of laying the ground for painting and priming and are never described as colouring substances in the execution of the painting itself, for which purpose powdered conch-shell appears to have been in general use for the white, as we find in the texts.

Red has been a favourite colour in these miniature paintings and several shades of it are found to have been used. The texts, particularly the Abhilāshitartha Chintāmani, speak of three shades produced from cinnabar (darada), lac juice (laktaka-rasa, laksha-rasa) and ochre (gairika). Approximately all these shades are found in the East Indian manuscript paintings and were probably produced as described in the texts.

Haritāla, i.e., orpiment, appears to have been generally used for the yellow (Vishṇudharmottara, Abhilāshitartha Chintāmani). It is repeatedly ground and sifted levigated to the consistency of fine white

flour and then used.

Blue has been used with charming effect in Indian paintings of all ages. In our manuscript-paintings its use is equally telling. Indigo (nīla) appears to have been the chief blue of the Indian painters. Both the Vishṇudharmottara and the Abhilāshitartha Chintāmani refer to it as the principal blue pigment. Rajavarta or lapis lazuli has also been alluded to in the above texts and in the Harshacharita. Lapis was always a foreign import, and was a valued article of trade. It is most probable that the lapis used in the paintings of Ajanta was from the unique source known to the ancient world - the mines of Badaksan. During our period, however, it is indigo which was commonly used for the blue, both in Eastern as well as in Western India.

For the black the texts prescribe lampblack (cf. Krishne kājjalamishyate - Abhilāshitartha Chintāmani) and the Śilparatna describes in detail the method of its preparation. In our paintings, also, lampblack appears to have supplied the black colour which, however, was used very sparingly.

In our manuscripts the use of green is fairly common, not only for vegetation but also for the body. Green does not belong to the category of basic colours, but is

produced by mixture. As the Vishṇudharmottara says, colours produced by combinations are innumerable, and the Abhilāshitartha Chintāmani and the Śilparatna give us lists of the principal mixed shades. Green is usually produced by mixtures of blue and yellow, while different shades were obtained by combining it with white in greater or lesser proportions. Besides the above, a few other shades are, also, found to have been in use, such as patala (buff), a combination of lampblack mixed with lac, or pink, a combination of cinnabar mixed with conch-shell, etc. The Śilparatna (Chap. 46, 119-130) describes in detail the preparation of the various colours, primary as well as mixed, and it is probably by these processes that the different colours that we find in our paintings were produced.

While on the subject of colours a word or two may be said about the binding media. The texts prescribe different kinds of binding media, such as the exudation of the Sindura tree (Vishṇudharmottara), exudations of kapittha (wood-apple) and nim (margosia) the latter being frequently spoken of in the Śilparatna. In recent times the exudation of tamarind seeds has been widely used as a binding medium for the pigments with the indigenous artists and craftsmen, and its use in the ancient times may, also, be tentatively inferred.

We may next turn our attention to such requisites as brushes, styles, pencils or crayons, etc. Of these no extant examples are known, but the texts supply us with useful information about them. A style (tindu or tinduka) was evidently intended for scratching a design on palm-leaf, as in Orissan, South Indian and Burmese manuscripts. The Eastern Indian, not belonging to this category, had apparently no use for such a style. Some kind of pencil or crayon (vartikā - Abhilāshitartha Chintāmani; kitta-lekhanī - Śilparatna) was used in drawing the first sketches for large-sized murals. Our paintings being on a miniature scale were sketched with the help of the brush and very little use was made of such crayons or pencils.

In manuscript-painting on a miniature scale the brush (lekhanī - Abhilāshitartha Chintāmani - Śilparatna; kurcha - Samarangana Sūtradhārā; tulika - Saṁyutta Nikaya, II.5, Kumārasambhava, I.32. The last term is used in the sense of the holder of the brush in the Abhilāshitartha Chintāmani), was certainly the principal implement not only in the first sketching but also throughout the different processes up to the completion of the painting. In our texts brushes are broadly divided into three categories, thick, medium and thin - the first for the filling in of colours (lepana), the second for modelling

(aṅkana) and the third for the drawing of finer details. The Abhilāshitartha Chintāmani prescribes that the brushes should be made of the soft hair taken from the ears of a calf and fastened to the holder with lac. The Śilparatna treats of brushes in greater detail and advises three brushes of each variety for each colour. According to this authority, the hair from a calf's ear has to be used only for the thick type of brush, and for the finer variety is prescribed the hair from the musk rat's tail. It is needless to say that our artists used brushes which differed very little from those described in the texts.

After the materials we may turn to an examination of the various technical processes involved in the execution of these illustrated manuscripts. From the tradition recorded in the texts one may visualise the artists at work through the various stages from the preparation of the ground to the completion of the painting . In the introductory chapter a general physical description of the manuscript-illuminations was given which may well be repeated here. In width, the manuscripts are narrow and on the folios the illuminations appear in separate oblong panels, either one in the centre or several uniformly spaced and demarcated by writing.

The holes for binding the manuscripts, also, serve as motifs for decoration, particularly on the folios where the illumination appear. Usually the manuscript was written first by the copyist who marked off on the required folios blank spaces to be later on filled by the artist with paintings. In the illuminated covers the entire space was taken up by illustrations arranged horizontally along their length. Such illustrations, however, did not portray one continuous scene or scenes, but consisted of different themes and subjects, each theme forming a separate composition aesthetically as well as iconographically. The themes portrayed, either on the folios or on the covers, seldom have any relation to the text, and the purpose of such illuminations appears to have been purely decorative, and, also, perhaps sacerdotal, in the majority of cases. In rare instances the illuminated panels are accompanied by descriptive labels, as we have in the R.A.S.B. Ms. No. A.15 and the Cambridge Ms. No. Add. 1643.

The illustrations on the folios appear to have been executed, at least in Palm-leaf manuscripts, directly on the surface without any size or priming. In the single paper manuscript under examination a size, mixed with powdered conch-shell perhaps, or white clay as recommended in the texts, appears to have been used as

a ground. For wooden surfaces, also, a similar ground was usually employed. The first outline was apparently drawn in light red with the brush, as described in the texts, which further speak of first sketches in yellow as well as in black. It is doubtful whether the latter practices were ever followed in the manuscript-illumination under notice. Black outlines are no doubt frequently encountered; but they seem to have been added last to give definition to the forms. In the R.A.S.B. Ms. No. G. 4716 of the Aparimitāyurnāma Mahāyāna Sūtra we have useful specimens of such first sketches in light red apparently drawn with the brush. The sketches in this manuscript are instructive as showing us the first drawings in all their characteristic features. The distinction of forms, separation of limbs according to correct proportions, the marking of the other essential parts of the composition were attended to even in the first sketches. The first outline was next filled with a light colour wash, usually white, after which the different colours were applied, not flatly though, but with due regard to lights and shades. The texts describe the various methods of differentiating the tones and shades of colours which no doubt testify to the Indians' detailed knowledge and experience in this. The information, supplied by the texts, when studied with reference to

actual examples such as the East Indian manuscript illuminations, leave little room for doubt that the methods described in the texts, were actually practised by the artists in ancient times. Colours of the deities, mythological persons and objects were determined, as already observed, by canonical prescriptions, but nature, inanimate objects, animal life, etc., were depicted in their natural colours, as repeatedly enjoined by the texts.

After the laying in of the colours, jewellery, ornaments, decorative details, etc., were worked out with fine brush strokes, but always with an eye to balance and harmony. It is at this stage that colour contrasts and colour reliefs were resorted to according to the needs of composition. Our texts have detailed injunctions for achieving such contrasts and reliefs and, also, for attaining softer and finer shades, and the illuminations reveal a high degree of practical skill on the part of the artists in these matters. These paintings by their varied tonal gradation of colours, pleasing and harmonious, prove beyond doubt that the detailed theoretical knowledge as we find in the texts, was actually put into practise with brilliant success and charming effect. So far as the primary colours are concerned the palette was comparatively limited, but even with these few the artists have

achieved countless varieties and grades of fine shades and tones. The surging plastic effect, achieved as much as by flowing and sweeping linear conceptions as by colour-modelling recall the glorious classical heritage of the Gupta age. The texts no doubt testify to the advance of the technique and the Eastern Indian manuscript-illuminations pre-suppose the full and mature absorption of this technical advance. That a few of these manuscript-illuminations still survive even after a period of a thousand years speaks volumes for the soundness and efficacy of the technique employed in their execution.

A P P E N D I X "A"

A P P E N D I X "A"

The Ajanta paintings have been referred to more than once in the present thesis. As it will not be possible to discuss in detail the technique and the opinions of different scholars on Ajanta, in the Art chapter (ante), a summary is here given.

Coomaraswamy has discussed the "Technique and theory of Indian Painting" (Technical Studies, Vol. III, No. 2, October 1934) and, in Vishnudharmottara (III) 41, J.A.O.S., LII, 1932, Tagore in his Sadanga or the "Six Limbs of Indian Painting" (J.I.S.O.A. publication) and also Ostasiatische Zeitschrift and Kramrish in "The Vishnudharmottara", Part III, 2nd ed. (Calcutta 1928) in a general way. As the methods and technique has been discussed in a general way in another chapter, we are not concerned, here, with details and a review of these works has not been included here.

Several scholars have worked on Ajanta, of whom Brown, Codrington, Griffith, Lady Herringham, Kramrish, Rowland and Yazdani's opinions are here quoted.

Indian Painting by Percy Brown(A)

(A) Brown has, also, discussed the methods and materials in his "Indian Painting under the Mughals", Chapter IX, pp. 180 ff.

(The Heritage of India)

1. "The oldest painting, therefore, at Ajanta represents no primitive beginning but an art of some maturity; not the first efforts of individuals groping in the darkness of inexperience, but the finished work of a school of artists trained in a high art, manifesting great and ancient traditions. From the references in the early Literature of India ....., it has been .... inferred that painting was a fully-evolved art in pre-Buddhist days, and the character of the most ancient frescos at Ajanta serves to strengthen this supposition" (p. 29)

2. "The characteristic features of these early frescos of Ajanta are a simple, bold style of painting emphasised by a spirited and vigorous outline. These scenes are well composed, some of the individual figures are very skillfully drawn, and the expressive treatment of the hands is noticeable". (p. 30).

3. "This is what has been discribed as the 'narrative style', and is literally a picture gallery illustrating some of the most engrossing episodes in the birth, life, and death of the Buddha. The conceptions of this group of frescos denote less idealism, and there is a decided feeling for the dramatic. They seem to have been selected with the object of attracting the observer by means of

their direct humanitarianism. Replete with vigour - for they are full of action - they depict the art in its most graphic form". (p. 31)

4. "Posed in impressive and stately attitudes, the contours of these figures are superb, and reveal a keen perception of the beauty of form. There is no undue striving after academic or anatomical exactitude, the drawing is spontaneous and unrestrained. Each figure naturally falls into its correct place, and unaffectedly takes its right position in the general composition. In sentiment the art is intensely emotional, uplifting the observer by its forceful expressiveness". (p. 64)

5. "But the chief characteristic of the art of Ajanta, and, in fact, all Oriental painting, lies in its adaptation of line". (p. 64)

6. "The painter knew how to qualify and gradate his outline so as to give it every degree of expression. Not only do these frescos represent his visualisation of a rounded object translated into line, but his actual treatment of this line is so subtle and experienced that by its varying quality and sympathetic utterance it embodies modelling, values, relief, foreshortening and all the essential elements of the art." (p. 64).

7. "In treatment this figure approaches the school of Botticelli in the absence of foreshortening and in the reduction of the modelling to the lowest terms. The strong direct drawing of the shoulders and arms is masterly in its unaffected simplicity, while the quality of the outline suggests the form with the least possible labour. Clean and clear on its outer edge, on its inner margin, where it is required to express the feeling of flesh, it is skilfully softened, and the effect of roundness is obtained without effort. The face is replete with depth and tenderness, the whole of which has been secured by a few carefully considered lines, qualified and shaded in places or blended when necessary by a few simple half-tones. The eyebrows, upon which depends much of the facial expression, are drawn in one simple wave-line; but in its simplicity of intention this single brush-form represents in itself the handling of a great craftsman, the genius of a master-mind". (p.65).

8. "In the subsidiary portions of this composition, such as the grouping of the lesser personages, a great refinement and harmony of form is attained. The single figures express a sense of rhythm and of graceful movement aiding considerably in the beauty of the conception as a whole. And in the hand of the principal character

is the blue lotus, symbolising much, and probably the clue to the artist's underlying ideal. For only the sinuous curves of the lotus stem, the spring of the petals, or the languid grace of the leaves as they float on the water can have inspired shapes and forms like these. Contrast the full-blown treatment of portions of the design with the exquisite modulation in other parts, the restrained rendering of the queen on the right in comparison with the vitality and action of the aerial creatures above; as one realises the deep significance of these qualities, the passionate intensity of the artist-priest becomes discernible, as, controlled by mental discipline and guided by refined taste, his hand portrayed with unerring skill the high abstractions of his creed".

"From a study of form we may pass to the scheme of colour employed in the Ajanta frescos. Time and other causes have destroyed much of the delicacy of tone and tint once displayed in these paintings, but enough remains to enable a reconstruction to be made of the colour motif, as this may have appeared fifteen hundred years ago. Then the depth and volume of the colour would have been a joy indeed, as the brilliant blues and greens against the dark rich purples appeared in their full strength, and the flesh tints and brightly-hued costumes glowed in the picture. Low-toned and blackened surfaces alone are all

that remain of this once gorgeous effect, and from these indistinct monochromes it is necessary to recreate the original colour scheme". (pp. 65-66)

9. "The process of the Buddhist frescos appears to have been the same in all the examples that have survived. Over the surface of the rough excavated wall of rock a mixture of clay, cow-dung and pulverised trap rock was applied, to the thickness of one-eighth to three-quarters of an inch. Sometimes this first dressing also contained finely-chopped straw or rice husks. This ground was then coated with an exceedingly thin layer of white plaster, about the thickness of, and in some senses, resembling an egg shell. On this polished shell-like surface, the frescos were painted in water-colour". (p.98)

Codrington:

(Smith, V., - The History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon)

"The nature of fresco-painting in any of its forms implies the use of a limited range of pigments capable of resisting the decomposing action of time and consequently composed of natural earth. At Ajanta and Bagh, the colours most freely used are white, red, and brown in various shades, a dull green and blue.

a) The white is opaque, mainly composed of sulphate of lime; the reds and browns derive their tints solely from compounds of iron; the green is a silicate,

similar to the mineral now known as "terre verte"; the blue is ultramarine, which was obtained in ancient times by grinding calacined lapis lazuli, a costly semi-precious mineral usually imported from either Persia or Badakshan. All other pigments are to be found locally".

"At Ajanta, yellow, so largely used at Anuradhapura in Ceylon, apparently is very rare. Yellow of the ancient painters is believed to have been always orpiment, a natural arsenic sulphide" (p. 98)

Lady Herringham's assertion that the white used is sulphate of lime not carbonate, requires checking.

Ajanta, published by Indian Society - Lady Herringham

"Nearly all the painting has for its foundation definite outlines, generally first on the plaster a vivid orange red, corrected and emphasised with black or brown as the painting preceeded. The outline in its final state, firm but modulated and realistic, and not often like the calligraphic sweeping curves of the Chinese and Japanese. The drawing is, on the whole, like mediaeval Italian drawing".

"The composition and incident of many of the pictures could be recovered in this way where the colour and modelling would be almost conjunctural ".

"To me the art is of a primitive, not decadant nature, struggling hard for fresh expression. The artists had a complete command of posture. Their seated and floating poses especially are of great interest. Their knowledge of the types and positions, gestures and beauties of hands is amazing". (p. 18)

Lady Herringham (continued)

(Smith. V., - The History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon)

1. "The technique adopted, with perhaps some few exceptions, is a bold red line-drawing on the white plaster. Sometimes nothing else is left. This drawing gives all the essentials with force or delicacy as may be required, and with knowledge and intention" (p. 98)

Lady Herringham here draws attention to the fact that the overpainting has frequently fallen away, leaving the under-drawing.

2. "Next comes a thinnish terra-verda monochrome showing some of the red through it; then the local colours; then a strengthening of the outlines with blacks and browns giving great decision, but also a certain flatness; last a little shading if necessary" (p. 98)

2. "There is not much definite light and shade modelling but there is great definition given by the use of contrasting local colour and of emphatic blacks and whites". (p. 98)

Kramrisch.

(A Survey of Painting in the Deccan, 1937)

"Colour occupies the first place along the metaphysical direction of the forthcoming of form. It is the ground, opaque and saturated. Shape is bodied forth from it. It is secondary in the ontology of the paintings. Technically, however, the outlines are drawn first and then only the colour is applied. This process of demarcation is necessary in order to allot to colour its position, in plots. These in the next step taken technically are modelled in colour and tone, by dots, cross lines (patra) and wash (?) and it is then that shape comes forth where figures necessitate it, whereas elsewhere the coloured ground remains flat, charged with its own density and beset with the light dots of flowers. Behind it, in the storehouse of consciousness the whole universe of objects lies, indiscriminate and with its eyes closed. The charged density of the colour lies still while it flickers. Nameless with uncounted flowers where it is the ground on which the figures stand and which also

extends behind them, in scenery and dwelling place. Behind and below are frequently coterminous and actually these relations do not exist in the paintings. The ground preserves its nameless density irrespective of its situation. When finally the outlines are drawn once more on top of the first lines of demarcation, then only do they give definition and precise name to the figures. Before this is done, the process of modelling within the figure fulfils, in relation to the changed colour surface, a function analogous to that of the flowers which flicker up as coloured dots where no outlined and modelled shapes are".

"The Abhidharmakosa words adequately and more comprehensively than technical treatises, the function of colour as it was felt, not only in Buddhist India, Indefinite extensiveness is compressed into an intensity for instance into the deep and saturated colour of lapis-lazuli. Space accordingly is a certain category of substantial colour. Colour in painting holds space". (pp. 26-27)

"Shadows are accidents..... There is no source of light anywhere in these paintings. The figures carry it in the modelled colour of their bodies. A painter raises a painting, he gives life to the figures by modelling them, by rounding them off with shading in colour, tone and high

lights. These are also raised and actually at times laid on with thick white colour."

"The high light is the final mark of their mode of progression. It is neither derived from an outer source of light nor does it render the figures transparent. It makes complete their solid volume. The luminosity of the single figure does not extend further than its limits and belongs to its substance".

"It corresponds to the opaque colour intensity of the ground beset with the light stars of uncounted flowers (Pls. II, III)". (p. 19)

Griffith, John.

(Various Reports on the work of Copying the Paintings in the Caves of Ajanta 1872-85).

"For the purposes of Art education, no better examples could be placed before an Indian art student than those to be found in the caves of Ajunta. Here we have Art with life in it, human faces, full of expression, limbs drawn with grace and action, flowers which bloom, birds which soar, and beasts that spring or fight, or patiently carry their burdens: all are taken from Nature's book, growing after her pattern, and in this respect differing entirely from Mahomedan Art, which is

unreal, unnatural, and, therefore, incapable of development". (p.6)

Griffith, J. (continued)

(Smith, v., The History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon)

1. "The Indian practice of wall-painting at Ajanta, as elsewhere, is in fact a combination of tempara with fresco. The hydraulic nature of Indian Lime, or Chunam, makes it possible to keep a surface moist for a longer time than in Europe, and the Indian practice of trowelling the work - unknown in Europe - produced a closer and more intimate liaison between the colour and the limes and a more durable and damp-resisting face than the open texture of European fresco. The art has been practiced all over India since the time of the Ajanta frescoes, and to this day, houses, mosques, and temples are thus decorated. The modern method is first to spread a ground of coarse mortar (chunam) of thickness of from half to one inch on the wall. This is allowed to stand for a day. If on the next day the ground is too dry, it is moistened, and then tapped all over with the edge of a small piece of wood of triangular section, to roughen it and give it a tooth. Then, with a coarse brush, a thin coating of fine white plaster (chunam) is applied, and the work is allowed

to stand till next day, being moistened all the time. If the painting is to be highly finished, the ground is carefully smoothed with a small flat iron trowel about the size of a dessert spoon, which produces a surface on whihh the design is first sketched, or transferred by pouncing from a perforated drawing on paper, and then painted.".

"The outline is usually put in first in brown or black; local colour is filled in with flat washes, on which the details are painted".

"The colours are ground with rice or linseed - water with a little coarse molasses (gur), and water only is used in painting. Then, when the painting is completed, it is again rubbed over with the same small trowel..... It is considered absolutely necessary that the work should be kept damp from beginning to finish, so that the plaster is not allowed to set until the completion of the picture. When once the smoothly trowelled surface is dry, it bears a distinct sheen or gloss and the colours withstand washing."

2. "Between the methods of modern India and that employed at Ajanta, the only difference is that instead of a first coat of mortar, a mixture of clay, cow-dung and pulvarised trap rock was first applied to the walls and thoroughly pressed into its (sic) surface, when the

small cavities and air-holes peculiar to volcanic rock and the rough chisel marks left by the excavators served as keys. In some instances, especially in the ceilings, rice husks were used". (pp. 97 ff).

3. "This first layer - which, according to our modern notions, promises no great prominence - was laid to a thickness varying from one-eighth to three-quarters of an inch, and on it an egg-shell coat of fine white plaster was spread. This skin of plaster, in fact, overlaid everything - mouldings, columns, carved ornaments, and figure sculptures, but, in the case of carved details without the intervention of the coat of earthen rough-cast; and, from what remains, it is clear that the whole of each cave was thus plaster-coated and painted". (pp 97 ff)

4. "It is evident from specimens of Egyptian work in the British Museum that loam or clay mixed with chopped straw formed the substratum over which, as at Ajanta, a layer of fine plaster was laid to receive the final painting" (pp. 97 ff).

It is interesting to note that Griffith does not mention the first outline in red.

Rowland

(The Wall Paintings of India, Central Asia and Ceylon)

1. "The Ajanta Bodhisattva lacks all of the sensuous overtones, the false wistfulness, and the unpleasant androgynous quality that distinguishes Leonardo's fleshly concept".

"At Ajanta, all is befittingly the calm of infinite compassion and tenderness". (Pl. 15, p. 74)

2. Technique - "The nose is rendered by a heavy stripe of light pigment bordered by areas of shading on both its margins. The object is to give a sense of plastic relief; there is no interest in light and shade as an end in itself. This effective, but artificial means of rendering relief with no regard to a definite light source underwent certain modifications after its introduction to Central Asia: there the stripes of shading became reduced to heavy lines as may be seen in the Bodhisattva of Group E at Bamiyan. In a slightly altered and purely linear form this technical device found its way into the wall paintings of Horyuji in Nara. The iconographical convention of repre-

senting the eyes with a black line bordering the upper lid and a red margin for the lower one can likewise be found in the religious art of all of Eastern Asia. In the detail of Padmapani and in the head of Sakti can be detected a technique of painting the shadows in tiny dots of colour, a sort of pointilliste method that occurs again in certain details of wall paintings of Horyuji in Nara." (pp. 74-75 Pl.15)

3. "The modelling of the features of Sakti of Padmapāni within a very limited range of lower dark values is a masterpiece even more subtle than the sureness of the shading of the face of the Bodhisattva". (p.75. Pl.16)

4. "The smooth abstract perfection of the torso of the prince in this panel with its elimination of all superfluous anatomical modelling reminds us of such masterpieces of Gupta sculpture as the famous statue of Buddha preaching in the Deer Park in the museum at Sarnath. The colours are exactly the same rich tonality almost like oil painting that we see in the paintings of the Great Bodhisattva". (p. 76, Pl. 17).

Ajanta by Yazdani

1. The colours used are only a few, red-ochre, terre-

verte, lamp-black, and white of lime, which have been used pure or mixed to produce desired effect in the schemes. Although it does not mention here the use of lapis-lazuli blue, it occurs frequently.

1. "The high lights on the noses and chins of the dark brown figures are not produced by wiping out the colour, but by applying a light yellow tint over the brown. Again, below the eye-lids of some figures, blue streaks have been painted to represent shade, which serve their purpose extremely well. The effect of roundness is produced by deepening the colours along the outline and in some places perspective is gained by the insertion of dots". (Part II, p. 1)

2. Modelling - "The dark brown washes along the chin, neck, and shoulders of this figure, to make it look round and detached from the background". (Part II, pl.IX. p.7)

3. Materials used - a) "Lamp-black, red ochre, yellow ochre, and lapis-lazuli formed the principle colours. The last, evidently came from outside Deccan " (Part I, pp. 1&2)

b) "A layer of clay mixed with rice-husk and gum was first put on the rock, and thereupon a coat of lime and the

surface was smoothed with a trowel. The subject was then outlined in pinkish brown or black, and afterwards colours were filled in by washes and detail accentuated by streaks and dots". (Part I, p. 2).

PART 2

C H A P T E R I.

Introductory Discussion.

PART 2

CHAPTER I.

The number of manuscripts emanating from Eastern India and Nepal and belonging to a comparatively early date is fairly large. But of this number only a very small proportion contains illuminations. There is no doubt that an intensive survey of the large monastic libraries still in existence in the Himalayan and sub-Himalayan tracts would lead to the discovery of further illuminated manuscripts. In recent years Prof. G. Tucci of Italy has carried away box-loads of manuscripts and manuscript paintings from Western Tibet. Pandit Rahula Sankrityayyana also brought huge collections from Nepal. These collections still await closer study and scrutiny. When this is done, many other manuscripts that may be invaluable are likely to be brought to light. These two instances are pointers to what detailed search may be expected to lead to.

The illuminated manuscripts from Eastern India and Nepal have been studied from different points of view by more than one scholar. In the section on

Painting in the History of Bengal, Vol. 1 (pp. 548 ff.) Ray sums up the position of such studies with reference to the art of book illustration in Eastern India. The scholars who have worked on the subject up till now have, almost without exception, based their enquiries and observations on the more well known manuscripts. Little attempt has been made either to utilise the less known examples for such studies or in any way to tread fresh ground. For a comprehensive study of these illuminations it is necessary that all available materials should first be surveyed. It is because of this that a catalogue of all the known illuminated manuscripts is given here, arranged chronologically with reference to the definitely dated manuscripts, under two heads - Eastern India and Nepal. Every care has been taken to make the catalogue as exhaustive and up to date as possible, though it is not unlikely that some material may have been left out due to insufficient data in such records as the manuscript catalogues, etc., and to the usual lack of information about the contents of private collections.

C H A P T E R II

CATALOGUE OF ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

OF

EASTERN INDIA AND NEPAL

CHAPTER II

CATALOGUE OF ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS OF EASTERN INDIA AND NEPAL

Eastern India:

1. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (University Library, Cambridge, No. Add. 1464).

Palm leaf. Kuṭila (precursor of Nāgari and Bengali scripts). Copied in the fifteenth year of the reign of Mahīpāladeva (1) of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal (c. A.D. 993).

"The Manuscript which is in excellent preservation, has several illustrations - chiefly of Buddhas, showing various mudrās - both near the beginning and end of the Manuscript and on the binding boards. There are several glosses in a hand from which it would appear that the manuscript remained in Bengal many centuries after which it was written".

Bendall, Cecil, Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge, p. 100.

This is a fairly well known manuscript and has

been utilised several times for studies in iconography and art of manuscript painting.

2. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, No. Govt. Coll. 4713).

Palm leaf. Kūṭila (as above).

Copied in the sixth year of the reign of Mahīpāladeva (1) of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal (c. A.D. 994).

"Six illustrations in the first two and as many in the last two leaves".

Sastri, H.P., Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts in the Government Collection under the care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol.1, pp. 1-2.

Apart from illustrations on the folios the two boards are also entirely covered with illuminations representing the five Dhyānī Buddhas and other Mahāyāna Buddhist divinities. The paintings on the boards, though damaged, appear to be of better execution than those within the manuscript. The manuscript, although known for a long time, has not yet been subjected to a detailed analytical study which is being done in Chapter III (Part 2) of the present dissertation. (J.R.A.S.B.L. Vol. XVI.)).

The above two manuscripts, copied at Nālandā, belong together, not only by the identity of the place of execution and nearness in date but, also, by affinities in the style of their illuminations.

3. PAÑCHARAKSHĀ (University Library, Cambridge, No. Add. 1688).

Palm leaf. Kūṭila (as above).

Copied in the fourteenth year of the reign of Nayapāladeva of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal (c. A.D.1052).

"The Manuscript is copiously illustrated with figures of Buddhas, divinities and chaityas: and the ends of chapters have elaborate patterns, etc."

Bendall, Cecil, Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge, p. 175.

The illustrations (36 in number) of this manuscript have not yet been subjected to a close study.

4. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Bharata Kala Bhavana, Benares).

Palm leaf. Proto-Bengali.

Copied in the ninth year of the reign of Rāmapāladeva of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal (c. A.D. 1086).

Exhibition of Art chiefly from the dominions of India and Pakistan (2400 B.C. to 1947 A.D.): Catalogue, p. 40, No. 429.

No notice of this manuscript has yet been published.

5. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Bodleian Library, Oxford, No. Ms. Sansk. a. 7).

Palm leaf. Proto-Bengali.

Copied in the fifteenth year of the reign of Rāmapāladeva of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal (c. A.D.1092).

The two boards and six folios within the manuscript are richly embellished with paintings. The paintings on the first board depict scenes from the life of the Buddha and those on the second the goddess Prajñāpāramitā flanked on either side by ten other goddesses, perhaps manifestations of the ten pāramitās. There are three illuminated panels on each of six folios, thus making a total of eighteen. On the folios the life scenes are repeated; besides there are the representations of several other Buddhist divinities.

A detailed analytical study of the illustrations of this manuscript constitutes Chapter ~~V~~ (Part 2) of the present dissertation. (Also, H.J. Stooke, An XI century illuminated palm leaf Ms. Oriental Art, I. No.1.,

pp. 5-8; Edward Conze, remarks on a Pāla Ms. Ibid. pp. 9-12).

6. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (formerly of the Vredenburg Collection).

Palm leaf. Proto-Bengali.

Copied in the thirty-ninth year of the reign of Rāmapāladeva of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal (c. A.D.1116).

Vredenburg, E., "Continuity of pictorial tradition in the art of India", Rupam, No. 1., 1920, pp. 7-11.

The covers and folios are decorated with graceful paintings.

7. PAÑCHAVIṀSATISĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (State Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda).

Palm leaf. Proto-Bengali.

Copied in the eighth year of the reign of Harivarman of the Varman dynasty of Bengal (Harivarman was probably a contemporary of Rāmapāladeva of the Pāla dynasty and the manuscript hence belongs to the last quarter of the eleventh century A.D.).

Bhattacharya, B., Bulletin of Baroda State Museum and Picture Gallery, Vol.I, No.1, pp.

22 paintings on 22 folios.

8. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi, Eastern Pakistan).

Palm leaf. Proto-Bengali.

Copied in the nineteenth year of Harivarman.

No study of the paintings of this manuscript has been possible except notices in the History of Bengal, Vol. 1 (edited by R.C. Majumdar), pp. 548 ff. and elsewhere. Definitely emanating from Bengal, the paintings of this manuscript and those of the preceding one deserve a detailed analytical study from the point of view of art.

9. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, U.S.A.).

Palm leaf. Proto-Bengali.

Copied in the fourth year of the reign of Gopāladeva, probably the third king of the same name in the Pāla dynasty of Bengal (c. A.D. 1129).

Coomaraswamy, A.K., Portfolio of Indian Art, Pls. 32-35.

Three illuminated panels each on six folios besides the illuminated covers.

According to Sri Ajit Ghosh, Gopāladeva of the present manuscript was Gopāla II, a view which

would place the paintings about the middle of the tenth century A.D. (Rupam, Nos. 38-39, 1929, p. 82). But the style of the paintings indicates a date not before the twelfth century A.D.

10. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (British Museum, London, No. Or. 6902).

Palm leaf. Proto-Bengali.

Copied in the fifteenth year of the reign of Gopāladeva, in all probability the third king of the same name in the Pāla Dynasty of Bengal (c. A.D. 1140).

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1910, pp. 150-51.

Some scholars identify Gopāladeva of the present manuscript with Gopāla II. But the palaeography as well as the style of the paintings indicates a much later date and the identification with Gopāla III appears to be nearer the truth.

11. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta (No. Govt. Coll. 9989A).

Palm leaf. Proto-Bengali.

Copied in the eighteenth year in the reign of

Govindapāladeva, evidently the same king who is known to have been reigning in Magadha about the middle of the twelfth century A.D.

Three illustrations on the last folio which only has been acquired.

Sastri, H.P., Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts in the Government Collection under the care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. I, p.6.

12. PAÑCHARAKSHĀ (Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, No. Govt. Coll. 4078).

Palm leaf. Old Bengali.

Śaka 1211 - A.D. 1289, during the reign of Gauḍeśvara Madhūsena.

Sastri, H.P., Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts in the Government Collection under the care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. I, p. 117.

Illustrations of the goddesses of the Pañcharakshā maṇḍala.

Executed nearly a century after the Islamic occupation of Bengal, these paintings bear distinct evidence of a disintegration of the style.

They are thus an important land-mark in the decline and ultimate collapse of the long-standing tradition of manuscript painting in Eastern India.

13. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Collection of Sri Ajit Ghosh, Calcutta).

Palm leaf. Proto-Bengali.

c. 11th-12th century A.D. (Though Ghosh places it in the ninth century the style of the paintings would ascribe it to a period at least two centuries later).

Ghosh, Ajit, "Miniatures of a newly discovered Buddhist palm leaf manuscript from Bengal", Rupam, Nos. 38-39, 1929, pp. 78 ff., Bhattacharya, B., Ibid., pp. 83 ff.

Besides the painted covers, several folios contain illustrations.

14. GAṆḌAVYŪHA (Collection - Mr. S. Roerich).

Palm leaf. Kūṭila.

c. 11th century A.D.

Profusely illustrated.

15. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Collection of S. Sawamura, Japan).

Palm leaf. Proto-Bengali.

c. 11th-12th century A.D.

Ostasiatische Zeitschrift, 1926, pp. 119-23, Pls. IX-X.

Both the covers are filled with illustrations.

Sawamura assigns this manuscript to the Nepal group. The characters are definitely proto-Bengali with clear affinities with those of the Deopara Inscription of Vijayasena, the first Sena king of Bengal. Its origin in Eastern India cannot be doubted.

16. APARIMITĀYŪRNĀNA-MAHĀYĀNASŪTRA (Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, No. Govt. Coll. 4716).

Palm leaf. "Kuṭila".

c. 12th century A.D.

A few folios contain "faded illustrations".

Sastri, H.P., Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts in the Government Collection under the care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. 1., p. 40.

Sri Ajit Ghosh refers to the manuscript of the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, University Library, Cambridge, No. Add. 1163 as containing illuminations (Rupam, Nos. 38-39, 1929, p. 82). Bendall, however,

is silent about this item of information (Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge, p. 132).

Some of the manuscripts in the Durbar Library, Nepal are, also, likely to contain illuminations, though Sastri in his Catalogue does not refer to them as such.

NEPAL

1. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (University Library, Cambridge, No. Add. 1643).

Palm leaf. Newari.

Newari Samvat 135 - A.D. 1015.

"There are illustrations on many leaves throughout the book. The insides of the binding boards bear, also, several more than usually artistic figures..."

Bendall, Cecil, Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge, pp. 151-152; Foucher, A., Etude sur l'Iconographie Bouddhique de L'Inde, pp. 189-206.

There are 85 illustrations, besides those on the boards. What is interesting is that many of the illustrations have descriptive labels attached to them.

In this respect this manuscript has a parallel in the R.A.S.B. Ms, No. A. 15, to be noticed later in this Catalogue.

This is a well known manuscript and its illustrations have been utilised by various scholars for studies in Buddhist Iconography and art, as well as for studies in Eastern Indian forms of architecture.

2. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Collection - S.K. Saraswati, Calcutta).

Palm leaf. Newari.

Newari Samvat 148 - A.D. 1028.

The covers, which are apparently contemporary with the date of the Manuscript, bear coloured illuminations. (Chapter IV, post).

3. ŚIVADHARMA (Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, No. Govt. Coll. 4077).

Palm leaf. Newari.

Newari Samvat 156 - A.D. 1036.

Sastri, H.P., Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts in the Government Collection under the care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. V. pp. 718-723.

The two boards are decorated with paintings pertaining to the legend of Śiva. These paintings, however, do not appear to be contemporary with the date of the manuscript: Mookerjee, M., "A painted Book cover from Nepal", (Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Vol. XIV, pp. 95-101).

A study of these paintings, hitherto not noticed, forms Chapter VII (Part 2) of the present dissertation.

4. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, No. A. 15).

Palm leaf. Newari.

Newari Samvat 191 - A.D. 1071.

"Profusely illustrated".

Mitra, R.L., Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal, pp. 188 ff; Foucher, A., Etude sur l'Iconographie Bouddhique de L'Inde, pp. 207-14.

The manuscript, as appears from the list given by Foucher, originally contained 37 illustrations, besides those on the covers. Two of the illuminated pages are, however, now missing. With the descriptive labels attached to the illustrations, the manuscript has a parallel in the Cambridge manuscript

No. Add. 1643 above. The paintings on the covers are apparently later than those within the manuscript.

This, too, is a well known manuscript and its illuminations have been frequently utilised by scholars for studies in iconography and art.

5. PAÑCHARAKSHĀ (Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Calcutta University, No. T. 1055).

Country-made paper. Newari.

Newari Samvat 225 - A.D. 1104.

Special importance is attached to this manuscript as this appears to be the earliest paper manuscript known up till now. Further, it brings out the name

known up till now. Further, it brings out the name

of a new king, Śihadeva, of Nepal, not mentioned as reigning in the Vaṁśāvalīs of the Nepal kings. (Saraswati, S.K., "Śihadeva, a forgotten king of Nepal", Indian History Congress, Tenth Session,

A study of the paintings of this manuscript, only recently known, is included in Chapter VI (Part 2) of the present dissertation. (J.I.S.O.A., Vol., XV).

6. PAÑCHARAKSHĀ (Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Calcutta University, No. T. 140).

Palm leaf. Newari.

The date has been effaced. It was copied during the reign of Śivadeva of Nepal, perhaps identical with the king of the same name, whose earliest recorded date is Newari Samvat 239 - A.D. 1119.

Illustrations of the five goddesses of the Pañcharakshā Maṇḍala.

A detailed study of these paintings, hitherto unnoticed, is included in Chapter VI (Part 2) of the present dissertation. (J.I.S.O.A., Vol., XV)

7. SAMGRAHA ŚLOKĀH (Private Collection, Kathmandu, Nepal).

Palm leaf. Newari.

Newari Samvat 262 - A.D. 1142.

"The boards are illustrated with figures of Hindu gods and goddesses. 10 in number".

Sastri, H.P., Catalogue of Palm leaf and selected paper manuscripts belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal, Vol. II., p. 110.

These illuminations, specially interesting as belonging to the rare Brahmanical series, still await detailed study by scholars.

8. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, No. Govt. Coll. 4203).

Palm leaf. Newari.

Newari Samvat 268 - A.D. 1148.

Sastri, H.P., Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Government Collection under the care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. 1, pp. 3-4.

Sastri's statement that "the first two leaves contain four illustrations" is apparently a mistake. Four folios scattered within the manuscript contain each an illuminated panel.

A fairly well known manuscript, its illustrations have been utilised for studies in art.

9. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Durbar Library, Kathmandu, Nepal, No. III. 381).

Palm leaf. Newari Ranja.

The manuscript was the gift of Vāsantī Devī, queen of the Gāhaḍavāla king Govindachandra of Kanauj, whose known dates range from 1114 to 1154 A.D.

"The manuscript is profusely and beautifully illustrated at the first and last pages."

Sastri, H.P., Catalogue of Palm leaf and selected paper manuscripts belonging to the

Durbar Library, Nepal, Vol. II, pp. 77-78.

Though written in Newari the manuscript, being the gift of an Indian queen, apparently emanated from India. Executed in all probability by a Nepalese staying in India, these paintings constitute important documents in the series of manuscript illustrations and are well worth for fuller study by experts.

10. PIṄGALAMATAM (Durbar Library, Kathmandu, Nepal, No. III, 376B).

Palm leaf. Newari.

Newari Samvat 294 - A.D. 1174.

"The wooden boards have six illustrations of Brahmā, Śiva, Vishṇu, Ganeśa, Śivaliṅga and Kārtika".

Sastri, H.P., Catalogue of Palm leaf and selected paper manuscripts belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal, Vol. II, p. 69.

11. KĀDIBHEDE KUBJIKĀMATAM (Durbar Library, Kathmandu, Nepal, No. 378A).

Palm leaf. Newari.

Newari Samvat 315 - A.D. 1194.

"The Kuṇḍali Śakti is illustrated in the wooden boards of the manuscript as two hooded serpents

facing each other".

Sastri, H.P., Catalogue of Palm leaf and selected paper manuscripts belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal, Vol. II, p. 71.

12. PAÑCHARAKSHĀ (Durbar Library, Kathmandu, Nepal, No. III, 368).

Palm leaf. Newari.

Newari Samvat 367 - A.D. 1247.

Illustrations of the goddesses of the Pañcharakshā maṇḍala.

Sastri, H.P. Catalogue of Palm leaf and selected manuscripts belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal, Vol. II, pp. 59-60.

13. PAÑCHARAKSHĀ (R.A.S.B13. Ms. No. B.35)

Palm leaf. Newari.

Newari Samvat 385 - A.D. 1265.

Illustrations of the goddesses of the Pañcharakshā maṇḍala. (Year Book, R.A.S.B. Vol. XV., 1950, pp. 25-26).

14. BODHICHĀRYĀVATĀRA (Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi, Eastern Pakistan).

Palm leaf. Newari.

c. 11th century A.D.

No study of the paintings of this manuscript has been possible except a notice in the History of Bengal, Vol. I (edited by R.C. Majumdar), pp.548 ff.

15. KĀRAṆḌAVYŪHA (Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi, Eastern Pakistan).

Palm leaf. Newari.

c. 12th century A.D.

No study has been made except a notice in the History of Bengal, Vol. I (edited by R.C. Majumdar) pp. 548 ff.

16. AṢṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi, Eastern Pakistan).

Palm leaf. Newari.

c. 12th century A.D.

Only a notice in the History of Bengal, Vol. I. (edited by R.C. Majumdar), pp. 548 ff.

17. PAÑCHARAKSHĀ (Bodleian Library, Oxford, No.Ms. Hodgson 8).

Palm leaf. Newari.

c. 12th century A.D.

The wooden boards are illuminated with paintings. The first has the representations of five figures, seated, cross-legged, each wearing jewellery and a crown. These figures, by their mudrās, may be identified with the five Dhyānī Buddhas, princely attire being sometimes met with in case of these divinities. The second cover bears the representations of the goddesses of the Pañcharakshā maṇḍala. Aesthetically the paintings are interesting and deserve closer study from that angle.

18. TATHĀGATAJÑĀNASTUTIGĀTHĀ (Bodleian Library, Oxford, No. Ms. Sansk. e. 21).

Palm leaf. Newari.

c. 12th century A.D.

19. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (British Museum, London, No. Or. 3345).

Palm leaf. Newari.

c. 12th century A.D.

Ghosh, Ajit, "Miniatures of a newly discovered Buddhist Palm leaf manuscript from Bengal", Rupam, Nos. 38-39, 1929, p. 82.

20. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Collection of Mr. Jackson Higgs, New York, U.S.A.)

Palm leaf. Newari.

c. 12th century, A.D.

Eighteen paintings within the manuscript, besides those on the covers, which were later in execution.

Coomaraswamy, A.K., History of Indian and Indonesian Art, p. 146.

21. A PAINTED WOODEN COVER (formerly in the Tagore Collection, Calcutta).

About 1200.

Kramrisch, St., "Nepalese Paintings", Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Vol. I, pp. 129-47. Pl. XXXVIII.

22. ASHTASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (Cleveland Museum. No. 38, 301).

Palm leaf. Newari.

c. 12th century A.D.

Twenty-five Miniatures (H. Hollis, A. Nepalese Ms., Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art, XXXVI, pp. 31-33).

H.J. Stooke in his article on the Bodleian Ms. refers to the following: (Oriental Art, Vol.I, No.1., p. 8).

23. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (British Museum, No. Or. 2202).

c.A.D. 1200.

Four Miniatures.

24. ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ (British Museum, No. Or. 2203).

Two Miniatures.

C H A P T E R III

A MANUSCRIPT OF THE AṢṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ IN THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, CALCUTTA

CHAPTER III

A MANUSCRIPT OF THE AṢṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ IN THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, CALCUTTA

A palm leaf manuscript of the Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā (No. G. 4713) in the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal was copied, according to the post colophon statement at the end, at Nalanda in the sixth year of the auspicious reign of Paramabhattāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara Paramasaugata Śrīmān-Mahīpāladeva, who meditated on the feet of Paramabhattāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara Paramasaugata Śrīmad-Vigrahapāladeva.(1) Another manuscript of the same work, copied in the fifth year of the reign of Parameśvara Paramabhattāraka Paramasaugata Mahārājādhirāja Śrīmān-Mahīpāladeva, is now preserved in the University Library, Cambridge (No. Add. 1464).(2) The characters of both the manuscripts are what generally is known as Kuṭila, the precursor of the subsequent Nagari and Bengali scripts, and the palaeography would place the manuscripts about the end of the tenth or the beginning of the eleventh century A.D. Mahīpāladeva

of the two manuscripts are apparently one and the same person and identical with Mahīpāla I of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal who came to the throne about the year 988 A.D.(3)

Both these manuscripts contain illuminations on the folios as well as on the inner sides of the two covers. Following, to a certain extent, the contemporary idiom of Pāla sculpture, they furnish the earliest extent records of Eastern Indian book painting and provide significant landmarks for a period when documents of Indian pictorial art are extremely rare. Manuscript paintings of the period have been studied by more than one scholar, but the majority of the documents being Nepalese the emphasis in such studies is more on the Nepalese development than on the Eastern Indian. As much of the inspiration in the art of Nepal has to be traced to Eastern India, a study of the miniature painting of Eastern India as such is likely to throw fresh light not only on contemporary Indian painting but also on that of Nepal.

In the present chapter an attempt of an analytical study of the paintings of R.A.S.B. Ms. No. G. 4713, copied in the sixth year of Mahīpāla I, is made.

The first cover (Fig. 1) has painted on the inside the representations of the five Dhyānī Buddhas, namely

Ratnasambhava, Akshobhya, Vairochana, Amitābha and Amoghasiddhī, beginning from the left. These celestial Buddhas are held in high esteem in the Mahāyāna doctrine and supply the framework, so to say, of the Buddhist pantheon. Independent images of the Dhyānī Buddhas, either singly or in a group, are extremely rare. But not infrequently they are found to appear in a group of five among the illuminations of the Buddhist manuscripts.

The Dhyānī Buddhas are all very much like one another. Each of them is represented as seated cross-legged on a full blown lotus, wearing a monk's dress which leaves the right shoulder and arm beare. No ornaments bedeck his person. The eyes are shown half-closed in meditation. The head is covered by the conventional curls topped by the ūshnisha. A large aureole surrounds the body and a halo the head.

Inspite of a similarity in the composition the five Dhyānī Buddhas are distinguished one from the other by their complexions and handposes.(4) In these respects the representations here clearly follow the prescriptions of the Sādhana, Ratnasambhava being characterised by the yellow colour and varadaemudrā, Akshobhya by blue colour and bhūmisparśa, Vairochana by white colour and

dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā, Amitābha by red colour and dhyāna or samādhi-mudrā and Amoghasiddhi by green colour and abhaya-mudrā.

The second cover is likewise illuminated on the inside but owing to its damaged condition it is difficult to identify the representations definitely. The composition divides the painted surface into three distinct units, the central, showing a group of three figures flanked by two more divinities on the two sides. In the central unit there appears in the middle a divine figure seated cross-legged on a lotus, the two hands being shown in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā. The upper part of the body, inspite of the strictly iconographical pose of the figure exhibits a slight flexion (Bhaṅga). There are two attendant male figures on either side, each seated in lalitāsana with one hand resting on the seat and the other held near the breast. Other details, however, have been obliterated. The central figure, if a female one, represents very possibly the goddess Prajñāpāramitā flanked by two attendant divinities. The The position of honour in the centre of the cover appears to support this identification as on several manuscripts the goddess Prajñāpāramitā is known to have occupied a similar position.

On the left side of this cover there is the representation of the Buddha seated cross-legged on a lotus in bhūmisparśa-mudrā. Evidently the representation is that of the Vajrāsana Buddha (A) which symbolises the Great Enlightenment at Bodhgaya.

(A). "The Sādhanamālā furnishes us with several descriptions of Buddha in Vajrāsana, who is represented as sitting in the Vajraparyaṅka attitude with his right hand displaying the Bhūmisparśana pose. The Dhyāna (See also Foucher: L'Iconographie Bouddhique, p. 15 ff) as given in one of the Sādhanas in the Sādhanamālā, is thus quoted below and translated:-

.....

.....

'The worshipper should meditate on himself as (Vajrāsana) who displays the Bhūsparśa-mudrā in his right hand while the left rests on the lap; who is dressed in red garments and sits on the Vajra on a double lotus placed on the four Maras of blue, white, red and green colours; who is peaceful in appearance and whose body is endowed with all the major and minor auspicious marks.

To the right of the God is Maitreya Boddhisattva who is white, two-armed and wears the Jaṭāmukuṭa, and carries the Chowrie-jewel in the right hand and the Nāgakeśara flower in the left.

Similarly to the left is Lokeśvara of white complexion carrying in his right hand the Chowrie and the lotus in the left.

These two Gods should be meditated as looking towards the face of the (principal) god.....'

Here ends the Sādhanā for Vajrāsana".

Bhattacharya B. Indian Buddhist Iconography, p. 11

See also Glossary.

Individual representations of the Buddha in this pose and attitude are very popular in Eastern India, in sculpture as well as in painting, and it is quite natural that in a manuscript, copied at Nalanda, such a representation should appear occupying a prominent place apart from its usual significance in connection with the incidents in the life of the Buddha. On the right side of the cover is represented again a figure, in all probability a god, with two hands in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā. Other details are lacking but the figure may tentatively be identified as that of Mañjuśrī, the Buddhist god of wisdom.

Besides the covers, the first two and the last two folios (each measuring 21½"x 2½") contain each three illuminated panels, one at the centre and two on the two sides. The side panels represent each an incident in the life of the Buddha, making a total of the eight conventional scenes. The four central panels on the four folios represent four divinities of the Mahāyāna pantheon. One of the covers has the representations of the five Dhyānī Buddhas and the other the seven Mānushi Buddhas, those of the Vajrāsana Buddha and two other Buddhist divinities.

The scenes from the life of the Buddha begin from proper right on each illuminated folio. The first panel on the first folio introduces to us the scene of the Nativity of the Buddha in the Lumbini garden.

(1) In the panel (Fig.3) the queen Māyā is seen standing in tribhaṅga pose with the right hand holding the branches of a tree (śāla tree)[6] and the left supported on the shoulders of her attendant, shown to the left, who is apparently her sister Mahāprajāpati. The tree is said to have bent down of its own accord. The baby Buddha is seen coming out of the right side of Māyā. A divine figure stands to the proper left and no doubt represents the god Śakra (Indra) who is known to have received the baby. The figure of the baby has been repeated in between Māyā and Indra. This, no doubt, represents the taking of the seven steps, after which incident the baby declares himself to be the foremost of the world. The yellow complexion of Māyā, Indra and the baby and the green of the attendant figure produce an effect of strong contrast with the red background. The figures of the Queen, the baby Buddha and Indra are distinguished by halos round their heads. Each figure is characterised by extreme flexions of the body, and wavy and bulging curves.

The composition is of the usual conventional order and similar representations are common in contemporary sculptures and paintings.

(2) The last panel in the first folio (Fig. 4) reproduces the Buddha, yellow in colour and with a halo around the head, seated cross-legged under the spreading foliage of a tree at Bodhgaya, on a lotus in Bhūmisparśa-mudrā. A red drapery covers the body but leaves the right shoulder bare. There are two other figures, one on each side of the Buddha, each with a halo round the head. The figure to the left is white in colour and has two hands, the left resting on the thighs and the right held near the breast in jñāna-mudrā. The figure to the right is yellow in colour and has two hands, but the attributes are not recognisable. The upper part of the body is bare in each case, the body being decked with the usual ornaments. The hair is raised up with bejewelled clasps in front. The panel apparently illustrates the incident of the Great Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya. The various texts have long accounts of the series of episodes, including the encounter with Māra, leading to the attainment of supreme wisdom. These different stages of the story have been embodied in a simplified, conventional stereo-typed formula comprising the Vajrāsana pose, the bhūmi-

sparśamudrā and the Bodhi tree, which collectively stand for this famous event. The Bodhi tree symbolises the location, the Vajrāsana pose, the grim resolve not to leave the seat until Bodhi is achieved, and the bhūmisparśa-mudrā the episode of calling Mother Earth to witness the contest with Māra. The two attendant figures may represent two of the celestial being who are said to have approached the seat of Enlightenment after the defeat of Māra.

(3) The second folio contains three separate panels two in the two corners of the leaf and one in the middle. The panel to the right (Fig. 5) represents the figure of the Buddha, yellow in colour and with red drapery covering the entire body, seated cross-legged on a lotus seat with a cushion behind him. The two hands are placed near the breast in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā. On either side of the central figure are seen two attending figures, each green in colour, their hands in añjali pose, and fully draped in yellow. In front of the seat are seen the effigies of two deer with a dharmachakra in between. The panel evidently represents the scene of the first sermon, figuratively known as the dharmachakrapravartana or turning of the Wheel of the Law, which symbolises the First Sermon

which was proclaimed in the Deer forest (Mrigadāva) at holy Rishipatana (modern Sarnath). The two attendant figures represent two of the five Bhadravargiya ascetics, before whom the Buddha preached his first sermon. According to the textual description,(6A) Buddha preached his first sermon before the five Bhadravargiya Bhikshus who became his first desciples. In the representations of the scene, two or four of these desciples, and rarely five, are shown. The two deer and the wheel in front of the seat represent this epoch-making incident.

(4) The last panel in folio 2 (Fig. 6) depicts the fully draped figure of the Buddha, yellow in colour, seated cross-legged in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā. Two more figures each in a similar pose, are seen on the two sides. All the figures are distinguished by halos around the heads, the central one having a prabhāmandala besides. This panel represents the scene of the Great Miracle (mahāprātihārya) which happened at Sravasti, the capital of Kosala. It being an important event with far-reaching consequences for the religion of the Buddha, the story may be given here in short. At Rajagriha there were six tirthika teachers who, having lost their esteem on account of the growing popularity of the Buddha and his religion, determined to hold a contest of miraculous feats whereby

they hoped to bring about the discomfiture of the Buddha. The contest was arranged at Sravasti and King Prasenajit built a special pavilion (Prātihārya-maṇḍapa)(A) for the purpose. On the appointed day the king arrived at the pavilion with his retinue, and the heretics also. While they were thus waiting, the Buddha appeared travelling through the air. The whole world became flooded in golden light and as the Buddha placed his feet on the ground, the earth began to move and tremble, while the sun and the moon shone out together. As he seated himself, rays of light began to emanate from his body and the maṇḍapa was filled with golden effulgence. He, then, rose in the air and appeared in all directions, fire and water began to emanate alternately from the upper and lower parts of his body. The miracles of the fire and water were known as the yamakaprātihārya (literally 'twin miracles)(B)

(A) See Glossary. Also Foucher, Beginnings of Buddhist Art:- Great Miracle of Sravasti.

(B) "Yamaka-patihāriya; For a long time the nature of this extraordinary performance was not understood, but we now possess canonical descriptions. Patisambhidamagga, i, 125; Mvastu, iii, 115. Buddha rose in the air, flames of fire came from the upper part of his body and streams of water from the lower part. Then the process was reversed. Next fire came from the right side of his body and water from the left, and so on through twenty-two variations of pairs. He then created a jewelled promenade in the sky, and walking along it produced the illusion that he was standing or sitting or lying down, and varied the illusions in a similar way. The Jātaka says that he performed it on three other occasions, at his enlightenment to remove the doubt of the gods, at the meeting with Patika, and at Ganda's mango-tree". P.T.O

The gods headed by Brahmā and Śakra appeared on the scene and took their seats. Thereafter a thousand petalled lotus resting on a jewel-stem sprang up supported by the Nāga kings, Nanda and Upānanda. The Buddha took his seat on the lotus and created multiple representations of himself which went up as far as the highest heaven. The heretical teachers discomfited by these successive miraculous events dared not show their own feats and were finally confounded by a violent thunderstorm and obliged to flee. The supreme position of the Buddha was thus vindicated, he preached the Law before the huge assembly of people that had come to witness the Miracle. The Sravasti episode is found in Buddhist art from very early times, the earlier representations at Bharhut and Sanchi being part of the life story. Later in Gandhara and in Gupta art, the theme was elaborated, as here recounted, giving the sequence of events ultimately leading to the multiple representations of the Buddha which actually constitute the Great Miracle, Mahāprātihārya. (See Glossary). In later representations the earlier episode, that is, yamakaprātihārya is invariably omitted, probably because of the fact that

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(B) Continued from previous page:

Thomas, E.J. "The Life of Buddha as Legend and History: pages 98-99.

See also Glossary.

there is some disagreement amongst the different sources regarding the situation of the story. It is neither particular to Sravasti, nor is it exclusively the achievement of the Buddha, but shared by a number of persons and śramaṇas. As has been said, in later periods, the representation was clearly confined to that of the Great Miracle,(9) and that too in a stereotyped composition consisting of a central figure of the Buddha in preaching attitude with similar effigies around. In Ajanta Cave VII, the multiplied effigies are placed on padmāsana, the lotus stemming off the lotus seat of the central figure supported by the two nāgas. (Fergusson and Burgess, Cave Temples of India, Pl. XXXI) This is the usual mode of representing the theme in sculpture as well as in painting from the Gupta period onwards. In still later times, the composition was further simplified, there being only two accessory representations of the Buddha, as we find in sculpture and painting of the 10th and 11th centuries A.D. In this respect the present miniature closely agrees with contemporary representations of the miracle in stone.

(5) The right hand panel (Fig.7) in the last but one folio depicts three figures, the central figure being that of the Buddha, yellow in colour and standing

with the right hand raised in varada. The red drapery covers the whole body down to the ankles leaving the right shoulder and the arm bare. The red Prabhāmaṇḍala and the halo are shown as usual. On the right of the Buddha stands a god, white in colour and with more than one head crowned by a jaṭāmukuṭa. A waterpot can be recognised on the left hand. To the left of the Buddha stands another god yellow in colour, wearing a tiara. The attributes in the two hands are not recognisable. This particular figure can be identified as that of Śakra on account of the representations of eyes shown on the body, an iconographic peculiarity of which we have a parallel in the Brahmanical descriptions of the God Indra. The figure to the right is that of Brahmā as is clear from the additional heads and from the water jug held in the hand. Two trees are seen on either side on a blue background. The panel no doubt represents the scene of the descent of the Buddha from the Trayastriṁsa heaven where he went to expound the Abhidharma to his mother and the gods of that heaven. He is said to have descended down the earth at the city of Saṅkāsya (modern Sankisa) by a little ladder, accompanied by Brahmā and Indra on his right and left respectively.(10) This event is represented at Bharhut and Sanchi and, also, at Ajanta. It, also, occurs in Gandhara

sculpture though not commonly.

(6) The last panel (Fig. 8) on this folio depicts the Buddha, yellow in colour, standing with the right hand in abhaya, the left holding the red drapery, which leaves the right shoulder and arm bare. This manner of holding the robe may be traced to Gandhara and from there to Roman prototypes.(10n) There is the usual prabhāmaṇḍala around the body and the halo round the head. The background is blue and a tree with heavy foliage may be seen over the head of the Buddha with two other trees on either side. To right and left of the Buddha appear two other figures each in the robe and attitude of a mendicant and with an alms bowl in one of the hands. In the foreground is seen the figure of a white elephant, repeated twice, once with uplifted trunk and then bending down before the Buddha. The panel evidently represents the well-known scene of the taming of the mad elephant, Nālagiri, whom Devadatta, the wicked cousin of the Buddha let loose to bring about his death. More than one story exists of Devadatta's attempts to compass the death of the Buddha. First he tried to kill him with the help of hired assassins, next by hurling down a rock upon him and again by letting loose the mad elephant

when the Buddha was out begging. All these events happened in quick succession at Rajagriha, the capital of Magadha. It is this last episode which is frequently represented in art. It is said that the raging elephant was tamed by the supernatural powers of the Buddha and thereby the attempt of his wicked cousin was foiled. The two figures of monks on either side may represent two of his devoted desciples who accompanied him on this occasion.

(7) The last folio (Fig.2), also, contains the same type of miniatures. The panel on the right (Fig.9) depicts the Buddha, yellow in colour, seated on a cot-like seat with a blue cushion at the back. The prabhāmaṇḍala is red and the background is blue. The red drapery covers the body leaving the right shoulder and arm bare. In the foreground are seen figures of monkeys approaching the Buddha who is in the attitude of receiving something from them. In the background to the left may be seen a mango tree. The panel can easily be identified as the scene of the offering of a bowl of honey to the Buddha in a mango grove at Vaisali by some monkeys. The tree in the left evidently serves to indicate the location of the event.

(8) The last panel (Fig.10) on this folio shows the Buddha, yellow in colour, reclining on his right side on an ornamental cot. Behind the head of the cot is a tree with large green leaves balanced by another on the right. There is a stūpa in the background, blue in colour and on one side of the cot appears a figure in the robe of a mendicant with an offering of garlands. The body of the Buddha is covered with red drapery. In front of the cot are two figures each seated in an attitude of sorrow and dejection. This represents the well-known scene of the Mahāparinirvāna or the Great Decease of the Buddha which happened at Kusinagara in his eightieth year. The monk with the garland may be Ānanda, the foremost desciple of the Buddha and the two figures in the foregound some of the desciples, who not yet completely emancipated from passion loudly lamented his passing. These figures of mourners occur in the Gandhara version of the Parinirvāna. The trees on either side represent the two śāla trees between which the cot, the last resting place of the Buddha, was spread. The stūpa in the background perhaps stands for the one which Buddha instructed Ānanda to erect for the enshrinement of his ashes after his body had been burnt on the funeral pyre. It is well-known that the relics were eventually divided into eight portions over each of which was raised a stūpa.(10B)

Besides these conventional scenes of the eight Great Events (Miracles) in the life of the Buddha on the end panels of the four folios, the middle one in each has a miniature representing a divinity of the Mahāyāna hierarchy.

(9) The first represents (Fig. 11) a fully draped figure, resembling the Buddha, seated cross-legged on a cushioned seat and with a cushion at the back. A red prabhāmaṇḍala can be found around the body, and a halo round the head. The hands of the figure are placed in dhyāna-mudrā. The figure is red in complexion and the yellow drapery produces a remarkable effect in contrast with the blue background. In the Sādhanamālā a description is given of Amitābha, the most ancient of the five Dhyānī Buddhas.(A) He was the first to appear in the developed Mahāyāna pantheon and texts glorifying his form and conception were composed from nearabout the beginning of the Christian era. As the spiritual father of Padmapāni (Avalokiteśvara) the dhyānī Bodhisattva who looks after the world in which Gautama Buddha preached the Law, he is also the most eminent of the group. According to the Sādhana he is to be painted of a red colour and to have the hands in dhyāna-mudrā. Amitābha

(A) For details on Dhyānī Buddhas and Bodhisattvas see Appendix B.

because of his position is fairly commonly represented in art and the present figure closely tallies with the iconographic prescription.

(10) The middle panel (Fig. 12) in the second folio depicts a rather blurred figure of a two handed goddess, seated cross-legged on a lotus seat. The upper portion of the body is slightly flexed. The two hands of the figure are held near the breast in dharma-chakrapravartana-mudrā. On either side of the goddess rise two stalks of lotuses, each of which probably supports a manuscript resting on the flower. It is unfortunate that the figure is discoloured and many of the details are obliterated. On the evidence of the dharmachakra-pravartana-mudrā the goddess may be identified as the goddess Prajñāpāramitā the embodiment of the Mahāyāna scripture of the same name. She is, therefore, the goddess of transcendental knowledge and her worship was very popular among Buddhists in the 8th and 9th centuries. She is consequently fairly frequently represented in art. Among illuminated manuscripts, versions of the Prajñāpāra-mitā are numerically most common and in these manuscripts representations of the goddess are fairly numerous. Almost invariably she appears on the cover as well as in the text, the representation in each case tallying closely

with the description of the goddess in the Sādhanā. The Sādhanamālā gives several descriptions of the goddess and states that one of her forms is that of a goddess of golden complexion having two hands in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā and with a Prajñāpāramitā book placed on a lotus on each side.(12) It will be found that the representation here tallies in all essential particulars with this form of the goddess.

(11) The middle panel (Fig. 13) in the third illuminated folio exhibits a god, yellow in colour, seated on a lion of light blue colour. The two hands are shown in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā. To the left of the god is seen a blue water lily and to the right a blue lotus. The figure sits in front of a cushion, the background being red. Locks of hair are seen falling below the shoulders and wrists, arms and neck are heavily bejewelled. In the Sādhanamālā, a description is given of a god named Mañjuvara, a variety of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. The god Mañjuvara is described as having a colour like that of molten gold,(13) and the rest of the description will be found to correspond exactly with the figure of the Bodhisattva god in this illustration. The five Dhyānī Buddhas, which according to the sādhana, the god Mañjuvara is to bear on the crest,

are, however, absent, but this feature is not so important when we remember that the god is represented in miniature and the salient cognisances are all there. It may be recalled in this connection that among the different forms of Mañjuśrī the present one is fairly commonly represented in contemporary Eastern Indian Sculpture.

(12) The middle panel (Fig. 14) on the last folio shows a god seated on a lotus seat in lalitāsana between two long stalks of flowers, with the two hands in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā. The painting is almost wholly effaced, and no defnite identification is possible for lack of details. However, the dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā indicates that the god may either be Maitreya,[14] the future Buddha, or a form of the god Mañjuśrī. It is probable that it represents the former, as a fitting sequel to the representations of the life scenes of the last of the mortal Buddhas.

The illuminations of the present manuscript, along with those of the Cambridge No. Add. 1464 copied in the year five of Mahīpāla,[3] constitute the earliest records in the series of Eastern Indian manuscript paintings. As such they are invaluable for a study of this phase of Indian pictorial art. Unforntunately, the paintings in

in both the manuscripts are, to a certain extent, blotched, a circumstance that makes a correct appraisal of their qualities and characteristics rather difficult. Yet, the present illuminations are important as exhibiting side by side the thoroughly plastic conception of the "classical" trend and the linear rendering of the "mediaeval". The plastic effect is achieved by modelling in colour as well as by firm and well-defined bounding lines. In the Nativity scene (Fig. 3) the rounded plasticity and mass of the figure of Māyādevī provide a contrast to the rather linear treatment of the face of her sister. The oscillation between "classical" and "mediaeval" trends is already noticeable in Ellora paintings and this oscillation continues in Eastern Indian manuscript illuminations. On the covers coloured modelling rendered by over-painting has a rather attenuated appearance; but the easily flowing lines, unburdened by bulging curves, add a new note aesthetically which is to find its fullest scope in subsequent generations.

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1. Paramabhattaraka-maharajadhiraja-paramesvara-paramasaugata-Srimad-Vigrahapaladevapadanudhyata parambhattaraka-maharajadhiraja-paramesvara-paramasaugata-Sriman-Mahipaladeva-pravardhamana-kalyanavitjaya-rajye shashthasamvatsare abhilikhyamane yatranke samvat 6 Kartika-krishnatrayodasyam tithau mangalavarena bhattarika nishpadilamiti.

   Sri-Nalandavasthita-kalyanamitra-Chintamanikyasya likhita iti.

   Sastri, H.P., Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts in the Government collection under the care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. 1, p.2.

2. Paramesvara-paramabhattaraka-paramasaugata-maharajadhiraja-Sriman-Mahipaladeva-pravardhamana-vijaya-rajye samvat 5 Asvinikrishne . . .

   Bendall, Cecil, Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge, p. 101.

3. Majumdar, R.C. (Ed.), History of Bengal, Vol.1,p.177.

4. Jino Vairochano khyato Ramnasambhava eva cha /
   Amitabh-Amoghasiddhir-Akshobhyascha prakirtitah //
   Varnah amisam sitah pito rakto haritamechakau /
   Bodhyagri-varado-dhyanam mudra abhaya-bhusprisau //

   Bhattacharya, B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, p.2.

5. In the canonical books there is nothing like a connected biographical account of the Buddha. The complete biographies that are known are compilations from the canonical accounts. The relevant details that have to be referred to in connection with these conventional scenes of the

Master's life are mainly based upon the accounts of the Jataka (Introduction by Rhys Davids, pp. 47 ff.), Lalitavistara, Mahavastu, etc. An account of the critical issues has been given by Thomas, (The Life of Buddha as Legend and History) who insists on a proper consideration of the Sanskrit and Tibetian sources as well as the Pali.

6. The Pali version makes the tree a sala, while, according to the Lalitavistara, I, pp. 82-82, it is a plaksha (fig tree)

6A. Thomas, E.J. The Life of Buddha as Legend and History, Chapter VII, pp. 81 ff.

7. Ihasane sushyatu me sariram tyagasthimamsam vilayam cha yatu /
Aprapya bodhim bahukalpadurlabham naivasanat kayamatas-chalishyate /

Lalitavistara, V, pp. 362.

8. Foucher, A., The Great Miracle of Sravasti, Beginnings of Buddhist Art, pp. 147 ff.

9. Sravasti was the place where all former Buddhas are said to have performed their greatest miracles (Thomas, E.J., The Life of Buddha as Legend and History., pp. 97 ff; cf. Kern, Manual of Indian Buddhism, p. 33); In "Ancient India" Plate XXVIII, Fig.B. represents the Great Miracle in Sculpture differently (not fully draped) Codrington, K. de B.

10. This event is supposed to have followed the Great Miracle of Sravasti, as it is a fixed law that all Buddhas resort to the heaven of the Thirty gods after performing their Great Miracle (Kern, Manual of Indian Buddhism, p. 33)

10A. Buchthal, H. The Western Aspects of Gandhara Sculpture, pp. 1 ff. (Annual lecture on Aspects of Art, British Academy, 1945).

10B. Thomas, E.J. The Life of Buddha as Legend and History. pp. 51, 85, 143; ff, 258.

11. Bhattacharya, B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, p.3.

12. Bhagavati Prajnaparamita pitavarna dvibhujaikamukhi pancha-Tathagata-Mukuti vyakhyanamudravati visva-dalapadme
Chandrasanasina sarvalankara-vastravati vamadakshina-parsva utpalasthaprajnaparamitapus takadharini

Sadhanamala, I, p. 312; Bhattacharya, B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, p. 126.

13. Manjusriyam taptakanchanabham panchavirakumaram dharmachakramudra-samayuktam prajnaparamitanvitanilot-paladharinam simhastham lalitakshepam sarvalankara-bhushitam
. . . Om Manjuvara hum . . .

Sadhanamala, I., p. 111; Bhattacharya, B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, p. 25

14. Sadhanamala, II, p. 560; Bhattacharya, B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, pp. 13-14.

CHAPTER IV

AN ILLUSTRATED COVER OF A MANUSCRIPT OF THE ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ IN PRIVATE COLLECTION.

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In 1947 Sri S. K. Saraswati, Lecturer, Calcutta University, acquired, by purchase, a manuscript of the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā copied in the year 148 (vasumanuprathite) of the Newar era during the reign of king Rudradeva. The date corresponds to 1028 A.D. and Rudradeva of the present manuscript is apparently identical with the king of the same name referred to in the colophons of two Cambridge manuscripts (Nos. Add. 866 and Add. 1643)[1], copied respectively in 128 and 135 of the Newar era. In these two manuscripts he is known to have been ruling jointly with other princes. In 148, however, he is referred to singly, and this may have some significant bearing on the history of Nepal during the period. The historical question is, however, outside our scope. What is important is the definite date and the fact that the two wooden covers, evidently contemporary with the date of the manuscript, bear elegant specimens of miniature painting in the style and tradition of the period.

The two covers were painted, both inside and outside. The manuscript, as usual, was regularly worshipped and in this sacred operation through centuries received heavy daubs of sandal paste, oil, milk, etc., as a result of which the paintings on the outside have been completely blurred. The painted surface on the inside, except for portions at the edges, is in a fair state of preservation and supplies a charming record of the pictorial art of those days.

Each of the covers measures 17½ inches by 3 inches and has a narrow border all round in three coloured strips. There is a background of dull red all over and plantain trees, uniformly spaced throughout, offer some kind of landscape effect. The figures are spread over the background without any demarcation of subjects or panels, though a basis of separation of the different themes is supplied by the two holes intended for the strings for binding the manuscript. Each cover is thus divided into three themes, that is, a total of six themes in the two covers.

The first cover begins from the right with the Nativity scene in the Lumbini garden. The composition is of the usual stereotyped pattern, but certain details are worth noticing as presenting features not generally met with. Māyādevī is seen standing under in tribhaṅga, her right hand grasping the branches of the tree and the left

supported on the shoulders of her sister Mahāprajāpati. The graceful and supple bends of the full but slender female forms have been strikingly delineated in each case. The tree, with branches and leaves symmetrically disposed, is adorned with clothes of various colours as described in the Lalitavistāra.(2) In the usual representations of the scene, whether in sculpture or in painting, it is the Bodhisattva in the form of a baby who is shown as coming out of the right side of the expectant mother. Here, however, we have an effigy with the figure of the Buddha in conventional attitude sketched upon it, which is found to be issuing out. He is being received, not by Śakra (Indra) as most authorities say, but by Brahmā who is holding a deer skin for the purpose. The Achchhariyabhutadhamma-sutta in the Majjhima Nikaya says that four gods received the Bodhisattva at the time of his birth.(3) The Nidanakathā speaks of four pure-minded Mahābrahmas as having received the Bodhisattva in a golden net; from their hands four great kings received him in a ceremonial robe of antelope skin; and finally from their hands human beings received him on a silver cushion.(4) According to the Lalitavistāra,(5) Śakra, the lord of the devas, and Brahmā, the lord of the earth, were said to be present at the time and both of them are spoken of as respect-

fully receiving the Bodhisattva under cover of a beautiful piece of silk cloth. The representation of the Nativity scene with Brahmā as receiving the new-born Bodhisattva cannot be said to be uncanonical, though very rarely met with in art. In the present scene three gods appear in this connection - Brahmā in the attitude of actually receiving the baby, Śakra or Indra standing next to him and third the god Śiva whose appearanch in such a representation is perhaps unique. Brahmā is represented with four heads, three of which are visible, the two on either side of the main one being in profile. He is of yellow complexion and has four hands, the two proper in the attitude of holding the deer skin and the additional ones as bearing his usual attributes, the manuscript and the rosary. Śakra or Indra can be recognised by the third eye placed horizontally on the forehead. He has a pink complexion and two hands, the right in vyākhyāna and the left hanging down gracefully along the waist. The god Śiva is white in complexion and has four hands. Of the two proper hands, the right is held in jñāna-mudrā while the left is supported on the waist. The additional right hand bears a rosary and the corresponding left a trident. Brahmā and Śiva have each a matted crown over the head with locks falling down the shoulders. All the gods

are represented with their usual attributes as enjoined in Brahmanical iconography, and no eyes are shown on the body of Indra as is usual in miniatures representing Indra in Buddhist manuscripts.(6) Each of the gods stands in slight tribhaṅga and is provided with a halo. Each is clothed in an extremely diaphanous, though embroidered, waist cloth the fluttering ends of which are shown in elegant plaits along the sides.

The representation of Śiva in connection with the Nativity of the Buddha is not supported by any of the texts unless we include him as one of the four gods or four pure-minded Mahābrahma of the Pali canon. But the Pali canon is certainly earlier than the Puranic concept of the god Śiva as he is shown in those representations. It is difficult, if not impossible, hence to associate him with the gods who, according to the Pali canon, are said to have attended the scene of the Nativity. The influence and impact of the Brahmanical pantheon on the Buddhist are admitted. The desire to show the Brahmanical gods in connection with the events of the life of the Buddha, probably to demonstrate the superiority of the latter, is also emphatic from the very beginning, and it is possible that the representation of Śiva, one of the principal Brahmanical gods at

the time when these paintings were executed, is, also, inspired by the same spirit and motive. In this connection reference may be made to a contemporary sculpture from Nalanda, depicting the Nativity scene, in which the god Vishṇu appears in the company of Brahmā and Śakra or Indra, though the representation of Vishṇu in this context is not met with in literature.(7)

In between Brahmā and Māyādevī is represented the scene of the sacred bath which followed the birth in the Lumbini garden. The episode is thus described in the Lalitavistāra: "Immediately after his birth the Bodhisattva alighted on the earth; and at that time piercing through the earth, a noble lotus appeared for the newly born Mahāsattva Bodhisattva. The two Nāga kings, Nanda and Upānanda, remaining in semi-developed form under the sky, bathed the Bodhisattva by pouring two streams of water, one hot and the other cold."(8) The Pali canon, the Buddhacharita, the Chinese, and the Siamese versions of the life of the Buddha are all unanimous that these two streams of water fell from the sky, the last adding that one of the streams washed, also, the mother of the Bodhisattva. The Tibetan version mentions the two streams of water with which the Bodhisattva was bathed but is silent regarding the source, while the Burmese version is entirely silent about this episode.(9) With the episode

of the sacred bath is, also, associated that of the taking of the seven steps by the new-born Bodhisattva.[10] The different versions of the legend all recognise this miraculous occurence and the words put into the mouth of the Bodhisattva are substantially, if not literally, the same. Shorn of the rhetorical superfluities and details the episode may be described thus. As soon as born the Bodhisattva firmly standing with even feet takes seven long steps,[11] surveys all the quarters and in a lordly voice says, "I am the chief of the world, I am the best in the world, I am the first in the world. This is my last birth. There is now no existence again."[9]

These two episodes are usually combined in artistic representations, whether in sculpture or in painting. Here in the scene under reference a lotus creeper with three stems supporting seven blossoms is seen issuing out of the ground. The baby Bodhisattva stands on the uppermost blossom of the central stem with his left hand akimbo and the right in varada. He is being bathed by water poured from a vase by a male figure shown within a blue circle with wavy lines sketched inside. Only the upper part of the figure is shown and this may represent one of the Nāga kings in semi-developed form under the sky bathing the Bodhisattva, as stated in the Lalitavistāra.

The Lalitavistāra,[12] also, speaks of a noble lotus piercing through the earth for the Bodhisattva to stand upon, the seven blossoms symbolising the seven long steps which he took before he declared his foremost position in earth.[13] The present representation is interesting not only for its many scrupulous details, not ordinarily met with, but also for certain unusual features already described.

The theme on the middle of this cover represents the Buddha preaching the first sermon (dharmachakrapravartana, literally, the turning of the wheel of the law) in the Mrigadāva at Sarnath. The central figure is that of the Buddha seated cross-legged on a lotus throne, the pedestal of which bears the wheel flanked by two antelopes on either side and two figures of lions at the extreme edges. The wheel with the antelope is a well-known motif symbolising the event and its location. The two hands of the Buddha are shown near the breast in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā. The colour of his body is yellow and the drapery, red in colour, covers the form from the shoulders down to the ankles. There is the ūshnisha over the head and urnā is marked on the forehead. An embroidered cushion is, also, placed behind the back. The throne on which the Buddha sits here as well as in other representations of the two covers, is an imitation of the image stelae, each side being adorned by a leogryph

with a kinnara, sometimes a hamsa, below, and the top showing a kīrttimukha with serpentine arabesques ending in a makara on the lintel on either side. The whole is surrounded by a semi-circular aureole filled with rich and intricate arabesque work.

The central figure is flanked by four other accessory figures two on each side. The two, adjacent to the Buddha on either side, are each shown in monkish robes and with hair closely cropped. That to the left is seated in lalitāsana with the left hand resting on the seat and right held up in vyākhyāna-mudrā. The figure to the right is seated cross-legged with the left hand holding some indistinct object on the lap and the right in jñāna-mudrā. These two figures appear to represent two of the five Bhadravargiya monks who were converted on hearing the Buddha's sermon. The second figure to the left is seated cross-legged with the left hand holding a lotus with a manuscript on it and the right in vyākhyāna-mudrā. The complexion is yellow and various ornaments and a jewelled tiara bedeck the person. From the manuscript and the vyākhyāna-mudrā the figure may be identified with that of Mañjuśrī. The second figure to the right, also of yellow complexion, is seated in lalitāsana, the left hand with a stalk of lotus over which is placed a ghaṭa, and the right in vyākhyāna-mudrā. The head is

surmounted by a jaṭāmukuṭa. From the ghaṭa placed on the lotus in the left hand the figure may be identified with that of Maitreya, the future Buddha. These two gods, though not connected with the memorable event of the preaching of the first sermon, are usually found to accompany the image of the Master in this attitude, each as an attendant divinity and the theme presented here is to be regarded more as an image intended for purposes of adoration than as a simple reproduction of the scene of the first sermon at Sarnath. It may be noted that the image of the Master, intended for worship, represents him in one or other of the miraculous events of his life.

The above is equally true of the third and the last theme on this cover which represents the scene of the great enlightenment at Bodhgaya. The Buddha is seated cross-legged (vajraparyaṅka) on a lotus throne as above with the left hand placed on the crossed soles of the feet with the palm upwards and the right touching the seat in what is known as the Bhūmisparśa-mudrā. The drapery, instead of covering both the shoulders, leaves the right shoulder bare. The attitude and gesture of the Buddha leave no doubt that the scene of the great enlightenment at Bodhgaya is represented here. The throne on which the Master is seated is surmounted by the foliage of a tree, evidently the Bodhi tree, which stands behind, and is

surrounded by an aureole as above. The pedestal bears the motif of the wheel flanked by two deer, which is meaningless in connection with this representation, and is perhaps an unconscious imitation of the well-known symbol of the first sermon at Sarnath.

The Buddha is flanked by two standing figures, each within an oval aureole of arabesque works. The figure to the left of the Buddha is white in complexion and bears a lotus by the stalk in the left hand and varada in the right. That to the right is yellow in complexion and bears a lotus in the left hand and vyākhyāna in the right. Each of the figures bears a jaṭāmukuṭa on the head. The figure to the left, from the attributes in the hands, may be identified with that of Avalokiteśvara, the divine Bodhisattva of the present kalpa, while that to the right represents perhaps Mañjuśrī as the vyākhyāna-mudrā in the right hand indicates.

On the second cover are represented three Buddhist goddesses, Tārā in the left, Prajñāpāramitā in the centre and Vasudhārā in the right. The great goddess Tārā of green complexion sits on a lotus throne in lalitāsana. She has two hands, the right in varada and the left holding a blue lily by the stalk. The throne and the aureole resemble those in the other themes and the cushion at the

back of the goddess is red in colour with arabesques sketched on it. The goddess is heavily bejewelled and there is a circular halo at the back of the head. On the left side of the goddess is shown a goddess of fierce mien seated on a lotus in ardhaparyaṅka within a red background of flame arabesques. She is of blue complexion, dwarfish and pot-bellied in form and has four hands. In the proper right she holds a kartri and in the corresponding left a kapāla. The additional right hand holds a khadga and the corresponding left a blue lily. She wears a tiger skin and her ornaments are made up of snakes, a snake with raised hood, also, crowing the hair, red in colour and shown further in flame-like upward curls. There are three round eyes, all red in colour, and the forehead is fringed by a diadem of human skulls. At her back is a cushion of white elephant skin. To the right of the goddess is another seated figure, yellow in colour, within an aureole of arabesques edged by flame like border. She bears two hands. The other details, however, are too effaced to allow further description.

From her complexion, the disposition of the hands and from the attendant divinities the principal figure may be identified as that of Khadiravani Tārā,(14)

otherwise known, also, as Śyama Tārā from her green colour. The attributes, varada and utpala or indivara, are common to the various forms of this goddess, who is described as the mother of Jinas (jananim Jinanam) in a sādhanā by Anupama Rakshita.(15) The green colour is, also, characteristic of several of her forms, Khadiravani Tārā, Mahattari Tārā, Varada Tārā, Vasyadhīkāra Tārā, etc.,(16) all belonging to the anugraha forms of this great goddess. What leads us to identify the figure definitely with that of Khadiravani Tārā is no doubt the fact that she is accompanied here by two attendant divinities. Of Mahattari Tārā and Vasyadhīkāra Tārā no attendant divinities are spoken of in the respective sādhanās.(17) Varada Tārā is enjoined to be accompanied by four goddesses, Aśokakāntā Mārīchī, Mahāmāyūrī, Ekajaṭā and Jāṅgulī.(18) Here we have only two attendant divinities, as enjoined in the sādhanā of Khadiravani Tārā. According to the sādhanā, Khadiravani Tārā is to have Aśokakāntā Mārīchī to her right and Ekajaṭā to her left. In the present representation the figure to the left of the goddess may definitely be identified with Ekajaṭā. The sādhanā of Khadiravani Tārā does neither describe Ekajaṭā nor Aśokakāntā. A two-handed variety of Ekajaṭā is spoken of in connection with the sādhanā of Varada Tārā.(19) The attributes prescribed for the

two hands are Kartri and kapāla, as we have in the figure under reference. The sādhanas of Ekajaṭā as an independent goddess recognise several forms and the representation of the goddess here closely agrees with the description of a four-handed variety of the goddess.(20) The other figure to the right of the principal one may be recognised as Aśokakāntā Mārīchī from the yellow complexion and two hands, though the attributes in the hands are not recognisable. The sādhanā of Varada Tārā prescribes for Aśokakāntā a yellow complexion and two hands with Aśoka leaves and thunderbolt in the left and right respectively.(21)

The central theme on this cover exhibits a composition consisting of five figures, a goddess in the middle with four attendant divinities, two on either side. The goddess sits in vajraparyaṅka on a lotus throne, the pedestal of which shows the wheel and two deer motif in the centre and two lion figures on either side. She has four hands, the two proper being held in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā, the additional right with a rosary and the corresponding left with a lotus with a manuscript placed on it. She wears the usual ornaments and a jewelled crown, and the head is surrounded by a circular red halo. The throne back and the

aureole are similar to the above in lay-out and embellishments. Each of the attendant figures is comfortably seated with slight flexions in the upper part of the body and has two hands. All of them wear identical jewelleries and have halos behind their heads. In three, the hair is tucked up on the head with curls hanging down the shoulders, the forehead in each case being fringed by a jewelled tiara, while the fourth wears a jewelled crown over the head. Of the two figures to the left of the goddess, one is green in complexion and the other yellow. The green figure has the left hand resting on the seat and holds by the stalk a blue lily over which is placed a vajra. The right hand is shown near the breast in vyākhyāna-mudrā. The yellow figure has the left hand resting on the thigh and the right held up in vyākhyāna-mudrā. Of the two figures to the right of the goddess, one is light pink in complexion and has the right hand resting on the seat and the left holding by the stalk a water lily over which is placed a manuscript. The head is crowned by ratna-mukuṭa. The other figure is of a deep cream complexion and has the left hand resting on the thigh and the right held near the breast in jñāna-mudrā.

The central figure in this theme is no doubt to be identified with the goddess Prajñāpāramitā. Among the nine sādhanas in the Sādhanamālā there is one describing a four-handed form of the goddess.(22) She is to be of golden colour and to have a jaṭāmukuṭa on the head and various ornaments on her person. She is to sit in vajraparyaṅka attitude and to show the dharma-mudrā in the two proper hands, abhaya in the additional right and lotus with Prajñāpāramitā manuscript in the corresponding left. The representation here closely agrees to the description of the sādhana except in the attribute of the additional right hand which bears a rosary, instead of the abhaya-mudrā. The head again is crowned by a ratnamukuṭa, and not by a jaṭamukuṭa as prescribed in the sādhana. In spite of these minor variations the essential cognisances of the goddess are all there and the identification of the goddess with Prajñāpāramitā of the four-handed variety is beyond any doubt. Indeed, it is this form which is usually represented in sculpture and in painting, and two significant examples may be noticed, one on the cover of the Bodleian manuscript of the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā copied in the fifteenth year of the reign of Rāmapāladeva and the other in the Asutosh Museum (Calcutta University) manuscript of the Pañcharakshā copied in 1104 A.D.

It is difficult, however, to be certain regarding the identification of the accompanying figures. In not a single of the sādhanas of Prajñāpāramitā mention has been made of any accompanying divinity, and each individual figure, as given here, admits of no definite identification in the present state of our knowledge. In painted miniatures the goddess is usually shown with attendant divinities and reference may be made, among others, to the representations of the goddess Prajñāpāramitā at Gridhrakuta, one in the R. A. S. B. manuscript of the Ashtasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, No. A. 15 (copied in 1070 A.D.), and another in a Cambridge manuscript of the same text, No. Add. 1643 (copied in 1015 A.D.). The former shows the goddess two-handed and with four attendants. In the latter the goddess is four-handed and has two attendant divinities.(23) In the present illustration the vyākhyāna-mudrā shown by two of the accessory figures, the manuscript placed on a lotus held by the third and the jñāna-mudrā shown by the fourth a suggestion is not unlikely that each of them is connected in some way or other, with learning and wisdom, and it is on account of such an association probably that they appear in the company of the goddess Prajñāpāramitā, the supreme goddess of learning in the Buddhist pantheon and the embodiment of the scripture of the same name

which bears all transcendental knowledge.

The last theme on this cover consists of a composition of three figures, a goddess in the centre flanked by two attendant divinities, each within a pointed aureole, not semi-circular as in the other themes. The goddess in the centre sits in lalitāsana on a lotus throne with her right foot hanging down the pedestal and resting on a pot from which jewels are seen issuing out. She is of yellow complexion and has six hands, the proper right in varada and the corresponding left holding a casket. The second pair has a jewel in the right and a bunch of corn in the left. The third pair shows namaskāra-mudrā in the right and a lotus with a manuscript on it in the left. The head is crowned with a ratnamukuṭa and surrounded by a halo.

The figure to the left of the goddess is much effaced. So far as the details can be ascertained he is of a chocolate colour and has two hands of which the left is probably supported on the thigh and the right shows vyākhyāna-mudrā. The head, also, appears to be surmounted by a canopy of serpent hoods. The figure to the right represents a pot-bellied male of yellow complexion seated in lalitāsana and has two hands. The right in varada holds a vijapuraka, while the left

is in the act of squeezing a mongoose which vomits jewels. He wears jewelled ornaments and a jewelled tiara crowns the head which is surrounded by a halo of blue colour.

The goddess in the centre represents no doubt Vasudhārā, the goddess in the Buddhist pantheon whose worship is said to bring great prosperity. She is usually regarded as the consort of Jambhala, the Buddhist counterpart of Kubera, the Brahmanical god of wealth. Her worship as an independent divinity was, also, much in vogue. In this aspect she may be regarded as the Buddhist counterpart of the Brahmanical goddess Śrī or Lakshmī. In the Sādhanamālā three sādhanas(24) describe this goddess in each of which she is spoken of as having a yellow or golden complexion and as bearing ears of corn in one of her hands. In one of the sādhanas she is said to have the Dhyānī Buddha Akshobhya on her crest, while according to another the Dhyānī Buddha Ratnasambhava. Among her attributes have been mentioned ears of corn, varada and a casket of jewels. All these three attributes have been shown in the present representation and the composition the general disposition of the figure corresponds to the description of the goddess Vasudhārā as given in the sādhanas. That she was very frequently invoked and worshipped may be inferred not only from her conception

as the goddess of prosperity which all people desire for, but also from her dharanī the text of which has been found in a rather large number of manuscripts. In the text of the dharanī and, also, in the sādhanas painted representations of the goddess (cf. pattagata Bhagavatī, patasya pratimā) are, also, frequently referred to. The six-handed form of the goddess, as we have here, though not accounted for by the known sādhanas, has been fairly represented in sculpture and painting, particularly from Nepal. Two significant parallels, among others, may be noticed in this connection, the first a stone image from Nepal,(25) and the second a painted miniature on the cover of the Cambridge manuscript of the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā No. Add. 1464, copied in the fifth year of the reign of the Mahīpāladeva. The form was popular even far outside the limits of Eastern India and reference may be made to the representation of Vasudhārā at Kanchinagara in Dakshinapatha, illustrated in the Cambridge manuscript of the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, No. Add. 1643.(26) The representation of the goddess, as given in that manuscript, closely agrees to the one under examination. It may further be pointed out that a four-handed variety, though not accounted for by the known sādhanas, is seen represented in the R. A. S. B. manuscript of the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, No. A. 15.(27)

The principal goddess as shown in the theme under reference thus presents the goddess Vasudhārā in a form of which literary support is lacking. Artistic representations of this form are, however, fairly frequent. The jewel held in one of the hands is in keeping with her conception as the goddess of wealth. The pot emitting jewels, as we have on the podestal of the present represenation, emphasises further her connection with wealth and prosperity. The manuscript in the uppermost left hand may stand for Vasudhārā-dharanī-pustaka, which is an indispensable element in the ritual of her worship. The figure to the left may represent the Nāga king, the lord of the nether regions, as representing the source of jewels, while that to the right is certainly Jambhala, the consort of the goddess and the Buddhist god of wealth. The representation closely agrees to the description of the god as given in the sādhanas.(28)

Among the illustrated manuscripts from Nepal, known up till now, these manuscript covers occupy the second position chronologically, the first being the Cambridge manuscript No. Add. 1643 which was copied in Newari samvat 135, that is, 1015 A.D. The manuscript under reference is thirteen years later and the painted covers were apparently contemporary with the date of the manuscript. This

becomes apparent on a comparison of the paintings on the covers of the present manuscript with those of the Cambridge manuscript dated 1015. A.D. In composition, as well as in linear and colour schemes both represent an identical tradition. The same physiognomical forms, the same types of jewelleries, drapery and other embellishments characterise the paintings in both. The covers of the present manuscript are interesting in as much as they illustrate the tradition in a more refined and subtler form. This may be recognised in a greater delicacy and fluency of outlines, smoother colour distribution and increased sensitivity of masses and volumes. Sometimes, the colours appear to exhibit different tones, but it is not certain whether such tones were original or are due to age. The line has the plastic quality as in the earlier classical tradition. It moves in continuous flowing curves and plastically shapes the masses and volumes within the given contours. The figures have grown more supple and slender, but nothing is flatly treated. Every form is full, sinuous and rounded. With greater refinement of contours and forms the figures are more agile in movement which is further emphasised by the fluttering ends of the garments of almost ethereal texture. In decorative embellishments, particularly in the arabesques, the bold and sure draughtsmanship is re-

markable. Here on these two covers we have perhaps the most noteworthy specimens of Eastern Indian miniature painting. The next example, so far known of the art of painting in Nepal, is supplied by the R. A. S. B. manuscript No. A. 15., copied in 1070 A.D., in which the above characteristics are, also, equally evident.

R E F E R E N C E S

1. Bendall, C., Catalogue of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts, University Library, Cambridge, pp. 1-4,151-52.

2. Lalitavistara (B.I.), text, p. 94; translation, p.123.

3. Thomas, E.J., Life of Buddha as legend and history, p. 31.

4. Ibid., p.33

5. Lalitavistara (B.I.), text, p. 95; translation,p.123.

According to the Buddhacharita of Asvaghosha, the Bodhisattva was received at birth by the thousand-eyed Indra (Sakra) (Cowell's edition, I. 27; Nandargikar's edition, I, 27) Prof. Johnston's edition, however, does not include this verse). The Tibetan version of the life of the Buddha says that Sataketu (Indra), assuming the appearance of an old woman, went to receive the new-born child, but the Bodhisattva ordered him back (Rockhill, W. W., Life of the Buddha and the early History of His order derived from the Tibetan works in the Bkah-gyur and Bstan-gyur,p.16). According to the Chinese version, Sakra received the child on a beautifully fine kasika garment (Beal, S., Romantic legend of Sakya Buddha from Chinese-Sanscrit, pp. 43-44). The Burmese version conforms more to the description of the Pali texts and says that four chief Brahmas received the new-born infant on a golden net and from them four chief nats (gods) received the child and handed him over to the men (Bigandet, P., Life and legend of Gaudama, the Buddha of the Burmese, pp. 36-37). In plastic and painted representations, it is Sakra or Indra who is usually shown as receiving the baby.

6. Cf. Brihat Samhita, LVII. 42:

Tiryak-lalatasamstham tritiyamapi lochanam chihnam.

Utpala comments on the relevant passage as tiryak kritva lalate sthitam ..., i.e., placed horizontally on the forehead, and further quotes Kasyapa in support of the third eye of Indra - tiryag-lalatagam netram tritiyam tasya karayet.

Also Vishnudharmmottaram, III, chap. 50. 3:

Tiryag-lalatagen-akshna kartavyas-cha vibhushitah.

7. ASR., 1930-34, p. 263, Pl. CXXXI (a).

8. Lalitavastara (B.I.), text, p. 95; translatioh,p.124

9. Thomas, Loc. Cit., pp. 31, 33.

10. Buddhacharita, Johnston's translation, p.5.

11. Beal, S., Loc. Cit., p.45.

12. Cf. R.L. Mitra's translation of the Lalitavistara, notes on p. 160.

13. Rockhill, W.W. Loc. Cit., p.16.

14. Sadhanamala, Vol. I., p. 176:

.....haritam-Amoghasiddhimukutinim varadotpaladhari dakshinavamakaram Asokakanta-Marichy-Ekajatavyagradakshinavamabhagam divyakumarim dhyatva.....

15. Sadhanamala, Vol. I., p. 200:

Taram pranamya mahatim jananim Jinanam.

16. Sadhanamala, Vol. I, pp. 176-77:

17. Cf. Sadhanamala, Vol. I pp. 176-77, 178.

18. Sadhanamala, Vol. I, pp. 177:

..... Taram syamavarnam sarvalankaradharam vame nilotpalavatim dakshine varadam ardhaparyankanishannam dakshinaparsve Asokakantam pitam nanaratnamukutam vamadakshinahastayor-asokapallavakulisadhram, tatha Mahamayurim pitam vametarakarayor-mayurapichochhikacha aradharinim, vamaparsve Ekajatam kharvam krishnam vyaghajinadharam trinetram damshtrakaralavadanam jvalatpingalordhdakesam kartrikapaladharinim, tatha Arya-Jangulim syamam vamadakshinahastayoh krishnoragacham radharinim vibhavayet .....

Iti Varada Tara-sadhanam

19. Ibid.

20. Sadhanamala, Vol. I. p. 265.

Bhagavatim-Ekajatam Sarvangakrishnam chaturbhujaika-mukimaraktatrinayanam vyaghracharmavasanam kapalamalasirah pingordhvakesam damshtrakarala-lalajjihvam lambodarim nilabhujagavichitrabhranama dvirashtavarsham pinonnat--apayodharam harakevurakinkinisragdamanvitasitasakalavayavam dakshinakarabhyam khadgakartridharinim vamabhujabhyam-utpalakapaladharinim .....

21. Cf. Sadhana of Varada Tara, Sadhanamala, Vol.I,p.177

22. Sadhanamala, Vol. I, p. 317:

Prajnaparamitam jatamukutinim chaturbhujam ekamukhim hastadvayena dharmamudradharam nanaratnabhushitam suvarnavarnojjvalam vamabhujasakta-Prajnaparamitanvitanilotpaladharam vichitravastra paridhanottariyam dakshinahast enabhayapradam raktapadmopari chandrasane vajraparyankastham Bhagavatim vibhayya ...

23. Foucher, A., Etude sur l'Iconographie Bouddhique de l'Inde, p. 207, Pl. IX (3); pp. 189-90.

24. Sadhanamala, Vol. II, pp. 421-23.

25. Bhattacharya, B. Indian Buddhist Iconography, Pl. XXXV(d)

26. Foucher, A., Loc. Cit., p. 201, Pl. IX(1)

27. Ibid., p. 213.

28. Sadhanamala, Vol. II. p. 560;

Bhagavantam Jambhalam dhyayat suvarnavarnam lambodaram sarvalankaradharam vamadakshinahastabhyam nakulivijapurakadharam Ratnasambhavamukutam utpalamaladharam .....

Also Ibid., pp. 564, 565, 580.

CHAPTER V.

A MANUSCRIPT OF THE ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀ-PĀRAMITĀ IN THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY OXFORD.

CHAPTER V.

A MANUSCRIPT OF THE ASHṬASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPARAMITĀ IN THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY OXFORD.

Among the illuminated Buddhist manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, there is one of the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā (No. Sansk. a. 7) which is of immense interest for a study of East Indian manuscript painting. It was copied in the fifteenth year of the victorious reign of Mahārājādhirājaparameśvara paramabhaṭṭāraka paramasaugata Śrīmad Rāmapāladeva.(1) Two other illuminated manuscripts of the same work, copied respectively in the ninth and thirty-ninth years of the reign of the same monarch, are also known, the former in the Bharata Kala Bhavana and(2) the latter in the Vredenburg collection.(3) The characters of all the manuscripts are proto-Bengali and Rāmapāladeva of these manuscripts are apparently identical with Rāmapāladeva of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal who came to the throne about 1077 A.D.(4)

Of these three manuscripts only one, that of Vredenburg, had received the attention of scholars. The existence of the Bharata Kala Bhavana manuscript is only recently known and the Bodleian manuscript, though

known for some time, still awaits a closer examination.[4a] In the present paper, hence, is attempted an analytical study of the Bodleian manuscript (No. Sansk. a 7); copied in the fifteenth year of the reign of Rāmapāladeva. It was copied at Nalanda by a certain Ahṇakuṇḍa and consists of 188 palm leaf folios, each 22" x 2⅜". Each folio contains three columns of writing separated by spaces of three quarters of an inch. The manuscript contains illuminations on the six folios, three in each, as well as on the inner sides of the two wooden covers. The illuminations consist of the representations of the life scenes of Gautama Buddha as well as those of other Buddhist divinities.

On the inside of the first cover (Fig. 15) are given the scenes from the life of the Buddha divided into separate panels. Altogether there are nine panels, the central one showing the Buddha seated cross-legged on a double lotus in bhūsparśa-mudrā. This represents the scene of the Great Enlightenment at Bodh Gaya. On either side of the central panel are ranged the eight other conventional scenes, four on each side. Beginning from the left we have first the scene of the Nativity of the Buddha. Though damaged, the details of the composition can be made out clearly. On the right, queen Māyā is seen standing in tribhaṅga with one hand holding

the branches of a tree (śāla or plaksha - see Glossary) and the other supported on the shoulders of a female attendant, apparently her sister Mahāprajāpati. Buddha in the shape of a baby is seen coming out of the right side of the queen and is being received by a divine figure, shown to left, evidently the god Śakra who is said to have received the baby after birth. The figure of the baby is repeated between those of the queen and Śakra. Here he is shown as standing and two hands from above are shown as pouring water on him. This no doubt represents the Sacred Bath after the Buddha was born and according to the canon he is said to have walked seven steps after the Bath and to have proclaimed himself the foremost of the world. The compositional details conform to the conventional description of this scene and the panel is in close agreement with the representation of the same scene in the R. A. S. B. Ms. (No. G. 4713); of year six of Mahīpāla (Chap. III ante) with the only difference that here the scene of the Sacred Bath has been given instead of the taking of the seven steps shown in the former manuscript.

In the second panel the Buddha is shown as seated cross-legged in samādhi-mudrā under a tree, apparently the Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya. On either side two demoniac figures are shown each in an attitude of threatening the

Buddha. Evidently the panel illustrates the story of the assault of Māra who tried to dissuade the Buddha from his life of meditation and thereby attaining Enlightenment.(4b) This assault took place before the Buddha attained his sambodhi and in stereotyped representations of the life events of the Buddha, these two episodes are usually combined in one, showing the Buddha in the earth-touching attitude which signifies the final triumph over Māra leading to the acquisition of the supreme knowledge. Here on the cover of the present manuscript both the episodes are separately shown, the asssault of Māra in the second panel from left and the enlightenment in the central panel. The divergence from the usual representations of the scene, including that in the manuscript of the sixth year of Mahīpāla (Chapter IIIante) is noteworthy.(5)

The third panel shows the Buddha seated cross-legged with two hands held near the breast in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā. On either side are shown several figures of ascetics. The panel illustrates the incident of the First Sermon at Sarnath and the figures of ascetics on either side represent a few of his first five desciples before whom he preached his Law, figuratively expressed as turning the wheel of Law. In the representation of the scene in the manuscript of the year six of Mahīpāla (Chapter III, ante) only two disciples are shown.

The next panel is badly damaged. To the left may be seen two figures of monks of which one represents the Master. He has his right hand in abhaya-mudrā and from this hand figures of lions are seen to be emanating. The remaining portion of the panel is completely effaced. But the above details enable us to identify the panel as representing the scene of the taming of the mad-elephant, Nālagiri, at Rajagriha. In the traditional representations of this incident, the emanation of lions from the hands of the Buddha is usually omitted. Hiuen Tsang, when he visited Rajagriha, describes this scene and in his description the miracle of the emanation of five lions from the five figures of the Buddha is referred to.(5a) Evidently he saw an analogous representation of this scene. The emanating lions may stand for the spiritual powers of the Master by which he subdued the furious elephant. So far as is known this feature occurs, also, in Cambridge Ms. Add. 1464, copied in the fifth year of Mahīpāla but is omitted in other known illuminations, including the one on the folios of the present manuscript. In China this feature survives even up to the present day.

The four panels to the right of the central one are extremely damaged and identification, when possible, depends in each case on fragments of one or two salient points remaining. From fragments of two figures on

either side, the first representation may be identified as the scene of the descent from the Trayastriṁśa heaven where the Buddha went to preach the Abhidharma to his mother. He descended down to the earth at Sāṅkāsya and was accompanied by the gods Śakra and Brahmā who are no doubt indicated by the two divine figures on the two sides.

The second panel depicts the upper part of the Buddha in the centre of the composition. Another figure, similarly posed, may be recognised to his left. From these two figures it is clear that the panel illustrates the scene of the Great Miracle (Mahāprātihārya) at Sravasti. The next panel is all but defaced, but for fragments of the figure of monkey on one side. The panel may hence be said to have represented the scene of the offering of a bowl of honey to the Buddha by the monkeys in the mango grove at Vaisali. The last panel is badly effaced; but naturally it would have depicted the last incident, that of the Great Decease at Kusinagara. All these eight scenes are repeated on folios inside the manuscript.

Some comment should be made regarding the sequence of the different events as represented on this cover. In the R. A. S. B. manuscript of the year six of Mahīpāla

(Chapter III ante) and, also, in usual representations of the eight principal incidents in sculpture or in painting, the events are given in their proper sequence as indicated by the different authorities. The departure from the orthodox order here on this cover is hence noteworthy. The orthodox order requires that the scene of the Great Miracle should precede that of the descent from the Trayastriṁśa heaven and the scene of the mad elephant should come after. Within the manuscript, also, the orthodox order has not been rigidly maintained, the positions of the scenes of the mad elephant and descent from the heaven being reversed.

The second cover (Fig. 16) shows eleven panels each containing the figure of a goddess. In the centre is shown the goddess Prajñāpāramitā, the embodiment of the Buddhist scripture of the same name. She sits on a lotus seat in cross-legged posture and has four hands. The main pair of hands are held near the breast in dharma-chakrapravartana-mudrā, while the two additional ones bear the rosary and the Prajñāpāramitā manuscript in right and left respectively. She is of golden complexion and has on either side accessory divinities in attitudes of supplication. The worship of the Goddess Prajñāpāramitā was very popular among the Buddhists and her representation is frequently met with in manuscript illuminations. In

the Sādhanamālā there are nine sādhanas of the goddess but only one of these sādhanas describe her with four hands. According to this particular sādhana, she is to sit in vajraparyaṅka attitude on a red lotus and to bear the dharma-mudrā (evidently dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā) in the main pair of hands, abhaya in the additional right and the blue lotus with the Prajñāpāramitā book in the corresponding left. She is to have a golden complexion, a jaṭāmukṭa on the head and various ornaments on her person.(6) The present representation corresponds to the sādhana closely except in the pose of the additional right hand which shows a rosary instead of abhaya. On either side of this central panel are ranged ten others, five on each side, each depicting a goddess with two hands, right holding an uncertain object near the breast, left resting on the thigh, perhaps a long stalk of flowers. Each goddess is characterised by a halo and a prabhāmaṇḍala, the distinction being possibly in the objects held in the hands and in their complexions. Without further details a definite identification is rather problematic, but the composition closely agrees to that of the Buddhist goddess Tārā.(6a) Reference may be made in this connection to the goddess Vajra-Tārā who has a number of sādhanas in the Sādhanamālā. What

is interesting in the context of the present representation are the goddesses who, according to other Sādhanamālā, are to surround Vajra-Tārā. They are the four Upachāra Tārās, such as, Pushpa-Tārā, Dhūpa-Tārā, Dīpa-Tārā and Gandha-Tārā, to be placed in the four cardinal faces, the four Dvārapālīs, Vajrāṅkuśī, Vajraspāśī or Vajrapāśinī, Vajrasphoṭī or Vajrasphoṭā and Vajraghaṇṭā at the four gates and Ūshṇīshavijayā and Sumbhā at the top and bottom respectively.(7) According to the sādhanas, these ten goddesses, arising from the ten syllables of the Tārāmantra,(8) are the embodiment of the ten pāramitās of the Mahāyana doctrine, and probably it is this conception of these divinities which is responsible for their representation on either side of the goddess Prajñāpāramitā. Further, it is interesting to note in this connection that the goddess Tārā is identified sometimes with the goddess Prajñāpāramitā.(10)

Inside the manuscript six folios (Fig. 17 & 18) contain illuminations, each in three panels. Among these we have the eight conventional scenes from the life of the Buddha, besides the representations of several other Buddhist divinities. The eight conventional scenes on the folios agree closely with similar representation on the cover, with, however, very slight

variations. In the Nativity scene (Fig. 19) the composition and other details resemble those on the cover except in that the episode of the Sacred Bath has been omitted. The figure of Śakra can clearly be identified in this panel on account of the numerous eyes shown all over his body. On the right panel (Fig. 20) of the same folio is depicted the scene of the assault of Māra and the great enlightenment at Bodh Gaya. The Buddha is shown here seated cross-legged in bhūmisparśa-mudrā under the Bodhi tree with two accessory figures standing on either side. The one to the right is a female figure holding in one hand perhaps a vessel. This may represent one of Māra's daughters trying to seduce him from his life of meditation.(11) The male figure to the right with a bow in one hand represents one of Māra's soldiers threatening him to desist. In spite of all temptations and threats the Buddha remained steadfast and sure of his coming victory called upon the mother earth (indicated by the earth-touching attitude) and the earth replied with so mighty a voice that the hosts of Māra fled away. Shortly after the Buddha attained his Sambhodhi.

On another folio are represented in two panels at the ends, two other incidents of the life of Buddha, namely, the turning of the wheel of the Law and the Great Miracle of Sravasti, both closely tallying with the representations

of the same scenes on the cover. The only difference is that in the scene of the First Sermon (Fig. 21), instead of several disciples as on the cover only two figures have been shown. The Sravasti episode, (Fig. 22) in composition and other details, agrees with the conventional representations of this scene. Stooke inadvertently describes this panel as representing Buddhas of three times (past, present and future). Conze, also, supports this description (Ibid, p. 10). But the composition is so well-known and coming in close sequence with reference to the traditional incidents in the life of the Buddha, the panel cannot but be described as the scene of the Sravasti Miracle.

On a third folio are represented again the incidents of the taming of the mad elephant, Nālagiri, at Rajagriha and the descent from Trayastriṁśa heaven. In the first (Fig. 23) the Buddha is shown standing in slight tribhaṅga flanked on either side by two monkish figures. On the left is shown an elephant, repeated twice. First it is shown approaching the Buddha with uplifted trunk in a threatening attitude. Next the same elephant is shown as prostrating before the Buddha. The composition closely agrees with the representation of the corresponding scene in the R. A. S. B. manuscript of the year six of Mahīpāla (Chap. III ante) and in both the story has been related with brevity but with great expressiveness.

The episode of the descent from the Trayastriṁśa heaven is, also, a frequently represented motif in art. In this panel (Fig. 24) the Buddha is shown standing in slight tribhaṅga between the gods Brahmā & Śakra to his right and left respectively. These two gods accompanied the Buddha on this occasion. Brahmā is characterised by his pot-belly and water pot in one of the hands, the other hand carrying a flywhisk. Śakra has the representations of eyes all over the body and he is perhaps holding an umbrella over the head of the Buddha. Stooke describes it as representing Buddha being entreated by Brahmā and Indra to preach. This description, however, badly disturbs the sequence but this composition is well-known as a substitute for the theme of the descent from the Trayastriṁśa heaven.

On a fourth folio are shown in the two side panels the remaining two events in the life of the Buddha, viz., the offering of the bowl of honey by the monkeys at Vaisali and the Great Decease at Kusinagara. In the former (Fig. 25) the Buddha is shown seated in three-quarter profile, under a tree, receiving something from a monkey which approaches him with bent head. The other figure of a monkey may represent its companion. The figure of a Vidyādhara is shown hovering above in the clouds, while

lower parts of similar figures may be recognised in the two scenes just preceding. In the second scene, that of the Great Decease (Fig. 26), the Buddha is shown as reclining on his right on a cot. Trees are shown on the background. The figure of a monk is seen approaching the cot from the back while another figure sits in front with outstretched hands facing the cot. The monk approaching the cot may represent Ānanda while that in front one of the mourners from among his devoted disciples. A stūpa is also shown in the background among the trees. In the central panel of this folio (Fig. 27) is shown the figure of a Buddha in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā under a tree with heavy foliage, perhaps as a votive piece just as the other divinities, or more possibly it may represent the Dhyānī Buddha, Vairochana.

The central panel (Fig. 28) in one of the illuminated folios illustrates the Buddha seated in pralambapāda on a seat under a tree and in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā. Before him appears a seated figure which, on account of eyes represented all over the body, may be identified as that of Śakra (Indra). In various texts describing the life of the Buddha there are different occasions when Śakra is said to have approached the Buddha for advice and instruction. One of the main incidents is the visit

of Indra to the Indraśālā cave near Rajagriha. This panel, however, illustrates a different scene. In fourteen out of the thirty-two chapters of the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā Śakra appears as an interlocutor. This illumination may represent the Lord's instruction in the Prajñāpāramitā to Śakra, the instruction which was responsible for the latter's conversion. This episode forms the subject of the second chapter (parivarta) of the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā.

Another panel (Fig. 29) in between those illustrating the scenes of the taming of the mad elephant and of the descent from the heaven shows the Buddha seated in Mahārājalīlā pose under a tree. The left hand is raised up with the palm upwards holding perhaps a flower, the right hand is held near the breast in jñāna-mudrā. On either side appears two figures of monks, that to left in añjali pose and the other has one hand in jñāna-mudrā. This may represent the Buddha among his disciples. A similar scene on the Ghose Ms. has been described as Buddha in company of Nanda and Rāhula.(11b)

Another illuminated folio shows three panels each depicting a Buddhist divinity. The left hand panel exhibits a god seated on a lotus seat in Mahārājalīlā pose. The two hands are in the dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā.

From the left side rises the stalk of a flower over which is placed a vase. Matted locks crown the head with long plaits dangling down the back. No ornaments bedeck the body which is bare except for a small waist cloth. There is a large round prabhāballī at the back and an oval halo round the head. The god, which appears to be white in colour, represents, no doubt, Maitreya, the future Buddha. According to the Buddhist legend, he is passing the life of a Bodhisattva in the Tusita heaven and will descend down to the earth full four thousand years after the Mahāparinirvāṇa. In the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā he takes part in the discussions on two occasions,(11c) and his representation within the Ms. may not perhaps be entirely irrelevant. According to the sādhana, he is to have a chaitya on his matted crest but this cognisance does not appear to be present in this illustration. The identification of the god with Maitreya is, however, definite on account of the dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā and the nectar vase (amritaghaṭa) placed on the flower which is evidently the nāgakeśara flower peculiar to Maitreya. The Sādhanamālā has one sādhana of Maitreya where he is said to have three faces and four hands - two hands in vyākhyāna-mudrā and the other two bearing Varada and nāgakeśara flower.(12)

The central panel (Fig. 31) on the same folio shows a god seated cross-legged, but with a flexion in the upper part of the body. He has two hands, the right holding a vajra and the left, placed on the lap, a ghantā. There is a crown on the head and locks of hair are seen falling down the shoulders. He, also, wears the usual jewellery, though the upper part of the body is uncovered. He is white in complexion and there is the usual prabhā-balī behind the back and a halo round the head. The god represents the Vajrasattva, the sixth Dhyānī Buddha who is regarded by the Vajrāchāryas of Nepal as the priest of the five Dhyānī Buddhas. The most notable feature of Vajrasattva is that unlike the other Dhyānī Buddhas, he wears ornaments and princely garments. Descriptions of this Dhyānī Buddha are found in the Advayavajra-saṁgraha and the Dharmakosha-saṁgraha,[13] and the present representation closely conforms to them. It may not be out of place to mention that the illuminations of most of these manuscripts were inspired by the Vajrayāna school of thought. Vajrasattva, that is, "He whose essence is the thunderbolt", is the supreme deity of this school, and Prajñāpāramitā is his śakti. The illustration here in this Ms. hence may not be without some significance.

The third panel (Fig. 32) on the same folio repre-

sents again a god seated in Mahārājalīlā pose with the right hand held near the breast bearing a vajra and left, resting on the thighs, the long stalk of a lotus flower. The hair is tucked up above the head in a matted crown. The complexion is white. He wears the usual ornaments. The upper part of the body is uncovered and the complexion appears to be white. There are the usual aureole round the body and halo round the head. This god represents perhaps Vajrapāni, the divine Bodhisattva of Akshobhya.(14) (cf. Ghose Ms., Rupam. No. 40. p. 79)

A damaged panel (Fig. 33) in between those rppresenting the Nativity and Enlightenment, described as unidentified by Stooke, depicts a goddess seated on athrone in sukhāsana in three-quarter profile. She has two hands held near the breast in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā. In front of the goddess is shown another figure with a fierce mien. The goddess represents Mahāśrī-Tārā, a variety of the supreme Goddess, which is very rarely represented in art. According to the sādhana, she is to have two hands in vyākhyāna-mudrā, to have elaborate ornaments and to sit on a golden throne. She is to be accompanied by Ekajaṭā, Aśokakāntā, Jāṅgulī and Mahāmāyūrī, with Kartri (dagger) and Kapāla (skull-cup), Vajra and Aśoka leaves, sarpa (serpent) and varada, mayūrapuchcha

(the tail of a peacock) and varada respectively.(15) This form of Tārā has a close resemblance to Varada Tārā, who is represented almost similarly except that she is to have a varada and blue lotus in the two hands, instead of the vyākhyāna-mudrā.(16) In this representation only one attendant divinity is seen and she is to be identified perhaps with Ekajaṭā from her fierce looks which Ekajaṭā is enjoined to bear. According to the sādhana, she is to be of green colour (śyāmavarṇā) but in the present panel she is of a colour other than green, a variation which perhaps is not fundamental. As already observed, Mahaśrī-Tārā is very rarely represented in art. One image in the Indian Museum represents this variety of the goddess.(17) Two miniatures (Fig. 34) in Ms. A. 15 in the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal depict the goddess Mahaśrī-Tārā accompanied by various accessory figures, besides the four enjoined by the sādhana.(18) The Vredenburg manuscript also contains an illustration of this goddes but with only two attendants.(19) Those miniatures are rich in detail and in colour scheme and closely agree to the sādhana in almost every particular. The present miniature, though lacking in detail and slightly differing from the description in the sādhana, is also a fine specimen in attitude and pose, in fluid linear scheme and also perhaps in colour composition.

Another damaged panel (Fig. 35), occupying the centre of the folio having the representations of the First Sermon and the Great Miracle, depicts perhaps a god seated in Mahārājalīlā pose with two hands in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā with a long stalk of blue lotus passing round the left arm. Unfortunately, other details of cognisance are lacking. Apparently it represents a variety of the god Mañjuśrī, who is supposed to have vyākhyāna or dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā in some of his forms, such as Mañjughoṣa,(20) Vāgīśvara,(21) Mañjuvara, etc.(22) But in each of these forms, he is to have a lion as his mount which, however, is absent here. But instances are not rare where the mount has been omitted in some of the stone images of these varieties of the god. Stooke describes the god as Avalokiteśvara in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā. It has to be noted, however, that this mudrā is characteristic more of Mañjuśrī than of Avalokiteśvara.

Lastly, we have two other panels on the folio representing the Buddha discoursing with Indra. The illustrations herein are, also, interesting though the identification in each case is, to a certain extent, uncertain. The first (Fig. 36) represents apparently a god, white in colour, with the right hand held near the breast perhaps holding something and the left bearing a lotus with a

crescent-mark above it. The figure is bedecked with the usual ornaments and a diademed crown, the upper part of the body being bare, except for a waist cloth. Curls of hair are seen falling over the shoulders. Stooke describes the figure as deity holding moon on lotus. The exact identification of the panel is somewhat problematic. It may be noticed in this connection that it is not clear even whether the figure is that of a male or of a female. The second panel (Fig. 37) represents again most probably a goddess of dark complexion, seated on a lotus with crossed-legs. She has two hands, left bearing the long stalk of a lotus flower, with the symbol of the sun on it, according to Stooke, and the right held in front with the two middle fingers bent towards the palm. She wears dress and jewellery as above. It is not impossible that she represents one of the varieties of the great Goddess Tārā, her distinctive emblem, the lotus flower, being held in the left hand. Stooke describes the figure as that of a god, perhaps Padmapāni.

Executed about the latter half of the 11th century A.D., these miniatures illustrate, to a certain extent, an advance over the technique and style of manuscript-painting of earlier date. In style they have close parallels in the illuminations of the Vredenburg manuscript copied in the thirty-ninth year of the same monarch.(23) A simplicity of composition, coupled with a fluidity of linear

scheme and lucidity of expression appears to be the chief characteristics of the illuminations under notice. The figures in the different panels are admirably grouped, all posed in ease and grace and with no feeling of constraint or hardness. The colour scheme, also, appears to be in good taste, though the complexion of the figures are determined by iconographic prescriptions. As is characteristic of the period, the paintings, whether on the covers or on the folios, are executed directly on the surface with a preliminary priming of white. It is significant to note that the colour modelling, so strongly evident in the paintings of the R. A. S. B. manuscript (No. G. 4713) of the year six of Mahīpāla, has, to a great extent, thinned down. This, instead of leading to a dessicated appearance brings out fully the possibilities of linear-modelling. The result is a composition brimming with fluid, mellifluous and sinuous lines, sometimes soft and sensuous, and at times sensitive and dynamic (cf. Fig. 25) The figures except those of the Buddha in adamantine pose, show easy and slight flexions illustrating fully the softness of the body and pliability of the limbs. Much of the plasticity depends on fluid and rounded lines though a very slight amount of shading has, also, been used to give emphasis to the masses and volumes which are thereby brought into full relief. As a rule, the physio-

gnomical type is slender and the limbs have an elongated appearance. In these respects, these painted miniatures have their counterparts in contemporary sculptures of Eastern India. The facial type is oval and the double curves of the lips and the strong and wavy eyebrows with tilts at the extreme ends add contrast to the otherwise smooth expression of the face. Sometimes, where the figures are shown in three-quarter profile, the eyes project beyond the outline of the face thus anticipating a characteristic which has been regarded as peculiarly Western Indian. In such tilts and projections, the mediaeval tendency may be seen approaching slowly but with sureness. The drapery of the Buddha, whether it covers the body fully or partly, is entirely diaphanous, the body shining through its transparency. Curved parallel lines indicate the folds of the drapery; but having no plasticity of their own and clinging fast to the body, in no way do they obstruct the soft and, to some extent, sensuous texture of the body from being seen. The dress in other figures consists merely of a waist cloth, the upper part of the body being entirely bare. In the figure of Māyā Devī, however, a diaphanous scarf covers, but fails to conceal, the upper part of the body. The ornaments and other accessory details cling to the body, and follow its contour very closely, thus helping to

emphasise the modulations and pliability of the limbs. The foliage, when shown, takes a more or less stereotyped form of thin elongated leaves symmetrically grouped. Trees are shown in the background with long branches with leaves arranged on either side. But everywhere such trees and foliage remain as the background proper and in no way do they minimise the importance of the main compositional group. With their admirable composition and colour scheme, flowing and rounded contours of the body, with all its elasticity and pliability of soft, sensuous limbs and surface texture, these illuminated panels reveal the art of manuscript painting in Eastern India perhaps in one of its highest levels.

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1. ... Maharajadhiraja-paramesvara-paramabhattaraka-paramasaugata-srimad-Ramapaladeva-pravardhamana-vijayarajye panchadasame samvatsare vyabhilikhyamana yatrankenapi Samvat 15 Vaisakhadine krishna-saptamyam .....

2. Catalogue of the Exhbition of Art chiefly from the Dominions of India and Pakistan; p. 40, No. 429.

3. Vredenburg, E., Continuity of pictorial tradition in the Art of India, Rupam, No. 1, 1920, p.9.

4. Majumdar, R.C. (Ed.), History of Bengal, Vol. I, p. 177.

4a. Since the chapter was written, Mr. H.J. Stooke has published an able description of the illuminations in Oriental Art, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 5-8, with supplementary remarks by Edward Conze (Ibid., pp. 9-12).

4b. Stooke describes it simply as "Buddha flanked by two other unidentified figures" (Loc. Cit., p.7)

5. There is also a possibility that the incident at Bodhgaya is limited only to the representation of the assault of Mara, and the central panel is merely in the nature of a votive piece. In Eastern India such votive pieces are rather frequent in sculpture as well as in painting.

5a. Foucher, A., Etude sur l'Iconographie Bouddhique de l'Inde, p. 170.

6. Prajnaparamitam jatamukutinim chaturbhujam ekamukhim hastadvayena dharmamudradharam nanaratna-bharanabhushitam suvarnavarnojjvalam vamabhujasakta-prajnaparamitahvitanilotpaladharam vichitravastra-paridhanottariyam dakshinahastenabhayapradam raktapadmopari chandrasane vajraparyankasthem Bhagavatim vibhavya .....; Sadhanamala I, p. 317.

6a. Stooke describes it as a Taramandala and observes that no exact equivalent is recorded either in literature, painting or sculpture; Loc. Cit.,p.7

7. Sadhanamala I, pp. 179-80, 184-5, 190-91, 196-98, 228-29.

8. Om Tare tuttare ture svaha.

9. Aksharairdasabhischaita devatyo dasanirmitah /
Dasaparamitah suddhah sarvakarmaprasiddhaye //

Sadhanamala, I, p. 185.

Also,

Dasaksharairdasadevatyo dasaparamitasrayah /

Sadhanamala, I, pp. 180, 229.

10. Cf. the statements iha hi Prajnaparamitam ... used with reference to the goddess Tara in Sragdhara-stutividhi (Sadhanamala, I, p. 224) and saiva Bhagavati Prajnaparamita saiva parama raksha in the sadhana of Vajra-Tara by Ratnakara Santi (Sadhanamala, I, p. 226). Cf. also the passage vanantareshu dasaparamiteti gita, also with reference to the same goddess in Tarastuti (Sadhanamala, II, p.524).

The close affinity of ideas underlying the conceptions of Prajnaparamita and Tara has also been emphasised by Conze (Loc. Cit., p.12).

11. Lalitavistara, p. 404.

11a. Mitra, R.L., Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal, p. 189.

11b. Rupam, No. 40, p. 83(3)

11c. Chap. VI. 135-54: XIX. 358ff.

12. Sadhanamala, II, p. 560; Bhattacharya, B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, pp. 13-14.

13. Cf. Advayavajrasamgraha: Vajrasattvastu Humkarajanma .... dvibhuja ekavaktro vajravajra-ghantadharah manahsvabhavah kasayarasasarirah ...

Also Dharmakoshasamgraha of Amritananda -

Ekavaktrah suklavarnah jatamukuti sanmudralankritah dvibhujah savyena hridayapradese akunchitena bhujena kulisam vibhranah, yasmin kulise satani kotayah agrabhagah santi. Vamena bhujena nabhipradese akunchitena ghantam vadayamanah.....

Bhattacharya, B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, pp6.

14. Bhattacharya, B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, pp.8-9

15. Mahasri-Taram chandraganastham syamavarnam dvibhujam hastadvayena vyakhyanamudradharam ekavaktram sarvalankarabhushitam parsvadvayenotpalasobham suvarnasimhasanopari apasrayadisobham nanapushpasokachampakanagesvaraparijatakadibhirajitam Amoghasiddhimukutinim. Mahasri-Tarayah parsve Ekajatam ardhaparyankopavishtam nilavarnam kartrikapaladharam sakrodham lambodaram pingalajatabhushitam vyaghracharmambaradharam, dakshine parsve Asokakantam pitavarnam ratnamukutinim vajrasokadharam, punarvame arya-Jangulim syamavarnam sarpavaradahastam, dakshine Mahamayurim mayurapichchhavaradahastam .....

Sadhanamala, I. pp. 244-45.

16. Haritam Amoghasiddhimukutim varadotpaladharidakshinavamakaram Asokakanta-Marichy-Ekajatavyagradakshinavamadigbhagam divyakumarim alankaravatim dhyatva .....

Sadhanamala, I, p. 176

17. Sadhanamala, II, pp. clxxiv-clxxvi.

18. Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Vol. III, pp. 55-56, pls. IX(4), & XI.

19. Vredenburg, E., Continuity of Pictorial Tradition in the Art of India, Rupam, No.1, 1920, figs.7 & 11.

20. Sadhanamala, I, pp. 107-09; Bhattacharya, B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, pp. 19-20.

21. Sadhanamala, I, p.105; Bhattacharya, B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, p. 24.

22. Sadhanamala, I, p. 111; Bhattacharya, B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, p. 25.

23. Vredenburg, E., Continuity of Pictorial Tradition in the Art of India, Rupam, No. 1. pp. 9-11, Figs. 1-11.

CHAPTER VI

TWO ILLUSTRATED MANUSCRIPTS IN THE ASUTOSH MUSEUM OF INDIAN ART, CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY

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In 1947 the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, University of Calcutta, acquired by purchase an illuminated manuscript (No. T. 1055) of the Pañcharakshā containing the sacred texts pertaining to the worship of the goddesses of the Pañcharakshā Mandala. These texts are :-

1. Mahāsahasrapramarddani-nāma Mahāyānasūtra (fol.1-13);
2. Mahāmāyūrī Vidyā (fol.18-40);
3. Mahāsitavatī-nāma Mahāvidyā (fol. 40-41);
4. Mahāpratisarā Mahāvidyā (fol. 42-57); and
5. Mahāmantrānusārini Mahāvidyā (fol. 57-59).

These goddesses, known as Mahāvidyās, form a group of five and are collectively known as the Pañcharakshā Mandala. According to the colophon at the end, the manuscript was copied in (Newari) Samvat 225, corresponding to 1104 A.D., during the reign of Śihadeva, king of Nepal. The colophon is important as it throws a new light on the history of Nepal during the first quarter of the 12th century A.D. It furnishes us with an indubitable historical fact which had remained unknown up till now.(1)

Unlike other manuscripts of the period, the present one is written on paper. The use of paper at so early a date is unknown and doubts may be entertained regarding the genuineness of the date given in the manuscript. The date, however, is given unequivocally, once in words and again in letter numerals, and the colophon leaves no doubt as to its being the date of the copy. Furthermore, a palaeographical examination of the script, also, corroborates the genuineness of the date. Bendall (2) has given a chart of the alphabets and numerals used in the Nepalese manuscripts preserved in the Cambridge University Library. It will be found that the letter numerals in the manuscript under examination for 200, 20 and 5 exactly correspond to those in the Cambridge manuscripts dated in the 11th-12th century A.D. The letter for 200, as given in our manuscript, is, however, not known after the 12th century A.D., and that for 20 undergoes a radical change in form in the 13th. The figure for 5, as it appears in our manuscript, was current in the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. and survives, in stray cases, till the early part of the 13th after which the form is greatly modified. As for other letters they will be found to have a close agreement with those of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. Students of palaeography are aware that the 13th century generally, and in some specific

cases even the 12th, introduced significant changes and modifications in the forms of the Newari letter, but such modified forms are totally absent in our manuscript. From the close resemblance of the script of this manuscript with that of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the date given in the manuscript. Copied in 1104 A.D. this may, therefore, be accepted as the earliest instance of the use of paper in India, antedating the earliest previously known paper manuscript by at least 300 years.

In this manuscript (specified here as MS. "A") there are ten illuminations, the first and the last on the insides of the two wooden covers and the rest on the folios. The illuminations are all uniform in size, each being 2¼" by 3½" inches.

(1) The front cover (Fig.39) shows a god of yellow complexion standing in tribhanga within a circle of flames. The right hand is shown in Varada-mudra, and the left holds a lotus with a manuscript resting on it. The figure is heavily bejewelled with anklets, bracelets, armlets, necklace, and earrings, and an elaborate ratna-mukuta crowns the head. The god wears a red-coloured dhoti with one end hanging down between the legs. A scarf of the same

colour passes round the body with the ends hanging down from the left arm. The upper part of the body is entirely bare.

(2) The illumination (Fig. 39) on the first folio represents the Buddha seated in Vajra-paryaṅka (A) on a double lotus throne with a highly elaborated back with flame borders. The upper part of this throne shows two haṁsas (B) with foliage-like plumes and a kīrtimukha at the top with serpents issuing from its mouth. Behind the figure of the Buddha there is a green cushion ornamented with a design resembling embroidery. In this and in the next seven

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(A) Vajraparyaṅ Kāsana or Vajrāsana or Dhyānāsana - is the meditative pose, the two legs being firmly locked with both the soles apparent - the characteristic sitting attitude of Dhyānī Buddhas. Sometimes a small thunderbolt, shown on the seat of the god, indicates the meditative attitude. Dhyānāsana should be distinguished from the Paryaṅka attitude in which case the legs are placed one upon the other with both the soles invisible.

Bhattacharyya, B.; Indian Buddhist Iconography. Glossary.

(B) Haṁsa - is commonly translated as swan in English but is actually the goose. I, therefore, leave it untranslated for it is an inadequate translation of such a term as Paramahaṁsa.

illuminations a tree with green foliage is shown behind the back of the throne of each of the figures. The figure in this illustration wears a red garment, covering the whole body. The hands are held near the breast in dharmachakra-pravartana-mudrā and this figure bears no distinguishing signs except the mudra.

(3) The next illumination (Fol. 2b - Fig. 40) shows a goddess who is depicted in her Ugra (fierce) manifestation. She is deep blue in colour, seated on a cushion upon a lotus in lalitāsana within a flame background. She has four heads, the additional heads being white, yellow and green in colour. Each of the heads has three round eyes and the hair is shown as rising upwards in flame-like curls. The goddess wears a cloth, violet in colour, the upper portion of the body being bare. She has eight hands of which the lowest right is placed on the thigh with a vajra (thunderbolt) in the palm; the other right hands hold an ankuśa (elephant goad), a śara (arrow) and brandishes a khaḍga (sword). The main left hand is in tarjani pose, while the other left hands hold a paraśu (axe), a dhanush (bow), and a lotus with an uncertain object (perhaps a jewel) on it. The goddess wears the usual ornaments, namely anklets, armlets, bangles, bracelets, neck-chains, and earrings.

(4) Next we have the representation of a three-headed goddess (Fol. 18b - Fig.41), yellow in colour, in her mild manifestation, seated in Vajra-paryaṅka on a cushion supported on a lotus. The background is red with white borders. Of the additional heads, the right one is blue, and the left is red. All the heads have three eyes each. Of the eight hands, the main pair show varada in the right and a cup with the effigy of a figure on it on the left. The additional right hands hold from below upwards, a ghaṭa (waterport), a chakra (discus) and a khaḍga (sword), while the other left hands bear the tail of a peacock (mayūrapichchha), a pot with a four pronged object on it and three round stalked objects, which it is hard to identify. The goddess wears the usual ornaments and a highly bejewelled crown.

(5) On Fol. 19a may be seen a goddess (Fig. 42) green in colour and with three heads and six hands, seated as above. The additional head to the right is white, and that to the left red. All the heads have three eyes each. The main pair of hands show vyākhyāna in the right, and tarjani in the left, while the additional hands to the right bear vajra and śara, and those to the left a staff (probably ratnadhvaja[A]

(A) This identification is tentative. Śiva as Lakulisa carries a short stick, which may be derived from the magical staffs used in Tibet and the adjoining countries, which are often made of iron.

of text) and a bow in the same order. The ornaments and crown are similar to those as in No. 4.

(6) We have next (Fol. 40b) a representation of a three-headed and eight-handed goddess (Fig. 43), white in colour, seated cross-legged, as above. The additional head to the right is dark blue, and that to the left is light yellow. All the heads have three eyes each. The main pair of hands are held near the breast, the right damaged and the left in tarjani mudrā. The additional hands to the right from below bear vajra (thunderbolt), śara (arrow), and khaḍga (sword) while those to the left, triśūla (trident), dhanuka (bow) and paraśu (axe). The ornaments and crown are similar to those as in No. 4.

(7) The white-coloured three-headed goddess on folio 41a (Fig. 44) has twelve hands. The additional head to the right is blue, and that to the left is red. All the three heads have three eyes each. The main pair of hands is in dharmachakra-pravartana-mudrā. Another pair of hands are shown in samadhi-mudrā. The additional right hands from below have varada and abhaya mudrās, vajra and śara respectively, while the left hands have tarjani mudrā, the water vase with flowers (possibly the padmankitakalasah of the text), a crest with a jewel on it (possibly the ratnachchatā of the text) and the dhanuka (bow). The ornaments and the

crown are the same as in No. 4.

(8) On folio 59b is illustrated a group of three figures (Fig. 45) each standing in tribhaṅga pose with two hands and with a halo round the head. In the background is seen a tree. The central figure is that of a Bodhisattva, yellow in colour. The right hand exhibits vyākhyāna-mudrā and the left holds a flower by the stalk with a water-pot on it. The hair is done up in jaṭāmukuṭa, in front of which may be seen the representation of a stūpa. A deer-skin is seen hanging down from the left shoulder. The Bodhisattva wears a red waist-cloth and the usual ornaments. The figure to the right is that of a white-coloured divinity. The right hand is shown in jñāna-mudrā and the left holds a lotus by the stalk. The figure wears the jaṭāmukuṭa with purita-shaped (see glossary) ornaments. The dress and ornaments are as above. The figure to the left is brownish in colour. The right hand is in jñāna-mudrā while the left holds a blue water lily. The hair is raised up over the head with jewelled clasps in front and the sides. The dress and ornaments are the same as in central figure. What, however, is interesting is that each one of the divinities wears different types of kuṇḍalas (earrings) in the ears.

(9) On the next folio (fol. 60A-Fig. 46) may be seen

a four-handed goddess, reddish in colour, seated cross-legged on a lotus. The main pair of hands are in dharmachakrapravartana-mudrā. The upper right hand holds a rosary and the corresponding left a lotus over which is placed a manuscript. She wears a red cloth, the upper part of the body being left bare, except for an ūttarīya the ends of which are seen passing round the arms of the main pair of hands. The background is white edged with red flames. She wears all kinds of ornaments and a highly elaborated crown.

(10) On the inside of the back cover is seen a six-handed divinity (Fig. 49), yellowish in colour, standing in tribhanga pose. The right hands, from below, exhibit varada, a rosary, and namaskāra mudrā. The left hands hold a lotus by the stalk, a ghaṭa, and a three-pronged staff (triśūla). The figure wears a dhoti and the usual ornaments, but the upper part of the body is bare. The figure of the Dhyānī Buddha Amitābha is inset in front of the jaṭāmukuṭa. The background is blue edged, with yellowish flames.

In the same Museum there is another manuscript (No.T.140, here designated as Ms.B) of the Pañcharakshā copied during the reign of Śivadeva, perhaps identical with the King of the same name for whom we have the dates 239, 240, 243 and 249 (1118,1120,1123 and 1129 A.D.) in manuscripts from Nepal. (3)

On the inside of the front cover may be seen the figures of the five Dhyānī Buddhas,(A) Ratnasambhava, Akshobhya, Vairochana, Amitābha and Amoghasiddhi, flanked on either side by the figures of devotees. On the back cover are seen the figures of the eight planets, ketu, the ninth, being left out. The manuscript provides representations of the five goddesses, evidently those of the Pañcharakṣā mandala. The illuminations in this manuscript are much damaged, and they, also, lack the artistic quality of those in Ms.A. From the standpoint of iconography each of the five goddesses in Ms.B. has a general resemblance with her counterpart in Ms.A. and need not be described in detail. The variations, when they are any, will be referred to in the following section dealing with the iconography of the figures represented.

(1) The Panel (Fig. 48) on folio 18 depicts an eight-handed goddess, white in colour, seated cross-legged with three visible heads. Of the attributes, the chakra, vajra, and arrow may be recognized in the right hands, and the trisula and bow in the left. The painting is much effaced and the pigment peeled off. The goddess has a general resemblance with that of illustration No. 6 (Fol.4) in Manuscript "A".

(2) Per Folio 21B (Fig. 49) is shown a ten-handed

(A) See Appendix 'B'

goddess, blue in colour, seated cross-legged with four visible heads. The attributes are all effaced.

(3) On Fol. 45b we find a ten-handed goddess (Fig.50) yellow in colour, with three heads, seated cross-legged. The additional head to the right is blue and that to the left red. The attributes which are seen in the right hands are varada, ghaṭa and vajra, while in the left hand we find a cup, a flower, a ghaṭa with a jewel above and a bunch of leaves.

(4) On Fol. 77B is depicted a six-handed green goddess (Fig. 51) with three visible heads and seated cross-legged. The additional heads are red. All the other attributes are effaced.

(5) The next figures (Fig. 52) which we find in Fol. 80b is all but effaced. From the remaining traces of the outline it seems to have represented a twelve-handed goddess seated cross-legged.

The illuminations in the two manuscripts have general affinities with each other though there are some variations in detail. In each set there are some common elements which help us greatly in the task of identification.

It is evident that in both the manuscripts there are represented the five Pañcharakshā goddesses, Ms. A. showing

a few other deities besides. The goddesses of the Pañcharakshā group are highly popular among the followers of the Mantrānaya; quite a large number of manuscripts were written and illustrated by representations of them, and a fair number of these have survived and come down to us.(4) The deities of the Pañcharakshā mandala (A) are Mahāpratisarā,

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(A) "The Pañcaraksā Mandala. - "The deities constituting the Pañcaraksā Mandala are called Mahāpañcaraksā deities and are five in number, - Mahāpratisarā, Mahāsahasrapramardini, Mahāmantrānusārini, Mahāmāyūrī, and Mahāsituvatī. They are said to affiliate themselves to the five Dhyānī Buddhas and their forms have been described under the feminine emanations of the different Dhyānī Buddhas. When they are worshipped in the Mandala their forms differ to some extent.

The Mahāpañcharaksā deities are very popular with the Mahāyāna Buddhists in as much as every Buddhist priest keeps a copy of the Pañcharaksā manuscript, which is neatly written, sometimes in gold and silver and with illustrations. That their worship was much in vogue is evident from the fact that every Vihāra in Nepal possesses images of these deities either in stone or in bronze.....

The reason why the Pañcaraksā deities are so popular are enumerated in the Sādhana named in the Colophon as "Pañcaraksāvidhānam" in the Sādhanamālā. The five deities when worshipped grant long life; they protect kingdoms, villages, and meadows; and protect men from evil spirits, disease and famines, and from all possible dangers that may befall humanity.

Prof. Foucher has given only a general idea about the Pañcaraksā deities (Etude sur l'Iconographie Bouddhique de l'Inde, II, p.99)".

An attempt to describe them more elaborately from the Dhyānas given in the Sādhanamālā, and to give an idea as to their respective positions in the Mandala, has been made by Sri. B. Bhattacharya on 133, and the following pages of Indian Buddhist Iconography.

Mahāpratisarā, Mahāsahasrapramardani, Mahāmantrānusārini, Mahāmāyūrī and Mahāsītavatī. According to the Sādhanamālā, the worship of these five goddesses grants long life, protects kingdoms, and secures immunity from evil spirits, and diseases, and from all dangers that befall humanity. The manuscripts of this work usually contain representations of all five divinities, to which are added occasionally illustrations of the Buddha, Mañjuśrī, Avolokiteśvara, Prajñāpāramitā, etc. Manuscript "A" of this work has five more illustrations in addition to the five goddesses of the mandala, whereas Manuscript "B", besides the illustrations on the two covers, has the usual group of five only. According to the Sādhanamālā, (6) Mahāpratisarā is to be placed in the middle of the Mandala with the other goddesses surrounding her on four sides. Mahāsahasrapramardani to the west, and Mahāsītavatī to the north. In the manuscripts of the Pañcharakshā this order is usually followed. Neither of the two manuscripts, under notice, follows, however, the above order. In our discussion of the iconography of the goddesses, as represented in our manuscripts, the order of the Sādhanamālā is followed for the sake of convenience.

MAHĀPRATISARĀ : (M.S. "A". Fol. 40b; Ms."B".Fol.1b)

In Manuscript"A" the illustration of the goddess (No.5 of the above description, Fig. 43) generally corresponds

to the Sādhana[7] with, however, slight variations. Of the eight attributes, chakra, vajra, śara and khadga in the right hands and vajrapāśa, triśula, dhanush and paraśu in the left, six are clearly recognizable in the present illustration, in the order as given in the sādhana. The two main pair of hands are held near the breast. The right held probably a chakra, which, however, has peeled off. The left is shown in a pose resembling tarjani-mudrā with a band round the wrist which may stand for the pāśa. The goddess sits in vajra-paryaṅka, and of the four faces, three are visible in the picture; but there is some slight variation in the disposition of the colour of the different heads. The additional right head, according to the sādhana, should be blue, the left red, and the back one yellow. In the illustration of the goddess in manuscript "A" the left head is yellow instead of being red; while in manuscript "B", the right and left heads are red and blue respectively (Fig. 48). The Sādhana, also, enjoins that the foliage of the Bodhi tree decked with various flowers and fruits should be shown over the head of the goddess. The goddess in manuscript "A" shows this feature which, however, is absent in Manuscript "B".

MAHĀSAHASRAPRAMARDANI : (Ms. "A".FOL.2b; Ms."B".Fol.21b)

The illustration of the goddess in manuscript "A" (No. 3 of the above description -Fig.40) closely resembles the sādhana[8] in every detail. The blue complexion, the

terrific look, with hair rising up in flames, contorted brows and fanged teeth, the background of burning flames, the lalita attitude, the tree over the head of the goddess, the various ornaments and the attributes closely correspond to the description of the sādhana. The goddess in manuscript "B" (Fig. 49), however, is more summarily treated and does not show the fierce mien of the goddess as enjoined in sādhana. Further the goddess sits in vajraparyaṅka, instead of in lalitāsana, and has ten hands, the attributes that are recognized closely tallying with those of the sādhana.

MAHĀMĀYŪRĪ (Ms.A.Fol.18b; Ms.B.Fol.45b)

The representation of the goddess in Manuscript "A" (No. 4 of the above description -Fig.41) closely corresponds to the description of the sādhana.(9) The yellow complexion of the goddess, the number of additional hands and their colours and the aśoka tree over the head of the goddess are as set down in the sādhana. The attributes in the left hand, however, call for some comment. The main left hand shows a bowl with the effigy of a figure on it, which may stand for the patropari bhikshu (a monk on a bowl) of the text. Dr. Benyotosh Bhattacharyya(10) is inclined to take the text as wrong on the basis of an illustration which he

reproduces and in which the object on the bowl, according to him, is a fruit. The identification of that object is, however, not beyond doubt, and when in the present illustration it distinctly shows a figure with the hair done up like that of a Chikshu, the reading of the text may not legitimately be doubted. The second left hand holds the tail feather of a peacock; on the third is seen a pot with a four-pronged object (viśvavajra) above it, and on the fourth is seen a cluster of what may be described as crests inset with jewels (ratnadhvaja). According to the text of the sādhana, the third hand should hold a viśvavajra over a bell (ghaṇṭopariviśvavajram). Both the illustrations under notice as well as the illustration reproduced by Bhattacharyya (A) the object held in the third hand is clearly a pot (ghaṭa) and not a bell (ghaṇṭa); and on the basis of these it appears that the proper reading of the text should be ghaṭopari viśvavajram (viśvavajra over a pot) and not ghaṇṭopari viśvavajram. The illustration in Manuscript B (Fig. 50) is slightly different in having ten hands, the bowl held in the left hand being empty.

MAHĀMANTRĀNUSĀRINI (Ms. "A" Fol. 41a; Ms. "B". Fol. 80b)

The illustration of the goddess in manuscript "A"

(A) Bhattacharya. B. Indian Buddhist Iconography plate XXXVIII (facing p. 134)

(No. 7 of above description - Fig. 44) closely tallies with the description of the sādhana[11] except in the fact that the attributes in the fourth and sixth left hands are reversed. That in manuscript "B" (Fig. 52) is seriously damaged; though summarily treated, it corresponds to the sādhana as far as the different features and attributes can be recognized.

MAHĀSITAVATĪ (Ms. "A". Fol. 19a; Ms. B. Fol. 77b)

The goddess in Manuscript "A" (No. 5 of above description - Fig. 42) resembles the description of the sādhana[12] except in one or two details. The first right hand exhibits the vyākhyāna-mudrā instead of abhaya as prescribed by the sādhana, and the attributes in the second and third left hands, also, corresponds, the arrow being placed on the third right hand. The illustration of the goddess in manuscript "B" (Fig. 51) has the additional right hand in light blue, instead of white as enjoined by the sādhana.

Manuscript "A" contains five more illustrations in addition to those of the five Pañcharakshā goddesses. That on the front of the cover (No. 1 of the description - Fig. 38) represents Siddhaikavira,[13] a form of Mañjuśrī the Buddhist god of wisdom. It should be observed in this

connection that it is difficult to distinguish between this form of Mañjuśrī and Lokanātha if the parental Dhyānī Buddha is not shown on the crest. In the present illustration, in spite of the absence of the Dhyānī Buddha Akshobhya, the identification of the god with Siddhaikavira is beyond any doubt because of the manuscript placed over the lotus held in the left hand, which clearly indicates the association of the god with Mañjuśrī. In the sādhanas Siddhaikavira is enjoined to be in the vajraparyaṅka pose, but representations of the god, either in sculpture or in painting are usually in a lalita pose.

The illustration on Fol. 1B (described as No. 2 above, Fig. 39) represents Buddha in the act of preaching his first sermon at Sarnath.

The central figure of the group of three on fol. 59B (described as No. 8 above, Fig. 45) may be identified with Maitreya, the future Buddha. This identification is clear not only because of the representation of the stūpa on the Śatamukuṭa, but also on account of its white complexion and the flower (nāgakeśara)(14) held in the left hand. The vyākhyāna-mudrā, shown in the right hand is quite appropriate, as the exposition of the Law is, also, enjoined as one of his primary functions when his kalpa comes. The figure to the right corresponds to the description of Lokanātha

but the identification of that to the left is rather uncertain in the present state of our knowledge.

The four-handed figure on fol. 60a (No.9 of the description -Fig. 46) represents the goddess Prajñāpāramitā in the form in which she is said to have emanated from the five Dhyānī Buddhas collectively. She has four hands and the attributes carried closely correspond to those enjoined by the sādhana except that the present illustration shows the akshamālā (rosary) in the additional right hand instead of the abhaya enjoined by the sādhana.(15) Similar representations of the goddess are met with in sculpture as well as in painting.(A)

The illustration on the back cover (No. 10 of the description -Fig.47) represents a six-handed male divinity which is a form of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, as is made plain by the effigy of the Dhyānī Buddha Amitābha on the jaṭāmukuṭa. In the Sādhanamālā Avalokiteśvara is described in his six-handed form, as Sugatisandarsana.(16) This particular form has six hands with varada, abhaya and the rosary in the right hands and the lotus, waterpot and tridandī (a staff with three prongs) in the left; the complexion is white. The illustration under notice corresponds to the description of the sādhana(16) except in some

(A) Bhattacharya B. Indian Buddhist Iconography, plate XXXVI (Facing p. 120)

particulars. The colour of the god is of a light yellowish tint, instead of white. The three left hands bear attributes as enjoined for the Sugatisandarsana in the sādhana, but there is a slight discrepancy with regard to those in the right hands. The attributes in the two right hands conform to those in the sādhana, but the third has namaskāra-mudrā,(A) instead of abhaya. Sculptures corresponding to the representation in the present illustration have been found in Eastern India. The discrepancies that are noted are, however, very minor and do not stand in the way of identifying the figure as that of Sugatisandarsana Lokeśvara.(B)

(A) Namaskāra is a modern term for the gesture of greeting. Añjali is the technical term for the pose used in the Sanchi and elsewhere, but on the Bharhut sculptures (BARUA, Bharhut, Vol. III, fig. 37) añjali seems to be distinguished from the act of worship (vandanā). Such variations, however, are of great interest from the point of view of the study of the usual material upon which our literary authors worked. The same kind of variation occurs in the Southern Āgama. Bhattacharya in his Indian Buddhist Iconography describes these terms as follows:-

(i) Namaskāra - "The mudrā assumed by the Bodhisattvas when paying homage to the Buddhas or Tathāgatas, or by the minor deities to the principal one. The hands slightly bent, is raised above in a line with the shoulder with the fingers outstretched or slightly bent and palm turned upwards.

The description given in Getty, p. 172, is a description of the Añjali mudrā."

(ii) Añjali - It is a "Name of a mudrā also known as the Sarvarājendra mudrā or the Samputāñjali. It is the mudrā in which the two hands are clasped palm to palm, both of which are extended upward with all fingers erect or slightly bent. This is the characteristic mudrā of Sadāksarī

Belonging to the beginning of the 12th Century A.D. these manuscripts supply us with welcome additions to our knowledge of pictorial art in Nepal.(C) Formerly we had no knowledge of the practice of painting in Nepal during the period between 191 N.S.- 1071 A.D. (R.A.S.B. Ms. A. 15)(17) and 268 N.S.-1148 A.D. (R.A.S.B. Ms. G 4803,(18) that is, for a period of well-nigh three quarters of a century. It was thought that the political circumstances of Nepal at this time, which lead to frequent changes of dynasties and consequent unsettled conditions, were responsible for a lack of interest in the formative arts. But political conditions and social upheavals have but very little influence on the

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(A) (Continued from previous page).

Lokeśvara and is also exhibited by Namasaṅgīti."

(B) Sugatisandarsana - "The worshipper should conceive himself as Bhattāraka Sugatisandarsana-Lokeśvara, white in complexion, six armed, showing the varada and Abhaya poses and the rosary in the (three) right hands, and carrying the lotus, the water-pot, and the staff with three horns in the (three) left; as decked in ornaments and jewels, wearing the sacred thread, and having a crown of the Chignon over head; as situated on the moon over lotus, and as peaceful in appearance."
Bhattacharya, B. Indian Buddhist Iconography, page 49.

The attempt to identify one of the Sarnath images with this particular variety of Lokeśvara (Bhattacharya, B. "The identification of Avalokiteśvara Images". Proceedings of the Oriental Conferences, Second Session, 1922, Calcutta.) has been given up due to the discrepancies of serious nature.

(C) See ante, part I.

religious and cultural life of the people of India in ancient days. Very seldom do the great political periods coincide with the great cultural epochs, which have, not infrequently, been found to have been periods of political unrest.

The illuminations in the first manuscript clearly carry on the style and tradition of Nepalese painting of the last half of the 11th Century A.D. The same fluency of linear outline persists, though the colour scheme appears to have become a bit hard and flat. The composition, also, becomes much less crowded probably because the artist has lost, to a certain extent, the sense for harmonious and balanced grouping which forms one of the chief characteristics of the illuminations of R.A.S.B. Ms. A. 15. The physical type is slender and this marked emphasis on slenderness is, also, felt even in the figures of divinities, which are traditionally required to be fat and pot-bellied (cf. Fig. 40). This pliant form with the sensitive treatment of the fingers is a trait that had already been achieved in the 11th Century A.D. and continues into the 12th. The eye-brows always show the double curve. The figures have, however, become more stereotyped and conventional and the individuality and independence of the composition, the freedom of the pose and attitude of the figures are already things of the past.

The above observations apply equally to the illuminations of the other manuscript (No. T. 140). But in this second manuscript the linear tendency has become rather brittle, the paintings, also, loosing the sureness of draughtsmanship which can be recognized in the first manuscript.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VI

Included in the second manuscript (A.M.Ms.No. T.140) there is a stray folio of a manuscript of the Ashṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā. This bears an illuminated panel (Fig.53) in the centre illustrating the Nativity of the Buddha. The composition here differs to a certain extent from that of the usual representations of the scene which we meet with either in sculpture or in painting. Queen Māyā is standing in a somewhat unemphasized tribhanga pose grasping the branches of a tree (śāla or plaksha) (A) by her left hand. To her left stands her sister Mahāprajāpati who clasps the queen with both hands. The other hand of the queen instead of being supported on the shoulders of her sister grasps her left arm. The child springs out as usual from her right side. In the centre is repeated the figure of the child on a pyramid of lotus flowers, being bathed by a divine figure pouring water from a pot. Though no distinctive cognisance can be recognized the figure may be identified with that of the god Śakra (Indra) who is said to have received the baby after his birth. To the right of Indra stands another god who may tentatively be identified as Brahmā. The central composition depicts the episode of the taking of the seven steps by the child just after the birth. The story goes that at each step

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(A) In the later texts the plaksha takes the place of the traditional śāla. (See Glossary).

there sprang up a lotus flower and immediately he finished the steps he declared himself to be the foremost of the world.(19) The pyramid formed by the lotus flower represents the step he took and the ceremonial bathing after birth is, also, shown jointly with this episode.

What is striking in this panel is the rather unusual pose and attitude of the queen and her sister. Such individuality is hardly to be met with in mediaeval representations of the scene where the composition is entirely conventional and stereotyped, as already observed (ante, part 2 chapters III and IV). The panel is, also, interesting because of the easy and flexible fluency of the delineation of each of the different figures. Every line glides softly downwards and melts, so to say, into the other lines of the composition (cf. the figure of Indra). They are not only elastic but are also endowed with a plastic quality that is rather unusual during the mediaeval period. Traces of the mediaeval emphasis on the linear are, also, evident to a certain extent in some of the figures especially in the curly eyebrows, the folds of the drapery, etc. But in the freedom of the drawings and the plastic qualities of the figures, this painting belongs to the classical tradition. Aesthetically, this particular painting is of a higher level than the paintings in two manuscripts, just described, though the date, from the script used, appears to be approximately the same. The difference in aesthetic standard is perhaps

due to the fact that the manuscript of which this particular page forms a part belonged to Eastern India, and, that is, to say, that the painting was executed by an Eastern Indian artist in India.

REFERENCES

(1) For the historical importance of the manuscript, reference may be made to the article by Sri S.K. Saraswati on "Sihadeva, a forgotten king of Nepal": Indian History Congress, Tenth Session, Bombay, 1947.

(2) Bendall, Cecil, Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge, Pls. IV & V.

(3) Sastri, H.P., Catalogue of Palm-leaf and Selected Paper manuscripts belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal, Vol. I, Bendall's Historical Table No. I, pp. 22-23.

(4) The most important of these is certainly the Cambridge University Library manuscript (No.Add.1688), copied in the 14th year of the reign of King Nayapaladeva of the Pala dynasty of Bengal, who is to be placed about the middle of the 11th century A.D., that is, nearly half a century older than Ms. "A" under notice. The Cambridge manuscript is copiously illustrated.

(5) Jvare gare (?) tatha roge samgrame cha tathaiva cha/
Dakini (sa) bhutochchhushmanadisatruprapidite //
Asanividyunmeghanam parvate vanamargayoh /
Tasmanmantram smarennityam sarvasankanisudanam //

(6) Sadhanamala, II, p. 410: Bhattacharya B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, p. 132.

Pancharaksha-vidhanam, pp. 405-409. Sadhanamala II.

(7) Mahapratisara gauravarna dvirshtavarshakritih chaityalankritamurdha chandrasanastha Suryamandalalidha vajraparyankini trinetra ashtabhuja chalatkundalsobhita haranupurabhushita kanakakeyuramanditamakhala sarvalankaradharini, tasyabhagavatyah prathamamukham gauravarnam dakshinam krishnam

prishthe pitam vame raktam, dakshinaprathamabhuje chakram dvitiye vajram tritiye saram chaturthe khadgam, vamaprathamabhuje vajrapasam dvitiya trisulam tritiye dhanuh chaturthe parasum, Bodhivrikahopsobhita ....

Sadhanamala, II, pp. 405-06; Bhattacharya, B. Indian Buddhist Iconography, p. 133.

(8) Tasya Mahapratisarayah purvasyam disi . . . Mahasahasrapramardani krishmayarna pingalordhakesa narakapalalankrita bhrubhrukutidamshtrakaralavadana sphurat-Suryamandalasana lalitakshepena mahabhutamahayakshanamakramamana katakakeyuramandita haranupurabhushita, tasya dakshinaprathamabhuje varadavajram dvitiye ankusam tritiye saram chaturthe khadgam, vamaprathamabhuje tarjanipasam dvitiye parasum tritiye dhanuh chaturthe padmopari shodasaratham, tasya mulamukham krishnam dakshine svetam prishthe pitam vame haritam, sarvam trinetram ... vatavrikshopasobhita .....

Sahanamala, II, pp. 406-07; Bhattacharya, B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, p. 133.

(9) Tato Mahapratisaraya dakshinadighbhavena ... Mahamayuripitavarna Suryamandalalidha satvaparyankini trimukha trinetra ashtabhuja ratnamukutini sarvabharanabhushita, tasya dakshinaprathamabhuje vardam dvitiye ratnaghatadhara tritiye chakram chaturthe khadgam, vamaprathamabhuje patropari bhiksham(kshuh) dvitiye mayurapichchham tritiye gamtopari visvavajram chaturthe ratnadhvajam, tato mulamukham pitam dakshine krishnam vame raktamdhvajam tato mulamukham pitam dakshine krishnam vame raktam asokavrikshopasobhita . . .

Sadhanamala, II, p. 407; Bhattacharya, B. Indian Buddhist Iconography, p. 134.

(10) Bhattacharya, B. Indian Buddhist Iconography, p.134.

(11) Tasyah Pratisarayah paschimadisi ~~visvavajroparii~~ Chandramandalamadhye . . . Mahamantranusarinim bhavayet suklavarham dvadasabhujam trimukham trinetram sphurat-Suryamandalalidham ratnamukutinim sarvalankarasobhitam navayauvanopteam haranupurakundalalankaram sirishayrikshopasobhitam, tasyah prathamabhujabhyam

dharmachakramudra dvitiyabhujabhyam samadhimudra tritiye varadha chaturthe abhayah panchame vajram shashthe sarah, tritiye tarjanipasah chaturthe dhanuh panchame ratnachechata shashthe padmankitakalasah, mulamukham suklam dakshine krisimam vame raktam . . .

Sadhanamala, II, p. 408; Bhattacharya, B Indian Buddhist Iconography, p. 134.

(12) Tato Mahapratisarayah uttarasyam disi visvapadmopari Chandramandalamadhye ... Mahasitavati haritavarna Suryamandalalidha trimukha trinetra shadbhuja Tathagatamukutini saivabharanalankrita divyavastropachchhadani, tasyah prathamabhuje abhayam dvitiye vajram tritiye saram, vamaprathamabhuje tarjanipasam dvitiye dhanuh tritiye ratnadhvajam mulamukham haritam dakshine suklam vame raktam, champakavrikshopasobhita.

Sadhanamala, II, pp. 408-09; Bhattacharya, B., Indian Buddhist Iconography, pp. 134-35.

(13) Siddhaikaviro bhagavan Chandramandalasthah Chadropasrayo jagadudyotakari dvibhuja ekamukhah suklo vajraparyanki vivyalankarabhushitah panchavirakasekharo ... vame nilotpaladharo dakshine varadah ... tatascha bhagavato maulau Akshobhyam devatyah pujam kurvanti.

Sadhanamala, I, p. 140; Bhattacharya, B. Indian Buddhist Iconography, pp. 20-21

There are also other sadhanas corresponding to the one quoted above.

(14) Cf. description of the sadhana (Sadhanamala, II, p. 560) pushpitanagakesaramanjaridharam.

The sadhana describes the god Maitreya as having three faces and four hands, but representations corresponding to the description is hardly met with in India.

(15) Prajnaparamitam jatamukutinim chaturbhujam ekamukhim hastadvayena dharmamudradharam nanaratnabharanabhushitam suvarnavarnojjvalam vamabhujasaktaPrajnaparamitanvitanilotpaladharam vichitravastraparidhanottariyam dakshinahastenabhyapradam raktapadmopari Chandrasane vajraparyankastham bhagavatim vibhavya.

(16) Sugatisandarsana-Lokesvarabhattarakam suklavarmam shadbhujam varadabhayakshamaladharama dakshine vame padmakunditridandi (dharam) cha ratnabharanabhushitam ...

Sadhanamala, I, p. 88; Bhattacharya, B. Indian Buddhist Iconography, p. 49.

(17) Mitra, R.L., Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal, p. 188.

(18) Sastri, H.P., Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts in the Government Collection under the cafe of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. I., pp. 3-4.

(19) Thomas, E.J. The Life of Buddha as Legend and History. Chapter III. pp. 27 ff.

CHAPTER VII

A PAINTED COVER OF A ŚIVADHARMA MANUSCRIPT IN THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, CALCUTTA.

CHAPTER VII

A PAINTED COVER OF A ŚIVADHARMA MANUSCRIPT IN THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, CALCUTTA

The wooden covers of the manuscript No. G. 4077 (Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal) throw a welcome light on the history of manuscript Painting in Eastern India. The manuscript contains a number of works all pertaining to the Śaivaite sect viz: 1) Śivadharmaśāstram, 2) Śivadharmottara, 3) Śivadharmasaṁgraha, 4) Umā-Maheśvara-Saṁbāda 5) Śivopanishad, Umottara or Uttarottara Tantra, 6) Vrishaśāra Saṁgraha, and 7) Lalitavistāra.(1) The measurement of the folios is approximately 22 x 2 inches.

The manuscript is very much damaged and worm-eaten, and a good many pages are obviously missing.(A) The Lalitavistāra of the present manuscript is not the celebrated Buddhist text of the same name but a Śaiva work known also, as Umā-Maheśvarottarāttarottarā Saṁbāda. The manuscript of this work was copied, according to the post-colophon statement, in Newari Samvat 156, during the reign of Paramabhattāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara

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(A) This manuscript urgently needs collating and textual study.

Śrī Laksmīkāmadeva. The Newari date is equivalent to 1036 A.D. The manuscripts of the other works, which are undated, also, appear to belong to about the same period on palaeographical grounds.

The wooden covers (22¼" x 2½") are each embellished with paintings on the inside. The manuscripts themselves are, however, unillustrated. The style and execution of the paintings would indicate that the covers were much later than the date of the manuscript. On one cover is an extended representation of the Liṅgodbhava-mūrti and on the other are represented various gods worshipping the Liṅga.(A)

(A) Gopinath Rao(2) describes the normal version of this icon, which is common in the Pallava and later temples of the South, as follows:-

Liṅgodbhava-mūrti. "This is one of the common icons in Southern India, which, according to the Āgamas is required to be placed in the niche in the Western Wall of the garbha-griha or the Central Shrine. Śiva is said to have appeared in the form of a blazing pillar of immeasurable size to quell the pride of Brahmā and Vishṇu. The story, which is almost identically given in the Liṅga-purāṇa, the Kurma-purāṇa, the Vāyu-purāṇa and the Śiva-purāṇa, runs as follows:- Vishṇu at the end of a kalpa was slumbering on the deep abyss of waters; a great illumination occurred then near Vishṇu and from it emerged Brahmā. Brahmā saw before him another person, Vishṇu; Brahmā approached Vishṇu and introduced himself to Vishṇu as the Creator of the whole universe and demanded of Vishṇu who he was; to which Vishṇu replied that he was, also, the architect of the Universe. Brahmā could not brook the statement of

(A) (Continued from previous page)

Vishṇu and a quarrel ensued between them both. At this juncture, there appeared a liṅga resembling the great cosmic fire, with hundreds of tongues of flames blazing out of it. Instead of quarrelling with each other, Brahmā and Vishṇu set about to find out the top and bottom respectively of this huge mass of fire, for which purpose the former assumed the form of a swan (haṁsa) and flew up in the air; while the latter took the form of a boar and burrowed down into the earth. The attempt of these two gods to discover the reality and measure of this fiery pillar, proved futile. They then came to realise that there certainly was something far greater than themselves; whose top or bottom they could not find out. Thus humiliated they approached this pillar of fire and began to praise it. Pleased with their prayers, Śiva manifested himself to them in the body of this fiery liṅga with a thousand arms and legs, with the Sun, the moon and the fire as his three eyes, bearing the bow called pināka, clad in the hide of an elephant, carrying the triśūla, wearing the yajñopavīta made of snakes and with a voice resembling the rumbling of the clouds or the noise of the drum, addressed Brahmā and Vishṇu thus: "You both are born from me, Brahmā having come from my right loin and Vishṇu from the left loin; all three of us are really one, but are now separated into three aspects, namely, Brahmā, Vishṇu and Maheśvara. Brahmā will in the future be born of Vishṇu and at the beginning of a kalpa, I myself will be born from the angry brow of Vishṇu". Thus declaring, Maheśvara disappeared. From this time the liṅga came to be worshipped by all men.

While searching for the top of the pillar of fire, Brahmā came by a petal of the Ketakī flower and asked it wherefrom it was descending; to this the petal answered that it was falling from the head of Maheśvara, for what length of time it could not remember. Taking hold of this petal, Brahmā descended and lied to Vishṇu that he had discovered the head of Maheśvara and from it had brought this petal of the Ketakī flower. For uttering this piece of falsehood, Brahmā was cursed not to receive any worship from men on earth. Hence it is stated, Brahmā is never enshrined in a separate temple and offered worship".

Rao, T.A.G. Elements of Hindu Iconography, Vol.II, [illegible]

The cover with the version of the Lingodbhava-mūrti began on the left with an illustration of the primeval flood, here represented by wavy lines with the picture of the fish, a conch, and an indistinct aquatic object.(▲) The next panel presents Vishṇu reclining on the coils of Ananta on the waters of the primeval flood. From his navel rises a lotus flower on which sits the god Brahmā. Both the gods have two hands each and the colour of each is yellow. Vishṇu holds a conch in his left hand. Behind Brahmā is seen a circular halo formed of concentric bands of various colours. The next panel shows the god Brahmā standing in three quarter profile, with four hands and one head. The two left hands hold a water vessel and a manuscript; of the two right hands one is in vyākhyāna-mudrā and the other seems to hold a rosary. The coils of his hair are shown as hanging down from the head and the complexion is yellow. Facing Brahmā stands the god Vishṇu, also, in three-quarter profile and bedecked with ornaments. He has four hands with Padma (lotus), chakra (discus), gadā (mace) and saṅkha (conchshell) his usual attributes. The colour is

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(▲) This subject may bear on the churning of the ocean myth, when various sacred objects were produced from the water.

greenish blue (Fig. 54). In the next panel, much of which is damaged, we have the representation of a pillar. In the next panel we see the god Brahmā mounted on his vāhana, the haṁsa and correspondingly the god Vishṇu mounted on his vāhana. Garuḍa is shown upside down as if seeking to penetrate to the lower limit of the Śaiva Liṅgam. The next panel introduces a Śaiva ascetic with a long beard and matted locks. He stands in three-quarter profile, the right hand held in vyākhyāna-mudrā. Next to him are shown the gods Brahmā and Vishṇu facing each other (Fig.55). In the next panel, which is badly damaged, are shown the gods Brahmā and Vishṇu, each standing with folded hands before a column (the liṅgam) with flames issuing out of it (Fig. 56), and in the last are, also, shown the same gods before the liṅgam which bears a representation of Śiva with three heads (Fig. 59). Brahmā with his four hands is standing with his main right hand in vyākhyāna-mudrā and has usual attributes in the others, while Vishṇu is shown with folded hands before the column, which no doubt represents a Mukha-liṅga, for the front head bears the trinetra (third-eye) of Śiva.

The illustrations on the second cover are divided into 12 panels, each containing the figure of a Śiva-liṅga being worshipped by a divinity seated on a lotus throne. Each of these deities is shown in the act of

placing an offering of flowers on the Liṅga with the right hand. Each of them has a cushion at the back and is provided with a halo round the head.

Beginning from the left, the first panel shows a four handed god, yellow in colour, seated on a lotus throne, worshipping the Liṅga, shown blue in colour. The attributes, except the flower offering in the main right hand, are indistinct. The next panel shows the god Vishṇu (blue in colour) worshipping the Liṅga (also blue in colour). Vishṇu holds the offering of flowers in the lower right hand and saṅkha and gadā in the upper right and left hands. The lower left, placed on the knee, holds an indistinct object. In the third panel the Śiva-liṅga as well as the four-handed deity worshipping it are yellow in colour. The god holds a trident in the upper left hand and offers a flower with the lower right hand and has the third eye shown vertically on the forehead. In the fourth panel, the Liṅga as well as the two-handed deity worshipping it are red in colour. The deity holds the flower offering in the right hand and a lotus flower in the left (Fig. 58).

The first four panels are divided from the next four panels by the pillar-like object found on the other cover, which may be a version of the Śaiva liṅgam.

The next panel to it shows a two-handed deity (yellow in colour) worshipping the Liṅga (also yellow) with the usual flower offering in the right hand and a half-blown flower held by the stalk in the left. In the sixth panel the god (yellow in colour) in the usual flower offering pose, is seen with a vajra (thunderbolt) in his left hand. He has the third eye placed horizontally on the forehand. The Liṅga is yellow in colour. The seventh panel shows a two handed god of a greenish-blue colour, worshipping the Liṅga which is, also, greenish blue with the flower offering in the right hand and the effigy (yellow in colour) of a human or divine being in the left. A two-handed god (yellow in colour) worshipping the Liṅga (also yellow) with the flower offering in the right hand and the effigy of a bird in the left is depicted in the eighth panel (Fig.59)

The representation of the pillar-like object mentioned above, here divides the foregoing panels from the last four panels.

The ninth panel shows a somewhat opulant, two-handed deity, coloured yellow with a slight reddish tone, worshipping the Liṅga, which is, also, coloured yellow, with the flower offering in the right hand and the left holding an uncertain object (probably a noose).

The next panel portrays a two-handed deity, coloured reddish, worshipping the Liṅga, also coloured reddish, with the flower offering in the right hand and a lotus bud in the left. The eleventh panel shows a two-handed deity, coloured yellow with a slight greenish tinge, with the flower offering in the right hand and a sword in the left, worshipping the Liṅga, coloured reddish. In the last panel we find a two-handed deity of a greenish blue colour worshipping the Liṅga, which is reddish. The deity holds the usual flower offering in the right hand and the left holds some object which cannot be identified. The god has the third eye in the forehead and does not wear the crown, as depicted in all the other panels, except the third and, also, probably the first. Instead, the hair is shown as falling in curls (Fig. 60).

As has been said, the top cover illustrates the well-known legend of the Liṅgodhbhava-mūrti, which is described in detail in the Āgamas and the Purāṇas. The text of the Śivadharma of the present manuscript, also, gives us the story in precis (see appendix to this chapter). Though various details have been left out of the present text, there is no fundamental divergence in the Śivadharma account from that of the Āgamas and

the Purānas. The main theme of the legend is that Śiva appeared in the form of a blazing pillar of immeasurable size to quell the pride and quarrels of Brahmā and Vishṇu with regard to the question of the superiority of the one over the other. The story in the different texts has been summarised by Rao in his Elements of Hindu Iconography, Vol. II., pp. 105-7, (see ante). It will be found that the illustrations on the present cover differ in many respects from the versions of the story found in the Āgamas and Purāṇas. In the first part of the story it is related how, during Brahmā's and Vishṇu's quarrels, there appeared before them the Liṅgam in the form of a flaming pillar of immeasurable size. At this apparition, Brahmā and Vishṇu stopped their quarrels, the former flying up in the shape of a haṁsa in an attempt to reach the top and the latter digging down to reach the bottom of the pillar. The episode of the appearance of the flaming pillar is left out in the present representation of the story, though Brahmā on his haṁsa and Vishṇu on Garuḍa appear, the pillar is not shown. A flaming pillar, however, appears towards the end of the present representation before which Brahmā and Vishṇu are shown with folded hands, and it is this flaming pillar which apparently manifests itself as the Mukha-liṅga in the last panel

which the two gods are made to worship as the supreme deity of the universe. The figure of the bearded ascetic, shown towards the middle of the representation, also, introduces a new element in the story. It appears that after the failure of Brahmā and Vishṇu to reach the top and bottom respectively of the Śaiva-liṅgam, this ascetic has been introduced in the present narrative to explain the nature and character of the strange phenomenon. It may be that the ṛṣi is depicted as exhortating the two gods but his appearance would seem to be unorthodox as far as the texts go.

On the lower cover, various gods are represented as worshipping the Liṅga. The text of the Śivadharma of the present manuscript, also, describes how the different gods, including Brahmā, Indra, Kuvera, Viśvadeva, Vāyas, Vishṇu, the eight Vasus, the two Aśvinīkumāras, Varuṇa, Agni, Sūrya, Chandra, the Rākṣasas, the Piśachas, the Guhyakas, the divine mothers, etc., worshipped the Liṅga. (See appendix). Many of the gods of this list may be recognised in the different panels of the present cover. The first and the second panels may be identified respectively as Brahmā and Vishṇu worshipping the Liṅga. In the third panel we have apparently the representation of the god Śiva worshipping the Liṅga. The object carried in one of the hands may be the trident

but the vertical third eye on the forehead and the matted locks, instead of the usual crown, clearly support this identification. The Liṅga is, of course, a form of Śiva himself and Śiva worshipping the Liṅga may appear to be strange. In Indian texts, as well as in Indian art, the deity is frequently shown in the guise of a yogī immersed in deep meditation.(A) These are not to be

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(A) Bhikshātanamūrti: Rao, in his Elements of Hindu Iconography,(3) describes it in the following way:-

"In the case of the image of the Bhikshātana-mūrti, the general posture of Śiva is the same as in the Kaṅkāla-mūrti aspect; that is, the left leg standing firmly on the ground and the right slightly bent suggesting walking. The front right hand and the back left are held as in the case of the Kaṅkāla-mūrti, whereas the front left hand should carry a Kapāla and the back right one a damaru. The head may have the jaṭās dishevelled (jaṭābhāra) or arranged in the form of a circle (jaṭāmaṇḍala) with the crescent moon in it. The forehead should be adorned with a paṭṭa or ornamented band; there should also be the other ornaments all over the body. But there should be no kind of clothing on the person of Śiva, not even the waist zone. Instead of this latter, there should be a snake tied round the waist; besides this there should be other snake ornaments in appropriate places on the person of Śiva. On the chest is to be seen a white yajñopavīta. The neck of Śiva should be of blue colour and his forehead should be beautified with tripundra mark. In this aspect he should not carry the kaṅkāla-daṇḍa, but in its place there should be the Śūla decorated with a lot of peacock-feathers. There should be a pair of wooden sandals on his feet. Sometimes it might be omitted also. The hand that bears the kapāla should be lifted as high as the naval, whereas the one that carries the damaru

wondered at. There is an interesting passage in the Mahābhārata which may help to explain the mystery of a god shown as a yogī in the act of worshipping himself. Nārada once visited the Badarikāsrama to see Nara and Nārāyana. He finds Nārāyana engaged in the act of worshipping; bewildered at this (because Nārāyana was himself an object of worship) Nārada asks him about the object of his devotion. The god tells him that he is worshipping his original Prakriti (Parā-Prakriti), the source of all that is and all that is to be. On this analogy, the present panel may clearly be accepted as Śiva worshipping the Liṅga, considered as his original Prakriti, the supreme force in the universe. Among the other panels, we may recognise Indra worshipping the Liṅga in the sixth panel. The identity of the god is certain because of the vajra held in one of the hands, though he is given the horizontal third eye[4] on the

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(A) (Continued from previous page.)

should be raised as far as the ear and distance between the wrist of this arm from the ear is to be sixteen angulas. As usual Śiva should possess in these two aspects three eyes. The rest of the description of the Bhikshātana-mūrti is identical with that given already under the Kaṅkāla-mūrti.

The Suprabhedagama adds that the Kapāla held by Śiva is that of Brahmā and the Kaṅkāla that of Vishṇu: herein the Paurāṇic story of the murder by Śiva of both Brahmā and Vishvaksena, as aspect of Vishṇu, is accepted and followed".

[illegible] of Hindu Iconography, p.306

forehead, which according to the iconographic texts are distinctive cognisances of Indra. The ninth panel probably portrays Varuṇa as a fat, two-handed deity with a noose in one of his hands. The crimson god of the fourth panel, holding a full blown lotus flower in the left hand may probably be identified as Sūrya, the Sun god. The Liṅga of reddish copper colour, as shown in the present panel supports this identification, as according to the Śivadharma text Sūrya is enjoined to worship a Liṅga made of copper.

The identification of the other panels is difficult for lack of sufficient details. Among them are probably to be recognised some of the other gods mentioned in the Śivadharma text as worshipping the Liṅga. However, in the last panel may be identified one of the Viśvadevas worshipping the Liṅga. The Viśvadevas, according to the Vishṇudharmottaram[5], are to be represented like Indra with a third eye on the forehead. The third eye on the forehead of the deity of the present panel hence lends some support to this hypothesis. The god with the sword in one of his hands may probably be identified as one of the eight Vasus worshipping the Liṅga.

The paintings are executed directly on the wooden covers without any backing of cloth, which is the usual practice in later periods. Over the polished surface of the wood there is a priming of white on which the illustrations are outlined in ochre. The different sections are then filled in with various pigments, green, blue, yellow and red being the principal ones. It is noticeable that the outlines are emphasised by thicker brush lines in deeper tones.

It may then be accepted that these paintings belong to the general category of Eastern Indian painting. Nepal, though within the orbit of influence of the Eastern Indian tradition, developed a certain individuality in course of time and this individuality is clearly apparent in these illustrations. On stylistic considerations, therefore, they belong to a rather later phase. A number of Buddhist manuscripts, from the latter half of the 10th century A.D., are embellished with miniature paintings, both inside and on the covers. Brahmanical paintings of this order are rare. In this connection reference may be made to a manuscript of the Piṅgalamata, a Tāntrik work of great importance, copied during the reign of King Rudradeva in Nepal Samvat 294 (1174 A.D.) The

paintings on the covers of this manuscript agree with those under examination in style and execution, and on this account, these paintings may be placed to about the same period, that is, the late 12th century or early 13th century A.D. But as regards quality the paintings of the present manuscript are poor and decandent. The manuscript of the Lalitavistāra was copied in 1036 A.D. The other manuscripts, also, may be ascribed to about the same date on palaeographical ground. The covers, hence, appear to be much later than the date of the manuscript. Miniature paintings of this date are rare. There are, however, a fair number of examples belonging to both earlier and later periods. These paintings are important, hence, as supplying a valuable link between the early and later phases of Nepalese painting.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VII

Nandikesvara uvacha :

Tvamativa Siva bhakti padmayoni sutottamah /
Tena te nikhilam vakshya srinushvekagramanasah //
Purvam ekarnava ghore nashte sthavara-jangame /
Vivadah sumahan asid Brahma-vishnoh parasparam //
. hankarta hyahankarta anyonya jagatah prabhuh /
. aha Harim Brahma Brahmanam cha Haris tathe //
Tayor darpapaharaya prabodhartham tu devayoh /
Madhya samabhaval Lingam aischaryan-teja-sambhavam //
Jvalamalavritan divyam aprameyam anopamam /
Yojanayuta-vistirnnam sthitam vimalambhasi //
Jvalabhir mohitau tasya Lingasya purasattamau /
Tada vismayam apannau pasyantavamaradhipau //
Gataschorddhvamadhaschaiva sampradhanya parasparam /

Adrishtatadhas chorddhvato sametya parasparam /
Kritanjaliputo bhutva Lingantam stuvatas tada //
Lingamadhye paralingam sthitam pradesa-sammitam /
Samddhistotra-sampannau drishtavantau Sivatmakau //
Lakshamatram Siva santam kevalantam Sivatmkam //
Tabhyantushto Mahadeva pradadyad varamuttamam /
Kara .... mavajnaya ta traivantaradhiyata //
Pranjalipranato bhutva Brahmapi daivatam param /

Purve Lingam samabhyarchya toda karyani chakriye //
Brahma brahmaksharair divyair Lingam pujayate sada /
Gandhapushpadibhir nityam Vishnuh pujayate Sivam //
Tada prabhriti Brahmadya pratishthapya surasurah /
.. santi kriti Lingam ijire munayas tatha //
Brahma pujayate nityam Lingam sailamayam subham /
Tasya sampujanat tena praptam Brahmatvam uttamam //
Sakro'pi devarajendro Lingam manimayam subham /
Bhaktya pujayatenityam tena Sakratvam apnuyat //
Lingam hemamayam kritva Dhanado' rchayate sada /
Tenassau Dhanado devo dhamadatvam avapnuyat //
Visvedeva mahatmano raupyam Lingam manoharam /
Yajanti bidhivad bhaktya tena visvatvam apnuyat //
Vayuh pujayate bhaktya Lingam pittala-Sambhavam /
Vayutvam tena sampraptam anopamyagunavaham //
Indranilamayam Lingam Vishnur archayate sada /
Vishnutvam praptavan tena adbhutaikasanatanam //
Vasavah kamsikam Lingam pujayanti vidhanatah /
Praptas tena mahatmano Vasavatvam mahodayam //
Asvinau parthivam Lingam pujayanti (?) vidhanatah /
Tena tav-Asvinau devau divyadeha-gatav ubhau //
Sphatika .... Lingam Varuna' rchayate sada /
Varunatvam hi sampraptam tena ridhya samanvitam //
Lingam ratnamayam punyam Agnir yajati bhovitah /
Agnitvam praptavan tena tejorupa-samanvitam //

Tamra Linga sadakala bhaktya devo Divakarah /
Archanena tu sampraptam tena Suryatvam uttanam //
Muktaphalamayam Lingam Somah pujayate sada /
Tena Samo' pi sampraptah Somatvam satatojjvalam //
Pravalakamayam Lingam yajanta Panagottamah /
Tena Nagastu bhogadhya prayata paramam padam //
Krishnayasamayam Lingam pujayantyasurottamah /
Rakshasas cha mahatmano tena te' mitavikramat //
Trapushimayam Lingam Pisacha .....ntiva /
Tena ridhivalopeta prayata paramam padam //
Trailohakam sada Lingam yajante Guhyakadayah /
Tena bhogavalopeta samprayantisvaram padam //
Da (?) jalohamayam Lingam yajante Matarah sada/
Matritvam praptam tah sarvah prayata param padam //
Evandevah sagandharvah sa-Yakhsoragorakshasah /
Pujayanti sada kalam Isanesvara-nayakam //
Sarvalohamayam Lingam sarvalinge pratishthitam /
Tasmat sarvarchayel-Lingam yadichchet siddhimatmnah //
Linga nityam Mahadevah sakshadeva vyavasthitah /
Anugrahaya lokanam tasman nityam prapujayet //

.....

.....

Sivadharma (R.A.S.B. Manuscript No. G. 4077): Chap.III

Verses 1 -34.

R E F E R E N C E S

Chapter VII

(1) Cf. Lalitavistara, ed. and transl. by R.L. Mitra.

(2) Rao, G., Elements of Hindu Iconography, Vol.II pp. 105 ff.

(3) Ibid, pp. 306 ff; cf. Mahadeva Sastri, A., The Vendanta Doctrine of Sri Sankaracharya, 1892, p. 154.

(4) Suklascaturvisano dvipo Mahendrasya Vajrapanitvam / Tryaglalatasamstham trtiyamapi locanamapi cihnam// Brhat Sambita, VII, 42.

Tiryaglalatagenaksma Kartavyasca Vibhusitah / Visnudharmottaram.

(5) Visvedevastatta Karyah Sakrarupadharah Surah / Tiryaglalatagenaksma ...../ Visnudharmottaram, LXXII.

A P P E N D I X "B"

A P P E N D I X "B"

The Mahāyāna Buddhism takes an important place in the illustrations in the manuscripts. In course of describing the illustrations, it has been noticed that many of the illustration are of the Dhyānī Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The colouring and the attributes of the divinities in the Mahāyāna pantheon have been described in various texts. It has been attempted in this Appendix to note some of the icons so described. Benoytosh Bhattacharya in his "Indian Buddhist Iconography, 1924" has described in detail, the divinities as they are set down in the texts. The following descriptions have been noted from him.

Dhyānī Buddhas:-

"The Buddhists are more scientific than the Hindus in the matter of determining the hierarchy of the gods in their pantheon. They believe that all gods emanated from one or the other of the Dhyānī Buddhas, popularly known as the Divine Buddhas, or four or five of them collectively; and their images of such emanations invariably bear the effigies of their sires on their head, crown or on the aureole behind them".

"The Dhyānī Buddhas are peculiar kinds of Buddhas who are not required to pass through the stage of a Bodhisattva; they were never anything less than a Buddha. They are always engaged in peaceful meditation, and they voluntarily restrain themselves from the act of creation. To create is the duty of their emanations, the Bodhisattvas".

"The Dhyānī Buddhas are five in number to which a sixth, Vajrasattva is sometimes added. Though some of them were known before A.D. 700 yet the idea of the full five seems to have developed in the first half of the eighth sentury during the time of Indrabhūti, the king of Uddiyana. That the five Dhyānī Buddhas might have owed their origin to the theory of the eternity of the five senses, seems to be borne out by a passage in the Cittavisudhiprakāsana of Āryadeva. But it may also be possible that the five mudrās, which Buddha Śākyasiṁha made sacred by using on memorable occasions, and which were constantly realised in the Buddhistic figures of the different schools of art - gave rise to the five Dhyānī Buddhas (Plate VI ed.). Advayavajra who flourished in the 11th century has written in one of his works of the five Skandhas (elements) or rather, that they were the embodiments of the Skandhas, which were held by Lord Buddha to be the constituents of a

being fused together by action. Vajrasattva (the word 'Vajra' means 'Śūnya' or void and 'Sattva' means 'essence' and so Vajrasattva is a god whose essence is Śūnya or Void), the sixth Dhyānī Buddha, who is generally regarded as the priest of the five Dhyānī Buddhas and is usually represented with the priestly symbols, the Vajra and the Ghanṭā, is an embodiment of the five Skandhas collectively and undoubtedly a later inorporation to the Pantheon of the Northern Buddhists".

"We have already said that the number of the Dhyānī Buddhas is five, to which a sixth is sometimes added. The order in which the Nepalese Buddhists worship them is as follows:-

1. Vairocana
2. Aksobhya
3. Ratnasambhava
4. Amitābha
5. Amoghasiddhi
6. Vajrasattva".

"Excepting the last, they appear all alike, but they vary according to the particular colour of their body and the different positions of their hands. The following verse in the Sādhana gives the colour and the mudrā of each:-

.....

.....

"The Jīnas (victorious ones) are Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, Amoghasiddhi and Aksobhya, whose colours resepctively are white, yellow, red, green and blue and who exhibit the Bodhyagri (Dharmachakra or teaching), Varada (Gift-bestowing), Dhyāna (meditative) Abhaya (assurance) and Bhūsparśa (Earth-touching) attitudes of hands resppctively".

"When represented, the Dhyānī Buddhas closely resemble each other. The difference, as has already been said, depends besides their colour, on the positions in which the hands are held, and on the Vāhanas which they ride. Every Dhyānī Buddha is always represented in a sitting posture on a full blwon double lotus. This attitude is known as the Dhyānāsana or the meditative attitude, in which he is required to sit cross-legged, the right foot crossing over and in front of the left which rests on the lap is sometimes empty but in most cases it carries a bowl. The head is bare, and hair curly, which radiates effulgence like a flame. The eyes are half closed in meditation. They are dressed in an under-garment reaching from the breast to the knees and tied by a scarf. The body is loosely covered by

the habit of a monk, leaving only the right arm bare".

"The Dhyānī Buddhas are generally represented on the four sides of a Stūpa, which is the symbol of the Buddhist Universe, facing the four cardinal points. Vairochana is the deity of the inner shrine and is, therefore, generally unrepresented; but exceptions to this rule are by no means rare. He is occasionally assigned a place between Ratnasambhava and Aksobhya. Independent shrines are, also, dedicated to each of these Buddhas.

1. Amitābha

Colour - Red Mudrā - Samadhi

Crest - Lotus Vāhana - A pair of peacosks.

2. Aksobhya

Colour - Blue Mudrā - Bhūsparśa

Crest - Vajra Vāhana - A pair of elephants

3. Vairochana

Colour - White Mudrā - Dharmachakra

Crest - Cakra Vāhana - A pair of dragons

4. Amoghasiddhi

Colour - Green Mudrā - Abhaya

Crest - Viśvavajra Vāhana - A pair of Garudas

5. Ratnasambhava

Colour - Yellow Mudrā - Varada

Crest - Jewels Vāhana - A pair of lions

6. Vajrasattva

Āsana - Vajraparyaṅka Symbols - Vajra and Ghaṇṭā

TABULAR STATEMENT SHOWING THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE FIVE DHYĀNĪ BUDDHAS

Dhyānī Buddha	Colour	Mudrā	Crest	Vāhana	Skanda	Position	Vījamantra	Season	Rasa	Varga
1.Vairocana	White	Dharma-chakra	Discus	Dragons	Rūpa	Centre	Om	Hemanta	Madhura	Kā
2.Ratnasambhava	Yellow	Varada	Jewel	Lions	Vedanā	South	Tram	Vasanta	Labana	Ta
3.Amitābha	Red	Samādhi	Lotus	Peacocks	Samjña	West	Hrih	Grīsma	Amla	Ta
4.Amoghasiddhi	Green	Abhaya	Viśva-vajra	Garudas	Samskāra	North	Kham	Varsā	Tikta	Pa
5.Aksobhya	Blue	Bhūspa-rśa	Vajra	Elephants	Vijñāna	East	Hum	Śiśira	Katu	Ca

Bodhisattvas:-

"The word 'Bodhisattva' in earlier times was synonymous with Saṅgha or the Holy Order and every Buddhist of the Mahāyāna faith was entitled to be called a Bodhisattva. In the Gandhara school of sculpture we meet with innumerable Bodhisattva images, both standing and sitting, and we venture to think that these images represented the more influential ones of the Holy Order. In Hiuen Tsang's time the great savants only of the Mahāyāna faith went by the name of Bodhisattva. This is true at least in the case of men like Nāgārjuna, Aśvaghoṣa, Maitreyanātha, Āryadeva and the like. The Buddhist scriptures prescribe certain extraordinary qualities and characteristics for the Bodhisattva. The duty of the divine Bodhisattvas, however, is to do the duties of a mortal Buddha during the period between the disappearance of the Buddha and the coming of the next. Thus Gautama Buddha has disappeared and at least 4000 years after his disappearance Maitreya Buddha who is now in the Tusita Heaven would descend to earth. During the interval Padmapāni Bodhisattva or Avalokiteśvara is doing the duties of a Mortal Buddha and thus he will continue so long as the Bhadrakalpa or the cycle of Amitabha continues".

"The Divine Bodhisattvas are also five in number to which a sixth is likewise added. They affiliate themselves to one or the other of the Dhyānī Buddhas and their respective Buddhaśaktis. They are:-

1. Sāmantabhadra.
2. Vajrapāni
3. Ratnapāni
4. Padmapāni
5. Viśvapāni
6. Gaṇṭapāni

"They are sometimes represented as standing erect and sometimes in different sitting attitudes each on a full-blown lotus and usually as holding in each hand a long stem of the same plant on which is placed the crest of the spiritual father of each. Each is covered by a robe and the upper part is covered by a scarf. The hair is cut short and on the head is a jewelled tiara which bears in the centre the effigy of that Buddha to whom the Bodhisattva owes its existence. In order to explain more clearly the relation between the Bodhisattvas, their Buddhaśaktis and Dhyānī Buddhas, a tabular statement is given below."

However, there is urgent need for a resurvey of this pantheon as actually portrayed in sculpture in the Western Indian Cave Temples. It is here that the prototypes of the pantheon must be sought:-

Dhyāni Buddha	Divine Buddhaśaktis	Divine Bodhisattva.
Vairocana	Vajradhatviśvari	Sāmantabhadra
Aksobhya	Locana	Vajrapāni
Ratnasambhava	Māmaki	Ratnapāni
Amitābha	Pandara	Padmapāni
Amoghasiddhi	Āryatārā	Viśvapāni
Vajrasattva	Vajrasattvatmika	Ghaṇṭapāni

G L O S S A R Y

GLOSSARY

Abhidhamma (Abhidharma)	-	Buddhist philosophy.
Abhaya-mudrā	-	The gesture of assurance symbolised by a hand held slightly elevated with the palm facing outwards and the fingers extended upwards.
Akshamālā	-	The string of beads; rosary. The beads consist of a kind of dried fruit called as Rudrāksa.
Ālidha	-	An attitude of standing in which the right knee is thrown to front and the leg retracted and the left leg is firmly planted in a slanting position. An attitude, reverse of this, is known as pratyālidha.
Ananta	-	Snake King.
Añjali-mudrā	-	The gesture of adoration symbolised by the two hands, held to front, and clasped palm to palm.

Ankuśa	-	Elephant goad. When such goad is surmounted by a Vajra it is known as Vajrāṅkuśa.
Ardhaparyaṅka	-	An attitude of sitting in which one of the legs is gathered up and bent on the seat in the usual position of the Buddha and the other raised up with the soles planted on the seat. Also called Mahārājalīlā.
Āsana	-	Literally a seat; technically an attitude connected with the seated pose.
Aśoka	-	A tree with red blossoms (Jonesia Aśoka), sacred in India from time immemorial.
Bhanga	-	A bend of the body.
Bhikshu	-	A monk.
Bhūmisparśa-mudrā (Bhūsparśa-mudrā)	-	The gesture of touching the earth associated with the Buddha's conquest over Māra and subsequent enlightenment.

It is symbolised by the right hand touching the seat with the palm inward and fingers outstretched and the left placed on the crossed soles of the feet with the palm upwards.

Bodhi - The supreme wisdom attained by the Buddha under the Bodhi tree at Bodhgaya. Also known as Sambodhi.

Chaitya - The Buddhist sanctuary, usually the votive stūpa. It is sometimes found as square, and sometimes as round, with spires or steps in the Capital.

Chakra - Discus; wheel. It is also very well-known in Hinduism and is connected with Vishṇu and Krishna.

Dhanush - Bow.

Dharmachakra-mudrā (Dharmamudrā or Dharmachakra-pravartana-mudrā) - The gesture associated with the preaching of the first sermon by the Buddha at Sarnath. It is symbolised by the two hands held near the breast, the left with the palm turned inward and the middle finger and thumb joined, and the right with the palm outward and the

thumb and index finger united. It is a combination of Jñāna and Vyākhyāna-mudrās, the former symbolised in the left hand and the latter in the right.

Dhoti - Cloth worn by men in India.

Dhvaja - Banner

Dhyāna - Meditation.

Dhyānāsana - The attitude of meditation. See Vajraparayaṁkāsana or Vajrāsana.

Dhyāna-mudrā - The gesture of meditation symbolised by the two hands joined one above the other, on the crossed soles of the feet with fingers stretched and palms upwards.

Dhyānī-Buddha - Buddha of the celestial region, always engaged in peaceful meditation, who, never anything less than a Buddha, is not required to pass through the stage of a Bodhisattva. There are five Dhyānī Buddhas, Vairochana, Akshobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha and Amoghasiddhi, and to this number a sixth, Vajrasattva, is sometimes added. The Dhyānī Buddhas

voluntarily restrain themselves from the act of creation which is the duty of their spiritual emanations, the Dhyānī Bodhisattvas.

Dvārapāli - A female guardian of the gateway.

Gadā - Mace

Ghaṇṭā - Bell

Ghaṭa - Vessel; pot.

Haṁsa - Haṁsa is commonly translated as Swan in English but is actually the Goose. But the translation will be inadequate to convey the real meaning.

Hīnayāna - Literally "lesser vehicle". The simple way of salvation, so called because of its restricted outlook emphasising personal salvation.

Jaṭāmukuṭa - The matted locks tied up above the head in a conical shape so as to resemble a crown.

Jñāna-mudrā - The gesture associated with knowledge, symbolised in one hand held near the breast with the palm inward and the thumb and middle finger joined together.

Kalasa - Water jar.

Kapāla - Skull cup;- may be i) severed head of a man or ii) the cup made of a skull or iii) a bowl.

Kartri	-	Dagger
Khaḍga	-	Sword
Kīrttimukha	-	Literally, the 'face of glory'. The grinning lion face shown at the top of the aureole.
Kuṇḍala	-	Ear-ring.
Lalitāsana	-	The seated attitude in which one of the legs (usually the left one) is gathered up on the seat and bent in the usual position of the Buddha and the other dangles down.
Mahāprātihārya	-	The Great Miracle performed by the Buddha at Sravasti to confound the heretical Tīrthikas.
Mahāparinirvāna	-	Literally, the Great Decease of the Buddha at Kusinagara. Also Nirvāna, Parinirvāna.
Mahārāja-līlā	-	The seated attitude in which one of the legs (generally the left one) rests on the seat while the other is raised up, the knee supporting the outstretched arm placed on it.

Mahāyāna	-	Literally, the "Great Vehicle", so called because of its liberal outlook which stresses on and emphasises the salvation of all, not of an individual only, through the cultivation of the pāramitās.
Mantrayana	-	The way of salvation based on incantation of mantras or mystic syllables.
Māra	-	Satan of the Buddhist legend.
Mayūra-pichchha	-	Peacock's tail.
Mukuṭa	-	Crown.
Mudrā	-	A gesture of the hand indicating a particular idea or an attitude of the mind.
Nāgakeśara	-	A flowering tree (Mesua Roxburghii) much celebrated in Indian literature and mythology. Also the flower of the tree.
Namaskāra-mudrā	-	The gesture of homage, symbolised by the hand slightly bent and raised above in a line with the shoulders, with the palm turned upwards and fingers stretched or slightly bent.

Nārada	-	The quarrelsome sage in Hindu mythology.
Nirvāna	-	See Mahāparinirvāna.
Padma	-	A lotus
Pāramitās	-	Perfect virtues according to the Buddhist canon. They are ten in number - dāna (alms-giving), śīla (morality), nekkhama (renunciation of the world), panna (wisdom), vīriya (energy), khānti (forbearance), sachcha (truthfulness), adhitthāna (resolution), metta or metti (charity) and upekkhā (indifference or equanimity). Slightly different lists are given in different texts. Each of the ten is again divided into three degrees.
Paraśu	-	A battle-axe.
Parinirvāna	-	See Mahāparinirvāna.
Pāśa	-	A noose.
Pātra	-	A begging bowl
Plaksha	-	Indian fig tree (Ficus Infectoria)
Prabhā	-	Effulgence
Prabhā-mandala	-	The circle of effulgence; the aureole.

Prakriti	-	In Sāmkhya, Nature (as distinguished from purusha), the original source of the material world consisting of the three essential gunas or qualities, sattva, rajas, and tamas. Parā Prakriti - The highest Prakriti.
Pralamaba-pada	-	The seated attitude in which the two feet hang down below the seat.
Prātihārya	-	A miracle which, according to the legend, the Buddha is said to have performed.
Prātihārya-mandapa	-	The pavilions specially designed for the performance of a miracle.
Pratyālidha	-	An attitude of standing, just the reverse of ālidha.
Purita	-	A triangular decorative motif used as ornamentation.
Ratna	-	Jewel
Ratna-ghaṭa	-	Jewelled pot or pot of jewels.
Ratnadvaja	-	Jewelled banner.
Ratnamukuṭa	-	Jewelled crown.
Sādhana	-	The procedure of invocation of the deities in worship.

Sādhana-mālā	-	Collection of Sadhanas.
Śakti	-	Female energy of a god.
Śakti	-	Spear
Śāla	-	The Indian Śāl-tree (Vatica Robusta)
Samadhi-mudrā	-	See Dhyāna-mudrā.
Sambodhi	-	See Bodhi.
Saṅkha	-	A conch-shell.
Śara	-	An arrow
Sarpa	-	A snake.
Stūpa	-	The tumulus raised for enshrinement of relics.
Sukhāsana	-	A seated attitude of ease and comfort, same as Mahārāja-līlā (See Mahārāja-līlā).
Tantrayāna	-	The worry of salvation through esoteric practices in the Tantras.
Tarjani-mudrā	-	The gesture of menace symbolised by the upraised hand with the index finger (tarjani) stretched and other fingers locked up in the fist.
Tarjani-pāśa	-	Pāśa or noose attached to the index finger of Tarjani-mudrā.
Trayastrimsa heaven	-	The heaven of the thirty-three gods to which the Buddha went up, after the great miracle at Sravasti,

to preach the Abhidhamma.

Tribhanga - A standing attitude showing three bends.

Tridandī - A staff with three prong-like projections.

Trinetra - Three eyes; having three eyes.

Tushita - A class of celestial beings; also used with reference to the celestial sphere where they reside. Maitreya, the future Buddha, is said to be now residing in the Tushita heaven, whence he is expected to descend down to the earth when the time of his appearance comes.

Upachāra - Offerings necessary in worship, such as, dhūpa (incense), dīpa (lamp), gandha (Sandal paste) and pushpa (flower).

Uttarīya - Scarf

Vajra - Thunderbolt. In Buddhist tantras the word generally designates sūnya or "void" which can neither be cut, nor burnt, nor destroyed, but which destroys all evils.

Vajraparyaṅka	-	The attitude of grim resolve, symbolised in the seated posture with crossed-legs, the soles of the feet being turned upwards. Also shortened to Vairāsana.
Vajrāsana	-	The diamond seat on which the Buddha attained the supreme wisdom. Also used with reference to the place where the elightenment took place.
Vajra-pāśa	-	Noose with Vajra attached at the end.
Vajra-tarjani	-	Vajra attached to the fist of the hand shown in tarjani-mudrā.
Vajrayāna	-	A form of Tantrayāna with emphasis on the cult of the Vajra.
Varada-mudrā	-	The gesture of conferring a boon symbolised by one hand (usually the right) held down with the palm outward and fingers all stretched.
Varada-Vajra	-	The hand in Varada with Vajra on palm.
Vidyādhara	-	A kind of supernatural being.
Viśva-Vajra	-	Two thunderbolts placed cross-wise; double thunderbolt.

Vitarka-mudrā	-	The gesture of discussion symbolised by the right hand held to breast with palm outward and fingers stretched ,except one of the forefingers and thumb which are joined to form a ring.
Vyākhyāna-mudrā	-	The gesture of exposition suggested in the same way as Vitarka-mudrā (See Vitarka-mudrā).
Yamaka-prātihārya	-	Twin miracles: the miracles of fire and water emanating from the body of the Buddha. (See also Thomas, E.J. "The Life of Buddha as Legend and History", p. 98, foot note).
Yogīn	-	A follower of the Yoga system; a saint given to meditation and contemplation.

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Rupam

L I S T O F P L A T E S

R. A. S. B. MANUSCRIPT NO. G. 4713

(Plates I to V)

1. First cover.
2. Last folio.
3. Nativity of the Buddha.
4. Enlightenment scene.
51 First Sermon at Sarnath.
6. Great Miracle at Sravasti.
7. Descent from the Trayastrimsa Heaven at Sankasya.
8. Taming of the mad elephant at Rajagriha.
9. Offering of the monkeys at Vaisali.
10. Mahāparinirvāna at Kusinagara.
11. Dhyāni Buddha Amitābha.
12. Prajñāpāramitā.
13. Mañjuvara.
14. Maitreya or Mañjuśrī.

Bodleian Manuscript No. Sansk. a. 7

(Plates VI to XI)

15. First cover
16. Second cover.
17. Three illustrated folios.
18. Three illustrated folios.
19. Nativity at Kapilavastu.
20. Enlightenment at Bodhgaya.
21. First Sermon at Sarnath.
22. Great Miracle at Sravasti.
23. Taming of the mad elephant at Rajagriha.
24. Descent from the Trayastrimsa Heaven at Sankasya.
25. Offering of the monkeys at Vaisali.
26. Mahāparinirvāna at Kusinagara.
27. Buddha in preaching pose.
28. Buddha and Indra.
29. Buddha among his disciples.
30. Maitreya.
31. Vajrasattva.
32. Vajrapāni.
33. Mahāśrī Tārā.
34. Mahāśrī Tārā (from Ms. A. 15, R.A.S.B.)
35. Unidentified god, perhaps a form of the god Mañjuśrī.
36. Unidentified god.
37. Unidentified goddess, perhaps a form of Tārā.

Asutosh Museum Manuscript No.T.1055

(Plates XII to XIV)

38. Siddhaikavira
39. Buddha in preaching pose.
40. Mahāsahasrapramardani.
41. Mahāmāyūrī.
42. Mahāsītavatī.
43. Mahāpratisarā.
44. Mahāmantranusārini.
45. Maitreya with two other divinities.
46. Prajñāpāramitā.
47. Sugatisandarsana Lokeśvara.

Asutosh Museum Manuscript No.T.140

(Plates XV to XVI)

48. Mahāpratisarā
49. Mahāsahasrapramardani.
50. Mahāmāyūrī.
51. Mahāsītavatī.
52. Mahāmantranusārini.

Stray Folio with Asutosh Museum Ms. No. T. 140

53. Nativity at Kapilavastu.

R.A.S.B. Manuscript No. G. 4077

(Plates XVII to XVIII)

54-57. First cover in four sections.
58-60. Second cover in three sections.

Saraswati Collection, Calcutta

(Plates XIX to XX)

Illuminated Covers

A1. Nativity of the Buddha.
A2. First Sermon at Sarnath

A3. Great Enlightenment at Bodhgaya.

B1. Tārā
B2. Prajñāpāramitā.
B3. Vasudhārā.

PLATE - I

R.A.S.B. MANUSCRIPT
NO. G. 4113

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PLATE - II

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PLATE - III

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PLATE - IV

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PLATE - V

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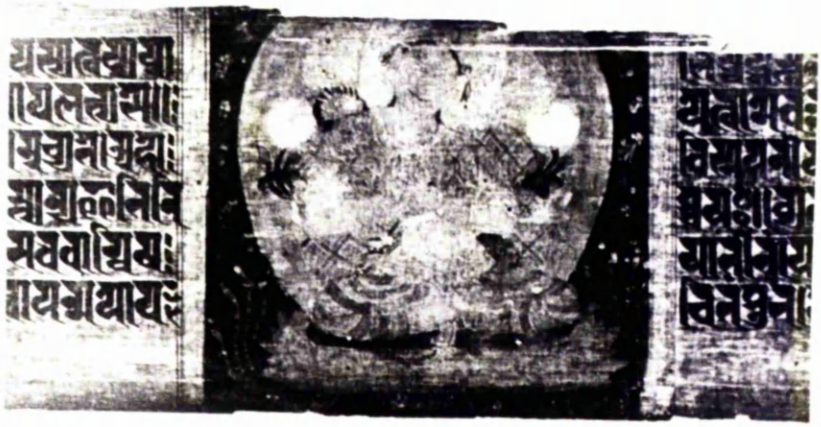

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PLATE - VI

BODLEIAN MANUSCRIPT
NO. SANSK. a. 7.

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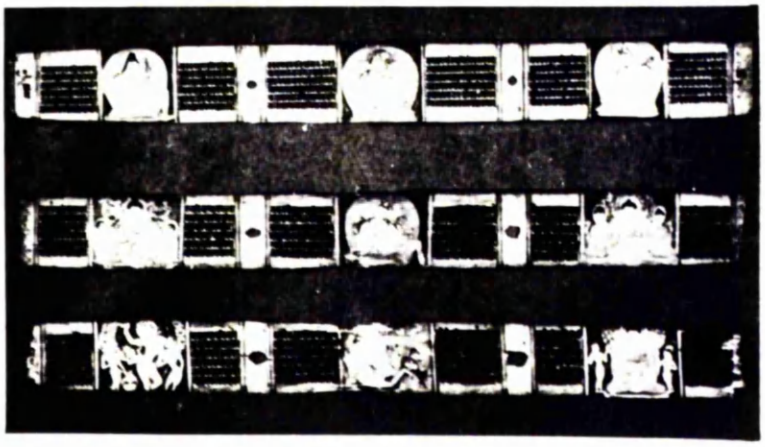

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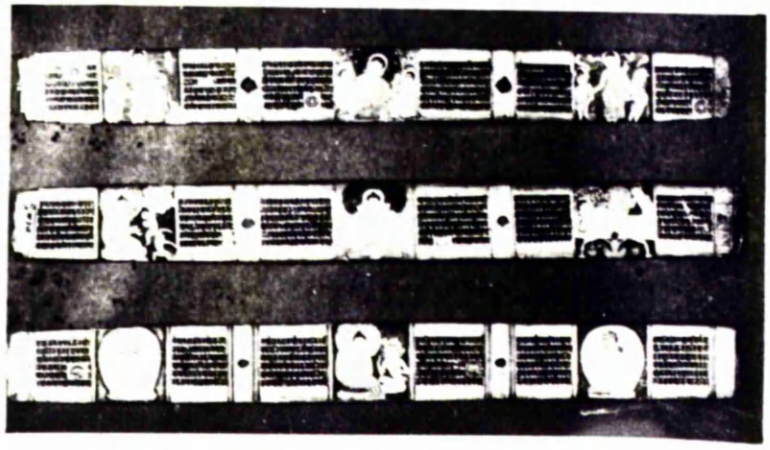

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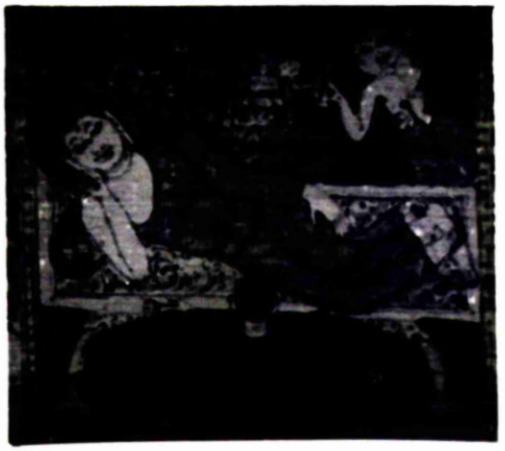

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PLATE – X

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PLATE - XII

ASUTOSH MUSEUM
MANUSCRIPT
NO. 1055

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PLATE - XIV

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PLATE - XV

ASUTOSH MUSEUM
MANUSCRIPT
NO. T. 140

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R. A. S. B. MANUSCRIPT
NO. G. 4077

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PLATE – XIX

SARASWATI COLLECTION
CALCUTTA

A.1

A.2

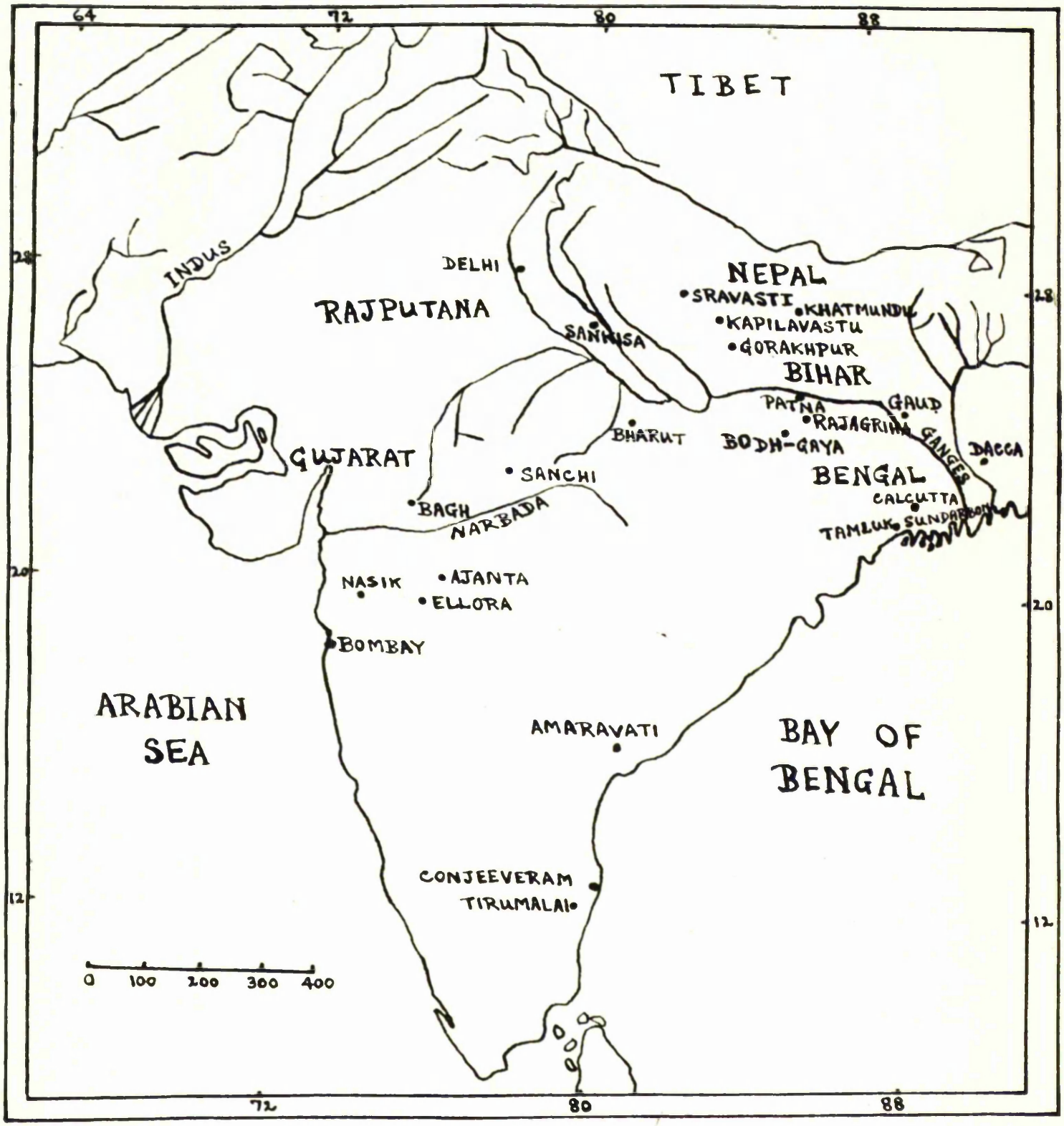
A.3

PLATE — XX

B.1

B.2

B.3


64
72
80
88
TIBET
INDUS
DELHI
RAJPUTANA
NEPAL
SRAVASTI
KHATMUNDU
KAPILAVASTU
GORAKHPUR
SANKISA
BIHAR
PATNA
GAUD
RAJAGRIHA
BODH-GAYA
BHARUT
GANGES
DACCA
GUJARAT
SANCHI
BENGAL
CALCUTTA
BAGH
NARBADA
TAMLUK
SUNDARBANS
28
20
12
NASIK
AJANTA
ELLORA
BOMBAY
ARABIAN SEA
AMARAVATI
BAY OF BENGAL
CONJEEVERAM
TIRUMALAI
0
100
200
300
400