

CHAPTER VI

MAITREYA ICONOGRAPHY UNDER TANTRAYĀNA BUDDHISM

In Eastern India especially in Bihar, Bengal and Orissa, a great change in the Buddhist art, both in style and iconography took place with the coming of new Buddhist philosophy which has been variously called as Tantrayāna, Vajrayāna or Yogacāra(1). It was under the Pala dynasty that this new art flourished for nearly four centuries from the mid eighth century to the twelfth century A.D.(2). The regions have yielded not only the Buddha and different Bodhisattva images but also protective male and female divinities. The Buddha and the limited Bodhisattvas of Mahāyāna period were developed into an elaborate pantheon comprising a hierarchy of Ādi Buddha, the Dhyāni Buddhas and a host of Divine Bodhisattvas frequently accompanied by female consorts or emanations(3).

Mahāyāna and Tantrayāna differ ^{from} each other in their theological orientation; the first one being a system of transcendental philosophy, while the second an empirical system. In its cultic development, Tantrayāna took shape within the context of esoteric yoga practices, hymns, magical rites and rituals predominated which were believed to have capabilities of producing supernatural effects. It shared a common heritage with Brāhmanical Tāntric tradition

as well.

The exposition of Tantrayāna philosophy is found in two literary works, Guhyasamāja Tantra and Ārya Mañjusrīmūlakalpa(4). The former must be a pre-eighth century work which deals with yoga, anuttara yoga, and concerns itself incidentally with maṇḍalas. For the first time it gives systematized theory of the five Dhyāni Buddhas each of whom is assigned a female deity. The Ārya-Mañjusrīmūlakalpa may date back to the eighth century A.D.(5). It gives an exposition of endless mudrās, maṇḍalas, mantrās, kriyās (rites) and charges (duties of an officiation in worship)(6). It also gives directions for drawing the pictures of different Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Tāra and other goddesses. The process of deification might have developed slowly since the end of the Gupta period and reached to the fullfledged form by the time when the Palas gained power in Eastern India around the mid eighth century A.D.

Maitreya the only Mānushi Buddha is mentioned several times in the Nispannayogāvalī. Two among three sets of sixteen Bodhisattvas, Mañjuvajra maṇḍala and Durgatiparisodhana maṇḍala are headed by Maitreya while the other one is headed by Sāmantabhadra(7). The Bodhisattva, as the leading figures in the groups, however do not seem to have any significant meaning but share equal right with other members of the group(8).

In the Durgatiparisodhana maṇḍalam, Maitreya is placed

in the eastern direction, his colour is yellow, in his right hand he holds a nāgakesara flower and with his left hand he holds a mendicant's bowl(9). In the Akṣobhya Maṇḍalam, Maitreya along with Kshitigarbha is located on the eastern circle, while the principal hand of Maitreya should hold the nāgakesara flower with its stem(10). In the Sādhanaṁālā, the colour of Maitreya is described as yellow and he displays the varada mudrā and holds nāgapushpa flower(11). In the Mañjuvajramaṇḍalam of Nishpannayogāvalī, Maitreya is located in the third circle on the east of the four cardinal directions, his colour is golden, he displays the dharmacakra pravartana mudrā with his two principal hands, the second right hand shows the varada mudrā, while the left hand holds a twig bearing the nāgakesara flower(12).

In the Maitreyasādhana section of the Sādhanaṁālā, Maitreya is described as having three faces, three eyes and four arms. He sits in the paryāṅka attitude on an animal (sattvaparyāṅkinam). His two hands make the Vyākhyāna mudrā. The other right hand shows the varada mudrā and the second left hand holds a full bloom nāgakesara flower with its branches (aparadakṣiṇa vāmabhujābhyām varadapuṣpita-nāgakesaramanjaridharam) and he wears various ornaments (nānālaṅkāradharam) (13).

What is interesting is how far such sādhanas help us in understanding the iconography or iconology of Maitreya sculptures. According to the textual sādhanas, the characteristics of Maitreya are:

- a) Maitreya is placed in the east of the four cardinal directions.
- b) He has yellow complexion like that of gold.
- c) His chief cognizance is the nāgakesara flower held in either side of the hand.
- d) The other hand displays either varada mudrā or holds a mendicant's bowl.
- e) He is also shown with four hands; two in dharmacakra pravartana mudrā or vyākhyāyana mudrā, while other two are in the same manner as the two handed Maitreya; varada mudrā in the right, nāgakesara flower in the left.
- f) Seated in paryāṅkāśana, he can have three faces, and ride on an animal.
- g) He is adorned with ornamentations.

What is interesting here is that there is no mention of the early attribute of Maitreya image, such as japa mālā, kamaṇḍalu and even of the emblematic stūpa and jaṭāmukuta, the characteristics of Maitreya which are observed in the earlier sculptural representations. Instead, the nāgakesara flower and varada mudrā appear constantly in the descriptions of Maitreya.

The most precise description which goes well with sculptural representations of Maitreya may be the sādhana that describes him as an attendant of Vajrāsana. According to the Sādhanamālā, when Maitreya appears as an attendant, his colour is white and he carries chauri in hand. The sādhana continues the description thus, "to the right of the

God (Vajrāsana) is Maitreya Bodhisattva who is white, two armed and wears the jaṭāmukuta and carries the chowrie-Jewel in the right hand and the nāgakesara flower in the left"(14). It is noteworthy that the above mentioned descriptions of Maitreya in the Sādhana-mālā except for the color of the deity, very closely relate to the Maitreya images of the later phase of Ellora.

In the present chapter, we will discuss the iconographical development that occurred in Eastern India under the Tantrayāna Buddhism and seek to clarify the relationship between textual and sculptural tradition. The chapter is divided into four sections as follows:

1. Maitreya iconography in the early Tāntric period.
2. Maitreya iconography in the mature Tāntric period.
3. Iconography of Maitreya in Kashmir.
4. Later Maitreya iconography in South India.

VI-1. MAITREYA ICONOGRAPHY IN THE EARLY TANTRIC PERIOD

VI-1-A. EARLY PHASE OF NALANDA

There are a number of Tāntric sculptures at Nalanda, dating back at least a century before the beginning of the Pala period. The stucco-images on the Great Stūpa Site No. 3, show not only Buddha, Avalokiteśvara, Maitreya and Mañjushrī, deities of popular Mahāyāna religion, but also many figures of goddesses. Maitreya images at this site

closely follow the idiom of Gupta Sarnath. The impact of Gupta Sarnath on Maitreya images of early Nalanda school are as follows. Firstly, the iconography of Maitreya is characterized by the ascetic appearance with jaṭāmukuta, devoid of hair decoration and ornamentations. However, no image of Maitreya has been found here carrying kamaṇḍalu. Secondly, the style of the figuration retains slender body proportions and transparent type of garment of Gupta Sarnath school.

The standing image of Maitreya (fig. 264) on the Great temple at Nalanda is perhaps the one which is most closely related to Gupta Sarnath model. This image has the jaṭā hair arrangement combed up to form a top-knot while the lower part of the hair is drawn up to the shoulders. He wears only a dhoti and the upper half of the body is bare. The dhoti is reduced to minimum details and depicts only the edge of the hem which is indicated by a few lines. The broken right hand might have been placed near the chest with the palm turned inwards, the gesture we named as that of 'acceptance' in the fourth chapter(15). It is not possible to speculate whether the right hand held a japa mālā which was the most prominent attribute of Maitreya in Gupta Sarnath (see the figs. 145-147). The left hand does not hold the usual kamaṇḍalu but displays 'empty hand' which has been observed first in Gupta Sarnath (fig. 114). This so-called empty hand had become very popular in Western Deccan(16). Interestingly, the ornate type of Bodhisattva on

the right side of the Buddha seated in pralambapādāsana and dharmacakra pravartana mudrā (fig. 265) is seen with a japa mālā in his right hand which is held up to the chest level and the palm turned inwards, in between the thumb and the index fingers is a mālā hanging down. In another triad, a similar mālā holding Bodhisattva is seen on the left side of the seated Bodhisattva in padmāsana and bhūmisparsha mudrā (fig. 266). His counter Bodhisattva is Avalokiteśvara for he holds a lotus in the left hand. The varada mudrā displayed by his right hand is another notable feature of Avalokiteśvara images at Nalanda. Such a pose is noticed neither at Gupta Sarnath nor in the Western Deccan. According to the Western Deccan tradition, the japa mālā has been used by two ornate Bodhisattvas, Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara, whereas at Gupta Sarnath, the Bodhisattva holding a japa mālā is none other than Maitreya. However the japa mālā holding Bodhisattva here is also shown with ornamentations, whereas the Maitreya images of Gupta Sarnath display the ascetic nature.

A clue for the identification of the above image may be found in another Bodhisattva (fig. 267). The image has all the iconographical characteristics of the Maitreya images seen in the fig. 264. Moreover, the stūpa in front of the jaṭāmukuta here proves the identity of the image as Maitreya. What is more important in this image is the presence of armlets, a part of the bodhisattva ornamentations. This leads us to the conclusion that

Maitreya images at Nalanda also carry the bodhisattva ornamentation and might have also carried a japa mālā in the right hand as in the fig. 265. The following are the iconographical features of Maitreya images in comparison with other Bodhisattvas at Nalanda:

- a) The right hand is in the so-called 'acceptance' gesture, probably with japa mālā in it, while in the case of other Bodhisattvas the right hands are in varada mudrā.
- b) The left hand can be seen to be in the mode of so-called 'empty hand' without any attribute, whereas Avalokiteśvara and Mañjushrī hold a stem of lotus flower.
- c) Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara have jaṭāmukuta hair arrangement, while Mañjushrī and Vajrapāṇi have a sort of headgear.
- d) The ornamentations of Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara are simpler, whereas the necklace of Mañjushrī is elaborate with many decorative elements hanging from it.

According to the above classification the Bodhisattva (fig. 267) who is paired with the Maitreya image of the fig. 264 can be recognized as Avalokiteśvara, since the image has similar ornamentation as that of the Maitreya image and holds a stem of lotus. For the same reason the counterpart Bodhisattva of Maitreya in the fig. 265 can also be identified as Avalokiteśvara. Similarly the Bodhisattva pairing with Maitreya in the fig. 266 and the single figure in fig. 269 can be safely identified as Avalokiteśvara, although the head's are totally lost. In the fig. 269, the

right hand is in varada mudrā and holds a stem of lotus flower in the left. His necklace is quite simple.

Maitreya is also paired with Mañjuśrī in the Buddhist triad. Maitreya (fig. 270) is seen on the right side of the Buddha who is seated in pralambapādāsana with dharmacakra pravartana mudrā. Although his head is badly damaged the remaining features are identical to that of Maitreya images described so far. His counter Bodhisattva is Mañjuśrī (fig. 271) with an elaborate necklace, varada mudrā in the right hand and the stem of a flower in the left.

The study of Maitreya iconography of the pre-Pāla Nalanda school reveals that they are somewhat similar to the early phase of Ellora in which Maitreya image appears in ornate form though devoid of nāgakesara flower (see the figs. 232-236). However, the iconographical scheme found at Nalanda is different from that of the Western Deccan; where the Avalokiteśvara images appear in ornate form, whereas in the Western Deccan such forms only appear at the last phase of its development, around the middle of the eighth century A.D., during which Maitreya consistently carries fully developed nāgakesara buds. On the contrary, the impact of the Gupta period Sarnath remains strongly at Nalanda while some elements have been discarded (such as chauri) and some elements get newly introduced (such as ornamentations). The iconography of Avalokiteśvara remains almost the same at Nalanda as the early images from Gupta period Sarnath. As in the figs. 265, 266, and 268, Avalokiteśvara images at

Nalanda do become ornate and carry padma in hand. To sum up, the stucco works of Nalanda stand closely parallel to the Gupta period Sarnath, although the works are much advanced in both stylistic and ichnographical features.

We, however, have no definite evidence for dating the spread of Tantrayāna Buddhism at this site. It has been generally agreed that the stucco works date between the sixth and eighth century A.D. although only few reasons have been explained to support any of the dates suggested(17). The date of the stucco works is particularly important for the origin of Tāntric deities, since these works are considered to be the earliest group having the Tantric elements in the Eastern India.

There have been two general theories regarding the origin of Tantric deities; one proposes the Western Deccan origin and the other to Eastern India. M.K. Dhavalikar has sought to prove that the Western Deccan is the place of the origin of Tārā, which is considered as one of the firm indications of Tantric influence(18). D.C. Sircar, on the other hand, is in favour of the Eastern Indian origin and quote textual references in this regard(19). Following him, M. Ghosh considers the stucco works of Nalanda as the concrete evidence for the Eastern Indian origin of Tāntric pantheon and ascribes a sixth century A.D. date for these works(20).

The basic concept behind such argumentation is that the Tantric artistic tradition began at one place and got spread

over to the other places. Such an assumption is objectionable since that the ichnographical programme followed at these two regions, Nalanda and Western Deccan differs considerably. We have already discussed the differences in the case of Maitreya iconography, which can also be observed in the cases of Avalikotesvara and Mañjushrī. The Avalokitesvara images of Western Deccan are characterized by the ascetic features and it is only in the late phase of Buddhist art of Ellora that he appears with ornamentations with much elaborate style than at Nalanda. In the case of Mañjushrī too, the differences between these two centers are obvious. The Mañjushrī images are rare and do not have definite iconographical features in the Western Deccan during seventh century A.D. Even in the last phase of Buddhist Ellora, Mañjushrī images often appear in conical headdress (see the figs. 243, 245 and 247), whereas in Nalanda the features are different.

The most likely date for the beginning of art activity under Tantric Buddhism at Nalanda may be early seventh century A.D. (21) contemporaneous with the early phase of Tantric Buddhist art in Western Deccan as suggested in an earlier context. Thus, the art traditions of Nalanda and the Western Deccan do not necessarily follow one after another, but have developed, almost simultaneously and independently from the early seventh century A.D. The probable sources of the new iconography might have been the common oral literary tradition.

VI-1-B. EARLY PHASE OF ORISSA

The region of present day Orissa(22) played a significant role in the development of Buddhism with her contribution towards Tantrayāna and the varied iconography that generated it. A large number of these sculpture, date from eighth to twelfth centuries A.D. and bear a strong affinity to Pala sculpture both in iconographical and stylistic features. Of iconographic interest in the present context are a number sculptures which show the assimilation of Gupta Sarnath features which probably belong to the early eighth century A.D. The significance of these early image group is that they carry the well established Tantric elements. For instance the japa mālā, the chief attribute of Maitreya at Gupta Sarnath and Nalanda schools, can be seen here replaced by the nāgakesara flower the chief cognizance of Maitreya under Tantrayana influence.

The characteristics of the Maitreya images of the earliest group of sculptures from Orissa are as followed;

- a) A plain nimbus which is a bit elongated vertically.
- b) The Jaṭāmukuta, arranged in the similar manner as the bow-knot type of the Maitreya images from Gandhara.
- c) Maitreya here does not bear the emblematic stupa, but a floral medallion in front of the jaṭāmukuta can be observed(23).
- d) Maitreya is adorned with common Bodhisattva ornamenta-

tions indistinct from that of other Bodhisattvas.

- e) His chief cognizance is the nāgakesara flower which is very similar to the actual flowers.
- f) When he is represented as an attendant he invariably carries a chouri in the right hand. This feature has not been found at Nalanda.

Perhaps, the earliest of Maitreya image in the above typology can be observed at Udayagiri(24). The brick stūpa here is adorned with the Buddhist triads at four sides; on the eastern side is a triad composed of Maitreya-Buddha-Avalokiteśvara (fig. 272). The Buddha is seated in padmāsana and his right hand displays bhūmisparśa mudrā. The Maitreya image, standing on the right side of the Buddha displays all the elements we have described above. The Avalokiteśvara image, standing on the other side, differs only in the attribute since he holds long stem of the lotus in the left hand. What is interesting here is the way how these two Bodhisattvas hold their respective chouris. Maitreya holds it downwards so as it touches the lotus pedestal, while Avalokiteśvara keeps it over the right shoulder so the chouri is hidden behind the head. Though different in exact details such unusual way of holding chouri has been noticed at Gupta Sarnath (figs. 145-147). Such similarity certainly suggests a close artistic connection between the Gupta Sarnath and this region.

Another important point here is to enquire whether the Buddha image in the above case represents the Śākyamuni

Buddha or Dhyāni Buddha, Akṣobhaya, who is believed to have been placed on the orb of the sun and whose symbolic gesture is considered to be bhūmisparśa mudrā. In the description of Bodhisattva Vajrāsana in the Sādhanaṁālā, the deity displays the "Bhūsparśa mudrā in his right hand while the left rests on the lap"(25). To the right of the God is Maitreya Bodhisattva with jaṭāmukuta and he carries chouri in the right and a stalk of nāgakesara flowers in the left. "Similarly to the left of the principal God is Lokeśvara of white complexion, carrying in his right hands chauri and the lotus in the left"(26). It is further stated that "These two gods should be meditated upon as looking towards the face of the (principal) god...."(27). Following the above descriptions it is almost certain that the Buddhist triad under consideration represents the Śākyamuni Buddha with the two most favourite Bodhisattvas, Maitreya and Avoalokiteśvara.

On the contrary, a strong possibility of it being a representation of Dhyāni Buddha Akṣobhya is indicated by the other three Buddhist triads placed on other three sides of the stūpa. The Buddhist triad (fig. 273) on the southern side has the central seated Buddha showing varada mudrā. The direction and the mudrā confirm its identity as the Dhyāni Buddha Ratnasambhava according to Tāntric tradition(28). The two Bodhisattva attendants may be Samantabhadra and Ākāśagarbha(29). On the western side is the Buddhist triad with the central Buddha seated in

padmāsana and dhyāna mudrā(fig. 274). This, Buddha can be Amitābha Buddha whose symbolic gesture is dhyāna mudrā. The Bodhisattva attendants may be Sarvanivāraṇaviṣkambin and Vajrapāṇi(29).

A problem arises in reading the above triads as representation of Dhyāni Bodhisattva when we look the triad on the northern side of the stūpa(fig. 275). Unexpectedly here the central figure is in the form of Bodhisattva and is flanked by two standing Bodhisattvas, the right side of which clearly reveals the iconographical characteristics of Bodhisattva Māñjusrī. The central figure, seated in padmasana and dhyāna mudrā, has jaṭāmukuṭa and long hair hanging down over the shoulders. He is, however, devoid of ornamentations. He is in a way a composite image of Buddha and Bodhisattva since he has the head of Bodhisattva and the body like that of the Buddha. No where, such an image has been found in Indian Buddhist art and the interpretation of the image demands a careful analysis.

According to the theory of Dhyāni Buddhas, the Northern side is dedicated to Amoghasiddhi Buddha whose symbolic mudrā is abhaya. However, the image here is neither of Buddha nor is shown in abhaya mudrā. Thus, the image cannot be taken as the Dhyāni Buddha Amoghasiddhi. The only possible interpretation of the image is that it represents the Mānushi Buddha Maitreya. This hypothesis is made on the basis of the fact that Maitreya is the corresponding Mānushi Buddha of the Dhyāni Buddha Amoghasiddhi according to

Tāntric tradition. The dhyāna mudrā might have been used here to emphasise Maitreya's state as an yet-to-be Buddha. The probable identification of the Bodhisattva attendants may be Mañjusrī and Kṣatigarba(31).

If the above reading is correct we can presume that the cult of Maitreya was at its height even after the beginning of Tantrayāna Buddhism in this region. It is hard to understand how the concept of Mānushi Buddha Maitreya could have replaced the position of the Dhyāni Buddha Amoghasiddhi. As proposed earlier, if the triad on the eastern side of the stūpa(fig. 272) represents the Śākyamuni Buddha rather than the Dhyāni Buddha Aksobhya, the four Buddha images around the Udayagiri stūpa can not be the just representations of Dhyāni Buddhas of four directions, but are combination of both the Mānushi and Dhyāni Buddhas. This kind combined iconographical innovations should be understood in terms of regional variations, which occurs frequently in the history of Indian art.

Ratnagiri, another center of Buddhist establishments in Orissa is located near by Udayagiri. This site has some sculptures that can be dated contemporary to the works from Udayagiri. The original Monastery-I is re-built, but on the basis of stylistic features of the architectural decoration and sculpture one can perceive that it was constructed during the early part of the eighth century A.D.

In the main shrine of Monastery-I is found a huge seated Buddha in bhūmisparśa mudrā, and two Bodhisattva

attendants, Avalokiteśvara(fig. 276) and Vajrapāṇi(fig. 277). There is a striking similarity between these images and that of Udayagiri in terms of stylistic features and even the quality of the stone is the same(32). The peculiar type of hair arrangement of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (fig. 276) is almost similar to that of the Bodhisattva attendants in the Buddha triad(fig. 272) of Udayagiri. The additional feature here is an emblematic image of Buddha Amitābha in front of the jaṭāmukuta. The way of varied manners of holding the chauri too is a typical characteristic feature of the early phase of this regions. The image of Vajrapāṇi of the fig. 277 may be compared with the Bodhisattva on the left side of the Dhyāni Buddha Amitābha(fig. 274); whom we have identified as Vajrapāṇi earlier. Unfortunately, the headgear is damaged but the half-bloom lotus and vajra are same as that of the fig. 277.

On both the lower sides of the door frame leading to the shrine is a group of figures, consisting door-keepers, Bodhisattvas, chauri-bearers, and nāgās. The Bodhisattva image on the right side jamb is Avalokiteśvara whereas the Bodhisattva on the left side seems to be of Maitreya as the nāgakesara flower is unmistakably present here(fig. 278). His over[^]all iconographical features are almost same as the Maitreya image, in the right side of the Dhyāni Buddha Akṣobhya (fig. 272) from Udayagiri. The Maitreya image on the door frame, however, displays the right hand in varada mudrā, instead of holding chauri, which is necessary only

when he attends upon the Buddha. Maitreya does not carry a stūpa as yet but a floral design is seen in front of the hair arrangement.

A seated image of Bodhisattva(fig. 279) found in the shrine of the main monastery at Ratnagiri attracts special attention in the study of Bodhisattva iconography. The image is seated in padmāsana with dhyāna mudrā. The image is characterized with jaṭāmukuṭa hair arrangement and Bodhisattva-ornamentation. He, however, does not hold any attribute, which is customarily seen in any Bodhisattva image. As a result the identification of the image allows no easy conclusion, although we can read it as not that of Avalokiteśvara, since he does not have a lotus in the hand. There are a few more images which are almost identical with the fig. 279. One of them is found in a near by village(fig. 280) and another from monastery no.4. Ratnagiri(fig. 281). The latter image has eight Bodhisattvas along with the main figure. Perhaps, the only clue for the identification of the above three images may come from the Maitreya image of the fig. 275. All of them do not have any attribute in hand but are shown in dhyāna mudrā and all of them have jaṭāmukuṭa hair arrangement. Despite the absence of the bodhisattva ornamentation, the Maitreya image(fig. 275) seems to demonstrate that, for Maitreya there is no need for any specific attribute and the dhyāna mudrā alone indicates his identity. Thus, the above three Bodhisattva images can possibly be the images of the

Bodhisattva Maitreya.

In the representation of Maitreya as a principal deity among eight Bodhisattvas, as seen in the fig. 281, one can interpret that Maitreya as a Future Buddha has been ascribed a status equal to the Buddha who is also represented with the same Eight Principle Bodhisattvas in certain example(fig. 282). There are a few sculptural steles from Orissa in which Buddha is composed as a principal figure among the eight Bodhisattvas who are represented as attendants around the main Buddha. The example(fig. 282) is found on the left side wall of the antechamber in Monastery I at Ratnagiri. Another stele(fig. 283) in the shrine of the vihāra at Udayagiri at first glance seems to have only six Bodhisattvas, three on each side of the Buddha, but it has total eight Bodhisattvas including the two Bodhisattvas below the lotus seat. In both the examples the Bodhisattva attendants undoubtedly are the Eight Principle Bodhisattvas, in which Maitreya is placed second from the top on the right side of the Buddha.

Representation of the Eight Principle Bodhisattvas in Cave nos, 11 and 12 at Ellora in the iconographical schema of maṇḍala (the figs. 239, 240 and 241) as well as in the three-dimensional manner in shrine(the figs. 242-247) has been analysed in the previous chapter. Of the same concept are the steles in the examples of the figs. 281, 182 and 183 which developed in the region of Orissa. Despite the difference in the arrangement, these steles have the

conceptual parallels in the later Buddhist sculptures at Ellora. In this case, the artistic connection between Orissa and the Western Deccan seems obvious. R.S. Gupte's suggestion that Tāntric Buddhism has travelled from Orissa to Ellora and his opinion that such a development took place during the end of the seventh century A.D.(33) seems to be plausible in the context of the above discussion.

As pointed out else where, the artistic influence from one region to the other needs to be analysed with more careful precision. It is a fact that through out the development of Buddhist art in India, almost every regions did have some connection in one way or the other with each other and at the same time also maintained the specific regional differences as well. Maitreya images at Orissa, for instance, do not yet have the emblematic stūpa which is already well established in the Western Deccan by this time when these images are carved. The way of holding the chauri, the hair arrangement and the type of the ornamentation too differ greatly between the above two regions.

VI-2. MAITREYA ICONOGRAPHY IN THE MATURE TĀNTRIC PHASE

Under the protection of the Pala kings, Buddhism prospered considerably and the Buddhist art produced during this period reveals more systematic Tāntric iconographic elements. Images of Dhyāni Buddhas have been arranged in a

more appropriate way according to the directions of the each Dhyāni Buddhas and have evolved their own specific symbolic mudrās. The role of the female deities becomes more prominent and gain a status of their own. The iconographical features of Bodhisattvas become more complex, but at the same time match with the descriptions found in sādhanaś. The hair arrangement, the emblem in their hair arrangements, and most importantly the attributes in their hands which are employed distinctly so as to specify the identity of each Bodhisattvas, inspite of a certain similarity in their bodily appearance are significant developments during this phase.

The iconographical features of Maitreya differ only slightly from that of the seventh and the early eighth century examples from Nalanda. These are as follows:

- a) The jaṭāmukuta of Maitreya becomes taller and elaborate.
- b) The stūpa appears invariably in front of the jaṭāmukuta and its shape becomes prominent having the essential characteristics seen in the three-dimensional stūpas of Pala period.
- c) The nāgakesara flower took definite shape and became a consistent attribute of Maitreya.
- d) His right hand displays varada mudrā when he is represented alone in standing pose.
- e) When represented in the Buddhist triad groups, he displays either abhaya mudrā or vitarka mudrā.

The above characteristics are observed through out the

Pala-Sena period in Bihar, Bengal, and Orissa, especially at Lalitgiri. Both stylistic and iconographical features become more or less stereotyped, and to trace changes that occurred with time and space become extremely difficult. Nevertheless, such changes are discernible and to overcome the problems, related to such a study the images will be analysed according to their placements and iconographical variations.

MAITREYA IN THE GROUP OF MĀNUSHI BUDDHAS:

In Tantric Buddhism, the seven Mānushi Buddhas like the Dhyāni Buddhas also are assigned with their respective Buddha-Prajñas(34) and Mānushi Bodhisattvas(35).

From Bihar two representations of Seven Manushi Buddhas along with Maitreya is known. Both of them are installed in the Indian Museum, Calcutta (figs. 284 and 285). In both the cases, each of the Seven Buddhas displays different mudrās, whereas in the earlier representations the Seven Past Buddhas are not been represented with specific mudrās. The fact that the corresponding images in both the above mentioned groups show identical mudrās and hence it can be presumed that by this time iconography has been standardised(36). Reading from the right side of the group, the first Buddha has the right hand in abhaya mudrā, the second one in varada mudrā, the third one in the so-called nāmaskāra mudrā, the fourth one in the so-called 'acceptance

gesture' the fifth one in dharmacakra pravartana mudrā, the sixth one in abhaya mudrā, the seventh one in bhūmisparśka mudrā, and the last, Maitreya in varada mudrā. The dharmacakra pravartana mudrā, held by the fifth one and the bhūmisparśka mudrā of the seventh one are not otherwise known to have been used in the standing images of Buddha.

Maitreya is represented at the left[†]end of the group in both the sculptures. In both the cases, Maitreya has a high jaṭāmukuta hair arrangement and a stūpa in front of it. He is adorned with ornamentation; his right hand displays varada mudrā, while the left holds a stalk of nāgakesara flower. The inscription in Chinese script at the lower part of the fig. 284 informs us the name of a monk, Thī-yi, who wishes all the people to enter the realm of Maitreya. The condition of the photo-reproduction of the inscription does not allow reading of all the contents, but the readable part clearly mentions '...distribute of thirty-thousands copies of Shang-Sheng Ching'. This sūtra(Ching) undoubtedly is the short from of the Kuan Mi-lo P'u-sa Shang-shaeng Tou-Shui-t'ien Ching (Sūtra of Mitreya's heavenly Tushita). This sūtra is perhaps the only text which is totally devoted to Maitreya, especially to the life in Maitreya's Tushita realm, and was known to Chinese Buddhists at least by the end of the fifth century. The second line reads thus : "... The unique one, the owner of the pantheon, is in a reach to be the father of all beings. All the virtues will come to.... All thirty-thousand people (who read the Shang

Ching ?) will reach the holy place to practise the duty of son to father..." Here, the 'unique one' or 'father' is very likely meant to address Maitreya and the 'holy place' here meant Maitreya's heavenly realm Tushita(37). Furthermore, Chinese script on the work of Indian artist speaks of a close relationship between Buddhist China and India. Considering the fact that a large number of Chinese monks visited India during early years of the eighth century A.D. and therefore, the monk Thi-yu might have come to India sometime during this period(38). According to the stylistic features of the work, the late half of the eighth century seems to be the most plausible date of the work. On the basis of stylistic comparison the other work (fig. 285) seems to be slightly later than the fig. 284. Apart from the inscription, the lower part of the stele also has donors, Bodhisattva figures, symbolic objects, and animals.

The above two examples of Mānushi Buddhas establish an important fact that the concept of Mortal Buddhas still survived even after the introduction of theistic elements of Tantrayāna Buddhism.

THE STANDING IMAGES OF MAITREYA:

A survey of the Eastern Indian sculptures reveals that there are at least nine sculptures of standing Mitreya. Among them five come from the ruins of the Buddhist monastic establishment at Lalitgiri and are now installed in the site

Museum. All of them are over life size figures and originally might have been paired with other Bodhisattva images that have been collected along with Buddha images. All the five images of Maitreya have high jaṭāmukuta with an emblematic stūpa in it and have elaborate ornaments and wear dhoti. All of them display their right hands in varada mudrā and the left hold a stalk of nāgakesara flowers. Two of them have seated Buddha images at the upper corners. In the fig. 286 is a small seated Buddha on the left top corner while the other corner is broken away(39). Other four images of Maitreya are seen along with two goddesses flanking the deity and two flying figures. The earliest among the four may be the one whose head is partly broken(fig. 287). The type of nāgakesara flower here is slightly different from what is generally seen. Here, three flowers are connected to the main stem by thinner stems, whereas in the general case flowers are attached to the main stem by much shorter, or at times without any stem. Other features of the flower are same as those described earlier. There is also an addition of two goddesses near the feet of the deity who are seen sitting on their respective lotus seats and are surrounded by nimbuses covering the whole body.

Another image of maitreya(fig. 288), having the same iconographical features of Maitreya described above, is also accompanied by two goddesses on either side and are seated on the lotus pedestal(40). In both the steles(the figs. 287

and 288), the goddess on the right side seems to have a flower similar to nāgakesara, while the one on the left seems to hold a lotus. However, we have no relevant textual information for the identification of the two goddesses in relationship to the cult of Maitreya(41).

Only four standing images of Maitreya from Bihar have been noticed. Two are now in the residence of Saiva Mahant at Bodh Gaya(fig. 289), one is in the site museum at Bodh Gaya,(fig. 290) and another one is in the Indian Museum, Calcutta(fig. 291). The iconographical features of these images are more or less the same as that of Lalitgiri, while the plastic quality is much more delicate and refined in these. Almost all the iconographical elements, like the high jaṭāmukuta, the stūpa in the hair arrangement, the hair band around the head, the small tassel-like decoration above the ears, the ornamentation, the treatment of the right hand (varada mudrā and even the round support behind the hands), the left hand holding nāgakesara flower, etc. are common to each other. The additional features in the works from Bihar are the sash tied around the hip (as seen in the figs. 289 and 290), a cakra design on the right palm (as in the figs. 289, 290 and 291) and the stūpa placed on a pillar design(as in the figs. 289 and 291).

The right hand of the fig. 289 is actually placed on a lotus emerging out from the back ground. Two stūpas, one on each pillar at both sides of Maitreya(fig. 289), and also the one in the fig. 291 may be symbolizing the embodiment of

the Buddhist Universe with all the heavens as conceived in Buddhism. The appearance of the stūpa may not possibly have any immediate connection with Maitreya, for it is also seen along with many other Buddhist deities including that of goddesses. A tiny figure on the left side of the Maitreya (fig. 289) is Kubera. Maitreya in the fig. 290 has the triple flowers of nāgakesara as is also seen in the hand of Maitreya image from Lalitgiri (the fig. 287). He is flanked by a male deity with a staff in his hands and a female deity in namaskāra mudrā. Although we are rather unsure of the identities of these attendants, they are certainly divine beings as indicated by their halos.

Maitreya of the fig. 291 is a much later work compared to the above two works in terms of stylistic details. The deity now flanked by four-handed goddesses, one on either side. The goddess on the right side of Maitreya holds a bow and an arrow in two left hands and while the lower right hand is placed on the waist the upper right holds a staff. The goddess on the left side holds a stalk of flowers and a staff in two right hands, and the two left hands hold a mālā and an axe. The present knowledge of Maitreya iconography, however, can neither explain the exact identification of the goddesses, nor their role in connection with Maitreya. Another important feature of this late image, (perhaps made during eleventh century A.D.) is the appearance of Kamaṇḍalu along with the nāgakesara flowers. It is placed on a leaf on the left side along with

the nāgakesara stem. It seems that Kamaṇḍalu which was a long-forgotten attribute of Maitreya reappears here. However, it gained no popularity as an attribute of Maitreya under Tantrayāna Buddhism. In the above exceptional case, the kamaṇḍalu must have been added deriving inspiration from the contemporary use of it in the iconography of Amoghapāsa.

The probable date of the figs. 286, 287 and 288 from Lalitgiri may be the late eight century A.D. with a possible exception of the fig. 288 belonging to the ninth^e century A.D. For the figs. 289 and 290, the period of the ninth^e century A.D. may be appropriate, whereas the fig. 291 may belong to the eleventh century A.D. It, however, does not mean that the iconographical features of sculptures discussed from such far away regions namely Orissa and Bihar need not necessarily indicate influence from former to the latter. As we will see, it was rather the other way round in the sense that the influence travelled from Bihar to Orissa via either Madhya Pradesh or Bengal(42).

THE SEATED IMAGES OF MAITREYA:

At Ratnagiri we have already observed three images of Maitreya seated alone in padmasāna(figs. 279 and 280) including one flanked by eight Bodhisattvas(fig. 281). Iconographically their significance was discussed in the context of the absence of attribute since both the hands are seen engaged in dhyāna mudrā.

Far from Orissa, from Vishnupur near Gaya is a rare image of the seated Maitreya, now in the Patna Museum(fig. 292). He has the usual hair arrangement with an emblematic stūpa comparable to that of the figs. 289-291. Unlike the images from Ratnagiri, this image has the right hand in abhaya mudrā placed near the chest and the left hand holds stem of nāgakesara flowers. He is seated in the so-called mahārājalīlāsana posture(43). This peculiar type of posture seems to have been closely related with the Bodhisattvas when attending upon the Buddha rather than when they appear alone as supreme deities. Thus, it may not be very wrong to expect a pair or more ^{of} images, probably numbering ^{to} eight, when we find any Bodhisattva in this attitude(44).

A seated image of Avalokiteśvara in the Patna Museum(fig. 293) was found from the same site as the above Maitreya image. Judging from the quality of stone, size of works and stylistic features, these two images certainly could be considered as a pair and might have been originally flanking a Buddha image in a temple which indicates that Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya were important deities of this region.

On stylistic grounds the date of the above images is generally accepted as belonging to the twelfth century A.D. A careful study of the images, however, indicates a much earlier date, which would be sometime in the ninth century A.D., if not earlier(45). When we see the Buddhist stele from Udayagiri (fig. 283), the above proposed date becomes

more acceptable. The posture attitudes of the eight Bodhisattva attendants are remarkably similar to the above two Bodhisattva images in the Patna Museum. On the left side of the central Buddha, the second and third image from the top are the small seated figures of Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara. Surprisingly, these two images too are seated in mahārājalīlāsana, the right hand kept in front of the chest and the left hand holds their respective flower. If our dating of the Udayagiri stele to the late eighth century A.D. is correct, the two works in the Patna Museum could be close to the above date. A small bronze image of Maitreya, in the Nalanda Museum is another fine example of the same time from Bihar (fig. 294). An emblematic stūpa in front of the jaṭāmukuta decorated with crown-like hair band becomes the chief identification mark for it being that of Maitreya. The left hand is broken and so no attribute is seen. Yet, in the broken left forearm and part of a stem is still visible. The right hand is in varada mudrā. He is seated in lalitāsana on a lotus, and there might have been another companion Bodhisattva, probably that of Avalokiteśvara, as has been argued in the context of the previous image of Maitreya. The probable date of this image may be the middle of the ninth century A.D.

Much later than the two Maitreya images discussed above (figs. 292 and 293) is a bronze image of the deity from Gaya district, now in the Bodhi Gaya Museum (fig. 295). Iconographically, this image is different from other images

of Maitreya found in this region: Firstly, he displays dharmacakra pravartana mudrā, which is an unusual feature for the Maitreya images of Eastern India(46). Second difference is that stalks of nāgakesara appear on both the sides of this image, whereas generally it is held in the left hand alone. Thirdly, the position of the legs forming ardhpariśākāśana is reversed here; i.e. the left leg is pendant instead of the right. Along with the rectangular shape of the urṇa which is inlaid with silver, such difference may be the outcome of apostasy. The clear shape of stūpa in front of jaṭāmukuta ensures its identity as the Bodhisattva Maitreya.

Similarly, a broken image of Bodhisattva (upper one in the fig. 296) in the Lucknow Museum can also be understood as that of Maitreya. The broken upper half of the body, clearly displays an emblematic stūpa in front of the jaṭāmukuta, earrings, necklace, ajina on the left shoulder, flower on the right side of the image, and the broken stem on the other side. The image might have held two flower stalks one in each of the hands as in the case of fig. 295. In all probability, the lower part of the body might have been similar to that of the fig. 292. The date of the image may be contemporary to that of the fig. 292. It has a big band-like urṇa comparable to the previous bronze image. The lower one in the fig. 296 is undoubtedly that of Avalokiteśvara, in a similar type as the above Maitreya image.

MAITREYA AS AN ATTENDANT IN THE BUDDHIST TRIAD:

Despite the large number of Bodhisattvas introduced in Tantrayāna Buddhism, Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara appear most frequently as attendant of the Śākyamuni Buddha, whose original theological bearing still proved to be important even during Tantric period. Hsuan-Tsang, when he visited Bodh Gaya in late 630s, recorded that "To the right and left of the outside gate are niches like chambers; in the left is a figure of Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, and in the right a figure of Maitreya(T'se-shī) Bodhisattva. They are made of white silver, and about 10 feet high"(47). The most popular type of the Buddhist triad of the Pala-Sena period is Maitreya-Buddha-Avalokiteśvara combination. The attendants in these examples are generally shown much smaller in size compared to the principal deity. The iconographical features of Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara are basically not very different from each other; both have jaṭāmukuta and the Bodhisattva ornamentations.

The cognizance of each image is, suggested through emblematic figures in their hair arrangements and the attributes in their hands. Avalokiteśvara bears the effigy of Amitābha in the jaṭāmukuta and holds a lotus in the left hand where as Maitreya bears an emblematic stupa in his hair arrangement and is further distinguished by the nāgakesara flowers in his hand. Quite often the emblematic figure in

the hair-arrangement is not very easy to recognize or sometimes it is absent. For instance, the Bodhisattva attendants of the Buddhist triad(fig.297) installed at Bodh Gaya Mahant do not show the emblematic stūpa or Buddha figure, but only have a simple vertical projection in front of the jaṭāmukuta. However, they are still identifiable with the kind of flowers that is held in their hands. The Bodhisattva on the right side of the Buddha holds a padma, while his counter Bodhisattva holds a stem with small-flowers that can most possibly be the nāgakesara flowers of Maitreya.

More clear example of the Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya is seen in the Buddhist triad from Bodh Gaya(fig. 298). The Bodhisattva on the right side of the Buddha holds a padma in the right hand, whereas the Bodhisattva in the other side of Buddha holds a nāgakesara. The supposedly important elements, Amitābha Buddha for Avalokiteśvara and stūpa for Maitreya are not recognizable here also. The stylistic feature suggests the date of the above two steles to be late eighth or early ninth^e century A.D. These sculptures also maintain vestiges of the certain Kushana Mathura style in the treatment of the head and broad shoulders which are common among the Buddha images of this period(48).

Another important point regarding Maitreya iconography of the Eastern India is the types of mudrā displayed in the right hand of the deity. In the above two steles(fig. 297 and 298), the right hands are kept closely to the centre of

the body, the palm outward, the fingers straight with the exception of the thumb which touches the end of the inflected index finger. This hand gesture has been generally called as vitarka mudrā(49) or chin mudrā(50). According to Saunders, the vitarka mudrā, when it is displayed by the Buddha, indicates the exposition of the law or the deliberation on the Doctrine(51). Symbolic meaning of this mudrā in the context of Maitreya is a matter of speculation, which, however, is said to be meaning that by making this mudrā the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas call upon all beings to hear the Law and attain nirvāṇa. It can be questioned whether this mudrā is meant to represent any particular aspect of Maitreya or not. An interesting point regarding the above question is that this mudrā is seen in Maitreya images only when he is represented on the left side of the Buddha, and he displays right hand mostly in varada mudrā when he stands on the right side of the Buddha. The same phenomenon is applicable to Avalokiteśvara too.

A standing Buddha image installed in the Maha Bodhi temple, Bodh Gaya, is flanked by Maitreya on the right side and Avalokiteśvara on the other side(fig. 299). Here, Maitreya displays right hand in varada mudrā, whereas Avlokiteśvara shows vitarka mudrā. Looking back at figs. 297 and 298, one can find the same arrangement being followed.

This kind of arrangement is not only limited to Maitreya Avalokiteśvara pair, but for all other Bodhisattvas

also. In a Buddhist stele with a seated Buddha at the centre, Maitreya image on the right side and Bodhisattva, most probably, Kshtigarbha on the other side follows the same system (fig. 300). Maitreya is recognizable with the nāgakesara flowers in the left hand. The identification of Kshtigarbha is made on the basis of the attribute held in the left hand, which is definitely not a padma, but identical with the 'wish-giving' flower(52) as shown in the figs. 308 and 309. Here too the right side attendant displays varada mudrā, and the left side Bodhisattva shows vitarka mudrā.

Thus, the use of vitarka mudrā should be understood in the larger context of triad compositions and thus may avoid over enthusiastic emphasis of this mudrā in relation to Maitreya. Sometimes, the vitarka mudrā is replaced by abhaya mudrā, most probably are result of misunderstanding of the vitarka mudrā. A Buddhist triad composed by Maitreya-Buddha-Avalokiteśvara in the Indian Museum, Calcutta(fig. 301) and the Buddhist triad composed by Avalokiteśvara-Buddha-Maitreya in the Ashtoshi Museum, Calcutta University(fig. 302) are the two selected examples to illustrate the above point. In both the cases, the Bodhisattvas on the left side of the Buddha hold the right hand in abhaya mudrā while the counterpart Bodhisattvas shows varada mudrā. In both the cases, Maitreya has a stūpa and Avalokiteśvara carries a tiny figure of Amitābha in dhyāna mudrā in front of their hair arrangement. Standing

on the right side of the Buddha, Maitreya in the fig. 301 holds a stem on top of which has a single flower and a few leaves, whereas the Maitreya image of the fig. 302, standing on the left side of the Buddha, is seen holding the proper nāgakesara flowers in the hand.

The Buddhist triad in the Indian Museum, Calcutta (fig. 303) is a rather unusual triad where it is composed of Vajrapāṇi-Buddha-Maṅjusrī. Vajrapāṇi is represented on the right side of the Buddha and is shown with varada mudrā in the right hand and the left hand holds a stem of a flower on top of which is placed a vajra. His counterpart Bodhisattva, Maṅjusrī displays the right hand in abhaya mudrā while the left hand holds lotus with a manuscript on it. This triad undoubtedly demonstrates that the kind of hand gesture is employed in the same compositional sense mentioned earlier. In some cases, both the Bodhisattva attendants hold an identical mudrā. The Buddhist triad (fig. 304) installed in the Maha Bodhi Temple, Bodh Gaya has a seated Buddha at the centre with Avalokiteśvara on his right and Maitreya on his left. Avalokiteśvara is characterized by the emblematic Buddha Amitābha and lotus flower, and Maitreya by the emblematic stūpa and nāgakesara flower. Here, both the Bodhisattva attendants display varada mudrā in their right hands.

In some cases, the vitarka mudrā is used by both the attendants as seen in the Buddhist triad in the Indian Museum (fig. 305). The Bodhisattva attendants Avalokiteśvara

and Maitreya here hold their right hands near to the centre of the chest and the thumb touches the middle finger. This version of vitarka mudrā is much rare compared to the general type in which the thumb touches the index finger. The triad in the Nalanda Museum(fig. 306) demonstrates another version of vitarka mudrā. The triad is composed of a seated Buddha in the centre who is flanked by Avalokitesvara on the right side and Maitreya on the other side. Here, too, both the Bodhisattvas hold their right hands in vitarka mudrā, but the thumb touches the ring finger. According to Saunders, this variation of the vitarka mudrā symbolizes good fortune or joy, particularly when it is related to the Śākyamuni Buddha which is the joy of purifying the world by his teaching of the Law(53). As it was suggested earlier this variant also meant the invitation to all beings to the Law in order to obtain nirvāṇa.

The above study does not, however, exhaust all the iconographical characteristics of the Buddhist triads found in Eastern India. In certain cases, there appear certain curious interchanging of the established norms of iconography. A bronze work from the eastern Bengal, now in the Indian Museum(fig. 307) is one such variation. The image of Avalokitesvara, on the right side of the Buddha, is seen with a chauri in the right hand and a padma in the left. As we have studied so far, the chauri can be seen largely avoided in the art of Eastern India. More

interesting feature of the present work is seen in the Maitreya image standing on the left side of the Buddha. Here, the deity holds a stem of nāgakesara flowers in the right hand and not in the left hand. In the left hand is a chauri. The way of holding the chauri reminds us that of the triads from Orissa, as for example, figs. 272-277.

MAITREYA IN THE BUDDHA MAṆḌALA:

Already in the caves 11 and 12 at Ellora, Maitreya has been noticed in the groups of the Eight Principal Bodhisattvas, which are seen sometimes in a row in a planar maṇḍala (as in the figs. 239 - 241), or in the three-dimensional manner (as in the figs. 242 - 247). In Orissa, the same eight principal Bodhisattvas have been introduced on the Buddhist steles as discussed in an earlier context (see figs. 281 - 283).

Similarly, Bihar has given rise to a different type of a Buddha maṇḍala with a seated Buddha at the centre and the eight Bodhisattvas on either sides of the Buddha in a row. At Ellora when the same is represented in a row, the Buddha is placed at the left end of the group(54).

A stone relief, perhaps an architectural member, now in the National Museum, New Delhi (fig. 308) is carved with a seated Buddha in bhūmisparśa mudrā at the centre and either sides of him is four Bodhisattvas all seated in mahārājāḷilāsana. Reading from the right side is,

Sāmantabhadra, Kshitigarba, Mañjusrī, Avalokiteśvara, Buddha, Maitreya, Vajrapani, Akāśagarbha and lastly Sarvānivāraṇaviskambhīn. The mudrā of the Buddha at the centre suggests his identity as Akshobya. Incidentally, the Buddhist triad from Orissa (fig. 272) composed of Buddha in bhūmiśparśa mudrā, who is flanked by Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya also has been identified as Aksobhya(55). The Bodhisattvas just next to the Buddha in the fig. 308 are Avalokiteśvara on the right side and Maitreya on the other side.

Iconographically, Maitreya here is almost identical with Avalokiteśvara except for the type of flowers that they hold. There are a few more interesting points here which can be of help in the study of Bodhisattva iconography. It is only the images of Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya ^{that} have a jaṭāmukuta while others have conical headgear, with the exception of Mañjusrī whose hair is arranged into three units. Another point is that Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya, or more precisely two Bodhisattvas just next to the Buddha display varada mudrā, while others hold some object or display vitarka mudrā.

Almost a replica of the fig. 308 is noticed in the Ashitosh Museum, Calcutta University (fig. 309). Here, the Buddha at the centre holds his hands in dharmacakra pravartana mudrā and below him is the Wheel of the Law flanked by two deers. On the right side of the Buddha are four seated Bodhisattvas; Sāmantabhadra, Kshitigarba,

Mañjusrī(?), and Avalokitesvara. On the left side of the Buddha are Maitreya, Vajrapāṇi, Akāṣagarbha and Sarvanivāraṇaviskambin^h. Unlike the fig. 308, Maitreya here displays the right hand in vitarka mudrā with thumb touching the ring finger, the type seen in the fig. 306.

In both the cases, the images of Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya do not have specific emblematic figure in their hair arrangements. Thus, they seem to be contemporary with the early works of Bodh Gaya which belong to the late eighth century A.D.(see, the figs. 297-299).

Compared to the representations of the Eight Principal Bodhisattvas at Ellora(see figs. 239-247), the above two maṇḍalās from Bihar represent much advanced features in iconographical details. However, such differences do not necessarily mean that the works from Eastern India are later than that of Ellora.

CULT OF MAITREYA UNDER TANTRIC BUDDHISM:

The above study of Maitreya images from the Eastern India lends us some important clues regarding the cult of Maitreya under Tantrayāna Buddhism. They are:

- a) Maitreya's status as a Future Buddha has remained unchanged who has been worshipped by the Tantrayāna Buddhists of Pala-Sena period for the same reason. The representations of the Seven Past Mānushi Buddhas and Maitreya together as in the figs. 284 and 285, are the

proof for this suggestion.

- b) Despite Maitreya's appearance as a Dhyāni Bodhisattva the concept of Mānushi Bodhisattva remained still strong. Since the original importance of the Sākyamuni did not change even after the introduction of the concept of Dhyāni Buddhas, Maitreya too still remained as the only Mānushi Bodhisattva of importance under Tantrayāna ideas. The best example of Maitreya as a Mānushi Bodhisattva seems to be the fig. 281, in which he is flanked by eight Dhyāni Bodhisattvas, as if he has achieved a stature equal to the Buddha Sākyamuni.
- c) Most of the time, however, Maitreya seems to have maintained his position in relationship with the Last Mānushi Buddha Sākyamuni. In maximum number of cases Maitreya appears in the Buddhist triad as an attendant of the Sākyamuni Buddha.
- d) Maitreya has been understood, to some extent as the ruling deity of Tushita heaven, while Avalokiteśvara is understood as a ruling deity in the present world. These two Bodhisattvas appear in larger number in the Buddhist triad and may represent, along with the Buddha, the whole realm of the Buddha, Past, Present and Future.
- e) Maitreya might have been known also as one of many Dhyāni Bodhisattvas, as he is the leading figure in the group of sixteen Bodhisattvas in the Mañjuvajra Maṇḍala(56). However, no sculptural remains representing this concept which would have revealed the special role of Maitreya

among other Dhyāni Bodhisattvas has been found.

- f) Although Sādhana-mālā furnishes us with the description of Maitreya as a principal divinity with three faces, three eyes and four arms(57), such a Tantric iconography seems to have not been popular in the Eastern India. No multiple headed or multiple handed image of Maitreya have been found in this region and it is only during the fourteenth or the fifteenth century A.D. in South India that we get the images of Maitreya with multiple hands(58).

VI-3. ICONOGRAPHY OF MAITREYA IN KASHMIR

In Kashmir, corresponding to the Pala-Sena period in Eastern India, Bodhisattva iconography developed differently from other regions with a strong predilection for Gandharan elements in the plastic form. A large number of Maitreya images found in this region indicates the prominence of the cult of Maitreya here. Indeed, it seems that only in Kashmir Maitreya's cult and iconographical features maintained the early features as it was during the Kushana Gandhara.

A standing image of Maitreya, most probably from Kashmir, now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art(fig. 310) is one of the earliest among the works of Kashmir artists. The Gandhara influence is noticeable in its iconographical feature, the plastic treatment differs from

Gandhara considerably. Gandhara elements are seen in his hair arrangement, mudrā of the right hand, and Kamaṇḍalu in the left hand. The hair is tied into a knot by a band on the top of the head. The type of the hair arrangement is close to the bow-knot type rather than to the top-knot type found in Maitreya images of Gandhara School. The most important element from Gandhara school is observed in the right hand which is raised up from the elbow, and the palm is turned inwards facing the body. This mudrā has been interpreted earlier as the mudrā of 'acceptance' or 'magnanimity', rather than merely as 'namaskāramudrā'(59). This feature undoubtedly originate from Gandhara, since this mudrā was closely related to Maitreya images during the period when images were characterized by the bow-knot hair style(60). A kamaṇḍalu is held in the left hand in the manner we have noticed in a Maitreya image from Gupta Sarnath(fig. 148). The late fifth century date seems to be most probable for this image, in comparison with the fig. 148. In Gupta Sarnath, the kamaṇḍalu lost its importance as an attribute of Maitreya at least by the end of the fifth century A.D. and disappeared from the hand of the deity since the beginning of the seventh century A.D. in the art of Eastern India. It is only in the Western Deccan, that the kamaṇḍalu as an attribute maintained its importance in the ascetic type of Maitreya images. Another clue for the above dating is the appearance of the ajina on the left shoulder, which appears only from the above date.

Another important feature of Maitreya iconography in the region of Kashmir is the introduction of the crown, which is certainly not a popular element for Maitreya iconography except in the Kushana Mathura school. A seated image of Maitreya in the collection of Mr. and Mrs. H.K. Swali, Bombay(fig. 311) invites a special attention in this context. First of all it has a crown in addition to the bodhisattva ornamentations. The crown is decorated with floral design and is open from the top. The idea of adapting the crown for Maitreya might have been an influence from other Bodhisattvas wearing a crown. On the other hand the kingly aspect of Maitreya as a ruling figure of the Tushita might have been emphasized as it was the case in Kushana Mathura, although the type of the crown here was much different from that of Mathura(compare figs. 20-27). As was the case in the early phase of Gandharan art and also through out the Kushan period in Mathura, Maitreya does not have long hair falling on the shoulder. However, the connection between Kushan Mathura and Kashmir is doubtful. Another important feature of the above image is the gesture of the right hand; which is held in the mudrā of 'acceptance' as seen in the previous image also(fig. 310). The left hand is placed in front of the knee with the palm turned inwards and the kamaṇḍalu is held by the neck between the index and middle fingers. The type of the pedestal is a kind of a stool which is another indicative element of the close relationship with Gandhara. The date of this image may

be late sixth century A.D. when the stūpa has not yet been introduced as an emblem of Maitreya in Eastern India.

A seated image of Maitreya in the Pan-Asian Collection(fig. 312) differs from the above image in some respects. Maitreya is here adorned with an emblematic stūpa in front of his crown, and the lower part of the hair falls down on the shoulders. He now displays varada mudrā in the right hand and is seated in padmāsana on a typical Kashmiri lotus throne. All these elements suggest the incorporation of the Eastern Indian influence. The kamaṇḍalu, however, still remains as a confirmation of Gandhara influence. The probable date for this image may be seventh century A.D. when the stupa had been introduced in Eastern India as shown in the Maitreya image from Nalanda(fig. 267). The impact of Eastern India in the art of Kashmir is further suggested by the presence of the nāgakesara flower as seen in the Maitreya image, now in the Nelson Gallery Atkins Museum, Kansas (fig. 313). In his left hand is a stem with multiple buds of nāgakesara. There is a remarkable similarity between this and the real buds of champā tree(fig. 233). Another interesting point here is that Maitreya is seated on a lion throne, below of which is again a lotus seat. This intentional use of the double pedestals may be understood in connection with the tall crown; both the crown and siṃhāsana might have been used to represent the kingly nature of Maitreya. Other features like stūpa in front of the crown, the regal attire, and varada mudra, are very close to the

fig. 312. Even though the nāgakesara flower was known to the Kashmiri artists as is evident here, it seems to have gained no popularity and the kamaṇḍalu has been preferably used instead of nāgakesara through out the history of Kashmiri art.

A standing image of Maitreya in the Pan-Asian Collection (fig. 314) shows much advanced style compared to the above seated image. He stands in a slightly flexed posture on a lotus pedestal and is surrounded by an aureole and a nimbus of flame. The hair is arranged as if it is combed up to make a sharp point. On the top of it is a stūpa and two strings of pearls that hang from top of it. He is decked with usual ornamentation. The strip of scarf, which was seen in the figs. 312 and 313, again indicates its close connection with Gandhara. The right hand is held in abhaya mudrā. The left hand holds a kamaṇḍalu, which is the traditional attribute of Maitreya.

A seated image of Maitreya in the Pan-Asian Collection (fig. 315) holds a japa mālā while maintaining the features of the fig. 314. The japa mālā is the typical attribute of Maitreya which got popularity in Gupta Sarnath and spread into Western Deccan. Under Tantrayāna Buddhism the japa mālā lost its importance and was replaced by the vitarka mudrā. Here, the japa mālā demonstrates the influence of Gupta Sarnath school, while the kamaṇḍalu that of Kushana Gandhara. The stūpa and the prominent urṇa might have been derived from the Eastern India school of Pala period. The

posture of lalitāsana too seems to have been derived from the Eastern India where this particular āsana, along with the mahārājalīlāsana had received a lot of popularity during the Pala-Sena period. Thus, this image is a testimony of the Kashmiri tradition that accepted influences from various sources, and turned them out into a unique style.

A standing image of Maitreya in the Doris Wiener Gallery(fig. 316) is another example with old and new iconographical features. The hair is arranged in the manner of the figs. 314 and 315 but the additional design makes it appear like a crown. The right hand here displays vitarka mudrā, with the thumb and ring figures touching each other. This hand gesture has been introduced first in Eastern India during the Pala-Sena period, as is seen in the figs. 297-300 and 305-308. Here the old attribute of Maitreya namely japa mālā is added in the hand, so the meaning of vitarka mudrā seems to have reduced to the natural gesture of holding a japa mālā. The left hand holds a kamaṇḍalu. Although the iconographical features of the image seem complex, the important points to identify the image as Maitreya are the stūpa in front of hair arrangement, the japa mālā in the right hand, and the kamaṇḍalu in the left hand. On the contrary, the hair arrangement similar to the jaṭāmukuṭa, long hair touching the shoulder, the bodhisattva-ornamentations, the sacred thread, and the vitarka mudrā need not be taken as the specific elements of Maitreya iconography since they are also seen in other Bodhisattvas.

The last three works may belong to the period between the ninth and the eleventh centuries A.D.

Through out its development Kashmiri artists maintained their own iconographical scheme in making the image of Maitreya. Evidently, the concept of Maitreya as the only Mānushi Bodhisattva remained the same, similar to that of the Sākyamuni Buddha whose importance was maintained itself even after the introduction of the Tantrayāna Buddhism.

VI-4. LATER MAITREYA ICONOGRAPHY IN SOUTH INDIA

It is generally believed that the development of Buddhism in India came to an end by the end of the twelfth century A.D. Although this is true for the major part of India, in South India the Buddhist art activity lingered on for a longer duration. A number of Buddhist image, in South India, mostly that of the Buddha, Avalokitesvara and Maitreya, were casted in bronze during a period between thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries A.D. Following the tradition of Chola art, the Bodhisattva images of south India closely resemble the Hindu deities, both in style and iconography. Largely coming from Nāgapattinam, the images of Bodhisattvas wear tall headgear and ornamentation similar to that of the Brahmanical divinities of the period. The attributes are held between the raised index and middle fingers in the typical dravidian style.

Above all, what is most interesting in the study of

Maitreya iconography from this region is the appearance of four-handed Maitreya images, perhaps first time in the Buddhist art of India. Four-armed figure from Nagapattinam, now in the Government Museum, Madras (fig. 317) has a close resemblance to the images of Śiva as Viṇādhara. The hair is arranged in a high crown shape with locks rising like flames. He has a japa mālā and a stalk of flowers in two of his upper hands, while other two display the abhaya-varada mudrā and kaṭakāmukha mudrā. The abhaya-varada mudrā is for 'inviting to confer boons' while kaṭakāmukha mudrā is used for 'holding an object like a lotus or lily' (61). These two mudrās might have been derived from nāṭyahastas (dance gestures) and were popular^P_K¹ used in the sculptures of Chola country.

The stūpa design in front of the hair arrangement provides a clue that the image is of a Buddhist deity. Moreover, the attributes like japa mālā, and nāgakesara flower help us to conclude that the image is none other than Maitreya. The iconographical features of this four handed image of Maitreya however, do not match with any known textual descriptions. According to the Sādhana-mālā Maitreya has three faces, three eyes, his two hands in vyākhyāna mudrā, and among his other two hands, one is in varaḍā mudrā and another holds a nāgakesara flower (62). According to Viṣṇu-saṁhitā, Maitreya displays the dharma chakra mudrā in the right and the twig of a nāgakesara flower in the left (63). Thus, the above image of Maitreya is more of a

local type that developed following the popular Hindu iconography. A standing image of Avalokiteśvara in the Government Museum, Madras (fig. 318) demonstrates a closeness with Hindu deity Vishnu. It is a very tiny image and a seated Buddha in front of the tall crown that gives an identification of the image as Avalokiteśvara. The attributes, a japa mālā and a bouquet of flowers hardly differ from that of the above image of Maitreya. Other two hands display abhaya mudrā and varada mudrā. In north India, the popular type of Avalokiteśvara, when he is four handed, is shown with a japa mālā and varada mudrā in the right hands, and the other two left hands hold kamaṇḍalu and lotus. The tall cylindrical crown seen in this image is also very unusual feature for Avalokiteśvara. The type of headgear and the hand posture are often seen in the Vishnu images of Chola art. It may be said that the Avalokiteśvara image reflects definite Hindu influence, particularly the features of Vishnu, whose nature is also of a saviour. In certain sense, the similarity in the iconographical features of Maitreya with that of Vishnu could be understood in terms of parallelism.

As seen in the above two images, both Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara have almost identical features, and unless there is a sign of stūpa or a tiny Buddha figure in the headdress it is almost impossible to distinguish one from the other.

A standing image with four-hands in the Government

Museum, Madras(fig. 319), for a example, is depicted with an emblematic stūpa in front of the tall headgear, so as to enable the identification as Maitreya. On the other hand, the gesture of the four hands, one of which holds a japa mālā, do not have any significance in recognizing the image. As is the case in the fig. 318, the japa mālā is also an attribute of Avalokiteśvara in this region. The image here has a tall cylindrical headgear which had been popularly used for both Hindu and Buddhist deities in South Indian art. If the identification of it as Maitreya is correct we have here another Maitreya image having crown, rather than the usual jaṭāmukuta, apart from the Kashmiri examples(figs. 311-313).

A standing image of Maitreya in the Government Museum, Madras(fig. 320) is again characterized by a tall cylindrical crown and a stūpa design in front of it. Here the image has only two hands; the right hand displays abhaya mudrā and the left hand a stalk of flowers most probably that of nāgakesara. This type of nāgakesara with triple flowers is already observed in Eastern India as well as in Orissa(see the figs. 286, 287 and 290). Another type of nāgakesara used in South India is the multiple buds type, as is seen in the standing image of Maitreya in the Government Museum, Madras(fig. 321). Here nāgakesara has a shape of the peacock's tail. The buds and not flowers are arranged here in a circular shape. This type might have made following the oral or literary description of the nāgakesara

buds. The stūpa in front of the tall headgear further suggests the identification of this work as Maitreya.

A caution should however be made when the type of flower differs from the above two types or when the flower is missing. A seated image holding a flower with four large petals in the Government Museum Madras(fig. 322) and a standing image found at Melaiyur(fig. 323) are often regarded as Maitreya mainly on the basis that they have a stūpa design in front of their crown. However, the clear shape of the stūpa is hard to find in these. It may be also remembered that Avolokiteśvara images of Western Deccan often bear a stūpa design in his jaṭāmukuta, and in Eastern India there are quite a few images having stūpa-like design instead of the figure of Buddha as in the figs. 297-299. On the contrary, the crown, is an elusive element in Maitreya iconography considering the time when the fig. 323 was made which was probably around the ninth century A.D. Thus the identification of Buddhist sculptures of South India demands a careful study.

Lastly, to speak of ^{the} role of textual descriptions in the study of Maitreya iconography, it can be concluded that the textual descriptions do not match with actual representation the image in following points:

- a) The description of color of the deity is ~~useless~~ in identifying ^{the deity} in the sculp^tural representations.
- b) The description of direction of the deity is practically not possible to trace in the condition when the works are

removed from their original place.

- c) The description of mudrās of the deity becomes useless since all other Bodhisattvas share the same mudrās.
- d) The description of Maitreya with multiple heads and hands has not been found in the sculptural works of Indian art.

Moreover, the iconographical types of Maitreya differ almost in every regions, and, therefore, impossible to relate any particular type to the textual descriptions. Thus, it is necessary to limit ourselves in depending on the textual descriptions in the study of Maitreya iconography.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 In the present work, the term Tantrāyana is preferred over Vajrayāna and Yogācāra for the simple reason that the term is more widely used than the other two.
- 2 The first known king of Pala dynasty is Gopala who was in power about 765-770 and he founded the Buddhist monastery of Odantapuri. C. S. Dutt, 1962, pp. 349 and 354. Simultaneous to Palas, who survived until the 12th century were the kings of the Candra dynasty (900-1050) in South-East Bengal, and the Somavamsis (10th to 13th century) in Orissa. The Senas were independent rulers of the area between Orissa and the Ganges delta during the 12th century.
- 3 The earlier tradition of the female deities along with Bodhisattvas may be better called as Prajñā(s); the transcendent knowledge which was the personification of the qualities of a Bodhisattva. It is in the later period that the female deities became 'Śaktīs' of male counterparts.
- 4 Guhyasamāja has been published in Gaekwad's Oriental Series; Ārya-Mañjusrīmūlakalpa is compiled by P.L. Vardya (Māhāyānasūtra saṅgraha, Part II, Buddhist Sanskrit Texts, No. 18).
- 5 According to B. Bhattacharyya, the original form of this work was much shorter, which was composed in about the second century A.D. while Winternitz places the composition of the text in the sixth or seventh century A.D. (R. C. Majumdar, 1955-IV, p. 360, 16n). Nalinaksha Dutt assigns the text to the fifth or sixth century A.D. (Ibid., p. 263).

- 6 R. C. Majumdar (1955-IV), p. 264.
- 7 Nispannayogāvalī, pp. 46, 50 and 67.
- 8 B. Bhattacharyya takes the leading figures Sāmantabhadra and Maitreya as the leaders of each group. (1924), p. 83.
- 9 Nispannayogāvalī describes him thus: "Tatra purvasyam paṭṭikayam maitreyaḥ pitaḥ savyakareṇa nāgakesarakusumān vāmena kuṇḍim dadhānaḥ." (Ibid., p. 68, Durgatiparisodhanamaṇḍalam).
- 10 "Maitreyasya pradhanakarena sapallavanagakesarakusuman cakranki-tamāmnayat." (Nispannayogāvalī p. 6).
- 11 "Maitreyaḥ pitavarṇasca nāgapuṣpavarapradāh."
Sādhanaṁālā, p. 49.
- 12 "Trtiyaputa maṇḍalapurvasyam paṭṭikayam maitreyaḥ suvarṇavarṇo dvabhyam kṛtadhamādesanamudro varadasavyakaro vāmena sapuṣpanāgakesarapallavadhraḥ ..." Nispannayogāvalī p. 6.
- 13 ".....Pita 'Msim'karaparīṇatam visvakamalāṣhitam trimukham caturbhujam kṛsmasuklasaksinvāmamukham suvarṇagaurem sattva-paryāṅkinam vyākḥāyanamudradharakaradvayam aparadaksiṇāvāmbhujābhayam varadapuspitanagakesaramanjaridharam nānālankaradharam ātmānam Maitreyarupam aīambya...."
Maitreyasādhanaṁ Sādhanaṁālā, p. 560.
- 14 B. Bhattacharyya (1924), pp. 77-78. The counter Bodhisattva is mentioned as Bodhisattva 'Lokesvara of white complexion, carrying in his right hand chowrie and lotus in the left."
- 15 For details, see pp. 190-196.
- 16 The examples are; from Ajanta, figs. 184, 187 and 261; from Aurangabad, figs. 193 and 257; from Nasik, figs. 198, 199 and 203; from Ellora, figs. 217, 221-223, 255 and 227; and from

Kanheri, fig. 262, etc.

- 17 M. Ghosh gives the date of sixth century (1980), pp. 29-30. Asher assigns the date of the first half of the seventh century; (1980) pp. 80-82. S. Dutt on the other hand suggested that all the Tantric image discovered in the ruins of Nalanda belongs to the Pala period (1962), p. 349. All the above datings are based on stylistic evidence. J.A. Page dated the stucco works to the seventh century on archeological evidence. (1925-26), p. 103.
- 18 M. K. Dhavalikar (1963), p. 18. He suggests that "From her (Tara) sculptural representations in the Buddhist caves in Western India and Northern Deccan it appears that her worship was popular at Kanheri, Nasik, Ellora, Aurangabad and Ajanta. They are all ascribable on stylistic grounds to circa sixth to seventh century A.D. and as no image of a still earlier date has so far been found in any part of the country, they are probably the earliest representation of Tāra". R.S. Gupte too favours the Western Deccan origin of Tāra. According to him, the earliest of Tāra which are of the sixth and seventh century A.D. have been found at Ellora. (The Śakti Cult and Tāra, ed. D. C. Sircar, 1967, p. 108).
- 19 D.C. Sircar (1967), pp. 109-128, has suggested that the Tāra of Chandradvipa, which is mentioned in the Cambridge University Library manuscript (Add. 1643) of the Asṭasahasrika Prajñāpāramita, required some time in becoming famous in Chandragomin's time (fifth and sixth century A.D.) and was therefore earlier than the date of Ellora sculptures.
- 20 M. Ghosh(1980), p. 30.
- 21 F.M. Asher suggested first half of the seventh century A.D. for

- the stucco works of Nalanda; Asher(1980), p. 48.
- 22 The important sites are Udayagiri, Ratnagiri, Lalitgiri, Solonapur, Khadipada, Baud Narasimhapur etc.
- 23 The floral medallion seems to have been used not only for Maitreya image but also for all other Bodhisattva images of early Tantric period in Orissa.
- 24 This statement may sound farfetched⁺ to those who believe that the sculptures of Udayagiri and Ratnagiri belong to the later period around the tenth century A.D. See Snellgrove(1978), pp. 281 and 285.
- 25 B. Bhattacharyya(1924), p.78.
- "He(Vajrāsana) is dressed in red garment and sits on the Vajra-marked double lotus placed on the four Māras of blue, white, red, and green colour,...His body is endowed with all the minor auspicious marks".
- 26 Ibid. p.78.
- 27 Ibid. p.78.
- 28 Ibid. p.73.
- 29 The suggested identification of the two Bodhisattva attendant is not, however, be confirmed with any literary sources, but is based on the assumption that the four Buddhist triads(two Bodhisattvas in each triad) around the stūpa comprise of eight principal Bodhisattvas; Ākāśagarbha, Sāmantabhadra, Maitreya, Avalokiteśvara, Vajrapāṇi, Sarvanivāraṇaviskambhī^h, Kṣatigarba, and Mañjuśrī.
- 30 This reading, too, has made with the same reason that has been mentioned in the previous footnote. Amitābha triad, according to

the Sukhāvatī sūtra, consists of Amitābha and his attendants Avalokitesvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta.

- 31 The identification of the Bodhisattva standing on the right side of Maitreya is Mañjusrī since he holds a lotus on which manuscript is placed. The Bodhisattva on the other side, holds a water vase and a strange flower. Following the case of the eight principal Bodhisattvas represented at Ellora as shown in the figs. 239, 240 and 241, the most probable of the above Bodhisattva attendants may be Kṣtigarba. At Ellora, we have observed many images of Kṣtigarba with strange flower as seen in the figs. 239 and 240.
- 32 The early and late works from these two sites, Udayagiri and Ratnagiri are distinguishable not only on the basis of stylistic features, but also can be differentiated on the basis of the kind of stone used; the early works are made in fine sand stone in light pink color, and the later works are in rough sand stone and darker in color.
- 33 R.S. Gupte(1964). PP. 146-47.
- 34 The seven Buddha-prajnas of the Seven Mānushi Buddhas are; Vipasyantī, Sikhimālinī, Visvadhara, Kakudvatī Kanthamālini, Mahidharā, and Yasodharā, B. Bhattacharyya(1924), P. 79.
- 35 The seven Mānushi Bodhisattvas corresponding to each of the Seven Mānushi Buddhas, and their Prajnas are; Mahāmati, Ratnādhara, Akasaganja, Sakamangala, Kanakarāja, Dharmadhara, and Ānanda. Ibid. p. 79.
- 36 One may also argue that both of them are from the same workshop. However, the difference of the stylistic feature is obvious leaving no room for such supposition.

- 37 Literary meaning of the 'Shang-sheng' is the 'life in upper(place)' while 'Hsia-sheng' means the 'life in lower (place)'. The former undoubtedly^{ed} meant Maitreya's heavenly realm Tushita, while the later meant Maitreya's earthly realm Ketumati. See for more details, chapter II. pp. 30-37.
- 38 The name of Chinese monk, Thi-Yi is unknown in any list of the Chinese Monks in India compiled by Latika Lahiri. He, however, must be one among many unknown monks who came to India from T'ang China(A.D. 618-907).
- 39 Another similar example is found on the stelae, Register no. 20. Site Museum, Lalitgiri. The stele, however, only leave the mark.
- 40 The stylistic feature of the stelae suggests its later date, perhaps the early ninth century A.D.: the flaming design around the stela^e is an additional feature compared to the figs. 284 and 285.
- 41 It is noteworthy that there have been found many Bodhisattva images having similar representation of goddesses at Lalitgiri. They are now installed in the site Museum; they are Samantabhadra (?) (Acc. No.17), Mañjusri (Acc. Noes. 18, 19, 22 and 43), Vajrapāṇi (Acc, No.41), and Avalokitesvara (Acc, Noes. 15 and 18).
- 42 The artistic connection between Orissa and Bihar has been noticed by many scholars. M.G. Dikshit is of the opinion that the architecture of the Buddhist monasteries in Orissa bears a striking resemblance to those in Nalanda. (M.G. Dikshit, 1955); D.P. Ghosh points out, ^{that it was} Madhya Pradesh and Bengal ^{through} which ~~were~~ the ~~centers of~~ Gupta art might have influenced Orissa. (He offers this suggestion while reviewing Dikshit's article in Lalit Kala, No. 8);

- N.K. Sahu informs that Saraha studied in the University of Nalanda and brought Tantric tradition to Orissa. (N.K. Sahu, 1958. p. 163).
- 43 The literary meaning of the term is 'royally relaxed seated posture'. This is also called lalita(Foucher) or rājalīla(Getty).
- 44 This may sound farfetched to those who believe the posture of maharājālīlāsana is related to royal bearing as the term indicate. The association of royalty with this posture could however be found in the narrative scene of palace, as in Ajanta murals or Amaravati reliefs.
- 45 A image of Avalokitesvara Simhanāda from Mahoba, now in the Lucknow Museum(Acc. No. 224) has been given date of cir 1100 A.D. which is acceptable on stylistic grounds. Compared to this image, the works of the figs. 292 and 293 definitely stands earlier in terms of style and iconography. The two Bodhisattva images in the Patna Museum seem to belong to an even earlier date than the dated image of Vagisvari(dated A.D. 944), in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. They are rather comparable to those bronze images, which are attributed to ninth century A.D. by N.R. Ray, et:all, Eastern Indian Bronzes; i.e. image of Lokanātha from Tekota(Ray's fig. no. 41), a image of Mañjusrī from Mainamati(Ray's fig. no. 43), a image of Mañjusrī from Achutrajpur(Ray's fig. no. 50), a dated image of Mañjusrī from Nalanda(A.D. 811, Ray's fig. no.106).
- 46 There are some examples of Maitreya having ūnarmacakra pravartana mudrā from Gandhara and also from Western India; see figs. 89, 90 and 116 from Gandhara, and fig. 158 from Ajanta.
- 47 Hsuan-tsang, Si-Yu-Ki, Beal's trans. Vol. II, p. 119. Unfortuna-

tely, we have no image that can be considered as the images described in Hsuan-tsang's description.

- 48 Comparable works with the fig. 298 are, the seated Buddha now placed above entrance of Mahabodhi temple, Bodh Gaya; the standing Buddha installed in niche at the right of entrance of the same temple; a seated Buddha from Bodh Gaya now in the Nalanda Museum, Acc. no. 77, etc. See Asher, The Art of Eastern India, 300-800, for the stylistic study of the sculpture from the Eastern India.
- 49 Saunders(1960), pp. 66-72.
- 50 T.A.G. Rao(1914), p. 16. He regards this gesture as mudrā of explication or of exposition. He also suggests vyākhyāna mudrā and saṁdarsana mudrā. Vyakhyana means 'detailed exposition of explanation'.
- 51 Saunders(1960), p. 70. He also explores different meaning according to different deities. See, pp. 66-75.
- 52 B. Bhattacharyya(1924), p. 93.
- 53 Ibid. p. 71.
- 54 At least two representations of the same kind are found at Ellora, both are in the third floor, Cave no. 11.
- 55 See fig. 272.
- 56 Manjuvajra maṇḍala, Niṣpannayogāvalī, pp. 46, 50 and 67.
- 57 Sādhanaṁālā, p. 560. B. Bhattacharyya(1924), p. 80. See, also Niṣpannayogāvalī, p. 50.
- 58 See, figs. 317-319.
- 59 The so-called nāmaskāra mudrā for the above hand gesture has been reviewed in the present research and the interpretation of it as 'acceptance' has been suggested earlier. See pp. 194-195.

- 60 The period of origin might have been around the beginning of the third century A.D. For the example, see the figs. 87, 88, 93, 99, 100 and 103.
- 61 C. Sivaramamurti(1963), p. 20.
- 62 Sādhanaṁālā, p. 560. See B.Bhattacharyya(1924), p. 80.
- 63 Niṣpanayogāvalī, p. 50. Ibid, p. 93.