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蹤如是空於波  
跡鳥彼无食等  
不遊所相如無  
可盡行解實積  
得空境脫失聚

!

Frontispiece: the calligraphy in seal  
script by Shi Weimiao, translated into  
Chinese by Shi Liaocan, reads:

*Whose āsavas are destroyed, and who  
is not dependent upon food, whose realm  
is empty and unconditioned release,  
his track is hard to follow,  
like that of birds in the sky.*

Dhammapada VII, v.93 (tr. K.R. Norman)  
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## EDITORIAL

This year marks the birth centenary of Étienne Lamotte (1903-83), undoubtedly one of the greatest Western scholars of Buddhism and possibly the last polymath in the field of Sino-Indian philology.

For many years he was Professor at the Institut Orientaliste of the Catholic University of Louvain (Leuven), Belgium, where he at first taught Greek Language and Literature, soon adding Sanskrit, Pāli, Indology, the History and Philosophy of India and what came under the umbrella term of 'Buddhist Languages', as well as occupying various other academic positions. However, what made his career unique was his decision systematically to translate, often for the first time in a European language, the major texts of Mahāyāna Buddhism from their originals in Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan. In turn, his authorised translator, Sara Boin-Webb, has rendered the French versions into English, notably his magnum opus, *Le Traité de la grande vertu de sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra/upadeśa)*, in five volumes, which regrettably continues to languish in the office of Peeters Press (Leuven) in the hope that it will be published.

Lamotte's accurate, almost pedantic yet highly readable translations, enhanced by the wealth of introductory essays and illuminating footnotes, have ensured him a permanent place in the history of Buddhist textual studies. To paraphrase a popular remark in another context, everything you ever wanted to know about mainstream Indian Mahāyāna thought and practice can be found, in unequalled measure, in his writings.

To commemorate this anniversary, we are featuring Sara Boin-Webb's translation of his 'Vajrapāṇi en Inde' (in two parts), to our knowledge the only substantial study of this subject. By so doing, we wish both to keep alive the memory of Lamotte's inspiring and life and career and to encourage a greater acquaintance and appreciation of his unique literary work.

## VAJRAPĀṆI IN INDIA \*

ÉTIENNE LAMOTTE

### I

#### I. THE YAKṢAS VAJRAPĀṆI AND INDRA

This proteiform spirit who, beginning from a humble origin, rose to the summit of the Buddhist pantheon, is referred to in the texts by the titles of *Yakṣa Vajrapāṇi*, *Guhyakādhipati*, *Malla*, ‘the spirit Thunderbolt-wielder, great leader of the Guhyakas, the Malla’. Here a few words of explanation are called for:

*Yakṣa* is an elastic term: sometimes it serves to designate all the non-human beings (*amanuṣya*) which make up the both despised and dreaded class of the demi-gods. At other times, it is used to describe the great gods, such as Śakra,<sup>1</sup> Māra<sup>2</sup> and even the Buddha himself.<sup>3</sup> An infinite number of *yakṣas* (‘beings worthy of worship’) exists, terrestrial (*bhauma*, dwelling on the surface of the earth or underground) – aerial (*ākāśastha*), etc. In Buddhist cosmology, certain categories of them are also inhabitants of Mount Meru.

On Mount Meru there are four terraces (*pariṣaṇḍa*) of 16,000, 8,000, 4,000 and 2,000 *yojanas*, each separated from the other by 10,000 *yojanas*. The first three are inhabited by the *karotapāṇi* ‘bowl-holding’ yakṣas, the *mālādhara* ‘garland-bearing’ yakṣas and the *sadāmada* ‘ever-drunken’ yakṣas. The fourth terrace is the preserve of the Four Great Kings (*caturmahārāja*) who, with their entourage, form the first class of the gods of the realm of desire (*kāmadhātu*).<sup>4</sup> The Four Great Kings, also called World Guardians (*lokapāla*) are charged with the surveillance of the

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\* Translated by Sara Boin-Webb from the French original ‘Vajrapāṇi en Inde’, in *Mélanges de Sinologie offerts à Monsieur Paul Demeville* I, (Bibliothèque de l’Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises XX), Paris 1966, pp.113-59, and published with gratefully acknowledged permission.

<sup>1</sup> *Majjhima* I, p.252.10.

<sup>2</sup> *Mahāvastu* II, p.261.11.

<sup>3</sup> *Majjhima* I, p.386.31.

<sup>4</sup> *Kośa* III, pp.159-60.

cardinal points; one of them, Vaiśravaṇa or Kubera, the Guardian of the North, is the king of the yakṣas.<sup>5</sup>

The second class of gods of the realm of desire is that of the *Trāyastriṃśa* 'the gods who have the Thirty-three at their head' and whose king is Śakra, *devānām indra* 'the Indra of the gods'. Their town, Sudarśana 'Lovely vista', which contains the *Vaijayanta* 'Palace of Victory', is situated on the summit of Mount Meru, on a plateau whose sides total 80,000 *yojanas*. Above the plateau, at the four corners of Meru, there are four peaks 50,000 *yojanas* high: it is there that reside the Vajrapāṇi 'Thunderbolt-wielder' yakṣas who guard and protect the Trāyastriṃśa gods.<sup>6</sup>

Hence the Vajrapāṇis (in Chinese *Ch'ih-chin-kang* 持金剛, *Chin-kang-shou* 金剛手 or simply *Ching-kang*) form a privileged class of yakṣas removed from the authority of Vaiśravaṇa and directly attached to the Buddhist Indra whose attribute, the thunderbolt (*vajra*), they share.

The Vajrapāṇi who is the subject of the present article plays the part of first among equals among his like, and his title of *Guhyakādhipati* 'leader of the Guhyakas' emphasises this quality. If we are to believe the *Lalitavistara*, the Guhyakas are identical to the Vajrapāṇis, and 'Guhyakādhipati is so named because it was from him that the race of the Vajrapāṇi yakṣas sprang'.<sup>7</sup> In fact, the *Guhyaka* yakṣas are no less known to Brahminical literature than Buddhist:<sup>8</sup> as their name indicates, they are 'mysterious' yakṣas, perhaps cave spirits before having become those of mysteries.<sup>9</sup> When they encountered the epithet of *Guhyakādhipati* in the Indian originals, the Chinese usually translated only the first part, *Guhyaka*, which they rendered by *Mi-chi* 密迹 'of

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Hōbōgirin*, pp.79-83, s.v. *Bishamon*.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Lokaprajñapti*, in L. de La Vallée Poussin, *Cosmologie bouddhique*, Brussels 1913, p.323; *Mahāvibhāṣā*, T 1545, ch.133, p.691c23; *Kośa*, T 1558, ch.11, p.59c21-22 (tr. III, p.161); *Nyāyānusāra*, T 1562, ch.31, p.518c21; *Yogācārabhūmi*, ed. V Bhattacharya, p.40, 5-6: *Upari Merutale caturṣu koṇeṣu catvāraḥ kūtāḥ pañcayojanaśatocchrāyāhtesu Vajrapaṇayo yakṣāḥ prativasanti*.

<sup>7</sup> *Lalitavistara*, p.66, 5-6: *Guhyakādhipati ca nāma yakṣakulam yato Vajrapāṇer utpattiḥ*.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. the indexes in *Epic Mythology* by E. W. Hopkins (Strasbourg 1915) and in the *Mahāvastu* ed. É. Senart.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. A. Foucher, *Art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhāra* II, Paris 1918, p.50, n.2.

‘of mysterious traces’. Further on we will see that, during his threatening interventions, Vajrapāṇi shows himself only to the Buddha and his direct adversary and remains invisible to the mass of watchers. On the other hand, he will end as the guardian of the ‘mysteries’ of the Buddha and bodhisattvas.

Finally, and as far as I know, his title of Malla is never encountered in the Indian originals but only in the corresponding Chinese versions which invariably render it by *Li-shih*. *Li-shih* is a common noun which means ‘athlete’; it is also a proper name used to designate an ancient population of northern Bihar: the Mallas of Pāva and Kuśinagara who had the honour of being present at the Parinirvāṇa of the Buddha and of performing his funeral. According to certain sources, Vajrapāṇi played an import-ant part in these ceremonies.

What should be r/emembered from the above remarks is the close relationship linking Vajrapāṇi to Indra, the great Aryan god, whose story is that of continual decadence.<sup>10</sup>

In Vedism, Indra is the most famous of all the deities: gigantic warrior, drinker and profligate, he wields the *vajra* fashioned for him by Tvaṣṭṛ. With this invincible weapon, he kills the dragon Vṛta, massacres demons, hacks the *dasyus* to pieces, releases the waters and vanquishes the light: he is the glory of the warrior caste of which he is the official protector.

Already in Brahminism, Indra slots into a hierarchy and is aligned over the Lokapālas. If he retains his *vajra* and prerogatives as a warrior, he is above all a god of the rains and his main weapon is magic. Furthermore, he is exposed to threats which impose upon him the ascetism of the Brahmins, and the slaying of Vṛta, which entitled him to great glory, is now taxed with brahminicide. In order to expiate this misdeed, he has to leave the heaven by hiding in a fibre of lotus and only regains his rule over the world on the intervention of Brhaspati and Agni who have discovered his hiding place.

Under the name of Śakra ‘the powerful’ (a Vedic epithet), Indra has acquired acceptance in Buddhism and, in the legend of the Buddha, there are few episodes in which he does not play his part. Śākyamuni’s birth and first bath, the return of Māyā and

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. L. Renou, in *Inde classique* I, Paris 1947, pp.319-21 and 492-3.

the new-born boy to Kapilavastu, the great departure and cutting of the Bodhisattva's hair, the bathe in the Nairañjanā Māra's assault, the invitation to teach, visit to Bimbisāra, great wonder at Śrāvastī, descent of the gods at Sāṃkāśya: on each occasion Śakra inter-venes and, if his good offices are not always accepted, his zeal is no less fervent, and the stanza which he utters immediately after Śākyamuni's Parinirvāṇa summarises the Four Noble Truths in a few words. His appearances are not the result of later augmen-tations of the legend: the presence of a *Sakkasamyutta* in the Nikāyas and Āgamas in itself demonstrates his 'canonicity'.

However, the Buddhist Śakra, a bashful devotee, no longer bears any relation to the Indra Vṛtāhan of the Vedic hymns. He is neither strong nor particularly intelligent and his imperfections are many. He has not eliminated the threefold poison of craving, hatred and delusion,<sup>11</sup> remains subject to death and rebirth<sup>12</sup> and is caught up in the whirl of the round of rebirths.<sup>13</sup> He is timid, subject to panic and often flees. Nevertheless, he retains his characteristic attribute, the thunderbolt; on occasion he wields that *vajra* or mass of flaming iron (*ādīpta ayahkūṭa*) for the protection of the future Buddha or his followers.<sup>14</sup>

A mere substitute for Śakra at the beginning of his history, Vajrapāṇi ended by becoming completely detached from him; then, in a separate form, he remounted all the steps his prototype had descended.

## II. VAJRAPĀNI, MERE MANIFESTATION OF ŚAKRA

Given the late compilation of the texts, it is extremely difficult to return to the very outset of the Buddhist tradition. The only way in which we can approach this is to base ourselves on the common sections of the Pāli Tipitaka on the one hand and the Sanskrit Tripiṭaka on the other, the latter existing on the whole only in Chinese translations.

<sup>11</sup> *Aṅguttara* I, p.144.6-7.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 24-26.

<sup>13</sup> *Aṅguttara* IV, p.105.4-5.

<sup>14</sup> *Jātaka* III, p.146.6; V, p.92.3; VI, p.155.11.

If Śakra frequently appears in the canonical writings (Sūtra, Vinaya and Abhidharma), Vajrapāṇi, who is still only his substitute, makes only a very few appearances in them. His interventions are only episodic in nature and always pursue the same aim: to force the recalcitrant to answer the Buddha's questions.

1. Two sūtras only, attested in the Pāli Nikāyas and Sanskrit Āgamas, mention Vajrapāṇi:

In the *Ambaṭṭhasutta*,<sup>15</sup> the Buddha asks the young Ambaṭṭha a question but the latter remains silent:

At the same moment the yakṣa Vajrapāṇi, with his great mass of iron, burning, flaming and all light, stood in the air above the young Ambaṭṭha. If the young Ambaṭṭha, he said, questioned up to three times by the Beneficent One on a matter concerning the Dharma, does not answer, I will instantly cause his head to shatter into seven fragments. Only the Beneficent One and the young Ambaṭṭha saw the spirit Vajrapāṇi.

An identical scene, reproduced in the same terms, is in the *Cūlasaccakasutta*,<sup>16</sup> when Satyaka Nirgranthaputra in turn refused to answer the Buddha.

2. The Pāli Vinaya does not breathe a word of Vajrapāṇi, and the other Vinayas, with the exception of that of the Mūlasarvāstivādins, are almost equally reticent.

In order to ensure descendents in his family, the monk Sudinna had fathered a child on his former wife. His fellow monks denounced him to the Buddha and the latter questioned the accused. This fact is narrated in all the Vinayas,<sup>17</sup> but that of the Mahīśāsakas<sup>18</sup> is the only one to mention Vajrapāṇi:

The Buddha, for that reason, assembled the community of monks. It is a constant rule of the Buddhas to question or not in full

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<sup>15</sup> *Dīgha* I, p.95.8-18; *Dirgha*, T 1, ch.13, p.83a16-21; *Fo k'ai chieh fan chih a p'o ching*, T 20, p.260b19.

<sup>16</sup> *Majjhima* I, p.231.30-37; *Samyukta*, T 99, ch.5, p.36a15-20; *Ekottara*, T 125, ch.30, p.716a7-12.

<sup>17</sup> Pāli Vin. III, p.231; Dharmaguptaka Vin., T 1428, ch.1, p.570b11-16; Sarvāstivādin Vin., T 1435, ch.1, p.1c2-7.

<sup>18</sup> T 1421, ch.1, p.3b8-13.



knowledge of the case. [The traditional formula follows: *jānantāpi tathāgata pucchanti*, etc.] It is also a constant rule of the Buddhas to have five hundred Vajrapāṇi yakṣas to protect them to left and right. When the Buddha has questioned three times and someone does not answer, the recalcitrant's head shatters into seven pieces.

We also read in the Sarvāstivādin Vinaya:<sup>19</sup>

The Buddha was dwelling in Śrāvastī. Then the monks in the Jeta-vana were defecating everywhere. The yakṣa Guhyaka Vajrapāṇi and the other Aṃanuṣyas became angry and criticised: Is it here that you should do your fouling? The Buddha said to the monks: You should not defecate everywhere; so do it in one place.

Finally, a *Vibhāṣā* on the same Vinaya<sup>20</sup> explains the *pradakṣiṇā* in the following way:

‘To circumambulate a person while keeping him to the right’. According to the Buddha’s Dharma, this circumambulation is done to the right. If someone were to turn to the left, the Guhyaka Vajrapāṇi strikes him with his *vajrakūṭa*.

3. The early school of sculpture which flourished in Central India during the last centuries before the Common Era abounds in representations of gods and demi-gods. Śakra, his hair dressed with a tiara, with or without thunderbolt, frequently appears in scenes of the Buddha's life (invitation to teach, visit to Indra-śailaguhā, descent of the gods at Samkaśya, etc.) or in Jātaka stories (Viśvantara, Śyāmajātaka, etc.). The ancient sculptors represented quite a number of yakṣas which the inscriptions some-times enable us to identify and whose names are partly known through literary sources. However, at Bhārhut, Bodh-Gayā or Sāñcī, among the monuments known up to now, there is no representation of Vajrapāṇi going back to an early date. At Sāñcī, it is only during the Gupta period that the Mahāyānist bodhisattvas, such as Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāṇi, make their appearance.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> T 1435, ch.38, p.276a14-17.

<sup>20</sup> T 1440, ch.5, p.534a10-11.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Sir John Marshall and A. Foucher, *The Monuments of Sāñcī* I, Calcutta 1939, p.253.

It seems to result from the relative silence of the texts as well as the total absence of carved representations that, at the outset of the Buddhist tradition, the thunderbolt-wielding yakṣa did not yet constitute a proper entity but merely a manifestation of Śakra in his minor role as a threatening deity.

Buddhaghosa (fifth century), the great exegetist of the Pāli Canon, was in no doubt about this. Commenting upon the *Ambaṭṭha*- and *Cūlasaccakasuttas* mentioned above, he explains:<sup>22</sup>

A thunderbolt-wielder is he who has a thunderbolt in his hand. When *yakkha* is said, this does not mean such-and-such (a particular) *yakkha*, but merely *Sakka*, the king of the gods.

It is quite natural that, in order to frighten Ambaṭṭha or Satyaka Nirgranthaputra, Śakra should borrow the form of one of these thunderbolt-wielding yakṣas promoted to the guardianship of the Trāyastriṃśa gods and residing with them on the summit of Mount Meru.

According to the *Avadānaśataka*,<sup>23</sup> Śakra is in the habit of doing this:

Śakra, the king of the gods, has the knowledge and sight of all that occurs beneath him. He saw the king [Dharmagaveśin] consumed by a desire to hear the Good Word, and wondered to himself: Maybe I should test the king. Then Śakra, the king of the gods, assumed the form of Guhyaka and, transforming his hands, feet and eyes, he confronted this king and uttered the following stanza...

Śakra does not have a monopoly of these transformations. Every deity, and even more so, the Buddha and bodhisattvas, can at will assume lesser forms. Sometimes it is even a necessity, as we know from the misadventure of the devaputra Hastaka who, because he wanted to manifest himself on earth without taking on a coarse form (*audārika ātmabhāva*) in advance, collapsed and fell without being able to stand: it was like melted butter or oil spread on the sand.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* I, p.264.12-13; *Papañcasūdanī* II, p.277.34-35.

<sup>23</sup> Ed. J S Speyer, I, p.220,5-7. – See also *ibid.*, I, p.189,3-7.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *Āṅguttara* I, pp.278-9; *Samyukta*, T 99, ch.22, p.159a; *Mahāprajñā-pāramitopadeśa*, T 1509, ch.10, p.128a (tr. in Lamotte, *Traité* I, pp.562-5).

The *Mahāvastu* claims that the Buddha, having reached the town of Kusumā with his disciples, took on the aspect of Vajrapāṇi through pity for beings.<sup>25</sup> In the Mahāyāna sūtras the great bodhi-sattvas assume the most varied of forms in order to win over beings: They become moons, suns, Śakra, Brahmā or Prajeśvara, they become water, fire, earth or the winds.<sup>26</sup> Quantities of Māras who go and tempt beings in innumerable universes are in reality bodhisattvas who behave like Māra through skilful means.<sup>27</sup>

In the various worlds, the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara teaches the Dharma to creatures in the most diverse of forms. The *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* lists a good fifteen of them and concludes by saying: To creatures who are susceptible to being won over by Vajrapāṇi, he teaches the Dharma in the form of Vajrapāṇi.<sup>28</sup>

It happens that some of the Vajrapāṇis introduced into the Mahāyāna sūtras are mere magical creations, transformations (*nirmāṇa*) which do not correspond to any reality. A passage in the Mahāyānist *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*,<sup>29</sup> translated into Chinese at the beginning of the fifth century, is significant in this respect:

The bodhisattva Kāśyapa said to the Buddha: Bhagavat, that the bodhisattvas consider all beings equally as their only son is such a profound mystery that I cannot grasp it. Bhagavat, the Tathāgata should not say that the bodhisattvas consider equally and impartially all beings as their only son. Why? In the Teaching of the Buddha, there are immoral (*duḥśīla*) beings, guilty of faults (*sāvadyakārin*) and destroyers of the Good Dharma (*saddharmadūṣaka*). How could such men be considered as one's only son?

The Buddha said to Kāśyapa: It is, however, true: I consider beings as my only son Rāhula.

The bodhisattva Kāśyapa further said to the Buddha: Bhagavat, one day the *poṣaḍa pañcadaśika* was taking place and the assembly

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<sup>25</sup> Ed. É. Senart, I, p.183,8-9.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*, tr. Lamotte, English version, pp.183-4, v.23.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p.150.

<sup>28</sup> *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, ed. Kern-Nanjio, p.445, 6.

<sup>29</sup> T 374, ch.3, p.380c3-17; T 375, ch.3, p.620b12-27; Tib. Trip., Vol.30, p.151, f. 43a4-b2.

was purifying itself. A young man (*dāraka*) whose bodily, vocal and mental actions were bad, hid himself and fraudulently listened to the *prātimokṣa* being recited. Guhyaka, the Malla, under the super-normal impulse (*adhiṣṭhāna*) of the Buddha, took his *vajrakūṭa* and reduced his head to dust. O Bhagavat, that yakṣa Vajrapāṇi was truly cruel thus to deprive that young man of his life. How, therefore, can the Tathāgata truly consider all beings as his only son Rāhula?

The Buddha said to Kāśyapa: Do not say that! That young man was only a magical creation (*nirmāṇa*) merely serving to expel immoral beings and destroyers of the Good Dharma and make them leave the community. Vajrapāṇi, the Guhyaka, was also a magical creation.

To sum up, in the early canonical texts Vajrapāṇi is merely a substitute for Śakra, and again in some Mahāyānist texts he may sometimes, but not always, reveal himself in a metamorphosed form of Śakra or the Buddha or of some bodhisattva.

It is therefore mistakenly that some authors have wanted to see the identification of Vajrapāṇi with Indra as the last stage in the evolution of the personage of Vajrapāṇi,<sup>30</sup> or the beginnings of a new religion with Śakra as its patron.<sup>31</sup>

### III. VAJRAPĀṆI, AUTONOMOUS SPIRIT, AND HIS INTERVENTIONS

The Canon of texts, scholarly and didactic in nature, was followed by the post-canonical literature which was more populist-inspired. Reproducing and complementing the biographical fragments in the early writings, it supplied new versions of the life of the Buddha (*Mahāvastu*, *Lalitavistara*, *Buddhacarita*, etc.) and collections of stories and fables (*Avadānaśataka*, *Divyāvadāna*, etc). Part of this output was incorporated into the Sanskrit Āgamas: we find an *Aśokāvadāna* in the Saṃyukta, numbers of stories and fables in the Ekottara and a complete life of the Buddha in the Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya, the compilation of which was not completed until the second century CE.

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<sup>30</sup> Sten Konow, 'Note on Vajrapāṇi-Indra', in *Acta Orientalia* VIII, 4, 1930, pp.311-17.

<sup>31</sup> C.E. Codage, 'The Place of Indra in Early Buddhism', in *Ceylon University Review* III, 1, 1945, p.52.

Vajrapāṇi made a place for himself in this new literary bed. He appears there, no longer as a secondary form of Śakra, but as an autonomous spirit, endowed with his own personality and often juxtaposed to Śakra from whom he is completely detached. He is no longer a mere bogey destined to frighten the Buddha's adversaries: he takes an active part in events.

I shall indicate here some of his interventions in the life of the Buddha.

*The Buddha's conception.* – When the Buddha entered his mother's womb, Vajrapāṇi was attached to his person with other deities, including Śakra. This is affirmed by the *Lalitavistara*.<sup>32</sup>

While the Bodhisattva was seated in this way, Śakra, the lord of the gods, the four Great Kings, the twenty-eight leaders of the army of yakṣas, the one named Guhyakādhipati from whom the race of Vajrapāṇi yakṣas sprang, having learned that the Bodhisattva had entered his mother's womb, were always and ceaselessly attached to his person.

*The great departure.* – When Śākyamuni left Kapilavastu to take up the homeless life, the deities, including Śakra and Vajrapāṇi, were present at that great departure. Here again, details are supplied by the *Lalitavistara*.<sup>33</sup>

The gods of the earth and the air, as well as the World Guardians, Śakra the lord of the gods with his retinue, the Yāma and Tuṣita gods and the Nirmita and Paranirmita gods hastened ...

And the magnanimous leader of the Guhyakas, also wielding a flaming thunderbolt, stood in the air, a breastplate girding his body, endowed with power, vigour and courage, holding in his hand a sparkling thunderbolt.

*The victory over the heretics and the great wonder at Śrāvastī.* – Unlike the two preceding episodes, this one is not mentioned in the canonical sources. A narrative in Pāli is incorporated into the Commentaries on the *Dīgha* and *Dhammapada*;<sup>34</sup> the much more

<sup>32</sup> *Lalitavistara*, p.66, 4.7.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p.219.

<sup>34</sup> *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* I, p.57; *Dhammapadatṭhakathā* III, pp.204-16 (tr. E.W. Burlingame, *Buddhist Legends* III, pp.38-47). See also *Jātaka* IV, pp.263-5.

developed Sanskrit version is found in the *Divyāvadāna*.<sup>35</sup> It is especially upon the latter that A. Foucher based his remarkable study on the ‘Great Miracle of Śrāvastī’.<sup>36</sup>

In the sources just cited, Vajrapāṇi is not mentioned, but he appears in what are probably some of the earliest texts:

1. The *Dharmapadāvadāna* is a collection of stories aimed at illustrating the verses of the Dharmapada. It was translated into Chinese at Lo-yang between 290 and 306 by Fa-chü and Fa-li of the eastern Chin, but it was only the second translation.<sup>37</sup>

Here is an excerpt in which the rôle played by the yakṣas Pañcika and Vajrapāṇi is emphasised:<sup>38</sup>

Formerly, in the kingdom of Śrāvastī, there was a Brahmin master named Pūraṇa Kāśyapa, accompanied by five hundred disciples. The king of the country and the population had at first welcomed him. When the Buddha attained enlightenment, he went with his disciples from Rājagṛha to Śrāvastī: his bodily marks were brilliant and his teaching very pleasing. Hence, in the royal palace and among the adjoining population, there was no-one who did not revere him

Then Pūraṇa Kāśyapa became envious and began to criticise the Bhagavat, in the hope of being the only one to receive honours. At the head of his disciples, he went to King Prasenajit and said to him: Among ourselves, the elders first followed the teachings of the old masters. But since the śramaṇa Gautama left home in search of the Path and, without truly being a holy man, claims to be the Buddha, the king has abandoned me in order to pay homage most especially to him. Now I would like to measure myself in virtue against the Buddha in order to know who is the better. Whoever wins, the king may honour until the end of his life.

The king declared that to be acceptable and, mounting a fine chariot, went to the Buddha. After having greeted him, he said to him: Pūraṇa Kāśyapa wishes to measure himself in depth against the Bhagavat and manifest wonders of supernormal power (ṛddhi-

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<sup>35</sup> *Divyāvadāna*, pp.143-66 (tr. E. Burnouf, *Introduction du buddhisme indien*, 2nd ed., pp.144-68).

<sup>36</sup> A. Foucher, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art*, Paris-London 1917, pp.147-84.

<sup>37</sup> See Chu, T 2145, ch.2, p.9c21; Li, T 2034, ch.6, p.66b24.

<sup>38</sup> *Fa chü pi yü ching*, T 211, ch.3, pp.598c1-599a16.

*prātihārya*). Would that not be expedient? The Buddha replied: Very well, in seven days I will engage in a bout of magic.

To the east of the town, on a vast levelled terrain, the king built two pavilions (*maṇḍapa*), adorned with the seven jewels. There he set up banners and laid mats. The distance between the two pavilions measured two *li*. The disciples of both parties settled at their feet. The king, the ministers and a great crowd assembled in a mass in order to witness the bout of magic between the two men. Kāśyapa and his disciples, having reached the foot of the pavilion, climbed up it by means of a ladder.

The king of the yakṣas named Pan-shih (Pañcika), seeing Kāśyapa's falsity and envy, raised a great wind and blew on his pavilion: the seating was overturned and the banners flew away. Sand, gravel and stones rained down to such a degree that the eye could no longer see.

As for the Bhagavat's pavilion, it remained calm and still. The Buddha and the great community approached in good order and, once close, found themselves suddenly at its summit. All the monks sat down calmly and in order. The king and the ministers, re-doubling their respect, bowed down their heads before the Buddha and said to him: We would like you to display wonders of super-normal power (*ṛddhipratihārya*) and humiliate the heretics; thus the population of the kingdom would have fervent and sincere faith.

Thereupon the Buddha vanished from his pavilion with the speed of lightning and, rising into the air, emitted great rays. He disappeared from the East only to reappear in the West, and it was the same in the four directions. His body emitted water and fire, alternately from above and below. Whether sitting or standing in the air, he performed the twelve transformations. Then, suddenly, he disappeared and resumed his place at the summit of the pavilion. The devas, nāgas and yakṣas offered him flowers and perfumes, gave great cries and shook the earth.

Pūraṇa Kāśyapa, wholly disorientated, lowered his head in shame and dared not raise his eyes. Thereupon Vajrapāṇi the Malla lifted his *vajrakūṭa* from the top of which fire issued and threatened Kāśyapa: Why, he asked him, do you not display your own super-normal wonders? Kāśyapa, fear-stricken, leaped from his pavilion and fled. His five hundred pupils ran away and scattered.

The Bhagavat remained imperturbable, displaying neither joy nor displeasure. He returned to Anāthapiṇḍada's grove in the

Jetavana. The king and his ministers, full of joy, took their leave of him and went away.

While Pūraṇa Kāśyapa and his disciples were leaving in shame, they encountered on their path an aged upāsaka named *Mo-ni* (Maṇi).<sup>39</sup> The latter cursed them, saying: Fools that you are! Without judging yourselves, you wanted to measure yourselves in virtue against the Buddha. Mad fools and imposters, you are unaware of shame. With a face like yours, you should not present yourselves before the Buddha.

Pūraṇa Kāśyapa and his disciples reached the bank of a river and, deceiving his disciples, Kāśyapa said: I am going to throw myself into the water and I will certainly be reborn as a Brahmadeva. If I do not return, know that I have that happiness. His disciples waited for him but he did not return. They said to one another: Our master has surely risen to the sky, where should we dwell? One after the other, they threw themselves into the water, hoping to rejoin their master but, unaware of what their offence implied, they fell into hell.

2. Compiled in Turfan by Hui-chiao and his colleagues from notes assembled in Khotan, the *Hsien yü ching* was published in 445 in Liang-chou.<sup>40</sup> It contains a detailed account of the 'Victory over the Six Masters', in which events are narrated day by day. It is during the eighth that Vajrapāṇi appears alongside Śakra.<sup>41</sup>

On the eighth day, at the invitation of Śakra devendra, a lion-throne (*siṃhāsana*) was made for the Buddha. The Tathāgata mounted it; Śakra devendra stood to his left and Brahmārāja stood to his right. The whole community, in silence, was seated in meditation. Slowly, the Buddha extended his arm and grasped the throne with his hand. Suddenly there was a great noise, like the trumpeting of an elephant. At that moment five huge yakṣas were pushing and pulling the great pavilion (*maṇḍapa*) of six masters. Vajrapāṇi the Malla seized his *vajrakūṭa* from the top of which fire issued and threatened the six masters. The latter, terror-stricken, fled on foot and, filled with shame, threw themselves into a river

<sup>39</sup> In the *Divyāvadāna*, p.164, 27, the role of Maṇi is played by a eunuch (*pandaka*) whose name is not given.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. *Chu*, T 2145, ch.9, pp.67c-68a, and S. Lévi, 'Le Sūtra du sage et du fou', in *JA*, 1925, p.312.

<sup>41</sup> *Hsien yü ching*, T 202, ch., p.363a1-9.



where they perished. The disciples of the six masters, nine hundred thousand in number, took their refuge in the Buddha and asked to become his disciples.

3. The twelfth chapter of the *Divyāvadāna*, entitled *Prātihārya-sūtra*, is entirely devoted to the great wonder at Śrāvastī. It has been translated by E. Burnouf.<sup>42</sup> The close relationship uniting the *Divya* and the *Mūlasarvāstivādin* Vinaya has long since been noted. For E. Huber, S. Lévi and H. Lüders,<sup>43</sup> the first would be an offshoot of the second; in contrast, J. Przyluski<sup>44</sup> thought that the compilers of the Vinaya had borrowed from the *Divya* or from an earlier version of that text. In the chapter which occupies us, the two sources generally coincide, except towards the end. The Vinaya presents a sober and coherent account in which Vajrapāṇi plays his traditional rôle. Conversely, the *Divya* complicates and enlivens the narration of events: it clearly seeks to amalgamate various sources, thus betraying its later compilatory nature. Furthermore, it substitutes Pañcika for Vajrapāṇi. Here, facing each other, are the two versions of the passage:

<p>Vinaya<sup>45</sup></p> <p>Then King Prasenajit said to the six masters: ‘The Great Bhagavat Master has already displayed supernormal wonders. Friends, now is the time for you to perform them’. Then the tīrthya Pūraṇa remained silent and said not a word. Then he nudged Maskarī Gośālīputra with his elbow. It was the same to the end: they successively nudged each other as far as the sixth, but not a single one dared answer. Three times the king</p>	<p>Divya<sup>46</sup></p> <p>Then Prasenajit, the king of Kosala, said to the Tīrthyas: ‘Bhagavat has just displayed supernormal wonders superior to the human condition; it is your turn to display them too’. At those words, the Tīrthyas re-mained silent, thinking only of departing. Twice more Prasenajit, the king of Kosala, said the same thing to them: Bhagavat has just displayed supernormal wonders superior to the human condition; it is your turn to</p>
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<sup>42</sup> E. Burnouf, *Introduction...*, 2nd ed., p.165.

<sup>43</sup> See the references in L. Renou, 'Sylvain Lévi et son œuvre scientifique', in *JA*, 1936, p.27, n.1.

<sup>44</sup> J. Przyluski, 'Fables in the Vinaya-Piṭaka of the Sarvāstivādin School', in *IHQ*, 1929, p.5.

<sup>45</sup> T 1541, ch.26, p.553c16-28.

<sup>46</sup> Divya, pp.163,10-162,5.

ordered them to display supernormal powers and each time the six masters set to nudging each one after the other but, as before, they remained silent, drawing in their necks and lowering their heads. As if they had entered deep meditation, they remained unresponsive.

Thereupon Vajrapāṇi, the great yakṣa general, had this thought: 'Those six fools have long tormented Bhagavat. A means must be found to make them go away; they have no courage, they will flee and bury themselves'.

Having reflected thus, he raised a violent storm mixed with rain and hail. The magic pavilion (*rddhimandapa*) of the Tīrthiyas crumbled on the spot. The Tīrthiyas and their wicked disciples all scattered.

Some of them, terror-stricken, entered mountain hollows, trees and forests, tufts of grass and re-mained hidden. Others entered temples of the gods and chapels: they held their stomachs, filled with sorrow.

As for the Buddha's magic pavilion, it was not shaken even once.

display them too. At those words the Tīrthyas, nudging one another, said to each other: 'Get up, it is for you to get up'; but none of them got up.

Now at that time Pañcika, the great yakṣa general, was in the assembly. This thought came to his mind: 'Here are foolish persons who will long continue to torment Bhagavat and the Community of monks'.

Having thought in this way, he raised a violent storm, accompanied by wind and rain. Because of that storm accompanied by wind and rain, the Tīrthyas' pavilion became invisible. The Tīrthyas, struck by the thunder and rain, fled in all directions.

Several hundreds of thousands of living beings struck by that violent rain, drew near the Bhagavat; and when they had arrived, having greeted his feet by touching them with their heads, they sat to one side. But the Bhagavat acted so that not even a single drop of rain fell on that assembly. Then those many hundreds of thousands of living beings who were seated to one side gave vent to these words of praise: 'Ah, the Buddha! Ah, the Dharma! Ah, the Community! Ah, how well the Dharma has been expounded'.

Pañcika, the yakṣa general, said to the Tīrthyas; 'You, foolish persons, take your refuge in the Buddha, in the Dharma, in the Community of monks!'

But they screamed as they fled: 'We take our refuge in the mountain; we seek refuge in trees, walls and hermitages'.

4. Again in the eleventh century, the Kashmirian poet Kṣemendra devoted to these events some verses of his *Bodhisattvāvadāna-kalpalatā* (XII, v.57):

In the meantime, noting that the Sectaries persisted in remaining obstinate adversaries of the Bhagavat, the yakṣa Vajrapāṇi, raising a violent storm accompanied by rain, scattered them and forced them to find refuge in caves, in the ground'.<sup>47</sup>

*Devadatta's attacks.* – A cousin and rival of Śākyamuni, Devadatta hatched several plots against the Buddha: he hired assassins to kill him, he dislodged a rock in order to crush him and he set the drunken elephant Nālāgiri on him. The second attack deserves attention since Vajrapāṇi, as the development of the tradition proceeded, ended by having the leading rôle.

1. The Pāli Vinaya,<sup>48</sup> partly reproduced by the *Milindapañha*,<sup>49</sup> recounts that one day the Buddha was walking at the foot of the Gr̥dhra-kūṭa-parvata in Rājagṛha. Devadatta climbed the mountain and, from the summit, threw a rock at him with the intention of crushing him. Two mountain ridges joined together and intercepted the rock (*dve pabbakūṭa samāgantvā tam silam sam-paṭicchimsu*); a sliver of stone flew off and injured the Buddha on the foot.

2. In the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya,<sup>50</sup> the rock is stopped by an anonymous deity who replaces it on the mountain peak.

3. The Vinayas of the Mahīśāsakas and Sarvāstivādins, the *Ekot-tarāgama*, the *Hsing ch'i hsing ching* and the *Vinayadānasūtra* <sup>51</sup>

<sup>47</sup> In the passage which occupies us here the Sanskrit text is corrupt, and the edition by P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga 1959, I, p.115, marks no progress over the old edition by S. Chandra Das, Calcutta 1888, I, p.427. Here I adopt the corrections proposed by S. Lévi (cf. A. Foucher, *Beginnings...*, p.175 in the notes):

*Atrāntare Bhagavataḥ satataṃ vipākṣān  
sarvātmanā kṣapaṇakān avadhārya yakṣaḥ,  
kṣiptogravātavṛtavarṣavaraiś cakāra  
vidrāvya randhaśaranān bhuvi Vajrapāniḥ.*

<sup>48</sup> Vin. II, p.193.

<sup>49</sup> *Milinda*, p.136.

<sup>50</sup> *Ssü fen lü*, T 1428, ch.4, p.592c24.

<sup>51</sup> T 1421, ch.3, p.20a28; T 1435, ch.36, p.260a20; T 125, ch.47, p.803b16; T 197, ch.2, p.170c1; T 1464, ch.5, p.870a11.

claim that the rock was intercepted by the yakṣa Kumbhīra (or Kimbila) who had his dwelling-place on the Ṛḍhrakūṭaparvata.

4. The Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya, the last date-wise, introduces Vajrapāṇi into the legend while still associating him with the yakṣa Kumbhīra. After having described the plot, it continues:<sup>52</sup>

The gods saw what was happening below them. At that moment, the yakṣa Vajrapāṇi had this thought: That Devadatta, who is very wicked, wishes to harm the Tathāgata. Having reflected thus, he went to the dwelling of the yakṣa Kumbhīra and said to him: Devadatta has built a great catapult on the summit of the Gṛdhra-kūṭapārvata; he will make great balls fly in order to wound the Buddha. The Bhagavat is now resting in your home. When Devadatta throws the rock, I will break it in flight with my *vajrakūṭa*. You should help me so that no sliver of rock (*prapātika*) harms the Buddha: it is for you to protect him. Kumbhīra signalled his agreement.

Then the Bhagavat, having risen from his seat, was about to enter the cave at the foot of the mountain when Devadatta and his five hundred companions aimed a flying rock straight at the Tathāgata. The yakṣa Vajrapāṇi struck the rock in the air with his *vajrakūṭa* and broke it. A sliver of rock was about to fall on the Buddha. The yakṣa Kumbhīra tried to grasp it, but was unable to do so: it struck him; from there it rebounded and wounded the Buddha on the foot. Then the Bhagavat uttered this stanza (*Dhammapada* v.127; *Divya*, p.532):

Naivāntarikṣe na samudramadhye  
na parvatānām vivaram praviśya  
na vidyate sa pṛthivī pradeśo  
yatra sthitam na prasaheta karma.

'Neither in the sky, nor in the midst of the sea, nor by entering mountain hollows, will one find a place where action does not follow'.

Then the yakṣa Kumbhīra who had received the rock full on his body understood that he was going to die and made the aspiration to be reborn after his death among the Trāyastriṃśa gods.

5. A later, strictly Mahāyānist source, the *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*, eliminates the yakṣa Kumbhīra from the story, retaining

only Vajrapāṇi:<sup>53</sup>

Devadatta conceived a malign thought (*duṣṭacitta*): he pushed a rock in order to crush the Buddha. However, Vajrapāṇi, the Malla, with his *vajrakūṭa*, hurled the rock far away. Nevertheless, a sliver of rock flew off and injured the Buddha on the toes.

*The Buddha's Parinirvāṇa.* – If Vajrapāṇi was thus able to insinuate himself into several episodes of the Buddha's life, it would indeed be surprising if he did not play any part in the crucial moment of the Parinirvāṇa. However, here again the oldest sources make no mention of him; it is only with time that he carved himself a place in the legend.

1. The *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* relates that after the decease of Śākyamuni the devas and disciples uttered several stanzas. The Pāli recension<sup>54</sup> places them on the lips of Sakka devānam inda, Anuruddha and Ānanda; the Sanskrit version<sup>55</sup> on those of a ‘certain’ bhikṣu, Śakra devendra, Brahmā Sahāṃpati and Aniruddha. It is then that Śakra utters his famous stanza condensing the Four Noble Truths:

*Anitya vata samskāṛā utpādvyaayadharmināḥ  
utpadya hi nirudhyanṭe teṣāṃ vyupasāmaḥ sukham.*

‘Impermanent indeed are all formations; their nature consists of aris-ing and disappearing; having arisen, they cease; their calming is happi-ness’.

2. However, in the version of the same sūtra, as it appears in the *Ādīśāstra*,<sup>56</sup> the gods and men who chant the stanzas are no less than twenty-seven in number: Brahmā Devarāja, Śakra devendra, Vaiśravaṇa, Aniruddha, Ānanda, the yakṣa Kumbhīra, Guhyaka Malla, Māyā the Buddha's mother, the deity of the two Śāla trees, the deity of the Śāla grove, the four devarājas, the king of the Trāyastriṃśa gods, the king of the Yama gods, the king of the Tuṣita gods, the king of the Nirmṛtavaśavartin gods, the king of the Paranirmṛtavaśavartin gods and, finally, several bhikṣus.

It will be noted that Guhyaka Malla, otherwise known as

<sup>53</sup> T 1509, ch.14, p.165a2-4 (tr. in *Traité II*, p.874).

<sup>54</sup> *Dīgha* II, p.157.

<sup>55</sup> Ed. E. Waldschmidt, pp.398-400.

<sup>56</sup> T 1, ch.4, pp.26c-27b.

Vajrapāṇi, speaks after Śakra devendra from whom he is clearly differentiated, and that the latter in turn is given as different from the king of the Trāyastriṃśa gods, which is contrary to the teach-ings of Buddhist cosmology.

Vajrapāṇi's stanza is: 'Henceforth and thereafter, the Brahma-loka, the gods and mankind will no longer see the virile man, the lion of the Śakyas'.<sup>57</sup>

3. A text entitled 'Sūtra of the sorrow and love of Guhyaka Vajrapāṇi, the Malla, when the Buddha entered Nirvāṇa' was translated into Chinese by an anonymous hand under the Western Chin (385-431).<sup>58</sup> It is purely Hīnayānist in inspiration. The scene occurs in Kuśinagara, in the Sāla grove. Guhyaka Vajrapāṇi, the Malla, seeing the Buddha about to pass away, sinks to the ground like a mountain collapsing,<sup>59</sup> then, having recovered himself, breaks into long lamentations. The Master comforts him with a discourse on impermanence.

The weakness that laid Vajrapāṇi low is represented on several Gandhāran bas-reliefs<sup>60</sup> and Hsüan-tsang, in his *Hsi-yü-chi*, de-votes a special mention to it.<sup>61</sup>

4. The *Lien hua mien ching* (T386) is one of the few Mahāyāna sūtras that can be dated with any precision: it is situated between the death of Mīhrikula (c. 530-540), whose misdeeds it predicts, and the Chinese translation concluded by Narendrayaśas in April 584.<sup>62</sup> It is a Parinirvāṇa sūtra relating the last months of Śākyamuni's life.

The Buddha is in Vaiśālī on the banks of the Markaṭahrada. Accompanied by Ānanda, he makes his way to Pāpā, bathes on the way in the river Acīravatī and causes a disciple to admire his marvellous body. He predicts to him his entry into Nirvāṇa, which will take place three months later, and advises him of the fate reserved for his relics. Leaving Pāpā, the Master starts a great tour of the kingdoms where he performs innumerable conversions. Having reached Magadha, he settles in Bodh-Gayā

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p.27a9-11.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. K'ai, T 2154, ch.4, p.519a2.

<sup>59</sup> T 394, p.1.116a26-27.

<sup>60</sup> A. Foucher, *Art gréco-bouddhique* I, figs 277, 279, 280.

<sup>61</sup> T 2087, ch.6, p.904a12-15 (tr. in Watters II, p.35).

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Li, T 2034, ch.12, p.102c16.

on the *bodhi-maṇḍa*. He announces to Ānanda that he will enter Nirvāṇa fifteen days later. It is then that the twenty-seven groups of deities, Vaiśravaṇa and Śakra at their head, break into tears and each utter a stanza. The twenty-fifth group consists of Vajrapāṇi Guhyaka accompanied by an hundred milliard yakṣas. The stanza he recites is further evidence of his disarray: ‘This supreme town, this great land of plenty is abandoning the Śākya clan: so where should we go?’<sup>63</sup>

Then follows the famous prediction which is the subject of the sūtra: The merchant Lotus-Face, says the Buddha, will be a king with the name of Mei-shih-ho-lo-chü-lo (Mihirakula), will annihilate the Dharma and, as a true brute, will smash my *pātra*. After his wretched death, seven gods will be incarnated one after the other in order to re-establish Buddhism in Kashmir.<sup>64</sup>

*Other episodes.* – Further minor incidents in which Vajrapāṇi plays a part can be found in the narrative literature.

1. When Sumāgadhā, the daughter of Anāthapiṇḍada, who was married to a heretic from the Puṇḍavardhana, invited the Buddha to her kingdom, the Master went there by means of his super-normal power, together with a group of Arhats and deities:

To the right of the Tathāgata was Brahmarāja devarāja; to his left Śakra devendra, holding a fly-whisk in his hand; behind the Tathāgata was Guhyaka Vajrapāṇi, the Malla, holding the *vajrakūṭa* in his hand. The devaputra Vaiśravaṇa, holding a *chattra* adorned with the seven jewels, stood in the air above the Tathāgata, for fear that some dust might sully the Tathāgata’s body.<sup>65</sup>

2. The Mūlasarvastivādin Vinaya records that one day the Bhaga-vat, taking the medicine-king Jīvaka with him, went to the Hīma-vat where all kinds of medicinal plants glittered like lamps. He asked Jīvaka to gather them, but the latter declined because he was afraid. Thereupon, at the request of the Buddha, Vajrapāṇi collected them in his place.<sup>66</sup>

3. The *Divyāvadāna* recounts how the yakṣa made a breach in the

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<sup>63</sup> T 386, ch.2, p.1075a21-24.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p.1075c.

<sup>65</sup> *Sumāgadhāvadāna*, T 125, ch.22, p.663c6-9; T 128, p.841b17-20.

<sup>66</sup> *Gilgit Manuscripts*, ed. N. Dutt, III, part 2, p.44, 8-13.

walls of Bhadrāṅkara so that the crowd could hasten more quickly to the feet of the Master.<sup>67</sup>

It would be easy enough to complete this account of Vajrapāṇi's minor appearances, but next we should approach the crucial event that made the yakṣa the hero of North-West India and the permanent escort of the Buddha.

*The subjugation of the dragon Apalāla.* – A dragon named Sundarin ravaged the harvests. A brahmin called *Fan-shih* 梵志 'Brāhmaṇa' or *Ch'ing-chi* 祇訖 (Gaṅgin?) tamed it by magical means. The king and the population rewarded him with gifts. However, a time came when the inhabitants stopped offering gifts to the brahmin. Annoyed, the latter made an aspiration to become a dragon and, since he had acquired great merit, his wish was fulfilled: he was reborn in place of the dragon Sundarin and set to ravaging the harvests of which he left only straws; hence his name Apalāla 'Strawless', transcribed in Chinese by *A-po-lo* 阿波羅, 阿鉢羅, or *A-po-lo-lo* 阿波羅羅 and translated as *Wu-tao-ch'ien* 無稻芊, *Wu-tao-kan* 無稻稈, *Wu-tao-kan* 無稻幹, *Wu-miao* 無苗, *Pu-liu-ku-i* 不留穀衣, *Wu-liu-yen* 無流延, *Wu-kao* 無藁, etc. The king appealed to the Buddha and the latter, assisted by Vajrapāṇi or other disciples, subdued and converted the dragon.

It has been suggested, not without malice, that if the Buddha required assistance this was because he was not capable of subduing the dragon on his own. This is to forget that the 'Being with Ten Powers' had peerless supernormal powers at his disposal and that, moreover, at the outset of his ministry and with no-one's help, he overcame and placed in his alms-bowl the monstrous serpent that guarded the fire-sanctuary of the jāṭila Urubilvā-kāśyapa.<sup>68</sup> It was only later, when he had a sufficient number of qualified disciples, that the 'Greatly Compassionate One' considered it undignified to scuffle with nāgas and appealed to his inferiors; Mahāmaudgalyāyana, the foremost of those who pos-

<sup>67</sup> *Divya*, p.130, 8.

<sup>68</sup> *Catuspariśatsūtra*, ed. E. Waldschmidt, pp.240-4; *Jātaka* I, p.82; various Vinayas translated by A. Bareau, *Recherches sur la biographie du Buddha*, Paris 1962, pp.257-60; *Mahāvastu* III, pp.428-9; *T'ai tzü*, T 185, ch.2, pp.480c20-482c1; *Kuo ch'ü*, T 189, ch.4, pp.646a13-649b6; *Chung hsü*, T 191, ch.9, pp.958a6-960b27; *Chung pên*, T 196, ch.1, pp.149c11-151c4.



-sessed the *ṛddhibala*, subjugated the dragon Nandopananda<sup>69</sup> and, as we shall see, the honour of having subdued Apalāla devolved above all on Vajrapāṇi.

Certain sources locate the subjugation of Apalāla in Magadha,<sup>70</sup> others in North India in Gandhāra (Ch. *Ch'ien-t'o-lo*)<sup>71</sup> or in Uddiyāna (Ch. *Wu-chang*),<sup>72</sup> finally others sometimes in Magadha and sometimes in North India.<sup>73</sup> Similar divergences are explained by one of those transfers of legends which are so common in hagiography or, quite simply, by the monstrous size of the nāgas 'whose tail is still in Takṣaśīlā whilst its head is already in Vāranaṣī'.<sup>74</sup>

Vajrapāṇi was perhaps the hero of Magadha before becoming that of North-West India, and the *Mahāmāyūrī*<sup>75</sup> no doubt has its reasons in making the yakṣa the protector of Rājagṛha, with his dwelling on the Gṛhdrakūṭa. However, whether the event occurred in Magadha or in the North-West, the developments of the legend are identical: in the victory over Apalāla, Vajrapāṇi plays merely a secondary rôle and it is only in the later sources that he alone carries off the laurels of victory. His elevation over all the attendants of the Buddha occurred only gradually.

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<sup>69</sup> Cf. *Visuddhimagga*, ed. H.C. Warren, pp.336-8; *Jātaka* V, p.126; *Ekottara*, T 125, ch.28, pp.703b-704c; *Divya*, p.395; *Nandopanandanāgarājadamana*, T 597, p.131; *Upadeśa*, T 1509, ch.32, p.300a29 ff.

<sup>70</sup> *Fên pieh kung tê lun*, T 1507, p.51c15; *P'u sa pên hsing ching*, T 155, p.116c6; *Fo pên hsing ching*, T 193, p.56c19.

<sup>71</sup> *Buddhacarita* of Aśvaghōṣa, T 192, p.40c16; *Buddhānusmṛtisamādhi*, T 643, p.679b7 (near Nagarahāra).

<sup>72</sup> *Asokarājāvadāna*, T 2042, p.102b13; *Ekottara*, T 125, p.661c23 (variant *Wu-chang* instead of *Ma-t'i*); *Fa-hsien chuan*, T 2085, p.858a18; *Lo-yang ch'ieh lan chi*, T 2092, p.1020a18 (on emerging from *Mung-chieh-li*); *Hsi-yü-chi*, T 2087, p.882b25 (on emerging from *Mung-chieh-li*, near the sources of the Swāt).

<sup>73</sup> The *Mūlasarvāstivādin* Vinaya (T 1443) locates Apalāla sometimes in Magadha (p.19b14 and 18; p.21c; p.40c6), sometimes in the North-West (p.40b6-8). – Similarly the *Upadeśa* (T 1509) first locates Apalāla in Rājagṛha, the capital of Magadha (p.78a28), then in North India, in the land of the *Yüeh-chih* (p.126b27).

<sup>74</sup> *Abhiṇiṣkramaṇasūtra*, T 190, ch.37, p.828b17.

<sup>75</sup> Ed. S. Lévi, JA, 1915, p.30: *Vajrapāṇī Rājagṛhe Gṛdhakūṭe kṛtālayaḥ*.

## 1. *Vajrapāṇi in Magadha.*

a. The *Fên pieh kung té lun* (T 1507) is a commentary upon the first four chapters of the *Ekottarāgama*; its translation into Chinese was made by an unknown hand under the later Han (25-220) and is archaic in style. Vajrapāṇi is mentioned in it, but the merit of victory mainly devolves on the disciple Cūlapanthaka, skilled among all at creating form by mental power.

The dragon 'Leafless' 無葉 (Apalāla?) ravages the harvests in Magadha and the Buddha decides to convert it. Followed by Guhyaka, Ānanda and Panthaka, he goes to the kingdom of *Chü-ch'ih* 俱持 where the dragon dwells. The latter rains down rocks. The Buddha, turning to the left, looks at Guhyaka. The yakṣa, with his *vajrakūṭa*, makes a large mountain crumble which overwhelms the dragon's chasm. The Buddha, turning to the right, looks at Panthaka. The bhikṣu makes himself invisible and, through his supernormal power, stops up the eyes, ears, nose and mouth of the dragon; he then makes his hand appear outside the place where he was standing invisible; finally, on the Buddha's command, he manifests himself an hundred paces away. The dragon prostrates itself.<sup>76</sup>

b. The *P'u sa pên hsing ching* (T 155), translated anonymously under the Eastern Chin (317-420), attributes the victory to Vajrapāṇi alone:

Succeeding the dragon Sundarin, in the pool of the village of *Yu-lien* 優連, in Magadha, Apalāla, his wife and one of his sons ravage the harvests. King Ajātaśatru appeals to the Buddha. Guhyaka, the Malla, strikes the mountain with his *vajrakūṭa*. All the dragons and causes of disease take refuge in the neighbouring kingdom of Vaiśālī.<sup>77</sup>

## 2. *Vajrapāṇi in North-West India.*

a. A chapter in the *Buddhānusmṛtisamādhi* (T 643) tells how the Buddha, on the invitation of King Puṣpabhūti, one day went to the

<sup>76</sup> *Fên pieh kung té lun*, T 1507, ch.5, pp.51c-52a (tr. J. Przyluski in 'Le Nord-Ouest de l'Inde', *JA*, 1914, pp.559-62).

<sup>77</sup> *P'u sa pên hsing ching*, T 155, ch.2, pp.116a-119a (cf. *Hōbōgirin*, pp.10-11, s.v. *Aharara*).

the kingdom of Nagarahāra (modern Jalālābād), converted a poisonous dragon and left his shadow in the Rakṣas' cave. The dragon's name is not given, but it was probably Gopālaka and not Apālāla; and, more precisely, the Cave of the Shadow is situated 20 *li* to the south-west of Nagarahāra, in the village of Pālitakūṭa, near modern-day Chahr-Bagh. A Kashmirian Vinaya-master, Buddhābhaddra, banished from Lo-yang and staying on Mount Lu, described this miraculous shadow to Hui-yüan and it was based on that information that the master of Lu made his famous image which was unveiled in 412.<sup>78</sup> If, as is claimed by certain sources,<sup>79</sup> Buddhābhaddra was a native of Nagarahāra (and not Kapilavastu), he would have been able to supply first-hand indications on the folklore of the North-West. In any case, it was he who later, in Nanking, between 420 and 429 made a translation of the *Buddhā-nusmṛtisamādhi* under the title of *Kuan fo san mei ching*.<sup>80</sup>

The subjugation of the dragon took place in the presence of several disciples: Kāśyapa, Maudgalyāyana, Śāriputra, Kātyāyana and Ānanda. The yakṣa Vajrapāṇi, making flaming whirls (*ālāta-cakra*) with his great mass, burnt the body of the nāga and the latter took refuge in the Buddha's shadow. The main rôle, however, fell to Maudgalyāyana who, transformed into a Garuḍa, made the nāga swear not to molest living beings any more and taught him the precepts.<sup>81</sup>

b. To judge from the texts analysed up to now, the legend still contains many hesitations, both as to the name and localisation of the one of more nāgas subjugated, and as to the exact role played by Vajrapāṇi in the event. It rests with the Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya (T 1448) to dispel all doubts. In the Section on Medicaments (*Bhaiṣajyavastu*) this Vinaya recounts a long journey under-taken by the Buddha in central and northern India. This journey was subdivided into three parts:

First part: Accompanied by Ānanda, the Buddha journeyed in six stages: 1. Hastinapura, 2. Mahānagara, 3. Śrughna, 4. Brāhmaṇagrāma, 5. Kālanagara, 6. Rohitaka.

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<sup>78</sup> Cf. E. Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, Leiden 1959, pp.224-5.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. *Kao sêng chuan*, T 2059, ch.2, p.334c17; *Ch'u*, T 2145, ch.14, p.103b28.

<sup>80</sup> *Li*, T 2034, ch.7, p.71a9.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. *Buddhānusmṛtisamādhi*, T 643, ch7, pp.679b-681b (tr. In Przyluski, *op. cit.*, pp.565-8.

Second part: Separating from Ānanda, and accompanied *only* by Vajrapāṇi, the Buddha undertook a long circuit in North-West India with the following seventeen stages: 1. Seen from afar, the Tāmasavana, 2. Rāśimat (?), 3. Retuka or Netraka, 4. crossing the Indus, 5. Rṣivihāra, 6. Apalālanāgarājabhavana, 7. seen from afar, the Kāśmīramāṇḍala, 8. Bhraṣṭālaya, 9. Kanthā, 10. Dhānyapura, 11. Naitarī, 12. Śādvalā, 13. Pālitakūṭa, 14. Nandivardhana, 15. Kuntī, 16. Kharjūrikā, 17. return to Rohitaka.

Third part: Separating from Vajrapāṇi and rejoining Ānanda, the Buddha returned to Mathurā, passing through Ādirājya and Bhadrāśva.

The second part of this journey has been translated by J. Przyluski<sup>82</sup> on the basis of Chinese and Tibetan versions. The discovery of the Gilgit Manuscripts in 1931, and their publication by N. Dutt in 1948,<sup>83</sup> has given us possession of several folios of the Sanskrit original concerning this journey. With the aid of these documents, I have been able to reconstruct the itinerary almost completely and draw up, in Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese, a list of the various locations through which the Buddha travelled.<sup>84</sup> Taking my inspiration from the works of A. Foucher I have attempted, with less success, to locate the ancient place names on a modern map of India and Afghanistan. Fortunately, the recent campaigns by G. Tucci in the Swāt have enabled the Italian scholar to provide corrections and new details: the place where the Buddha saw Kashmir from afar is Shangla; Bhraṣṭālaya and Kanthā can be located between there and Shakorai or Mangalore; Dhānyapura and Naitarī correspond respectively to Dan-gram and Net-mera; finally, and especially, the *Ming-chieh-li* of Hsüan-tsang is not Mangalore as was supposed but Mingaora-Butkara where the Italian mission has just discovered important Buddhist foundations.<sup>85</sup>

With regard to this journey in the North-West I will merely reproduce here the passages concerning Vajrapāṇi. It will be noted that the original Sanskrit contains details which the

<sup>82</sup> Przyluski, 'Le Nord-Ouest', pp.495-522.

<sup>83</sup> N. Dutt, *Gilgit Manuscripts* III, part 1, Srinagar 1948, pp.xvii-xviii, and 1-17.

<sup>84</sup> É. Lamotte, 'Alexandre et le bouddhisme', in *BEFEO* XLIV, 1961, pp.152-8.

<sup>85</sup> G. Tucci, 'Preliminary Reports and Studies on the Italian Excavations in Swāt (Pakistan)', in *East and West* IX, 1968, pp.285, 288, 325 n.12, 327.

Chinese version neglected.

[In Rohitaka] the Bhagavat reflected as follows: The life-span at my disposal is very short: hardly have I appeared in the world than the time of my Nirvāṇa has arrived. Great work of conversion still remains for me to accomplish. If I go with the bhikṣu Ānanda into the land of North India, that work of conversion will be difficult to complete. Now, it is with the yakṣa Vajrapāṇi that I should undertake those conversions. [The Buddha then addresses the yakṣa with two stanzas in which he stresses the advantages of the *smṛti-mantaḥs*.] He then says to the yakṣa Vajrapāṇi: Do you wish to come with me to North India to convert the nāga Apalāla? – I agree to that, O Bhagavat. – The yakṣa Vajrapāṇi and the Bhagavat, rising into the air, departed. The Bhagavat saw from afar a green forest and said to the yakṣa: Do you see that green forest? – He replied: I see it, O Sugata. – The Buddha went on: One century after my Nirvāṇa a *saṃghavihāra* will be built on that site: for those who practise *śamatha*, it will be a place of great value.<sup>86</sup>

[Having reached the palace of the nāgarāja Apalāla, the Buddha joined battle with him.] Then, having reflected, he said to the yakṣa Vajrapāṇi: You must attack that wicked nāgarāja. Thereupon the yakṣa, obeying the Tathāgata's order, struck the mountain summit with his *vajrakūṭa*, and the mountain crumbled, half-overwhelming the nāga's pool.<sup>87</sup>

Having converted the dragon, the Bhagavat saw from afar a completely green forest and he again said to the yakṣa Vajrapāṇi:<sup>88</sup> Do you see that completely green forest? – I see it, O Bhagavat. – That, O Vajrapāṇi, is the district of Kashmir. One hundred years after my Nirvāṇa, there will be a bhikṣu named Madhyandina, a companion of the bhikṣu Ānanda. He will convert the wicked dragon Hulaṭa and then, crossed-legged, will introduce my teaching throughout the district of Kashmir.<sup>89</sup>

The Bhagavat reached Kharjūrikā, and there he saw some young boys playing with some stūpas made of clay. Seeing that, he again said to the yakṣa Vajrapāṇi:<sup>90</sup> Do you see, O Vajrapāṇi, those

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<sup>86</sup> T 1448, ch.9, pp.39c21-40a7.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p.40b20-22.

<sup>88</sup> According to the *Lien hua mien ching*, T 386, ch.2, p.1075b16, this prediction was made to Ānanda.

<sup>89</sup> *Gilgit Manuscripts* III, part 1, p. xvii,1-7.

<sup>90</sup> According to Fa-hsien (T 2085, p.858b13) and Hsüan-tsang (T 2087, ch.2, p.879c12), this prediction was made to Ānanda.

young boys playing with stūpas made of clay? – Yes, Venerable One. – That one, four hundred years after my Nirvāṇa, will be the king named Kaniṣka of the Kuṣāṇa dynasty. In this very place he will inaugurate a stūpa which will be designated by the name of Stūpa of Kaniṣka, and after my Parinirvāṇa, he will do Buddha deeds.<sup>91</sup>

This last prediction proves that the passage concerning North-West India could not have been written before the reign of Kaniṣka which, according to the latest opinions, began in 78, 128 or 144 CE.

Thanks to the Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya, three points will surface in the first or second century CE. First, Ānanda was the companion of the Buddha during the first and third part of the journey, but Vajrapāṇi alone followed him during the second. This is not a matter of a substitution of a yakṣa for a favourite disciple, as Przyluski claimed, but a juxtaposition of a great yakṣa with a great disciple according to the concepts of the developing Mahāyāna. Second, in the North-West Vajrapāṇi became the only attendant of the Buddha and no longer shared this honour with others. Third, all hesitation is removed from what concerns the subjugation of Apalāla by the powerful yakṣa: it was in the North-West (Swāt or Gandhāra) that this took place, no longer in Magadha.

This localisation is confirmed by the ‘Legend of Aśoka’<sup>92</sup> which briefly summarises the whole journey to the North-West, the oldest recension of which was translated into Chinese by An Fa-ch’i in about the year 300. Furthermore, it was in *Wu-shang* (Uḍḍiyāna), near the sources of the Śubhāvastu (Swāt), that is, in North-West India, that the Chinese pilgrims Fa-hsien, Sung Yün and Hsüan-tsang, who visited the holy sites respectively in 399, 520 and 630, heard of the subjugation of the ‘wicked dragon’ Apalāla.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> *Gilgit Manuscripts* III, part 1, pp.1,20-2, 5.

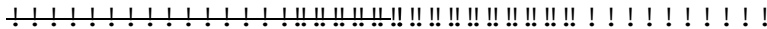
<sup>92</sup> *Aśokarājāvādāna*, T 2042, ch.1. p.102b16-16 ; *Samyukta*, T 99, ch.23, p.165b-21-23 ; *Aśokarājasūtra*, T 2043, ch.2, p.135b14-16 ; *Divyāvādāna*, p.348, 20-22 (corrupt text).

<sup>93</sup> *Fa-hsien chuan*, T 2085, p.858a18-25 (tr. Legge, p.29); *Lo-yang ch’ieh lan chi*, T 2092, ch.5, p.1020a17-20 (tr. Chavannes, *BEFEO* III, 1903, p.409); *Hsi yü chi*, T 2087, ch.3, p.882b25-c13 (tr. Watters, I, pp.228-9).

The tradition concerning the journey to the North-West has already defied time and is again found in the eleventh century from the pen of Kṣemendra. In Chapter 56 of his *Avadānakalpalatā*, the Kashmirian poet tells how, after having converted the dragon Gopāla on the Stone Mountain (*pāśasaparbata*), at the end of the village of Hingumardana, the Buddha met Vajrapāṇi by chance and did him a favour (*cakre 'nugraham*). He went into the forest, near the rocks 'hallowed by the manifestation of the lotus-feet of the past Buddhas', Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni and Kāśyapamuni. There, to Indra surarāja who came to see him (*samdarsanāpta*) and who asked him the reason for his smile, he explained that he too had chosen his dwelling 'near these streams of pure and limpid water, in hermitages favourable to inoffensive people and peaceful places which purify the minds of ascetics devoted to the Dharma'.<sup>94</sup>

In those forests and hermitages, P. Demiéville<sup>95</sup> recognised the Tāmasavana, between Cīnabhukti and Jālandhara, mentioned by the Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya and where Hsüan-tsang was still able to see the footprints of the four Buddhas of the past. 'It will be noted,' adds Demiéville, 'that in Kṣemendra Vajrapāṇi makes but a brief appearance, only to give way immediately to Indra, but both are thunderbolt-wielders, and Buddhaghosa, for example, confuses the two'.<sup>96</sup> This proves that during the Indian middle ages, at a time when Vajrapāṇi had already enjoyed a long career, the memory of distant times when he was still only a secondary form of Indra had not been lost.

*Vajrapāṇi in Gandhāran art.* – If Vajrapāṇi won acceptance in folklore and the post-canonical literature of the Stories and Fables, he occupies a yet more important place in the carved statuary of the Gandhāran school of sculpture where he followed the Buddha like a shadow. In the hundred scenes of the life of the Buddha reproduced by A. Foucher in volume I of *Art gréco-bouddhique* (figs 182 to 282), ‘there is hardly a single illustration in which we do not perceive the Beneficent One flanked by that inevitable escort’. Vajrapāṇi appears for the first time at the



<sup>94</sup> *Avadānakalpalatā*, ed. P. Vaidya, II, p.339.

<sup>95</sup> Tr. From P. Demiéville, 'Les versions chinoises du Milindapañha', in *BEFEO* XXIV, 1924, p.37.

<sup>96</sup> Tr. from *idem, ibid.*, p.39, n.6.

moment of the Great Departure and does not definitively disappear until after the Parinirvāṇa: 'for more than half a century he remains attached to the steps of the Master'.

Nothing, I believe, can be added to the study which A. Foucher devoted to the iconographic character of Vajrapāṇi.<sup>97</sup> His innumerable examples are divided into *beardless Vajrapāṇis* (with a tendency to assume, under the influence of classical memories, the bearing of a Hermes, Eros or Dionysos) and *bearded Vajra-pāṇis* (turning into Pan on the one hand, Zeus or Herakles on the other). Sometimes he appears as a Pariah, wearing a simple loin-cloth or Indian-style breeches; sometimes he is clothed antique-style in chlamydos, himation or exomis. He is never separated from the *vajra* 'a kind of double pestle, swollen at each end and ordinarily rounded which is grasped by the middle'.

The impressive excavation campaign undertaken in the Swāt, in 1956-58, by G. Tucci and his Istituto per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente have restored to the Gandhāran school 335 new sculptures published and analysed by D. Facenna.<sup>98</sup> Vajrapāṇi appears on 37 of them, always closely linked to the life of the Master: presentation of the betrothed Yaśodharā (pl.162), great departure (pl.151), exchange of clothing with the hunter (pl.173), encounter with the grass-cutter (pl.23), first discourse (pl.54), Parinirvāṇa and cremation (pl.126, Nos 5 and 6). One will see (pl.107) a subjugation of the nāga Apalāla, which can be added to the representations already indicated by Foucher in his *Art gréco-bouddhique* (I, pp.544-54).

Recent research on the chronology of the art of Gandhāra also enables us to ascertain that Vajrapāṇi survived all the vicissitudes of the school. In his posthumous work *The Buddhist Art of Gandhāra*, published in Cambridge in 1960, Sir John Marshall distinguished between three periods of artistic evolution: ado-lescence (ca. 60-100 CE), early maturity period (100-140 CE) and late maturity period (140-320 CE). Vajrapāṇi is equally re-presented during the three phases:

a) Period of adolescence, figures 53, 55-61, 63, 66-68 (Mardān group), 69, 70-72 (Sanghao-Nathu group), 75 and 76 (Sikri group).

<sup>97</sup> *Art gréco-bouddhique* II, pp.48-64.

<sup>98</sup> *Sculptures from the Sacred Areas of Butkara I*, Part 2, Rome 1962.



b) Early maturity period, figures 87-88, 96, 98, 100.

c) Late maturity period, figures 113, 115, 116, 119, 127-129.

The yakṣa appears for the first time on a bas-relief from Mardān, representing the donation of the Jetavana (fig.53), a bas-relief which Sir John Marshall considers to be 'the earliest representation of the Buddha by a Gandhāran artist known to us' (p.41). He is again found in the grandiose representation of the Parinirvāṇa from Swāt and Takht-i-Bahī (figs 127-129), the last products of the school before the conquest of Gandhāra by the Sassanids.

In the Kuṣāna empire, in parallel and simultaneously with the Graeco-Buddhist school in Gandhāra, the Indian school of Mathurā developed. The points of contact between the twin schools are many. They both abounded in representations of yakṣas, but while Gandhāra multiplied its Vajrapāṇis to infinity, Mathurā, as far as I can judge,<sup>99</sup> did not represent him once. This contrast clearly emphasises the northern character of the yakṣa as the Hellenic artists conceived him. We hasten to add that this northern character did not prevent Vajrapāṇi over the course of time from manifesting his presence on the carved monuments of India (particularly at Amarāvati<sup>100</sup> and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa<sup>101</sup>), Central Asia, China and Tibet.

(to be concluded)

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<sup>99</sup> According to the works of J.P. Vogel, *Catalogue of the Archaeological Museum at Mathurā*, Allahabad 1910; 'La sculpture de Mathurā', in *Ars Asiatica* XV, Paris and Brussels 1930.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. S. Sivaramamurti, *Amarāvati Sculptures in the Madras Government Museum*, Madras 1942, p.186 and pl.57, fig.4; p.257 and pl.62, fig.2; Ph. Stern and M. Benisti, *Evolution du style indien d'Amarāvati*, Paris 1961, p.60a.

<sup>101</sup> A.H. Longhurst, *The Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, Delhi 1938, pl.40, 48, 50a.

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<sup>101</sup> A.H. Longhurst, *The Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, Delhi 1938, pl.40, 48, 50a.

## THE PĀRĀYAṆASŪTRA IN OLD TURKISH\*

PETER ZIEME

Translated from German by Maurice O'C Walshe

By chance, while I was preparing my contribution to this *Festschrift*, I hit on the Old Turkish version of a text, the Indian source of which played a certain role in the work of the recipient. In his *Bruchstücke buddhistischer Verssammlungen*, H. Bechert writes: 'The *Pārāyana* too is part of the *Sutta Nipāta* (976-1149). It is of course well known that *Aṭṭhakavagga* and *Pārāyana* can also be shown for other reasons to be originally independent texts. In addition, Central Asian manuscript fragments exist of both'.<sup>1</sup>

In general it is the case that we do not look for, or find, possible sources of Old Turkish Buddhist texts precisely in the Pāli Canon.<sup>2</sup> Where this is nevertheless possible, as in the present case, we have to assume that the source probably existed in a lost Chinese or Central Asian version. To anticipate one conclusion: we cannot be sure from the Old Turkish remnants whether we are

\* 'Das Pārāyana-sūtra in der alttürkischen Überlieferung'. *Bauddhavidyāsudhā-karaḥ*. Studies in Honour of Heinz Bechert on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday, ed. Petra Kieffer-Pülz & Jens-Uwe Hartmann. (*Indica et Tibetica* 30) Swisttal-Odendorf 1997, pp.743-59. The author expresses his gratitude to the late translator, Maurice Walshe, as well as to the *BSR* editor, Russell Webb, who encouraged me to republish this article without greater revision. It is planned to edit further fragments related to the *Suttanipāta*. Among them, a newly identified fragment, Mainz 699 of the Turfan Collection of the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, is of great importance as it is a complete one from the same manuscript and precedes the edited one.

<sup>1</sup> H. Bechert, *Bruchstücke buddhistischer Verssammlungen aus zentral-asiatischen Sanskrithandschriften I Die Anavataptagāthā und die Sthavira-gāthā*, Berlin 1961, p.11.

<sup>2</sup> On the Pāli Canon, see O. von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, Berlin-New York 1996. I would like here to thank Herr v. Hinüber for his literary references.