

**AN EIGHTH-CENTURY COMMENTARY ON THE NĀMASAṄGĪTĪ
AND THE CLUSTER OF TEMPLES ON THE PRAMBANAN PLAIN IN CENTRAL JAVA**



The view from the eastern gateway leading into the Candi Sewu temple complex. Credit: Author

Mark E. Long

NALANDA-SRIWIJAYA CENTRE
WORKING PAPER SERIES NO. 20
(Nov 2015)

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The NSC Working Paper Series is published electronically by the **Nalanda–Sriwijaya Centre** of ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute

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ISSN:2529-7287

Citations of this electronic publication should be made in the following manner:

Mark E. Long, An Eighth-Century Commentary on the Nāmasaṅgīti and the Cluster of Temples on the Prambanan Plain in Central Java, **Nalanda–Sriwijaya Centre** Working Paper No 20 (Nov 2015).

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Typesetting and Layout: Andrea Acri and Joyce Zaide

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An Eighth-century Commentary on the *Nāmasaṅgīti* and the Cluster of Temples on the Prambanan Plain in Central Java

Mark E. Long

INTRODUCTION

OVER 85 YEARS AGO, Bosch (1929:49–54) proposed that the entire cluster of temple complexes on the Prambanan Plain to the north of the Ratu Boko prominence—of which Caṇḍi Sewu and Caṇḍi Lumbung are merely two components—may have been based on an integrated plan that was to be completed over time. He attempted to demonstrate that Caṇḍi Lumbung had been dedicated to the *ratnatraya* in unity with Mañjuśrī, and that the deities of the Vajradhātumaṇḍala had resided at Caṇḍi Sewu. He also believed it possible that Prambanan’s Hindu pantheon had been part of the overall plan.¹

Indeed, we may take the view that once the great design embodied in the doctrine of the multiple unfolding of Mañjuśrī—the Supreme Deity—had been accepted in outline, there would be no dogmatic objections to allocating the execution of the construction of the [constituent] parts over a long period of time. “Those who believe hasten not”. Here not only to one, but to a series of monarchs was offered the opportunity for acquiring imperishable *punya* through the creation of statues, the founding of sanctuaries, [their] donation of land and other pious work for themselves and for their offspring. Their merit would not be affected when unity was lost in the style of buildings and other foundations, which in religious terms had once and for all been established (Bosch 1929:54; see also Bosch 1961:125–130).

This article is dedicated to exploring how an eighth-century commentary on the *Nāmasaṅgīti* (hereafter NS) helps to clarify and enhance Bosch’s original hypothesis. As the colophon to the NS indicates (Davidson 1981:69), the text’s complete title is the *Mañjuśrījñānasattvasya paramārthā nāmasaṅgītiḥ*, ‘The supreme name-chanting of the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī’ (Tribe 1997:117). According to the eighth-century² *ācārya*

¹ My thanks to Roy Jordaan for bringing this issue to my attention on multiple occasions over the years, and also to Andrea Acri as well as Arlo Griffiths for their feedback on an earlier draft of this paper; any mistakes are mine alone. The romanization of the Old Javanese follows the system used by Acri and Griffiths (2014).

² ‘According to one tradition recorded by Bu ston, Mañjuśrīmitra was the teacher of Vilāsavajra [who] in any event is localizable in time as he worked with rMa rin chen mchog when that famous [Tibetan] translator was studying in India, having most likely gone there shortly after his ordination (779)’ (Davidson 1981:6–7).

Vilāsavajra, the ‘Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī’ is the Non-dual Awareness definitive of Buddhahood that resides in the heart of all the Buddhas of the three times. This is signified by the short syllable ‘A’ placed in the heart, and with the ultimate (*paramārtha*) understanding of its nature, or source of identity, being the means whereby yogins realize Non-dual Awareness.

In his ‘Explanation of the Meaning of the Name-*mantras*’ (*Nāmamantrārthāvalokinī*, hereafter NMAA), Vilāsavajra explains: ‘The Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī is not the Bodhisattva who is the master of the ten stages (*bhūmi*). Rather, he is Non-dual Awareness (*advayañānam*), the Perfection of Wisdom itself’ (Tribe 1994:84). Furthermore, it should be understood that ‘Mañjuśrī, the Knowledge-Being who dwells in the heart of all the Tathāgatas’, is qualified in the NS by phrases, whose words are Name-*mantras* (*ibid.* p. 35).

By etymological analysis syllable (*akṣaraḥ*) [is seen to] mean ‘that which does not (*na* < *a-*) perish (*kṣarati* < *kṣaraḥ*)’. This is because it is without change, due to having the Limit of Reality as its nature. [Hence the word] ‘*paramākṣaraḥ*’ means the **supreme syllable**, [that is to say, ‘the supreme unchangeable reality’] {*parama:akṣaraḥ*}. In this way what is really named by ‘Knowledge-Being’ and ‘the letter A’ is explained. And that same [nature], since it is completely free from all obstacles, should be understood to be the nature, one by one, of each of the *maṇḍala* deities arising in the consciousness of yogins (Tribe 1994:118).³

THE ŚRĪ SAṄGRĀMADHANAÑJAYA INSCRIPTION AND THE KNOWLEDGE-BEING MAÑJUŚRĪ

Now we shall direct our attention to the opening verse of the Śrī Saṅgrāmadhanañjaya inscription, which was discovered in the old *desa* Kelurak formerly located between Caṇḍi Prambanan and Caṇḍi Lumbung. ‘This inscription is a glorification of Mañjuśrī (= Mañjughoṣa) as the paragon and prototype of knowledge-beings, consistent with the Tantric work *Mañjuśrī-nāma-saṅgīti* in its Yoga-tantra tradition’ (Wayman 1981:140).

For each of the four homophonic segments from v.1, the subject appears to be the word *akṣara*. The initial segments of the Śailendra-sponsored Kalasan and Abhayagirivihāra charters are *maṅgalācaraṇa* strophes devoted to the inscription’s principal divinity or divinities, and this likewise seems to have been the case with another Śailendra inscription, the fragmentary Kayumvuñan charter. Given the above and the fact that the first stanza of the Śrī Saṅgrāmadhanañjaya inscription is composed in the vocative—the formal means for addressing an individual or object—the original Sanskrit verse plausibly can be translated as follows:

³ This initially might seem like a foreign conception to westerners but a strikingly comparable example is found in the Bible: ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the word was God’ (John 1:1).

Also of interest is a comparable explanation of the term *akṣara* submitted by Buddhaguhya (see Hopkins 1985:76, and which is also cited in Long 2014:98). The monk had resided at Nālandā during the latter half of the eighth century, where he was visited by a Tibetan delegation that extended an invitation from King Khri-srong Ide-bstan (r. 755–797) to go to Tibet (Hodge 2003:17). For analogous speculations found in Śaiva, Śākta, and Pāñcarātra Tantric texts, see Padoux 1990.

*jaya lokeśvarasugatapadākṣara jaya bhadreśvarasugatapadākṣara /
jaya viśveśvarasugatapadākṣara jaya – – śvarasugatapadākṣara // (1)⁴*

O [you who are] the immutable reality (*akṣara*) of the Buddhahood (*sugatapada*) of the Lord of the Worlds (*lokeśvara*), hail to Thee (*jaya*)!⁵ O [you who are] the immutable reality (*akṣara*) of the Buddhahood (*sugatapada*) of the Lord of Well-Being (*bhadreśvara*), hail to Thee (*jaya*)! O [you who are] the immutable reality (*akṣara*) of the Buddhahood (*sugatapada*) of the Lord of the Universe (*viśveśvara*), hail to Thee (*jaya*)! O [you who are] the immutable reality (*akṣara*) of the Buddhahood (*sugatapada*) of the Lord of... (*-śvara*), hail to Thee (*jaya*)!

Here, the word *akṣara* can be interpreted as referring to the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī as the principal divinity for the entire text. Among other things, this would help to clarify an apparent contradiction first noted by Bosch (1929:42–43), given that the inscription's opening salutation pays homage to the Three Jewels (*ratnatraya*) and yet 'Mañjuśrī' is clearly the most important deity within the text overall. This apparent contradiction is resolved when we realize that the Non-dual Awareness signified by the *akṣara* 'A' is the supreme immutable reality⁶ from which arise the Body, Speech and Mind of all the Buddhas.⁷ So the four designations of *-īśvara* presented in this verse not only may pertain to the families of the Tathāgatas, as Bosch (1929:43–44) had surmised,⁸ but also have the very source of their Buddhahood enunciated, as we shall see below.

THE CORE RITUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE NMAA

Before we can attempt to demonstrate this, we need to review the core ritual framework (*sādhana*) presented by Vilāsavajra in Chapter 4 of the NMAA, which is summarized below. After having generated the thought of enlightenment for the sake of all beings and having conducted the requisite meditations and preliminary purification rites, the *yogin* imagines a temple featuring an exterior square enclosure with four corners, four gates and four arches and an interior circular enclosure containing a *maṇḍala* with empty thrones for the deities, with the principal seat being reserved for Mahāvairocana (see Tribe 1994: 100–104). 'Having generated the conviction that he is, himself, Mahāvairocana... [the *yogin*] should visualise a moon-disc in his heart; [and... above that he should visualise]...

4 See Bosch (1929:18).

5 Lokesh Chandra (1995:218) noted that *jaya* can be interpreted as the verbal imperative 'hail to Thee', which is found in Bengalese oral folk-tales (Kundu 2008:301) and the literary traditions of India (Shanbhag 2007:171).

6 'The letter A also possesses a significant role in the Yogatantras. It is the first letter of the alphabet and thus can be seen as the letter or sound from which all the others emerge. Its use as a negative prefix also made it the perfect symbol for the essence of the Perfection of Wisdom' (Tribe 1997:123).

7 The Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī is qualified as follows in NS v.108: 'As the great mind of all Buddhas, he is present in the mind of all Buddhas. Having the exalted body of all Buddhas, he is the Sarasvatī {i.e. speech} of all Buddhas' (Davidson 1981:31).

8 'The word *sugata*, which forms an integral component of the four composites concerned, makes it more plausible that the four *sugatas* par excellence are intended, i.e. the four Tathāgatas' (Bosch 1929:44). Given that the link between Amitābha and the designation *Lokeśvara* is apparently confirmed in v.2 of our inscription, this does seem plausible, though another possibility shall be considered later.

the Ādibuddha (*ibid.*, p. 106). [Then the *yogin*] contemplates a wisdom-wheel (*prajñācakra*) in the heart of that [visualised form of the] Ādibuddha....' (*ibid.*, p. 108).

Next, Vilāsavajra cites in succession the three verses comprising the NS chapter on the method of Awakening (*abhisambodhikramah*) according to the *Māyājāla*:⁹ '[Śākyamuni] Spoke this verse of the Lord of Speech, which is endowed with six kingly *mantras*, in which there is the source of the Non-dual, [and] which has the characteristic of non-origination' (NS v.25). 'A Ā I Ī U Ū E AI O AU AṂ AḤ. I {the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī}, the Awakened One, the Embodiment of Knowledge, am in the heart of the Buddhas of the three times' (NS v.26). At this point Vilāsavajra remarks that the *yogin* should now visualise himself as the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī, born from the letter 'A' and situated in the heart of the Ādibuddha at the hub of the Wisdom-Wheel, which displays four bands¹⁰ as well as six spokes of different colors, each of which is adorned with one of six kingly *mantras*: 'OM—Obeisance to you, *Vajra*-Sharp, Destroyer of Suffering, Embodiment of the Knowledge Wisdom, Knowledge-Body, Lord of Speech, Arapacana' (NS v.27) (see Table 1).

Table 1. The six kingly *mantras* with their associated *mantra*-family and Tathāgata

Kingly-mantra	Mantra family	Tathāgata	NMAA chapter number	Content
1. Vajratikṣṇa (‘Vajra-Sharp’)	<i>lokālokottara</i>	Amitābha	8	On Discriminating Awareness
2. Duḥkhaścheda (‘Destroyer of Suffering’)	<i>lokāloka</i>	Akṣobhya	7	On Mirror-like Awareness
3. Prajñājñānamurti (‘Embodiment of the Knowledge of Wisdom’)	<i>kulatraya</i>	Vairocana	6	On the Awareness of the perfectly pure Dharma Sphere
4. Jñānakāya (‘Knowledge-Body’)	<i>mantravidyādhara</i>	Amoghasiddhi	10	On the Awareness of the Performance of Action
5. Vāgīśvara (‘Lord of Speech’)	<i>mahoṣṇīṣa</i>	Ratnasambhava	9	On the Awareness of Equality
6. Arapacana*	<i>mahāmudrā</i>	Bodhicittavajra	5	On the Vajradhātu mahāmaṇḍala

* Davidson (1981:22, n. 63) characterizes this as the esoteric alphabet of the early Mahāyāna, and which only subsequently became specifically associated with Mañjuśrī.

Then, having imagined the syllables of the *mantras* on the [wisdom] wheel to be symmetrically placed, to have the colours described, to be radiant [and] capable of destroying the mountain of ignorance, he should visualise his own body as shining with those rays of light.

⁹ See Tribe 1994:421.

¹⁰ The first *mantra* from the *mantravinyāsa* segment of the NS (see Davidson 1981:44) is visualized on the innermost band, and with the twelve vowels from NS v.26 being visualized on the second. On the rim outside of the spokes is arranged the second *mantra* presented in the *mantravinyāsa*, and on the remaining fourth band is mentally placed the Sanskrit consonants, beginning with the letter KA and ending with the letter HA (see Tribe 1994:109–110).

The bright rays go out of the four faces [of Mahāvairocana] and illuminate the Saha world. Next, [they] go to the various Buddha fields, the collection of which makes up the whole of space, [and] accomplish the welfare of the mass of beings without remainder... Having illuminated the assembly of all the Tathāgatas, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, they enter their mouths [and] circle the *vajra* in their hearts from left to right, extracting their Wisdom-Knowledge (*prajñājñāna*). They, [namely, the lightrays, then re-]enter one's own, [that is, Mahāvairocana's four] mouths, [the rays being conceived] as identical with the essencelessness of all *dharma*s, [and] become united with the *mantra*-syllable ['A'] on the moon[-disc] in one's own heart (Tribe 1994: 111).

The core ritual framework also incorporates six ancillary visualizations devoted to a different Tathāgata, which replaces Mahāvairocana as the occupant of the central position of the *maṇḍala*, beginning with Amitābha. In the heart of each Tathāgata is visualized the Ādibuddha, and within the heart of the Ādibuddha is visualized a wisdom-wheel (*prajñācakra*) whose number of spokes equals the number of syllables comprising the *mantra* for the associated Mantrarāja deity placed at its hub, beginning with Vajratīkṣṇa. These six ancillary visualizations are structurally the same with the principal differences having to do with the specific details associated with each Tathāgata and its corresponding Mantrarāja (see Table 2).

Table 2. The six ancillary visualizations of the *sādhana*

Tathāgata	Cakra	Color/Gesture	Akṣara ^a	Mantrarāja name/at-tributes	Wisdom-wheel mantra
Amitābha	3	red/dwelling in <i>samādhi</i>	HRĪḤ	Vajratīkṣṇa/lotus and sword	OM Vajratīkṣṇāya namaḥ
Akṣobhya	3	blue/earth-touching	HŪṂ	Vajrakaḍga/Duḥkhaccheda/ <i>vajra</i> and sword	OM Duḥkhacchedāya namaḥ
Vairocana	2	white/ <i>bodhyagrī</i> ^b	ĀḤ	Prajñājñāna/wheel and sword	OM Prajñājñānamurtaye namaḥ
Amoghasiddhi	5	green/fearlessness	AḤ	Jñānakāya/ <i>viśvavajra</i> and sword	OM Jñānakāyāya namaḥ
Ratnasambhava	4	yellow/giving	OM	Vāgīśvara/jewel and sword	OM Vāgīśvarāya namaḥ
Bodhicittavajra ^c	1B ^d	white/ <i>vajra</i> & bell/crown with five Buddhas	A	Arapacana/book and sword ^e	OM Aracapanāya namaḥ

^a Though the seed syllable for each Tathāgata may change from one divinity to the next, each ultimately is generated by means of the syllable 'A' placed on the Wisdom-Wheel within the heart of the Ādibuddha in NMAA chapter 4.

^b Wheel-turning gesture.

^c His attributes are the *vajra* and bell, i.e. just like Vajrasattva.

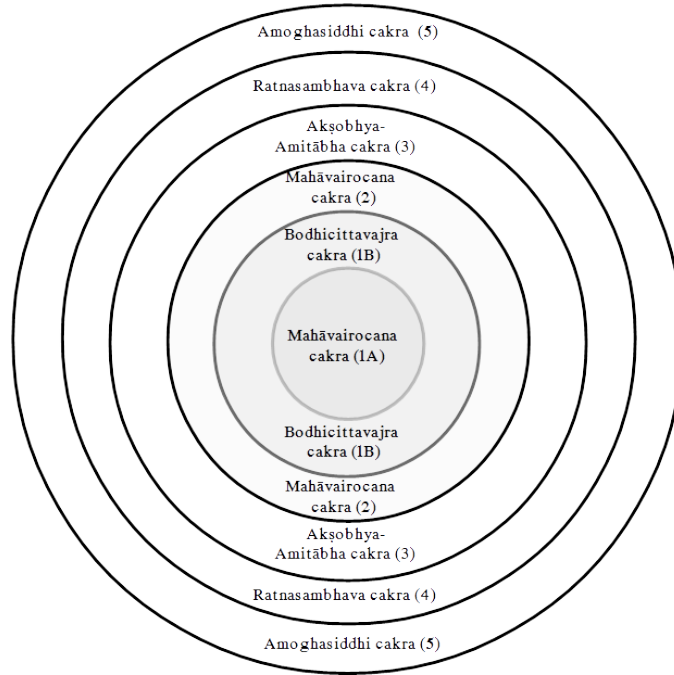
^d Tribe (1994) refers to the previously described principal visualization of Mahāvairocana as *cakra* 1A.

^e Seated in a state of diamond-pride.

Among other things, the assignment of each Tathāgata-Mantrarāja pair and its associated divinities to one of the circles (*cakra*) of a composite *maṇḍala* is of considerable interest. Chapter 4 of the NMAA describes how the yogin visualizes himself as Mahāvairocana enthroned at the center of the Vajradhātumahāmaṇḍala, surrounded by the empty moon seats envisioned for other divinities. However, these moon seats only later

become populated by means of the recitation of the Name-*mantras* presented in Chapter 5, within which Bodhicittavajra apparently replaces Mahāvairocana as the principal divinity.¹¹ Then in Chapter 6, within which Mahāvairocana is once again the principal divinity, the deities arising from the 36 Name-*mantra* phrases presented therein populate what Vilāsavajra calls the second circle of Mahāvairocana (see Tribe 1994:45–46), whilst the divinities arising from the Name-*mantras* presented in Chapters 7 through 10 migrate to additional exterior circles located outside of the Vajradhātumahāmaṇḍala (see Fig. 1).¹²

Fig. 1. The deity-circles surrounding the core area of the Vajradhātumahāmaṇḍala, according to Vilāsavajra



The presentation order of the six kingly *mantras* within NS v.27 as well as in Chapter 4 of the NMAA follows what one might plausibly regard as Tathāgata associations for the four homophonic segments comprising v.1 of our inscription, excepting only the placement of the spiritual family of Vairocana between the two pairs: *Lokeśvara* (‘Lord

¹¹ The NMAA’s translator designates this as *cakra* 1B to differentiate it from the *yogin*’s initial visualization of himself as Mahāvairocana at the center of the *maṇḍala*, which he designates as *cakra* 1A.

¹² It is noteworthy that the six Tathāgatas presented in the NS have not been afforded an equal status. ‘Just as Vairocana (or Mahāvairocana) subsumes Akṣobhya, Amitābha, Ratnasambhava, and Amoghasiddhi so Bodhicittavajra, a hypostatisation of *bodhicitta*, subsumes the other five. Mañjuśrījñānasattva is the source or nature of all six. The steps in this proliferation of figures, each incorporating the previous ones, appears to be a translation into ritual terms of successive attempts to describe liberative realisation in the most fundamental terms’ (Tribe 1994: 48–49).

Moreover, it is not obvious why Vilāsavajra had assigned the Tathāgatas Amitābha and Akṣobhya to the same circle (i.e. *cakra* 3). Tribe (1994:47) suggested that this might be due to their association with the *padma* and *vajra* families, respectively which historically appeared before the *ratna* and *karma* families. Another potential explanation is because of their membership in the so-called *kulatraya*, which Mañjuśrimitra defined as consisting of ‘the Tathāgata, the Vajra and the Padma families’ (Davidson 1981:21, n. 62).

of the Worlds') with the family of Amitābha;¹³ *Bhadreśvara* ('Lord of Well-being') with that of Akṣobhya;¹⁴ *Viśveśvara* ('Lord of the Universe') with the family of Amoghasiddhi (which has the *viśvavajra* as its attribute); and with the remaining *-īśvara* designation hypothetically going with the *kula* of Ratnasambhava. Later on we shall review a plausible reason as to why Amitābha comes first and also identify a potential allusion to Vairocana in our inscription.

The question remains open as to whether these four *-īśvara* designations actually refer to the Tathāgatas themselves or to four of the six epithets for the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī (see Table 1) that Davidson (1981:22, n. 63) calls 'Mantrarājas' since they are derived from the six kingly *mantras* presented in NS v.27. In the latter case, *Lokeśvara* would then refer to Vajratīkṣṇa, the Mantrarāja of the 'worldly and super-worldly' (*lokālokottara*) family (i.e. the *padmakula*); *Bhadreśvara* to Duḥkhaścheda ('Destroyer of Suffering'), the Mantrarāja associated with the *vajrakula*; and *Viśveśvara* to Jñānakāya ('Knowledge-Body'), the Mantrarāja of the *karmakula* who holds the *viśvavajra* and sword of wisdom (see Table 2). Moreover, Lokesh Chandra (1995:218) has suggested <Vāgī>śvara ('Lord of Speech')—the Mantrarāja linked to the *ratnakula*—for resolving the identity of the lacuna-ridden fourth designation.

We must also consider the possibility that the inscription's composer, presumably the Śailendra-*guru* Kumāraghoṣa, had intended for the four *-īśvara* designations to simultaneously evoke the Tathāgatas as well as the kingly-*mantra* epithets that correspond to their respective spiritual families. This would hardly be surprising given that *śleṣa*, or double meaning, is one of the 12 limbs of Sanskrit composition, and is extensively found in Sanskrit inscriptions and classical literature as well as in Hindu-Buddhist art. 'Indeed, there may be as many as three or more levels of interpretation possible in literature and, in the art, an equal number are expected and even more are possible. Multivalency is the norm, not the exception, and, in major monuments such as Borobudur, it is to be expected throughout' (Huntington 1994:136).

THE ŚRĪ SAṅGRĀMADHANAṆJAYA INSCRIPTION, THE NS AND THE GUHYASAMĀJATANTRA

The NS and its early commentaries as well as the *Guhyasamājatantra* collectively provide us with the means for conducting deeper analyses of two other key strophes from the Śrī Saṅgrāmadhanaṇjaya inscription: first v.15 and then v.2 thereafter. Vilāsavajra authored a short but influential note on the *nidāna* to the *Guhyasamāja*¹⁵ and according to 'Gos lo tsā ba, both Vilāsavajra and Mañjuśrīmitra had 'instructed Buddhaśrījñāna, founder of the

13 Lokeśvara is given as an alternate designation for Amitābha in the *Guhyasamājatantra*.

14 Bosch (1929:44) proposed identifying *Bhadreśvara* with "Vairocana, the spiritual father of Samantabhadra and also likewise the lord of all *bhadra* 'good'." On the other hand, Samantabhadra also can be counted among the members of the *vajrakula*, together with the NS interlocutor Vajradhara (= Vajrapāṇi). When discussing the role of Vajradhara and his fierce attendants, Vilāsavajra noted that these 'tamers of the hard-to-tame' may be wrathful in appearance but are actually agents of the worlds' welfare (*bhadra*). 'What nature do they, [that is, the attendants] have? [They are described as] functioning as agents for the [ultimate] purpose of the worlds by means of wisdom, [skill-in-] means and great compassion' (Tribe 1994:76–78).

15 The *Guhyasamājatantranidānagurūpadeśabhāṣya*; another short work by him titled the *Pinḍikramaṭippanī* is found in the *Guhyasamāja* section of the Derge Tanjur (Tribe 1994:407).

Jñānapāda school of Guhyasamāja exegesis' (Davidson 1981:6). Vilāsavajra appears to have been residing at Nālandā when Kumāraghoṣa—the Śailendra-guru hailing from Gauḍīdvīpa mentioned in the Śrī Saṅgrāmadhanañjaya inscription—had departed Gauḍīdvīpa for Central Java, so it would seem plausible to think that Kumāraghoṣa had been familiar with Vilāsavajra's works if not with the influential *ācārya* himself. The Sanskrit text for verse 15 may be translated as follows:

*ayaṁ sa vajradhṛk śrīmān brahmā viṣṇurmmaheśvaraḥ /
sarvadevamayaḥ svāmī mañjuvāg iti gīyate // (15)¹⁶*

He (sa)¹⁷ the wielder of the thunderbolt (*vajradhṛk*), this one (*ayaṁ*) possessed of glory (*śrīmān*), the Brahmā-Viṣṇu-Maheśvara, the Lord (*svāmī*) containing all the gods (*sarvadevamayaḥ*), is thus (*iti*) hymned (*gīyate*) as Gentle-voiced (*mañjuvāg* = *mañjuvāc*).

Vilāsavajra distinguishes between the conventional (*saṁvṛti*) understanding of the NS Names as mundane and super-mundane objects of experience, and their ultimate (*paramārtha*) understanding as being Names of the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī (see Tribe 1994:35). This method of distinction likewise shall be applied to the names and epithets presented in our inscription. A conventional understanding of the initial half-verse would be that it equates Mañjuśrī with prominent Hindu deities. However, *vajradhṛk*, *śrīmān* and other designations also convey additional nuances that point in the direction of the ultimate understanding.

Both *vajradhṛk* and *śrīmān* qualify this stanza's culminating designation 'Gentle-voiced', i.e. Mañjuvāc, which is synonymous with the name Mañjughoṣa mentioned twice elsewhere in the inscription. To Lokesh Chandra (1995:223), however, *vajradhṛk* also suggested Vajradhara (=Vajrapāṇi), who in the oldest strata of Buddhism is Indra tamed and converted to the faith. The use of *vajradhṛk* and *śrīmān* in tandem does potentially evoke the interlocutor of the NS: 'Vajradhara the glorious {*śrīmān*}, best tamer of those hard to tame, a hero [since he is] the conqueror of the three worlds, king of secrets, lord of the thunderbolt {*kulīśeśvara*}' (NS v.1 in Tribe 1994:72).¹⁸ In the *Guhyasamājatantra*, moreover, the *mantra* VAJRADHṚK signifies the ultimate innermost essence of the 'family of hatred', otherwise known as the *vajrakula*. The expounder of this *tantra* is Mahāvajradhara, or Vajradhara as the personification of the supreme state of enlightenment.

What appeared to be a potential identity conflict between Vajradhara and Mañjuvāc in v.15 of our inscription is resolved by way of the NS's qualification of the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī as 'the splitter of the great mountain of existence, Mahāvajradhara' and also as being 'supreme among those possessed of glory' (NS v.40 and NS v.157). Vilāsavajra's

¹⁶ See Bosch 1929:19–20.

¹⁷ Perhaps mentioned in the preceding strophe as the destroyer of Desire's malevolence (*smarārāti nisūdane*); see the translation of v.14 that appears below.

¹⁸ According to the eighth-century NS commentator Vimalamitra, the reference to 'conqueror of the three worlds' in NS v.1 should be interpreted as follows: 'Having tamed the lord of the underworld, Mahādeva, the lord of the surface of the earth, Viṣṇu, and the lord of the world far above the earth, Brahmā, who are the deities of the [Brahmanical] outsiders' body, speech and mind, [Vajradhara] is said to be victorious over the triple world' (Davidson 1981:18, n. 53). Moreover, Vilāsavajra interpreted the use of *śrīmān* in NS v.1 as a reference to one possessing the deities of a *maṇḍala* (see Tribe 1994:73, including n. 28).

analysis of NS v.148 also explains that the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī is called ‘the leader of gods’, ‘the deity beyond gods’, and ‘the lord of churners’ because he has the nature of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Mahādeva, respectively (Davidson 1981:36, n. 122).¹⁹ Furthermore, *sarvadevamayaḥ svāmī* is perhaps yet another example of *śleṣa* since ‘the lord containing all the gods’ also potentially implies one with the ability to encompass, bind, or otherwise restrain them; and this phrase’s alternate meaning of ‘the lord comprising all divinity’ can refer to the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī as the underlying nature of all the deities arising in the composite NS *maṇḍala*. Finally, the strophe’s culminating expression ‘thus hymned as Gentle-voiced’ is in all probability²⁰ an allusion to NS v.76,²¹ which qualifies the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī as: ‘Gentle-voiced (Mañjughoṣa), with a great roar, he is great with the sound unique in the world. He is sonance as far as the end of the sphere of space and the best of those possessed of sound’ (Davidson 1981:28). The declaration in v.18 about Mañjuśrī (= He the Tārṅkṣya)²² guarding the defense (of the region) by destroying all dangers with his ‘charming roar’ (*mañjurava*) lends further support to this hypothesis.

Verse 15 is just one of four strophes collectively forming a discrete group within our inscription,²³ and which otherwise allude to protection and/or welfare functions that plausibly can be associated with the *vajrakula*. Here are the others:

kīrtistambho ’yam atulo [11] *dharmmasetur anuttaraḥ* /
rakṣārtham sarvasatvānām mañjuśrīpratimākṛtiḥ // (13)

This peerless pillar of glory, this excellent bridge to the Dharma, this relics-house for the image of Mañjuśrī is for the sake of the protection of all living beings;

*atrabuddhaś ca dharmmaś ca sanghaś cāntargataḥ sthit<ā>ḥ*²⁴
dṛṣṭavyo dṛṣṭaratne ’smin smarārāti [12] *nisūdane* // (14)

The Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṅgha which are present here, existing within (this pillar of glory), should be seen in this jewel of visible objects as the destroyer of Desire’s malevolence;²⁵

19 The NS elsewhere qualifies the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī as ‘Brahmā having obtained Brahmanirvāṇa’ (NS v.95 in Davidson 1981:30); as ‘beloved of Śrī {= Viṣṇu}, radiant illuminating, he is light, with the splendor of the illuminator’ (NS v.102 in Davidson 1981:31); and also as *mahākālpataruḥ sphīto*, the ‘great flowering wish-granting tree’ (NS v.88 in Wayman 1985:89), with this last being pertinent to the description of the inscription’s principal divinity as the wish-granting tree of the new Kali (Yuga) in v.17.

20 Glossed above as ‘hymned’, *gīyate* means ‘praised in song’. Given that *gīyate* and *saṅgīti* (‘singing together’) are both derived from the same root (√*gai*, ‘to sound; to sing’), *gīyate* can be viewed as specifically referring to the NS.

21 This is the final verse in the NS chapter on the Mirror-like Awareness of the *vajrakula*.

22 This unusual equating of Garuḍa (Tārṅkṣya) with Mañjuśrī potentially can be explained by Vilāsavajra’s statement that the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī can appear in a range of forms in accordance with the needs of living beings (Tribe 1994:48).

23 Bosch (1929:18–20) characterized these verses as *śloka*s.

24 For this emendation, see Sarkar 1971/2 1:44 & 46, n. 17.

25 Here ‘the destroyer of Desire’s malevolence’ can be equated with the ‘Destroyer of Suffering’ epithet for the Mantrarāja of the *vajrakula*, and with ‘should be seen’ as well as ‘jewel of visible objects’ also being potential allusions to the Mirror-like Awareness of the ‘great family of the sight of the worlds’

deśasya tasya parārakṣāṁ parasvasya yatanam sthiram / [13]
mañjuśrīr ayam atrāste kurvan tavyo hitaśriyā // (16)

Situated in this place for welfare and prosperity, this Mañjuśrī who is active and strong shall be the paramount protection of another's property making a steadfast effort for his region.

Over and above this discrete strophe group, v.8 informs us that the Śailendra preceptor had established 'this Mañjuśrī, whose abundance of glory is enunciated/celebrated by innumerable Sugatas ...' (*mañjuśrīr ayam aprameyasugataprakhyātakīrti-mahā*; see Bosch 1929:19).²⁶ At the level of ultimate understanding, this can be connected with the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī whose Litany of Names (*Nāmasaṅgīti*) 'is that which is highest in all Tathāgatas and the realization of the *dharmadhātu* for all the Sugatas' as well as 'the traditional scripture for the Dharma of all Buddhas and the attainment of all Buddhas', as the discussion-of-benefits segment of the NS explains (Davidson 1981:39).

With respect to v.2 of our inscription, an important correction must be made to a previously published hypothesis of mine (Long 2014:123–125). The designation Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara does not appear in the early NS commentaries of Mañjuśrīmitra and Vilāsavajra. It was not until the early tenth century that Mañjuśrīkīrti 'delineated the new ritual structure for the NS called the *maṇḍala* of Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara' (Davidson 1981:12).²⁷ If correct, the Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara *sādhana*s that appear in the significantly younger *Sādhanamālā* and *Niṣpannayogāvalī* cannot be considered as directly relevant to our discussion of this eighth-century inscription. If we follow Bosch, however, and consider that v.1 actually does pertain to the spiritual families of the Tathāgatas of the cardinal directions, then v.2 potentially can be viewed as signifying the three remaining Tathāgatas belonging to the NMAA's ritual framework:

dharṣati yo [2] lokaśa<ṁ> dhartu<ṁ> mūrdhnāmitābham api lokaśvaram /
*praṇamata taṁ lokaśaṁ sakaladigantāvabhāsanālokaśaṁ // (2)*²⁸

(a) [Pay homage unto Him] the Lord (*lokaśa<ṁ>* = Bodhicittavajra) who dares to bear on his head even the Lord of the Worlds Amitābha;²⁹ (b) Pay homage unto Him, the Lord illuminating in all the directions (= Mahāvairocana); and (c) [pay homage unto Him] the Lord of light (= Vairocana).³⁰

(*lokāloka*kula), as the *vajrakula* is alternately designated in the NS (see Tribe 1994:96). Additionally, Bosch (1929:42–43) viewed this stanza's reference to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṅgha as having no other intention than to emphasize the unity of Mañjuśrī with the Triratna.

26 Here *kīrtti* (= *kīrti*) conveys the additional meanings of 'luster' as well as 'speech' in the sense of a pronouncement, whilst *prakhyāta* means 'celebrated' as well as 'told (to others)', hence the gloss 'enunciated' as something proclaimed to others in clear or definite terms.

27 This view is confirmed by Tāranātha (see Dutt 1969).

28 See Bosch 1929:18.

29 'Bodhicittavajra was... the most important jina, and, as mentioned in the first chapter of the Guhyasamāja, all the other jinas were seen to reside in his heart.... [But] Bodhicittavajra was soon supplanted by the figure of Mahāvajradhara, who combined within himself the functions of Ādibuddha as well as the jina at the head of the sixth kula' (Davidson 1981:4).

30 Note that the main verb for the entire stanza (*praṇamata*, read as *praṇamatha*) does not appear until the beginning of the second hemistich, and so with respect to the initial half-verse it is implied. It is also hypothetically possible that this verse alternately refers to Avalokiteśvara (Body), Vairocana (Speech), and

Here ‘Lord of light’ can refer to Vairocana (from *vi-rocana*; ‘the illuminating one, coming from or belonging to the sun’). ‘Vairocana, the great lumen, the light of gnosis, he is the illuminator; the lamp of the world, the torch of gnosis, with great splendor he is radiant light’ (NS v.62 in Davidson 1981:26). The physical sun was certainly the terrestrial ‘lamp of the world’ during ancient times. However, the light of the worldly sun is limited because it is unable to penetrate interior space and whenever it is spreading light on one side of the earth, the other side remains immersed in darkness. By contrast, Mahāvairocana is the great illuminating one who spreads his light in all the directions, both externally and internally, and also shines with an eternal splendor.³¹

With respect to the seven Tathāgatas described in the NMAA’s core *sādhana*, Vilāsavajra describes Bodhicittavajra as being uniquely crowned with the five Buddhas, hence potentially explaining the statement in v.2 about supporting on his head *even* the ‘Lord of the worlds’, which also would imply that Amitābha is superior in some way with respect to the other Tathāgatas—an issue to which we shall return shortly.

The linkage of the name Amitābha with the designation ‘Lokesvara’ in v.2 was unusual enough to puzzle Bosch, who elected to accept it on the authority of the inscription alone. What he did not know at the time was that Lokesvara substitutes for Amitābha in the segment of the *Guhyasamājantra* that describes Bodhicittavajra generating the quintessence of the ‘family of passion’, e.g. the *padmakula*, by means of the *samādhi* ‘vajra birth of the great passion of all the Tathāgatas’. Therein Lokesvara is also qualified as being the ‘Lord of the great mantra’ (*mahāvidyādhipati*) ĀROLIK signifying that quintessence (see Freemantle 1971:30–31). Additionally, the designation ‘Lord of the Worlds’ is closely related to the name given to the *padmakula* in the NS: the ‘worldly and super-worldly family’ (*lokalokottarakula*).³²

When he identified the NS verses that denote the Tathāgatas belonging to his modified version of the Vajradhātumaṇḍala, which initially appeared in the *Sarvatathāgatatattva saṅgraha* (STTS), Vilāsavajra began with Amitābha [instead of Vairocana] ‘in order to indicate the preeminence of passion’.³³ But then he abruptly switched to Vajrasattva as his identification for the first Name-*mantra*: ‘great festival of great passion’.

There is said to be a great festival {*mahā:mahāḥ*} when the Tathāgatas display worship that pervades the whole of space. The word festival, [therefore,] denotes worship. Great passion is passion that has a nature that is great. In this context, of the great festival of great passion {*mahāmaha:mahārāgaḥ*}, great passion is that which has the characteristic of ripening and liberating living beings. And that [great passion] is [of the nature of] ... Vajrasattva, the Tathāgata (Tribe 1994:122).

a third divinity (Mind) belonging to the *lokāloka* (= *loka-āloka*) *mantra*-family of Mirror-like Awareness given that *ālokeśam* also can be glossed as the ‘Lord of sight’ (see Tribe 1994:96, n. 84). The resulting triad could then collectively signify Prajñājñānamurti (‘Embodiment of the Knowledge of Wisdom’), the Mantrarāja associated with the *kulatraya* of Vairocana. ‘The triple family [is so called] because it has [the triad of] body, speech and mind as its nature’ (Tribe 1994:96).

31 This is the viewpoint expressed by the early ninth-century Japanese monk Kūkai (see Wayman & Tajima 1992:248).

32 According to Mañjuśrīmitra, ‘the worldly family is the family of sentient beings such as ordinary spiritual friends and so forth while the super-worldly family is the family of Hearkeners (*śrāvakas*), Private Buddhas, and Bodhisattvas’ (Davidson 1981:21, n. 62).

33 With respect to v.2 of our inscription, *dhartum mūrdhnā* can mean ‘to honor highly’ (lit. ‘to hold above everything’).

Here Vajrasattva is an alternate designation for Bodhicittavajra, which is likewise the case in the *Guhyasamāja*. This is also implied by Vilāsavajra's statement that *bodhicitta* is the nature of Vajrasattva (Tribe 1994:67). Vilāsavajra then linked Amitābha to the NS Name-*mantra* 'producer of joy for all beings'; Akṣobhya to 'great festival of great hatred, great enemy of all defilements'; Vairocana to 'great festival of great delusion, destroyer of stupefied mental delusion'; Amoghasiddhi to 'great festival of great anger, great enemy of great anger'; and Ratnasambhava to 'great festival of great greed, destroyer of all greed'.

Table 3. The deities comprising the Vajradhātumahāmaṇḍala, according to Vilāsavajra³⁴

Tathāgata	Four Perfections [*]	Secret worship goddesses	External offering goddesses
Vajrasattva (aka Bodhicittavajra)			
Amitābha (W)	Sattvavajrī (E) [†]	Vajralāsyā (SE)	Vajradhūpā (SE)
Akṣobhya (E)	Ratnavajrī (S)	Vajramālā (SW)	Vajrapuṣpā (SW)
Vairocana (Zenith)	Dharmavajrī (W)	Vajragīti (NW)	Vajradvīpā (NW)
Amoghasiddhi (N)	Karmavajrī (N)	Vajranṛtyā (NE)	Vajragandhā (NE)
Ratnasambhava (S)			
Mirror-like Awareness	Equality Awareness	Reversion from Discriminating	Awareness of the Performance of Action
Action		Mind	
(Akṣobhya)	(Ratnasambhava)	(Amitābha)	(Amoghasiddhi)
Vajrasattva (E)	Vajraratna (E)	Vajradharma (E)	Vajrakarma (E)
Vajrarāja (S)	Vajrasūrya (S)	Vajratikṣṇa (S)	Vajrarakṣa (S)
Vajrarāga (N)	Vajraketu (N)	Vajrahetu (N)	Vajrayakṣa (N)
Vajrasadhu (W)	Vajrahasa (W)	Vajrabhāṣa (W)	Vajramuṣṭi (W)
The 16 Bodhisattvas[‡]			
(E)	(S)	(W)	(N)
Maitreya	Bhadrapāla	Mahāsthāmaprāpta	Candraprabha
Mañjuśrī	Sagaramati	Sarvāpāyāñjaha	Amitaprabha
Gandhastin	Akṣayamati	Sarvaśokatamonirghātamati	Gaganagañja
Jñānaketu	Pratibhānakūṭa	Jāliniprabha	Sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhin

^{*} These are the family mothers of the Four Awarenesses (see Tribe 1994:43).

[†] Vilāsavajra does not provide any directional assignments; those given above come from the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*.

[‡] Vilāsavajra's sixteen Bodhisattva identifications differ from the list for the Vajradhātumaṇḍala that appears in the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*; instead, they match those that this particular text gives for the Mañjuvajramaṇḍala.

The NMAA's translator noted that the first quarter of the verse appears to name Vajrasattva while the second quarter names Amitābha, which contravenes the ensuing general pattern of assigning an entire half-verse to each Tathāgata. 'However, the ritual structure of the NMAA is a sixfold one (six *mantra* families, six Wisdom-wheel visualisations) and if Vilāsavajra needs Names for six Tathāgatas a half-verse has to be divided' (Tribe 1994:122, n. 158).³⁵

34 Vilāsavajra does not identify any NS Name-*mantras* for associating with the four female gatekeepers mentioned in the STTS: Vajrāṅkuśa, Vajrapāśa, Vajrasphota and Vajrāveśa; and no NS verses are left over for possibly fulfilling this purpose.

35 Tribe also raises two potential objections: (a) Vilāsavajra does not mention the generation of a sixth

Vilāsavajra clearly describes Bodhicittavajra as occupying the central seat of the Vajradhātumahāmaṇḍala: ‘One should visualise Bodhicittavajra, transformed out of the syllable A, white in colour, possessing the Erotic Sentiment, crowned with the five Buddhas, seated in a state of Diamond-pride, adorned with every ornament, holding a vajra and bell, [placed] as before, at the centre of the *maṇḍala*’ (Tribe 1994:115). Furthermore, the *ācārya* concludes his identification of the Name-*mantras* (Table 3) by stating: ‘And these *maṇḍala*-deities—Vajrasattva and [the rest of the deities of the Vajradhātumahāmaṇḍala]—by virtue of their union with the Great Seal (*mahāmudrā*), go forth endowed with their own [distinguishing] colours and implements. And having issued forth they perform the activities of the Buddhas for [the benefit] of all living beings in all world spheres’ (Tribe 1994:143).

VILĀSAVAJRA’S MODIFIED VAJRADHĀTUMAṆḌALA AND CAṆḌI SEWU

The apparent inclusion of Vajrasattva (= Bodhicittavajra)³⁶ among the NS Name-*mantras* for the Tathāgatas belonging to Vilāsavajra’s modified Vajradhātumaṇḍala is potentially significant because the entire data set would then numerically match the number of image emplacements available within the principal temple at the center of Caṇḍi Sewu (see Table 4).³⁷ The NMAA’s translator has suggested that Vajrasattva might represent the Ādibuddha in this instance. ‘If it were assumed that every figure in Vilāsavajra’s ritual structure is “Named” in chapter 5 [of the NMAA], including the central deity and the inner figures, then the Tathāgata Vairocana can be taken as Mahāvairocana and perhaps the Tathāgata Vajrasattva can be identified as the Ādibuddha’ (Tribe 1994:59). On the other hand, NMAA Chapter 4 stipulates that the Tathāgata Bodhicittavajra has the Ādibuddha in his heart. Tribe also found it puzzling that NMAA Chapter 5 is entitled ‘On the Vajradhātumahāmaṇḍala of Bodhicittavajra’ given that the prior chapter had indicated that the Vajradhātumaṇḍala has Mahāvairocana in the central position.

If Bodhicittavajra is the Ādibuddha and the Ādibuddha is interpreted as the inner aspect of the central deity then in chapter 5, as the inner aspect, Bodhicittavajra emanates the inner (first) *cakra* of the main Vajradhātumaṇḍala and then in chapter 6 {‘On the Awareness of the perfectly pure Dharma Sphere’}, as the outer aspect of the central deity, Mahāvairocana emanates its outer (second) *cakra* (Tribe 1994:49).

seat for Vairocana if Vajrasattva is placed at the center of the *maṇḍala*; and (b) the designation Vajrasattva is subsequently identified with another Name-*mantra* for one of the deities immediately surrounding Akṣobhya in the Vajradhātumahāmaṇḍala.

36 Vilāsavajra’s equating of Bodhicittavajra with Vajrasattva appears to be based on the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*, in which the designations Bodhicittavajra, Vajrasattva, Mahāvairocana, Mahāvajradhara, and Vajradhara are used interchangeably.

37 However, this numerical equivalence was only achieved over time. Dumarçay (2007:197–199) noted the existence of several stages of remodeling within the core temple at Caṇḍi Sewu, including the replacement of the main image in the central sanctum by a larger idol, the enclosure of the circumambulation path surrounding the central sanctum, and the addition of four supplementary pedestals for additional images in each of the four auxiliary shrines in the cardinal directions. However, these changes do not necessarily indicate a radical change to the underlying deity system installed in the main temple. For example, 16 new images on supplementary pedestals, perhaps the 16 Bodhisattvas having Name-*mantras* in the NS, could have been added later to precisely enhance the overall efficacy of the *maṇḍala*. Moreover, the changes in esoteric Buddhist thought with respect to the role of the Tathāgata Bodhicittavajra that occurred somewhat later might help to explain why the main image had been changed (see footnote 29).

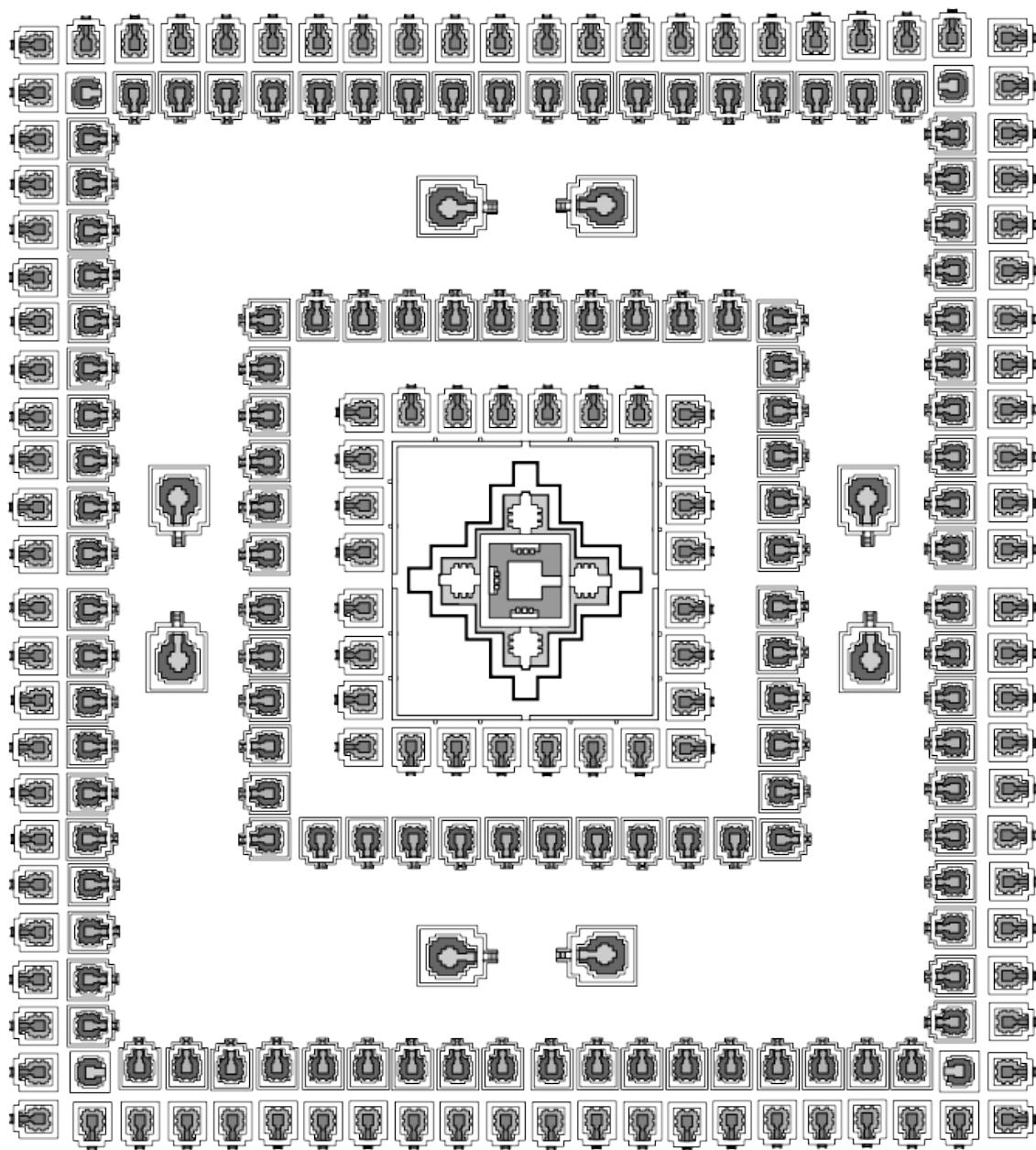
Table 4. Hypothetical Vajradhātumahāmaṇḍala deity-locations at Caṇḍi Sewu's principal temple (see Fig. 3)

NORTH SHRINE		
Sidewall niche triads: Vajrayakṣa - Amogahasiddhi - Vajragandhā Vajramuṣṭi - Vajrarakṣa – Vajrakarma		
Corner pedestals: Candraprabha, Amitaprabha, Gaganagañja, Sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhin		
WEST SHRINE	CENTRAL SHRINE	EAST SHRINE
Sidewall niche triads: Vajrabhāṣa - Vajrahetu – Vajradharma Vajradvipā - Amitābha – Vajratikṣṇa	Interior image: Bodhicittavajra (Vajrasattva)*	Sidewall niche triads: Vajrasādhū - Vajrarāja – Vajrasattva Vajrarāja - Akṣobhya – Vajradhūpā
Corner pedestals: Mahāsthāmaprāpta, Sarvāpāyañjaha Sarvaśokatamonirghātamaṭi, Jālinīprabha	Exterior North-wall niche triad: Vajragīti - Karmavajrī – Vajranṛtyā Exterior West-wall niche triad: Sattvavajrī, Vairocana,† Dharmavajrī Exterior South-wall niche triad: Vajramālā - Ratnavajrī – Vajralāsyā	Corner pedestals: Maitreya, Mañjuśrī Gandhahastin, Jñānaketu
SOUTH SHRINE		
Sidewall niche triads: Vajrahāsa - Vajraketu - Vajratatna Vajrapuṣpā - Ratnasambhava – Vajrasūrya		
Corner pedestals: Bhadrapāla, Sagaramati, Akṣayamati, Pratibhānakūṭa		

* Or if a revelation-form of Mañjuśrī, as Bosch (1929:52) had proposed, then an image of the Mantrarāja Arapacana with the sword of wisdom and book.

† The placement of Vairocana in a niche on the exterior facade of the centrally-placed inner sanctum would perhaps help to explain why the surrounding circumambulation path had been altered to cut it off from the outside, except for the zenith direction associated with this particular Tathāgata.

Fig. 2. The layout of the main temple at Caṇḍi Sewu

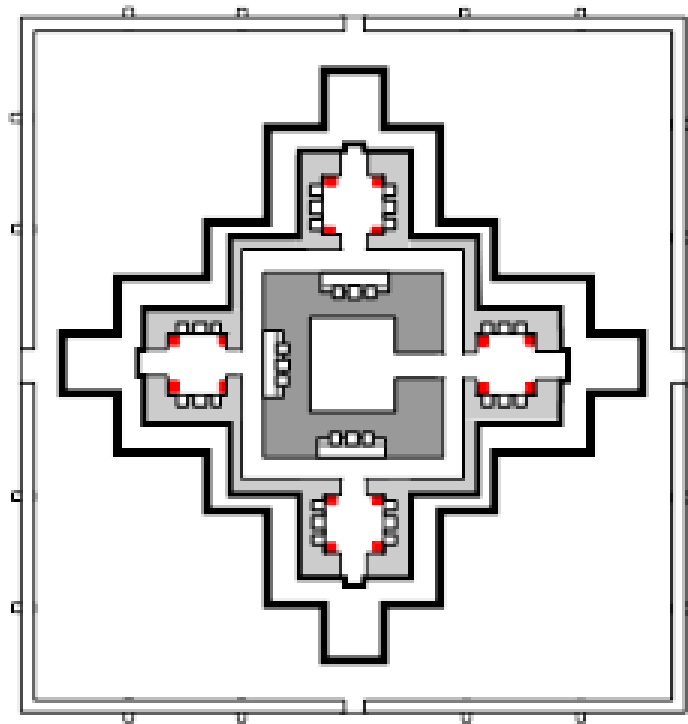


Tribe's hypothesis seems plausible to me given that Bodhicittavajra is the only Tathāgata mentioned by Vilāsavajra to have the syllable 'A' in his heart other than the Ādibuddha residing in the heart of Mahāvairocana. So we shall postulate herein that an image of Vairocana had been installed in a niche on the exterior of the innermost sanctum at Caṇḍi Sewu, and with an image of Bodhicittavajra (= Vajrasattva) having been placed in the 'heart' of the entire complex.³⁸

³⁸ Huntington (1994:140) observed that Vajrasattva is identifiable with the practitioner himself, who must generate the very *maṇḍala* upon which he must meditate. "The *maṇḍala* appears in a complex array as the Mount Meru headdress of Vajrasattva on which the Buddhas and sometimes Buddhaprajñās of the Pañcājina cycle appear as ornaments'.

A very large number of pedestals were placed within the surrounding auxiliary shrines (Dumarçay 2007:203) for which only a few dozen representing Tathāgatas have been found. This has led to the suggestion that the total image population originally had been intended to represent the thousand Buddhas of the Bhadrakalpa depicted as surrounding the 37 core deities of the Japanese Vajradhātumaṇḍala. Indeed, Sewu means a ‘thousand’ in Javanese. But the number of available pedestal emplacements is significantly lower than 1,000 at Caṇḍi Sewu. Dumarçay (2007:204–205) estimated a count that amounts to approximately 400. Moreover, some of the auxiliary chapels also contain niches for accommodating additional images (see, for example, the drawing in Dumarçay 2007:133), including those of Bodhisattvas as well.

Fig. 3. Caṇḍi Sewu ground plan, principal shrine



Caṇḍi Sewu’s central structure is surrounded by two successive tiers of 28 and 44 auxiliary shrines, or 72 in all; a numerically comparable arrangement is found on the summit of Borobudur in the form of 72 perforated *stūpa* constructions. Within the Buddhist Abhidharma philosophical schools, the Sarvāstivādins identified three unconditioned Dharmas whose nature is free from the laws of causation (*asaṃskṛta*) as well as 72 conditioned Dharmas (see Wayman 1997:269) which are subject to the laws of causation (*saṃskṛta*). So one might conjecture that these 72 auxiliary shrines had pertained to what Vilāsavajra had called the second circle of Mahāvairocana containing the divinities belonging to the perfectly pure Dharmadhātu of Vairocana.³⁹ To the exterior of this core arrangement at Caṇḍi Sewu, there are pairs of larger ancillary temples in the

39 On the other hand, Vilāsavajra noted that the NS chapter devoted to the perfectly pure Dharmadhātu of Vairocana contains 36 phrases whose words are Name-*mantras* (see Tribe 1994:47).

central courtyard that flank the temple axis in each of the cardinal directions,⁴⁰ and there are two more tiers of 80 and 88 smaller shrines on the outer periphery of the entire temple complex (see Fig. 3). All 176 peripheral structures can be apportioned hypothetically to the spiritual families of the four Tathāgatas of the cardinal directions that collectively occupy the outer circles of the composite *maṇḍala* described in the NMAA.

CANḌI LUMBUNG AND THE CULT OF TRAILOKYAVIJAYA IN CENTRAL JAVA

If Caṇḍi Sewu had been constructed to function as a modified Vajradhātumaṇḍala, then what would have been the function of Caṇḍi Lumbung? The allusion in v.15 of our inscription to ‘Vajradhṛk’, the quintessence of the *vajrakula*, potentially qualifies the underlying nature of the principal image installed in a temple. Citing younger Tibetan source materials, Wayman (1985:31–33) surmised that the retinue of deities from the *vajrakula* in the great composite NS *maṇḍala* would have had as its principal member a form of Mañjuśrī that exhibited the nature of Trailokyavijaya, surrounded by the wrathful guardians of the ten directions. A potential allusion to this that is found in the early NS commentaries is Mañjuśrīmitra’s statement in his *Upadeśa* that the deities proceeding forth from the NS *maṇḍala* segment belonging to Akṣobhya ‘tame the noxious beings of the world’ (Davidson 1981:46), which is the very function attributed to Trailokyavijaya in the STTS.⁴¹

The NS chapter on Mirror-like Awareness contains ten verses plus a quarter beginning with ‘Producing terror as Vajrabhairava’ and ending with ‘the best of those with a voice’, i.e. the ‘Gentle-voiced’ Mañjughoṣa as we have previously seen. Unfortunately, Vilāsavajra does not present the same level of detailed identifications in NMAA Chapter 6 that he did in Chapter 5 (see Tribe 1994:46), though in his chapter on the Mirror-like Awareness he does identify ‘many NS Names as being those of Krodhas (“Wraths”) by stating the Tantra in which they are to be found’ (Tribe 1994:48).

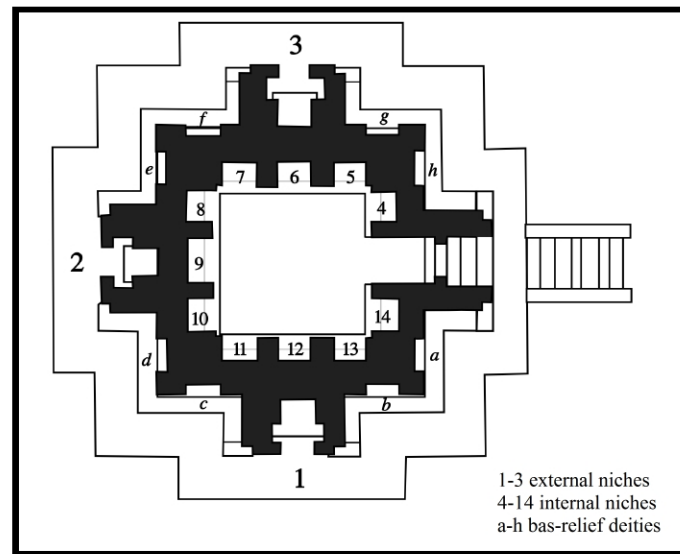
The principal shrine at Caṇḍi Lumbung has a total of eleven niches for images within its inner sanctum (see Fig. 4), which does suggest the possibility of a connection with the Vajrahūmkāramaṇḍala presented in the considerably younger *Niṣpannayogāvalī*, in which the principal divinity displays the Trailokyavijaya-*mudrā* and is immediately surrounded by the wrathful (*krodha*) guardians of the ten directions (see Bhattacharya 1949:44). The *Niṣpannayogāvalī* also describes a second *maṇḍala* in which Mañjuvajra is surrounded by ten krodhas, which is interesting given that Tribe (1994:8, n. 19) has suggested that the NMAA had actually paved the way for Mañjuvajra to become interpreted as signifying the essence of the *vajrakula*.⁴²

40 Though the later Javanese gloss for this type of temple construction was Caṇḍi Apit, we simply do not know how these edifices were named by the Hindu-Buddhist architects.

41 It appears that the composer of the NS had been well aware of the contents of the STTS. Wayman (1985:57) noted that all four divisions of this Esoteric Buddhist text are implicated in the previously cited description of Vajradhara from NS v.1: the Diamond Realm (*vajradhātu*) is signified by ‘Vajradhara’ and ‘possessing glory’ (see the second part of footnote 18); Victory over the Three Worlds (*trailokyavijaya*) by ‘the hero’ because he is ‘victorious over the three worlds’; Training the Living Beings (*jagad-vinaya*) by ‘supreme tamer of those hard to tame’; and Achieving the Objective (*siddhārtha*) by ‘king of secrets’ and ‘adamantine lord’.

42 The system of *Guhyasamāja* exegesis developed by Vilāsavajra’s student Buddhajñānapāda, which features the Mañjuvajramaṇḍala, ‘became one of the two defining systems inherited by most concerned with the *Guhyasamāja* tradition’ (Davidson 2002:311).

Fig. 4. Main shrine at Caṇḍi Lumbung



As previously noted, Vilāsavajra associated the Name-*mantras* presented in the NS chapter on Mirror-like Awareness with one of the outer circles of a great composite NS *maṇḍala* (see Fig. 1). So it is possible that Caṇḍi Lumbung had been intended to represent this particular segment of the overall *maṇḍala*, and with an image identifiable with Trailokyavijaya as being its principal divinity. That Trailokyavijaya had been worshiped in Central Java during the late eighth century is strongly suggested by an inscribed gold foil discovered on the Ratu Boko prominence overlooking the cluster of temples on the Prambanan Plain. One of the foil's interlinked diamond panes presents the mantra *om ṭakī hūm jaḥ svāhā*, and with the exaggerated bubble comprising the vowel 'ī' containing the Old Javanese words *panarabvan* and *khanipas*. Sundberg (2003:164–165) deduced that this mantra is a variant of the *hūm ṭakījjah* formula uttered by Vajrapāṇi (aka Vajrahūmkāra and Trailokyavijaya) in the STTS for the purpose of summoning and subjugating Śiva, Umā and other Hindu divinities, who subsequently were assimilated within a *maṇḍala* on the summit of Mount Sumeru. More recently, Griffiths (2014a) noted the presence of *om ṭakī hūm jaḥ* in a lead-plate inscription dedicated to a wrathful form of Vajrapāṇi. Found to the west of Borobudur, this lead-plate inscription has been dated to the ninth century on a palaeographic basis.⁴³ Elsewhere Griffiths (2014b) noted that *om ṭakī hūm jaḥ* appears in the *Guhyasamāja* (14.22), in four short Old Javanese inscriptions and in the Tibetan version of the *Sarvavajrodaya*.

Sundberg (2003) employed a mix of phonetic and orthographic arguments to demonstrate that the Old Javanese word *panarabvan* can be viewed as a variant of the name of Rakai Panaraban (r. 784–803). The linkage of this variant of a personal name with *om ṭakī hūm jaḥ svāhā* suggested to Jordaan and Colless (2004) that the intent had been to mantrically subjugate and convert the Javanese ruler. As Acri (forthcoming) points out, a sixteenth-century Tantric compendium called the *Mantramahodadhi* 'describes six arrangements for connecting the mantra to be uttered in each rite with the letters of

43 Griffiths (2014a:32) also refers to the discovery in Indonesia of four bronze images of Trailokyavijaya.

the name of the victim of the magical act; such methods may include the insertion of the victim's name at the end, or the insertion of letters between its syllables, and so on.... It is therefore not too far-fetched to assume, as was done by Sundberg (2003:177), that the inscription of Panaraban's personal title within a grapheme was intended to infix it "as a vital component of the sacred mantra". Aciri also hypothesized that the 'vaguely vajra-shaped double quadrangle' of the Ratu Baka gold foil could have functioned as a *yantra* of coercive magic comparable to examples described by the *Mantramahodadhi* and other Tantric sources.

One of the major unresolved issues pertaining to the Śrī Saṅgrāmadhanañjaya inscription of 782 CE is whether it had originally been associated with Caṇḍi Lumbung or Caṇḍi Sewu. Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1981:19–20) proposed that this inscription originally had been the foundation record for Sewu, even though the stone had been recovered from a location in closer proximity to Lumbung. She based her surmise on the additional discovery of the Old Malay Mañjuśrīgrha inscription dating from 792 CE in the southwest corner of the Caṇḍi Sewu temple yard.⁴⁴

It is indeed striking that Mañjuśrī is not only the central focus of both these inscriptions but also the only discrete Buddhist divinity mentioned therein. However, we must also consider the possibility that the Śrī Saṅgrāmadhanañjaya inscription had actually been the foundation record for an extended temple complex in which Caṇḍi Sewu and Caṇḍi Lumbung were merely discrete parts. In this instance, vs. 1–2 of the inscription potentially could refer to the central construction at Caṇḍi Sewu, with v.1 pertaining to the placement of the four Tathāgatas of the cardinal directions in the four subsidiary shrines surrounding the central core structure and with v.2 potentially pertaining to the presence of (Mahā-)Vairocana and Vajrasattva (= Bodhicittavajra) within the core area of the principal shrine. By contrast, vs. 13–16 hypothetically could refer to the principal divinity installed in the main shrine at Caṇḍi Lumbung. In the latter case, the multivalency inherent in the designations *vajradhṛk* and *śrīmān* from v.15 of our inscription, which equally can be applied to Vajradhara (=Vajrapāṇi, Trailokyavijaya) as well as the 'Gentle-voiced' Mañjughoṣa,⁴⁵ may be an outgrowth of the perception that Vajradhara has the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī as his underlying nature.⁴⁶ From this perspective, the {NS} Names are names of the forms in which Mañjuśrī as Knowledge-Being, i.e. as *jñāna*, can appear. As such they could, and do, range from Buddhas to doctrinal categories. They could be described as being Mañjuśrījñānasattva as he appears at the level of conventional truth (*saṃvṛtisatya*) (Tribe 1997:119).

CONCLUSION

In those esoteric Buddhist cosmograms that also incorporate Hindu deities, these lesser divinities are typically assigned positions along the outermost periphery of the *maṇḍala*.

44 See the provisional transcription of the Mañjuśrīgrha inscription in Boechari 2012:476–477, which originally appeared in Boechari 1992:93.

45 Verse 11 specifically refers to the establishment of a 'Mañjughoṣa' [temple and/or image] by the Śailendra-guru.

46 It is interesting that the arrival of Kumāraghoṣa in Central Java closely preceded the appearance of the inscribed gold foil discovered on the Ratu Boko, which Sundberg has linked to the reign of Rakai Panaraban (784–803 CE).

The south was considered the most inauspicious direction in ancient Java due to its associations with death. Therefore, the placement of Caṇḍi Prambanan at the southern periphery of the great composite *maṇḍala* would make sense, at least in theory, with respect to the protective functions that the NS attributes to Hindu divinities within its discussion-of-benefits segment, which states that whatever son or daughter of good family who makes the Knowledge-Being Mañjuśrī the object of meditation will be guarded, protected and defended by Brahmā, Indra, Upendra, Rudra, Nārāyaṇa, Sanatkumāra, Maheśvara, Kārttikeya, Mahākāla, Nandikeśvara, Yama, Varuṇa, Kuvera, Hārītī, and the guardians of the world in its ten directions.

Still other gods and nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, demigods and garuḍas, kinnaras and mahoragas, humans and nonhumans, and other planets and lunar mansions, divine mothers and lords of hosts, as well as the Seven Divine Mothers, yakṣiṇīs, rākṣasīs, and piśācis, all united and harmonious, with armies and attendants, will guard, protect and defend him. Still more they will infuse in his body vitality and strength, and they will induce in him the strength of health and the extension of life (Davidson 1981:42–43).⁴⁷

Furthermore, the placement of a temple associated with the quintessence of the *vajrakula* immediately to the north of Caṇḍi Prambanan would seem plausible given the taming functions ascribed to this particular spiritual family, as we have previously seen.

As demonstrated above, the emplacements for images within Caṇḍi Sewu's central shrine can be matched hypothetically to the deities populating Vilāsavajra's modified version of the Vajradhātumaṇḍala, which offers a modicum of support for Bosch's original theory. Moreover, Bosch observed that Caṇḍi Lumbung is situated precisely in the middle of the north–south line on which Caṇḍi Sewu and Caṇḍi Prambanan are linked together and also noticed that the Śrī Saṅgrāmadhanañjaya inscription identifies Mañjuśrī equally well with the Buddhist Triratna and the Hindu Trimūrti. This led him to conclude that our inscription directly pertains to Caṇḍi Lumbung, with Mañjuśrī having been manifested in union with the Triratna at this Buddhist temple and then subsequently as the Trimūrti at Caṇḍi Prambanan.

Given the vast extent of the complex, construction at Caṇḍi Prambanan presumably began well before the reign of Rakai Pikatan (847–855),⁴⁸ the Javanese monarch suspected to have been posthumously identified with the principal image installed at the center of this Hindu temple complex (see Aichele 1969:159; Jordaán 1991:169; and Jordaán and Wessing 1996:68–69). So a purely Buddhist construction plan might have motivated only the initial stages of site development at Caṇḍi Prambanan, with the forthcoming Hindu divinities perhaps envisioned as fulfilling the protection and welfare functions assigned to them in the benefits segment of the NS as a plausible extension of Caṇḍi Lumbung. In this respect, it is of considerable interest that Caṇḍi Prambanan seems to have formerly possessed a set of *dvārapāla* images no longer in evidence (see Jordaán 2013) that were comparable to those still found *in situ* at Caṇḍi Sewu as well as the pair which had

47 Notwithstanding Davidson's theory (1981) that the core NS verses had started off as an independent text, it is clear from the respective remarks of Vilāsavajra and Mañjuśrīmitra that the posterior benefits segment of the NS written in prose had been part of the overall text in the latter half of the eighth-century but had been considered to be different from the core text that had preceded it (see Tribe 1997:112).

48 Jordaán (1993) has suggested Śailendra involvement in the construction at Prambanan.

originally graced the singular entrance in the east at Caṇḍi Lumbung.⁴⁹ Moreover, Caṇḍi Prambanan initially could have been conceived as still another extension of Caṇḍi Sewu's Vajradhatumahāmaṇḍala. 'As a result of his {Trailokyavijaya's} victory, all of Maheśvara's retinue, including his wife, agree to become part of Vairocana's *maṇḍala*, and they are given back their names but with the word '*vajra*' placed before each to denote their new Buddhist status' (Davidson 2002:151). Obviously, however, the underlying purpose of Caṇḍi Prambanan could easily have evolved considerably during the later construction phases. In any event, the soaring spires at Caṇḍi Prambanan had surpassed the glory of the Buddhist temples to the north by the mid-ninth century at the very time that the Śaiva religion began to eclipse Buddhism in Central Java.

More research will be required to determine whether an applicable cosmogram pertaining to the *vajrakula* had existed in the late eighth century that would have provided a numerical match for the 11 niches contained within the central shrine at Caṇḍi Lumbung.⁵⁰ But if we envision this temple complex as just one of the deity circles comprising a composite *maṇḍala*, we automatically overcome potential objections to the non-conformance of its layout with respect to one of the design aspects typically associated with esoteric *maṇḍalas*, e.g. the incorporation of four gateways facing the cardinal directions. In theory, the singular entrance in the east at Caṇḍi Lumbung would have provided the central shrine's internal deity pantheon with the means for their respective spiritual essences to emanate to, and return from, the cardinal direction specifically associated with the *vajrakula*.

As for the other four satellite temples formerly surrounding Caṇḍi Sewu in the north, east, south and southwest, one might conjecture that each of these structures (Caṇḍi Lor, Caṇḍi Asu, Caṇḍi Bubrah⁵¹ and Caṇḍi Kulon⁵²) had served as the site for performing a *sādhana* dedicated to one of the remaining four *mantra*-families presented in the NS. For example, Wayman notes that Mañjuśrimitra had written a short *sādhana* for the divinity Ekavīra, who is 'described as holding the blue lotus with his right hand, and with his left hand making the gesture of explaining the Dharma (chos 'chad). One imagines oneself that way, surrounded by the six syllables, OM Vāgīśvara MUḤ' (Wayman 1985:35). This or a comparable short *sādhana* could have served as a foundation for rituals pertaining to the Mantrarāja Vāgīśvara associated with the Equality of Awareness in the NS.

The Śrī Saṅgrāmadhanañjaya inscription contains additional verses that hypothetically could be linked to at least two of the other *mantra*-families presented in the NS. For example, the reference to Mañjuśrī as the Tārksya (= Garuḍa) in v.18 potentially

49 A manuscript in the KITLV library written by van der Vlis and dating from 1841 refers to the pair of *dvārapāla* statues at Caṇḍi Lumbung previously mentioned by Mackenzie (1814), which places their disappearance between 1840–1885 (Roy Jordaan, pc 5 Sept. 2012). Additionally, Krom (1923 1:277) noted that Hoepermans had found two smaller *dvārapāla* statues at Caṇḍi Asu, the small satellite temple formerly located on the eastern side of Caṇḍi Sewu.

50 What may be helpful in this respect are the *Trailokyavijaya*, *Vajrabhairava* and other Tantras that Vilāsavajra had cited in the NMAA. As for the identities of the other images originally installed on the pedestals and in the niches within the 16 shrines surrounding the main sanctuary at Caṇḍi Lumbung, however, at best we can merely conjecture that they might have included images of the sixteen Bodhisattvas.

51 To date, 14 images have been recovered from this site: ten of Amitābha, three of Ratnasambhava and one of Akṣobhya (Degroot 2009:245).

52 The remains still visible in the mid-nineteenth century were located 200 m to the south of Caṇḍi Sewu's east–west axis.

can be equated with the spiritual family of the Tathāgata Amoghasiddhi, whose celestial mount is the Garuḍa. Moreover, the wish-fulfilling tree described in v.17 could in theory be linked to the spiritual family of the Tathāgata Ratnasambhava, who displays the wish-granting (*varada*) hand gesture. At the richly ornamented satellite temple of Caṇḍi Asu, which no longer exists, were discovered no less than five images of Kuvera, whilst two more Kuvera statues of comparable dimensions, although not found *in situ*, were presumed to have come from the same site (Krom 1923:I:275). Among Mahāyāna Buddhists, this wealth-bestowing divinity (who is also known as Jambhala) is considered to be an emanation of Ratnasambhava.

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