ON THE JĀTAKA RELIEFS AT CULA PATHON CETIYA

Buddhist Folk Tales Depicted at Chula Pathon Cedi

Piriya Krairiksh, with Thai translation by M.C. Subhadradis Diskul
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The rediscovery in 1968 of the Cula Pathon Cetiya [Pāli: Cūḷa Paḍoṇa Cetiya] near the town of Nakhon Pathom has brought to light a number of terracotta and stucco panels which once decorated the base of this stūpa. A detailed study of a number of these reliefs has recently been published by Piriya Krairiksh in his book entitled Buddhist Folk Tales Depicted at Chula Pathon Cedi. In spite of their mutilated and incomplete condition, Krairiksh has been able to identify many of the narrative panels, and has successfully demonstrated that some of the illustrated tales do not derive from the Pāli collection of the Jātaka stories, but from the Sanskrit sources. The religious inspiration behind the execution of these scenes, according to Krairiksh, was probably that of the Sarvastivāda school of Buddhism, a Hinayāna sect which used Sanskrit in its canonical writings.

Krairiksh’s research, no doubt, has contributed a great deal to our still limited knowledge of the cultural history of Dvāravatī in central Thailand. It has generally been accepted that the principal religion of Dvāravatī was Theravāda Buddhism, the canonical language of which—as evident from inscriptions—was Pāli. Brahmanism, too, prevailed to a certain extent in the Dvāravatī region. Traces of the Sanskrit language occurred from time to time in Dvāravatī epigraphs, either as a result of contact with northern India or through relations with Cambodia farther to the east. Bodhisattva images, assumed to date from about the eighth to ninth centuries A.D., also form part of the material remains of the area, and their presence suggests influences of Mahāyāna Buddhism in a country predominantly Theravāda in tradition.

The study of the Cula Pathon, a stūpa dating from the Dvāravatī period, discloses many interesting features concerning the religion and culture of the time. Jean Boisselier, who took part in the excavation and restoration of this monument in 1968, assigns the reliefs around its base to two different periods of construction. According to him, the terracotta panels belong

1 Note should be taken of the new nomenclature for historical classifications proposed by Dr. Piriya in his Art Styles in Thailand, published by the Fine Arts Department of the Royal Thai Government as the catalogue for the exhibition “A Selection from National Provincial Museums” held in August 1977. The term ‘Mon’ has been proposed for the ‘Dvāravatī’ period—Ed.
to the seventh to mid-eighth centuries A.D., and the stucco panels to a period extending from
the end of the eighth to the ninth century. The latter group, he believes, reveals certain
Mahāyāna influences, possibly from the Śrīvijaya kingdom in the south.2

 Rejecting Boisselier’s dating of the reliefs as well as his hypothesis on the Mahāyāna impact at Cula Pathon, Krairiksh implies that the panels belong to one and the same period of
construction, of about the fifth to seventh centuries3, or the sixth to seventh centuries A.D.4, and
owe their inspiration to the Sarvastivāda school of Hinayāna Buddhism which prevailed
in north India at that time. Krairiksh’s theory rests on his contention that the majority of
the tales illustrated at Cula Pathon were derived from Sarvastivāda sources, and that the
parallels to most of the scenes can be found in the art of Qizil, “a stronghold of the Hinayāna
Buddhism in Central Asia.”5 To support his theory, Krairiksh refers to I-Ts’ing’s testimony
on the popularity of the Sarvastivāda doctrine in the Malay archipelago and Campa in the
seventh century. He also draws attention to N.-R. Ray’s hypothesis on the prevalence of the
Sarvastivāda at Śrī Kṣetra in Burma, and to Coedès’ reference to Sanskrit Hinayāna Buddhism
in Fu-nan.6 His suggestions on the date and religious orientation of the reliefs at Cula Pathon
are obviously based on the assumption that the Sarvastivāda doctrine also prevailed in
Dvāravatī in the course of the sixth to seventh centuries A.D.7

 It is quite apparent from Krairiksh’s research that, besides the Pāli Jātaka-āṭṭhakathā, some other collections of Buddhist birth-stories were also known at the time of the modelling of
the reliefs at Cula Pathon. As some of the stories depicted have surviving parallels only in the
Sanskrit literature of north India, we are able to assume that a wave of cultural influences from
north India could have entered Dvāravatī. This cultural impact probably brought along to
Dvāravatī a repertory or repertoires of Buddhist birth-stories current in the northern part of
India. Krairiksh ascribes these apparent influences from north India to the activities of the
Sarvastivāda school which, he believes, prospered in north India and southeast Asia in the
sixth to seventh centuries. Krairiksh’s theory, nevertheless, seems hard to accept for various
reasons.

 In spite of Krairiksh’s detailed study, we should like to review these narrative panels once
again. Because of the unfortunate circumstances in which they were discovered, many of the
reliefs are in such a fragmentary state that the reconstruction and identification of the il­lus­trated scenes have become impossible. What confuses the issue all the more is that some of the
reliefs were executed in terracotta (see figure 1, panels nos. 1-3, 5), and all but one of the rest
in stucco. One panel (no. 4) contains figures made of both types of materials. Krairiksh,
we have mentioned, rejects Boisselier’s hypothesis that the terracotta group antedates the stucco
group, and assigns all the panels to the same period.8 Our own study of the terracotta reliefs

3 Krairiksh, op. cit., p. 21.
4 Ibid., p. 23.
5 Ibid. The term “Hinayana Buddhism” here presumably refers to the Sarvastivāda school of
Hinayana Buddhism, and not to the 17 other Hinayana Nikayas.
6 Krairiksh, op. cit., pp. 22-23.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid., p. 4.
9 Ibid., pp. 5-6.
and their position in situ (see reconstruction drawings of panels nos. 2 and 5, in figure 1) leads us to agree with Boisselier that they do not belong to the same period as the stucco reliefs. The composition and proportion of many terracotta figures do not conform to the average dimension of the stucco panels. Had they remained in their original and complete form, their heads would certainly have jutted out from the stucco frames (see figures in the frames of panels nos. 2 and 5, in figure 1). In other words, the hollow space designed to contain a stucco panel cannot have accommodated these terracotta figures. It is most likely that the terracotta reliefs antedated the building phase in which the base of Cula Pathon was refaced, repartitioned and ornamented with stucco panels. Terracotta and stucco figures found together within the same frame (for instance figures reconstructed as panel no. 4; see figures 1, 2) most probably do not form part of the same scene, but derive from two different layers of materials applied on the same base at different periods. The final reconstruction of panel no. 4 displays a seated person in stucco, and two smaller standing figures made of terracotta (figure 2). Krairiksh's argument that they belong together, and that the use of terracotta could have been abandoned during the execution of these scenes in favour of the simpler medium of stucco, certainly does not hold. Had it been so, the most important personage of this panel, viz. the man seated in the mahārājālīlāsāna, would not have been made of stucco while the two smaller and apparently less important characters were entirely sculpted in terracotta, the finer and more costly material.

Nevertheless, this does not necessarily imply that there must have been a great time difference in the execution of the two groups of reliefs. We quite agree with Krairiksh that there exists no clear distinction in style between the terracotta and stucco figures, and that there are no indications that the use of different media coincided with the sectarian change which took place at Cula Pathon. Modifications in plan and alterations of motifs seem to have been carried out repeatedly at Cula Pathon. A clear example of the abrupt change of themes at Cula Pathon is demonstrated by panel no. 37, where a princely person on horse was covered and hidden by a simha figure.

Notwithstanding these problems concerning the building process of the Cula Pathon, Krairiksh has been able to identify many relief scenes, in both stucco and terracotta: the story of Maitrakanyaka (panel no. 5), Supārāga (panel no. 23), Kacchapa (panel no. 24), Mahākapi (panel no. 25), Saddanta (panel no. 26), Syāmaka (panels nos. 30, 31), Hasti (panels nos. 32, 33), the Divine Horse, Śibi, and Cūlahammapāla. In most

10 See also ibid., fig. 10, which shows terracotta figures of panel no. 5 still in situ.
11 Krairiksh, op. cit., p. 6.
12 Ibid., pp. 5-6.
13 Ibid., figs. 7-9.
14 Ibid., pp. 8-10, fig. 10.
15 Ibid., pp. 10-12, fig. 12.
16 Ibid., pp. 12-13, fig. 14.
17 Ibid., pp. 13-14, fig. 16.
18 Ibid., pp. 14-16, fig. 20.
19 Ibid., pp. 16-18, figs. 25-27.
20 Ibid., pp. 18-20, figs. 31-32.
21 Ibid., p. 20, fig. 36.
22 Ibid., fig. 37.
23 Ibid., p. 21, fig. 40.
cases we agree with Krairiksh on the matter of identification, but feel that some remarks and alternative suggestions should be added, as follows.

(a) Panel no. 23 (figure 3), which Krairiksh believes to represent the story of Supārāga or Suppāraka24, could also illustrate some other sea stories, such as the Samuddavānija-Jātaka told in the Pali Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā. In this existence the Mahāsattva was born as a master carpenter who navigated the ship containing his 500 followers and eventually saved them from peril25. The Cula Pathon relief shows no detail which might decisively identify that situation. The composition of the panel is most similar to that of the Samuddavānija-Jātaka panel at the Minigalazedi, a Theravāda monument at Pagān (figure 4). The resemblance between these two reliefs (figures 3, 4) in any case is much more striking than that between the Cula Pathon panel and the Supārāga scene at the Barabu26. This remarkable analogy, Krairiksh implies, could be merely a coincidence, as the artists of Dvaravati and Pagān might have followed the same conventional ‘formula’ for all nautical scenes27. Even so, there still is no valid reason to connect the Cula Pathon relief specifically with the story of Supārāga and not with many other seafaring legends. This scene could equally represent the Samuddavānija-Jātaka as well as the Supārāga-Jātaka proposed by Krairiksh.

(b) Panels nos. 30 and 31, identified by Krairiksh as scenes from the story of Śyāmaka28, should be reexamined. M.C. Subhadradis Diskul, in his review of Krairiksh’s book, hesitates to accept the author’s identification of these two panels as scenes from the same legend, on the grounds of the obvious discrepancy in ornamentation of these two groups of persons. Prince Subhadradis points out that while none of the characters in panel no. 30 displays any jewelry, the figures in panel no. 31 wear earrings and necklaces29. His observation leads us to reconsider Krairiksh’s interpretation of these two scenes. While panel no. 31 probably represents the story of Śyāmaka, panel no. 30 (figure 5) may illustrate an episode from the Viśvantara-Jātaka, well-known from the Sanskrit Jātakamāla30 and the Pali Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā31. The three characters in panel no. 30 wear no ornaments, for all of them are ascetics. The central figure obviously represents Prince Viśvantara in the act of giving away his wife, whose hand he is holding, to Śakra disguised as a brahmin. Parallels to this scene can be found at Sānci32 as well as on the simās discovered in northeastern Thailand33 and in Cambodia34.

(c) The fragment of a man on a horse35 suggested by Krairiksh as depicting the Sanskrit story of the “Divine Horse” who saved a number of merchants from the island of rākṣastas36, also finds a parallel at a Theravāda monument in Burma, the Nanda (figure 6). Many versions

24 See our note 15.
26 See Krairiksh, Buddhist Folk Tales…, fig. 13.
27 Ibid., p. 10, note 44.
28 See our note 19.
30 See The Gātakamāla…, pp. 71-93.
31 Jātaka no. 547. See The Jātakas…, vol. VI, pp. 246-305.
32 See J. Marshall and A. Foucher, pl. XXIX.
33 See Krairiksh, “Semas...” fig. 22.
34 See J. Boulbet and B. Dagens, photo 134.
35 See Krairiksh, Buddhist Folk Tales…, fig. 36.
36 Ibid., p. 20.
of this legend of the Divine Horse are known in Sanskrit\textsuperscript{37} and Pāli literature\textsuperscript{38}, the earliest visual representation of which apparently occurred at Bhārhut\textsuperscript{39}. Therefore, the story seems to have been popular among the Hinayānists and Mahāyānists alike.

(d) The court scene (figure 7) reconstructed from fragments is suggested by Krairiksh as representing the Cūlādhamsapāla-Jātaka\textsuperscript{40}, the story of a cruel king who ordered his own infant son to be taken away from his mother to be killed. The details of our relief, however, suggest another plausible interpretation. The panel could depict the story of King Surūpa as told in the Avadānasātaka\textsuperscript{41}. This charitable king offered his child, his queen and lastly himself to a bloodthirsty yakṣa who actually was Indra in disguise. After this test of Surūpa's virtue, the king of the gods restored to him all he had given away. In the Čula Pathon relief, the child is being presented by his royal father to the yakṣa who stands on the extreme right. The demoniacal character of the latter is indicated by his knitted eyebrows, an item also noted by Prince Subhadradīs\textsuperscript{42}. The queen stands in the middle of the scene, sad but resigned, submissive to her lord's command. To the left, servants carry a bowl or tray of food, to be offered to the horrid guest who refused to partake of anything but the flesh and blood of the baby prince. A representation of the story of Surūpa occurs in the wall painting at Qizil; the yakṣa is seen consuming the child in the presence of his horrified parents (figure 8). A series of reliefs at the Barabuḍur in central Java depicts this legend in a much less gruesome way (figure 9).

(e) Panel no. 70 which shows a man riding on a hybrid animal (figure 10), considered a mere decorative relief by Krairiksh\textsuperscript{43}, could depict the Śarabha-Jātaka related in the Jātakamāla\textsuperscript{44} and the Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā\textsuperscript{45}. The Great Being was born as a Śarabha, a fabulous animal accredited with great strength equal to that of lions and elephants. The creature saved the life of the king of Vāraṇasī who, in his determined effort to catch the animal, had fallen into a deep chasm. Seeing what had happened, the Śarabha climbed down, took the king on his back and carried him to safety. Being a mythical animal, the Śarabha is diversely portrayed in art. At Barabuḍur we see him as a calf-like creature with eight legs, four of which are turned upwards on his back\textsuperscript{46}. Hindu treatises, too, give us various fantastic descriptions of the Śarabha\textsuperscript{47}, but on the whole agree with one another that he is a curious, composite animal. A Śarabha image from south India (figure 11) depicts him with a leonine body and head such as our hybrid animal possesses in panel no. 70 at Čula Pathon (figure 10).

\textsuperscript{37} See The Divyāvadāna..., p. 524; and The Mahāvastu, vol. III, pp. 70-93.
\textsuperscript{38} Jātaka no. 196. See The Jātakas, pp. 89-91.
\textsuperscript{39} See B. Barua, Barhut, pp. 104-105, pl. XXVI, uppermost scene, right.
\textsuperscript{40} Krairiksh, Buddhist Folk Tales..., p. 21.
\textsuperscript{41} Avadāna no. 35. See Avadānasātaka..., pp. 187-192.
\textsuperscript{42} See Diskul, in The Sculpture of Thailand, cat. no. 18c, p. 52.
\textsuperscript{43} Krairiksh, Buddhist Folk Tales..., p. 7.
\textsuperscript{44} See The Gātakamāla..., pp. 227-234.
\textsuperscript{45} Jātaka no. 483. See The Jātakas..., vol. IV, pp. 166-174.
\textsuperscript{46} See N.J. Krom, Beschrijving..., p. XI, 91-93.
\textsuperscript{47} For this see T.A. Gopinatha Rao, Elements..., vol. II, part I, pp. 171-174.
Our attempt at identifying and reidentifying these scenes merely confirms Krairiksh’s discovery that a number of the reliefs at Cula Pathon were not inspired by the Pāli Jātaka-atṭhakathā. His list, and our alternative interpretations of the scenes, show that there must have been some other sources. Krairiksh asserts that most of the stories depicted at our monument are preserved in the various Avadānāmalās, which are the works of the Sarvāstivādins. The majority of these “Garlands of Avadānas”, nevertheless, prove to be but paraphrases of an ancient collection such as the Avadānasatāka, an important Sanskrit work which forms part of the Chinese Tripitakas. The Avadānasatāka was translated into Chinese in the third century A.D., and could have been composed as early as 100 A.D. This text has been classified as a work of the Sarvāstivādins, because it was written in Sanskrit, and its general character and style conform to the “primitive Buddhist spirit” which pre-dated Mahāyāna concepts. The origin of the Avadāna stories is therefore very old, in any case much older than all the Avadānāmalās of the Sarvāstivādins.

A second look at the list of tales depicted at the Cula Pathon reveals another interesting feature. These stories, in one form or another, are also preserved in many other ancient texts besides the Avadānāmalās of the Sarvāstivādins. Eight out of the 12 legends so far identified by Krairiksh and ourselves find parallels in the Pāli Jātaka-atṭhakathā, which probably assumed its final form in the fifth century A.D. Quite a number of these stories, too, occur in the Jātakamāla of Ārya Śūra written about 250 A.D., and some in the Jātakastava, a text of an early but unspecified date. Certain tales are told in the Mahāvastu, a collection of tales from the Vinaya-Piṭaka of the Mahisāṅghika Lokottaravādins. The nucleus of this work probably goes back before the beginning of the Christian era, though in its present form it suggests a date as late as the fourth century A.D. Two stories, one of which seems to have been preserved nowhere else, occur in the Sutrālīkāra, believed to have been written by Aśvaghosa or Kumāralata around the first or second century A.D.

48 Krairiksh, Buddhist Folk Tales..., esp. p. 1.
49 See Avadānasatāka..., “Preface”, pp. xvi-c.
50 Ibid., p. xv.
51 Ibid., p. xvi.
52 Maitrakanyaka (Mittavindaka), Pāli Jātaka, no. 439; the ship scene depicting Supārāga (Supparaka), Pāli Jātaka, no. 463 or Samuddavānija, Pāli Jātaka, no. 466; Mahākapi (Mahākapi), Pāli Jātaka, no. 516; Sādantā (Chaddanta), Pāli Jātaka, no. 514; Śyāmaka (Sāma), Pāli Jātaka, no. 540; Sarabha (Sarabhamagga), Pāli Jātaka, no. 483; Divine Horse (Valahassa), Pāli Jātaka, no. 196; Visvantara (Vessantara), Pāli Jātaka, no. 347.
54 Supārāga (?), Jātakamāla no. 14; Mahākapi, Jātakamāla no. 24; Hasti, Jātakamāla no. 30; Sarabha, Jātakamāla, no. 35; Visvantara, Jātakamāla no. 9. A version of the Maitrakanyaka tale, too, might have been written by Ārya Śūra; for this see Jātaka-Mālā..., “Introduction”, p. ix.
56 Kacechapa; Mahākapi; Sādantā; Śyāmaka; Divine Horse.
57 See The Jātakastava..., pp. 401-405.
58 Śyāmaka; Divine Horse; Surūpa.
60 Sādantā; Śibi.
61 Śibi.
62 See L. Renou et J. Filliozat, p. 381.
From the above it appears that these stories have been known in India since a very early period. What is more important, they have been utilized by various Buddhist sects for their own edification. Doctrinal orientations of the literary sources mentioned above are definitely variant. The Avadānasataka, and some other ancient Avadāna collections such as the Divyāvadāna and the Karmasataka, were probably the works of the Sarvāstivāda school, which was one of the first offshoots of the ancient Sthaviravāda division of primitive Buddhism. The Pāli Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā belongs to the Theravāda Nikāya, the orthodox school which strove to maintain the original Sthaviravāda tradition of early Buddhism. Ārya Śūra's Jātakamālā, composed in the purest Sanskrit, begins with the invocation "Om namah śrīśarasvabuddha-bodhisattvebhyah" ("Om! Adoration to all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas")64, the usual invocation of Mahāyāna Sūtras65. The flowery, elaborate style of this text, as well as its idealistic inclination, distinguishes it from the early works of the Sarvāstivādins which are generally recognized by "the complete absence of Mahāyāna concepts"66, and by "the conformity of the spirit [that pervades them] with the Holy Writ of the so-called Southern Buddhist"67. The date and doctrinal orientation of the Jātakastava, a Sanskrit text found at Khotān in central Asia, are still problematic. Central Asia, traversed by flourishing trade routes between China and India, seems to have been a meeting place of numerous religious sects68, and Mahāyāna Buddhism also thrived at Khotān in the time of Fa-Hien69 and Huan-Tsang70. The Mahāvastu declares itself to be "the beginning of the Great Story of the Vinaya-Piṭaka according to the text of the Mahāsāṃghikas, the Lokottaravādins of Madhyadeśa"71. In this work we notice a clear tendency towards Mahāyānism72, e.g., the docetic personality of the Buddha (Lokottara), and the introduction of the Bodhisattvacaryas and Bodhisattvabhūmis73. The non-Hinayāna character of this work is so distinct that B.C. Law calls it a Mahāyāna textbook74. The Sūtrālaṅkāra, translated into Chinese around 405 A.D., was either the work of the famous Āśvaghosa or his younger contemporary Kumāralaṇa. Neither of them could have belonged to the Sarvāstivāda Nikāya. Mahāyāna elements have been noticed

63 For schismatic divisions of Buddhism, see J. Masuda, pp. 1-78; and A. Bureau, pp. 16-30.
64 See Jātaka-Mālā..., p. 1; and The Gūstakamālā..., p. 1.
65 See, for instance, Renou et Filliozat, p. 367.
66 See Avadānaṭṭhakatha,..., "Preface", p. xvi.
67 Ibid., p. xvi.
68 Manuscript remains in central Asia include fragments of early and later Buddhist works, ranging from the ancient Vinaya-Piṭaka and the Agamas to pure Mahāyāna Sūtras and Tāntric works, written divergently in Pāli, Sanskrit, Ugar, Tocharian, Khotanese, Kuchean, Sogdian and other central Asian dialects. For this see K. Saha, pp. 31-114.
69 See A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms..., pp. 16-20.
71 For this translation of the introductory statement of the Mahāvastu, see E.J. Thomas, p. 280.
72 The Mahāsāṃghikas can be called Hinayāna only in the sense that they branched off from the main body of primitive Buddhism and became an independent Nikāya before the rise of Mahāyānism. They in fact rejected the severe attitude maintained by the Sthaviravādins, and were later responsible for the Mahāyāna movement which became distinguished before the fourth century. For the philosophy of the Mahāsāṃghika Lokottaravādins, see Bureau, pp. 75-77.
73 Cf. Bureau, p. 77; and N. Dutt, p. 272.
74 See Law, A study of the Mahāvastu, "Introduction".
in the work of Āśvaghosa\textsuperscript{75}, and Kumāralaṇa was one of the leaders of the Dārṣṭāntika branch of the Sautrāntika school\textsuperscript{76}.

In view of the antiquity of these literary sources and their divergent doctrinal orientations, it is clear that we cannot consider the birth-stories depicted at Cula Pathon to be the exclusive property of the Sarvāstivādins. The origin of these tales, still preserved in a great quantity in the Sarvāstivāda and Theravāda literature, goes back to ancient times before the religion of the Buddha was divided into different sects. The fact that most of them are to be found in the works of the Sarvāstivādins and the Theravādins may be explained by the simple reason that the scriptures of these two Nikāyas are the most well-preserved of all, thanks to the devotional enthusiasm of the Chinese, the Tibetans and the Sinhalese\textsuperscript{77}.

From times immemorial, the Buddhists have assimilated an uncountable number of popular folktales and employed them to suit the purpose of glorifying the Buddha and propagating the Doctrine. The collections of birth-stories which have come down to us represent but incomplete versions of what was once known by the ancient Buddhists. Many of the Jātakas and Avadānas can be traced back to stories told in the Vinaya-Piṭaka, and in the early Nikāyas of the Sūtra-Piṭaka\textsuperscript{78}. The Mahāvastu, which calls itself an Avadāna, also contains stories collected from the Vinaya-Piṭaka of the Lokottaravādins\textsuperscript{79}. Tales told in connexion with the institution of rules and in the introductory part of the Sūtras, were extracted from the Canon and told again as Jātakas or Avadānas, singly or in collections. The Theravādins inserted the Jātakas in the Khuddaka Nikāya, the fifth and additional section of their Sutta-Piṭaka\textsuperscript{80}. Among the Sarvāstivādins of ancient India, the birth-stories formed part of a special type of unclassified scripture but were regarded all the same as containing the Buddhavacana\textsuperscript{81}. In China and Tibet, these tales or collections of tales were incorporated into the Canon\textsuperscript{82}.

These birth-stories preserved in the scriptures of various Buddhist sects, therefore, had one and the same origin in the vast repertory of tales, gathered and utilized by the Buddhists even before the time their Canon was given a definite form. The Vinaya-Piṭaka and the Sūtra-Piṭaka of the early Buddhist sects, especially the Sarvāstivāda and Theravāda, were substantially similar\textsuperscript{83}, since both had been based on the original Canon in the Prākrit language, whether oral or written\textsuperscript{84}. The Theravādins converted these Piṭakas into Pāli, and the Sarvāstivādins into Sanskrit. The Theravādins compiled their collection of birth-stories, which is now known

\textsuperscript{75} See Renou and Filliozat, p. 205.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., p. 381. For the doctrine and origin of the Dārṣṭāntika sect, see Bareau, pp. 160-161.
\textsuperscript{77} Cf. Bareau, pp. 8, 131, 207-208.
\textsuperscript{78} See T.W. Rhys Davids, pp. 194-196; Thomas, pp. 278-280; Dutt, pp. 241-243; Avadānaśataka..., "Preface", p. ix; and The Divyavādāna..., "Preface", p. viii.
\textsuperscript{79} See Thomas, pp. 280-281.
\textsuperscript{80} For the components of the Pāli Tipitakas, see Bareau, pp. 210-211; and Thomas, pp. 266-275.
\textsuperscript{81} See Bareau, pp. 135-136; and Thomas, p. 279.
\textsuperscript{82} See Avadānaśataka..., "Preface", p. x.
\textsuperscript{83} See Thomas, pp. 266-274; and Dutt, pp. 146-151.
\textsuperscript{84} Rhys Davids, pp. 172-173; and Thomas, p. 264.
to us as the Jātaka-āṭṭhakathā; the Sarvastivādins, and most probably the Mahāsāṅghikas, too produced the Avadāna literature. The actual difference between the "Jātakas" and "Avadānas" lies in the fact that the Jātakas are stories of the previous births of the Buddha Śākyamuni while the Avadānas relate the glorious past lives of the Buddha as well as of other beings. Any Jātaka, therefore, can be called an Avadāna, but not every Avadāna a Jātaka. The concept of the Jātakas, moreover, is obviously older than that of the Avadānas, as the Jātakas confine themselves only to the nucleus figure of the historical founder of Buddhism. The Avadānas follow the same outline, but show a clear tendency towards the worship of many Bodhisattvas which, in the course of time, developed into the polytheistic doctrine of the Bodhisattvayāna.

After this short survey on the origin of Buddhist birth-stories, we may come back to the subject under review: the reliefs at Cula Pathon. From the identification of each and every scene, it is clear that all the stories depicted here deserve the designation of "Jātakas", since they only depict the past deeds of the Buddha and not of any other beings. The fact that most of them are preserved in the Avadāna literature, by no means deprives these tales of their Jātaka nature. But it would even be more precise to call them "Jātakas", because they are not just Buddhist folktales but tales of the previous lives of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

The comparison made by Krairiksh of the Jātaka representations at Cula Pathon with the narrative scenes at Qizil in central Asia is quite interesting. On the face of it, to find similar motifs in the arts of two countries separated from one another by the whole subcontinent is beyond expectation. There could be no question of one school of art influencing another, and Krairiksh considers the Sarvastivādins to be responsible for the occurrence of the same themes in these two regions. We have shown in the preceding paragraph that even if these stories were popular among the Sarvastivādins, they are far from being the exclusive property of this particular sect. The two schools of Buddhist art at Qizil and Dvāravatī simply obtained their inspiration from the same ancient tradition—that of primitive Buddhism prior to its sectarian schism. The artists of these two schools made use of the rich and inexhaustible repertory of tales, which is a common heritage for Buddhists of all sects and periods. There seems to be no reason to connect the Cula Pathon reliefs with the paintings at Qizil, either in doctrinal orientation or in time. Jātaka stories in general are non-sectarian and timeless motifs in Buddhist art, and each and every tale depicted at Cula Pathon displays such characteristics.

Literary evidence quoted above will suffice to show that the Jātakas in question have been known in ancient India by various Buddhist sects long before the sixth to seventh centuries A.D., to which period Krairiksh assigns these reliefs. Originally they belonged to the enormous collection of tales widely known among the ancient Buddhists, the complete version of which is now lost or never did exist in book form. After the schism in Buddhism, each sect made use of this common heritage for its own edificatory purposes. Quite a number of collections of birth-stories must have existed in the old days, though only a few have come down to us. By the sixth to seventh centuries, the proposed date of the Cula Pathon reliefs, these tales were obviously used as visual parables by all Buddhist sects in the Indian subcontinent. In the early fifth century the pilgrim Fa-Hien saw representations of 500 Jātakas in Ceylon. At Ajanṭā,

85 Krairiksh, *Buddhist Folk Tales...*, pp. 22-23.
86 See *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms...*, p. 106.
among the rich evidence of Mahāyāna worship, we find illustrations of many tales which also occurred at Cula Pathon. The Jātakamāla of Ārya Śūra, written as early as in the third century, formed the main source of the fifth-to-seventh-centuries paintings at Ajanta, together with a number of stories known as the Mahānipatā-Jātakas, the favourite and timeless subjects of Theravāda artists\textsuperscript{87}. An even closer parallel to the series of Jātakas at Cula Pathon is provided by the reliefs at Barabudur. On the wall of the balustrade of the first gallery, we find representations of the complete set of tales told in the Jātakamāla. The rest of the identifiable birth-stories are legends known from the Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā and the Avadānas, and all but one or two of the Cula Pathon Jātakas have their counterparts among the Barabudur reliefs\textsuperscript{88}. This central Javanese monument, however, dates from around the eighth to early ninth centuries A.D., and its religious inspiration was purely Mahāyāna of the Yogācāra type\textsuperscript{89}. The timeless and non-sectarian nature of Jātakas as art motifs seems to be most clear from these examples.

It would therefore be imprudent to connect the Cula Pathon reliefs with the Sarvāstivādins. The role of this Buddhist sect in southeast Asia, at the present stage of our knowledge, is still difficult to determine. In the seventh century I-Tsing mentioned that there were a few followers of the Sarvāstivāda-Nikāya in Campū, while the Buddhists of that country generally belonged to the Sammitiya-Nikāya\textsuperscript{90}, another Hinayāna Buddhist sect whose popularity in India at that time apparently exceeded that of the Sarvāstivādins\textsuperscript{91}. According to I-Tsing the islands of the archipelago universally adopted the (Mūla)sarvāstivāda doctrine, though some followed the Sammitiya-Nikāya, and a few followers of the Mahāsāṃghika and Sthāviravāda were also found there\textsuperscript{92}. Ray, in his study of Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma, suggests the existence of the Sarvāstivāda-Nikāya at Śrī Kesāra, on the basis of the evident cultural relation between Burma and Magadha in the seventh century A.D., and Magadha at this time is referred to by I-Tsing as a stronghold of the Sarvāstivādins\textsuperscript{93}. The role of the Sarvāstivādins in the Indian subcontinent is well known to us from epigraphical and literary records. They were extremely powerful in north India in the early centuries A.D.\textsuperscript{94}, and Kaniśka the great Kuśāna ruler is credited with having patronized their doctrine and widely propagating it in Gandhāra and Kāśmīr\textsuperscript{95}. The accounts of the Chinese pilgrims also testify to the popularity of the Sarvāstivāda doctrine in north and northwest India as late as in the seventh century A.D.\textsuperscript{96}

However, archeological finds from the areas conventionally known as Hinayāna Sarvāstivāda territories amazingly give us quite a different picture from what we might have deduced from literary records. To begin with, Bodhisattva images—a definitely non-Hinayāna element

\textsuperscript{88} See Krom, \textit{Beschrijving...}, pp. 213-480.
\textsuperscript{89} These facts have also been noted by Diskul, "Porāpagatī-Viśāraṇa", p. 318.
\textsuperscript{90} See A \textit{Record of the Buddhist Religion...}, p. 12.
\textsuperscript{91} See tabulated data in Dutt, pp. 307-308.
\textsuperscript{92} See A \textit{Record of the Buddhist Religion...}, p. 10.
\textsuperscript{93} See N.-R. Ray, pp. 19-30.
\textsuperscript{94} See Dutt, pp. 141-144; and Bareau, pp. 131-132.
Mahāyāna settlements before Huan-Tsang’s time, and in any case there were Mahāyāna monks in Gandhāra in the seventh century A.D. The same may be said about Kāśmir, which was conventionally known to have been a great centre of the Sarvastivādins and a headquarters of eminent Sarvastivāda teachers through the ages. Huan-Tsang’s record, it is true, tells us of the predominance of this doctrine in Kāśmir, but it also mentions that Buddhism of both Vehicles prospered there side by side. Moreover, we know from other sources that Kāśmir at that time came under the supremacy of the Hindu kings of the Karkotā dynasty. This country, therefore, was actually far from being an exclusive field of activity for the Sarvastivādins, and this fact tallies well with archeological finds from Kāśmir which consist of numerous images of Hindu and Mahāyāna deities. The region of Magadha, often referred to as another stronghold of the Sarvastivādins, also seems to have been a great centre of all Buddhist sects alike, probably due to its close connection with the life of the Master. The records of pilgrims in the fifth to seventh centuries A.D. agree with one another that Buddhist sects of the two Vehicles prospered side by side in Madhyadeśa and northeast India, both of which were important regions in the history of cultural contact between ancient India and southeast Asia. Religious inspirations issuing from these pan-Buddhist centres, therefore, could not have been exclusively Sarvastivāda.

In certain cases, it is fairly clear that the personal, sectarian inclination of the author of each account induced him to neglect mentioning the other existing creeds. I-Tsang in his reference to Campā gives us an impression of the prominence of the Buddhist Sammitiya doctrine, and says nothing of Śaivism which obviously was the state religion of Campā at that time. His mention of “a few” followers of Mahāyāna Buddhism in the archipelago too could have been an understatement of the actual fact, or an inaccurate survey of the extent of the Mahāyāna impact there. I-Tsang, we also notice, makes no reference whatsoever to the Hindu religions in the archipelago, though a Vaiṣṇava kingdom probably existed in west Java, and a Śaiva dynasty could have been ruling central Java at that time. The pilgrim, naturally, was primarily concerned with Buddhist religion and practices; it was not his intention to report on the entire religious circumstance in these countries. So we should bear this in mind and refrain from drawing a hasty conclusion from such recorded testimonies.

(b) If the prominence of the Sarvastivādins in the Buddhist world was not exaggerated in literary records, the presence of Mahāyāna elements in their territories could be explained in another way. The Sarvastivādins, as it should be correctly understood, were not “Hinayānis” in the most usual sense of the word. The term “Hinayāna”, as used in various conventional tables to qualify all the 18 schools including the Sarvastivāda, Mahāsāṅghika and Sthavira-

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105 Ibid., pp. 279-283.
107 For Fa-Hien, see A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms..., pp. 62, 78-79, 98-99; for Huan-Tsang, see Watters, vol. II, pp. 86-177; for I-Tsang, see A Record of the Buddhist Religion..., pp. 8-9.
108 See A Record of the Buddhist Religion..., p. 12.
109 Ibid., pp. 10-11.
111 Ibid., pp. 13-14.
112 For the classifications of early Buddhist sects, see Bareau, pp. 15-34.
vāda, has the special meaning of "primitive Buddhism", viz. Buddhism before the rise of Mahāyānism. Only in this sense can the Sarvastivādins and the Mahāsāṅghikas be called Hinayānists. It would be wrong to consider the Sarvastivādins and the Mahāsāṅghikas orthodox, since these two schools separated themselves from the original Hinayāna trunk because they disapproved of the disciplinal severity demanded by the other members of the community, i.e. the Sthaviravādins. It has been accepted by scholars that the germs of Mahāyāna Buddhism are to be found in the doctrines of the Sarvastivādins and the Mahāsāṅghikas, so we should not be surprised to notice Mahāyāna elements in the concepts and practices of these two Hinayāna sects. The Sarvastivādins, in particular, disapproved of the great emphasis prescribed on the Vinaya by the Council of Elders, and they branched off to form a separate Nikāya concentrating on the eminence of the Abhidhamma. They certainly did not observe strict rules and regulations like the orthodox Theravādins, considering these a matter of less importance. Upon the rise of Mahāyānism, which probably occurred before the fourth century A.D., the Sarvastivādins could have assimilated certain Mahāyāna rituals and customs, and if not they must at least have studied the Mahāyāna system along with their own. A good example of the liberal practices of the Sarvastivādins in the seventh century can be found in I-Tsung's record. The pilgrim, being himself a Sarvastivādin, received instruction from various distinguished teachers who possessed an abstract insight into the doctrines of the Mahāyāna Madhyamikas and Yogācāras.

It has been pointed out so many times that the distinction between Mahāyāna and Hinayāna Buddhism was not as obvious as that between two biological species. Even I-Tsung's oft-quoted rule, that the worship of a Bodhisattva and the reading of a Mahāyāna Sūtra are characteristics of the Mahāyānists, fails to operate in many instances. According to the pilgrim's own statement made during his journeys, it cannot be determined which of the schools should be grouped with the Mahāyāna and which with the Hinayāna. He also seems to imply that one and the same school adhered to the Hinayāna in one place and to the Mahāyāna in another place. Huan-Tsang, who must have been fully aware of the doctrinal distinction between the two divisions, could not make up his mind as to the classification of certain Buddhist schools, and ended up by calling them the Mahāyānists of the Sthavira Schools. From the records of these two pilgrims we also learn that eminent Buddhist monks in India and elsewhere, no matter to which sect they belonged, studied the Sūtras of the other schools and were thoroughly versed in the doctrines of the other systems. A great number of Sūtras were recited, discussed and revered by the Mahāyānists and Hinayānists alike. The Bud-

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113 Cf. Bareau, pp. 31-34.
114 See Bareau, pp. 303-304; Thomas, pp. 166-176, and 283-285; also Dutt, pp. 260-268.
115 See our note 72.
116 See Bareau, p. 131; cf. Thomas, pp. 157-158.
117 See A Record of the Buddhist Religion..., "General introduction", p. xxii.
118 See the note 72.
119 Ibid., pp. 184-185.
120 Ibid., p. 14.
121 Ibid., see also "General introduction", pp. xxii-xxiii.
123 See A Record of the Buddhist Religion..., pp. 184-185; and Shaman Hwui Li, pp. 6-10.
124 A Record of the Buddhist Religion..., pp. 152-166.
dhists of the archipelago, too, chanted the works of Aśvaghosa and Nāgārjuna. If they were predominantly Sarvāstivādins, as I-Tsing tells us, we may assume that the adherents of this sect must have been most liberal in their conduct, rituals and thought.

The unconventional attitude of the Sarvāstivādins makes it difficult for us to recognize their activities beyond the field of written documents. While the absence of the Bodhisattva cult and the use of Pāli assert the presence of the Theravādins, there seems to be nothing by way of archeological remains to prove the existence of the Sarvāstivādins. The use of Sanskrit and the introduction of Sanskrit Buddhist literature into southeast Asia, at most, indicate a wave of cultural influences from the northern regions of India, where a great number of Buddhist sects prospered side by side since the early centuries of the Christian era.

For the reasons cited above, we seriously doubt Krairiksh’s theory on the prevalence of the Sarvāstivādins in the kingdom of Dvāravati. The Jātakas depicted at the Cula Pathon and preserved, as many of them are, in the Sarvāstivāda literature, have been a common heritage of all Buddhist sects from times immemorial. A great quantity of birth-stories were in circulation all over the Indian subcontinent before the fifth century A.D. Undoubtedly, there were many collections of these tales in existence, and more than one of them found their way into Dvāravati. The collections known in Dvāravati at the time of the construction of Cula Pathon were also in circulation in various regions of the Indian subcontinent in the course of the fifth to seventh centuries A.D., and in central Java around the eighth to ninth centuries.

The Jātaka stories which form the main theme of the decoration of Cula Pathon, therefore, have no bearing either on the date or the sectarian inclination of the monument. The only fact to be deduced from them is the confirmation of the impact of northern Indian influences, direct or indirect, which subsequently followed the earlier contact of Dvāravati with some Buddhist centres in the south. Krairiksh considers the Sarvāstivādins responsible for these influences and attributes the Cula Pathon reliefs to the sixth to seventh centuries A.D. which, he believes, represents the flourishing period of the Sarvāstivāda doctrine in southeast Asia. Another reason for this dating seems to be Krairiksh’s conviction that the reliefs must precede the eighth century, which presumably marks the first occurrence of Mahāyāna elements in the art of Dvāravati.

Besides the fact that there is no material indication of Sarvāstivādin inspiration at Cula Pathon, the date ascribed to these reliefs by Krairiksh also seems too early. Stylistically, the panels indicate a mature period of Dvāravati art, the phase after imported Indian elements had been absorbed and successfully integrated into the esthetic norm of the locality. Clumsiness and uncertainty resulting from the imitation of unfamiliar art forms, such as we usually find in the formative stage of various art styles, are no longer noticeable at Cula Pathon. The figures, simple but very much alive with individual charm and spontaneity, appear to have been sculpted by competent craftsmen who were familiar with and had a full understanding of their subjects.

125 Ibid., pp. 158-166.
126 Krairiksh, Buddhist Folk Tales..., pp. 21, 23.
We believe that these reliefs should be dated from the latter part of the seventh century to the eighth century A.D., the mature period of Dvāravatī art in central Thailand. The northern Indian influences noticeable in them are apparently those of the Mahāyāna type of Buddhism, which made their appearance in southeast Asia as early as in the seventh century, and became very distinctive in the course of the eighth century. Although no obvious traces of Mahāyāna worship exist at Cula Pathon, images of Bodhisattvas already had appeared at the monuments of Kāla Bua which date approximately from the same period. Some bronze figures of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, too, testify to his veneration in central Thailand. Nevertheless, the occurrence of Bodhisattva images in Dvāravatī does not necessarily imply that Mahāyāna Buddhism had become the prominent religion of the kingdom in the late seventh to eighth centuries. On the contrary, Mahāyāna influences appear to have been but an intervening element in the long-standing Theravāda tradition of Dvāravatī. We have good reason to believe that the imported cult of Bodhisattvas did not find much response in Dvāravatī and Bodhisattva images, in most cases, were not made for independent worship but to serve as subsidiary figures or attendants of the Buddha Sākyamuni. Their position in the Dvāravatī system of worship was, on the whole, not unlike that of the Hindu gods Brahmā and Indra in the early Buddhist pantheon.

The use of Sanskrit in Dvāravatī inscriptions of the seventh century could have been stimulated by the contact of Dvāravatī with north India. But there seems to be another plausible explanation for the use of Sanskrit along with Pāli in this kingdom. Prince Subhadradas has drawn our attention to the fact that the Sanskrit and Pāli inscriptions of Dvāravatī appear to be contemporaneous, and the two languages could have been used for different aims: secular and religious. All Sanskrit inscriptions from the Dvāravatī region either bear royal epithets or record meritorious deeds performed by important persons. The most lengthy of all turns out to be non-Buddhist, commemorating the foundation of a Śiva linga by a certain King Śrī Harṣavarman. The Pāli epigraphs, as a rule, contain extracts from the Tipiṭakas of the Theravādins.

Prince Subhadradas' suggestion obviously provides a solution to the problem which has long puzzled art historians and archeologists. The use of Sanskrit in Dvāravatī was not necessarily inspired by any direct contact with north India, the homeland of this hieratic language, but could have resulted from centuries of cultural and political relations with the empire of Fu-nan. Sanskrit, we know, was introduced into southeast Asia as early as the third century A.D., and has been used in the official documents of rulers of most of the Indianized states of southeast Asia from the very beginning of their history. It was, and still is, the holy and ritualistic language imbued with the divine flavour appropriate to the

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127 See for instance Diskul, in The Sculpture of Thailand, cat. nos. 2 and 3.
128 See for instance C. Chongkol and H. Woodward Jr., cat. no. 28.
129 Diskul, “Poraragati-Vicāraṇa”, p. 316.
131 See Coedès, Recueil..., ins. no. XVI, pp. 4-5, pl. 1.
133 See J. Filliozat.
134 For Indonesia see Chhabra, pp. 65-98; for Campā see Boisselier, La statuaire du Champa..., pp.18-20; for Cambodia see our note 133.
pomp and sanctity of kingship. In all probability, Sanskrit was used as the royal and official language in central Thailand before the foundation of the Dvaravati kingdom, which presumably took place upon the disintegration of Fu-nan.

The inclination of Dvaravati to the Theravada faith did not prevent its kings from retaining the use of Sanskrit, the sacred language of all Indianized kingdoms of southeast Asia. It is quite natural that the Buddhist kings of Dvaravati continued to issue their regal and official documents in Sanskrit. Votive inscriptions were written either in Sanskrit or in the native Mon, depending on the social status of the donors. Only purely religious epigraphs had to be inscribed in Pāli, since they cited passages from the Canon of the Theravādins. Conservative Buddhists have maintained through the ages that the purity of the “Words of the Elders” could only be preserved through the recitation and transmission of their doctrine in untranslated Pāli. This practice is still followed at present by the Theravāda community of Thailand.

The influx of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which swept over the kingdoms of southeast Asia in the course of the seventh to thirteenth centuries A.D., did not leave lasting impressions on such regions with a strong Theravāda tradition as Burma and Dvaravati. Bodhisattva images, the conventional signs of Mahāyāna worship, appeared in the art of Dvaravati sporadically and only for a certain period. Their status, in any case, was apparently inferior to that of the Buddha. The veneration of Sākyamuni and of his Four Noble Truths, which permeated the spiritual life of the Dvaravatī kingdom from the very beginning, remained predominant till the end of its history.
Figure 1. Cula Pathon Cetiya, northeast side, with terracotta and stucco reliefs on base. After Kairiksh, Buddhist Folk Tales..., fig. 1.
Figure 2. Cula Pathon Cetiya, relief no. 4, terracotta and stucco. Photo by author, neg. P4-68.

Figure 3. Cula Pathon Cetiya, relief no. 23. Photo by author, neg. P4-56.
Figure 4. Mingalazedi, Samuddavājiya-Jātaka. After Duroiselle, pl. LVI, 39.

Figure 5. Cula Pathon Cetiya, relief panel no. 30. Photo by author, neg. P4-65.
Figure 6. Nanda, Valabha-Jataka. After Duroiselle, pl. LIV, 24.

Figure 7. Cula Pathon Cetiya, panel showing court scene. Photo by author, neg. P4-59.
Figure 8. Qizil, Surūpa-Jātaka. After Grünwedel, fig. 248, B8.
Figure 9. Barabudur, Surupa-Jātaka. After Krom, Beschrijving van Barabudur, pl. XX, 176, series I(B) a.

Figure 10. Cula Pathon Cetiya, relief panel no. 70. Photo by author, neg. P4-62.

Figure 11. South India, Śiva Śarabhamūrti. After Rao, vol. I, part I, pl. E.
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