



**Fig. 1** *Đồng Dương pedestal and vihara imagined by Parmentier (1919).*

The parts of this large pedestal were found in late 1902 in the crumbled pile of the principal tower in the first enclosure of the monument at *Đồng Dương* village (today – *Thăng Bình* district, *Quảng Nam* province), in an excavation by an EFEO team headed by Henri Parmentier. It represents the richest Cham account of the traditional stories of the life of the historical Buddha.

The reports by Parmentier and the photographs taken *in situ* by Carpeaux provide valuable information on the structural layout of this pedestal complex, which can be recognised in three components.<sup>1</sup> The great pedestal is a nearly-square platform (204 cm x 204 cm x 86 cm) with stairways on three sides. It faced east to the only door of the principal tower. The small altar, in the form of a square block (104 cm x 104 cm x 58 cm) with stairways on four sides, was located on the main pedestal. The high altar table behind this consists of several decorated stone blocks, some of which have holes cut into them for the bases of statues. This high altar table

leaned against the western wall of the sanctuary. From the sections he uncovered, H. Parmentier speculated that there must have been a Buddha icon on the high altar with other statues of deities or worshippers on the lower blocks. These he included in his drawing (Fig. 1). (see Sharrock in this volume on this being anachronistic p. 111)

The reliefs of figures on the great pedestal below the dais have also attracted much comment, but a full interpretation of the carvings still remains open. Henri Parmentier modestly expressed his ‘ignorance’ of their meaning and only provided the descriptions of the figures, including positions, gestures and attributes. He labeled the 15 parts of the main pedestal with the letters A to O, starting from the south side.<sup>2</sup>

The great pedestal has an abundance of personages carved in high relief. On each side is a central stairway with relief panels of carved images to the left and right of the stairways. The reliefs on the stairway wings are arranged in three registers. All walls of the main pedestal, the small altar and the high altar table are richly decorated

1 BEFEO III, pp 80-85; Parmentier 1909: 439-505; Baptiste 2005.

2 Parmentier's labelling has been used by all later scholars and is preserved in his catalogue entry.

3 Parmentier 1909: 468.

4 Boisselier 1963: 267-270.