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The Buddha’s Great Miracle at Śrāvastī: a Translation from the Tibetan *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*

David Fiordalis

Abstract

This article offers an annotated translation of the story of the Buddha’s great miracle at Śrāvastī, as found in the Tibetan translation of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*. While miracles of the Buddha are many and various, the great miracle of Śrāvastī, one of the Buddha’s principal miracles, is almost the prototypical Buddhist miracle story, and the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* contains a significant version of it. Yet of the many versions preserved in a variety of languages, this is one of the last to garner much scholarly attention. This article makes it more widely accessible to an interested audience, thereby contributing to the further study of Buddhist miracle literature.

Introduction

Stories of the Buddha’s miracles are numerous, regardless of one’s interpretation of the wondrous and its place in Buddhism. Some might argue that the miraculous does not play a key role in Buddhism, and that the Buddha appealed primarily to reason and even disdained the performance of miracles.¹ From another perspective, Thich Nhat Hanh suggests life is full of wonders: ‘the blue sky, the sunshine, the eyes of a baby’.² So in this sense, the Buddha’s life is itself a wonder, all the more so for his teachings, which draw attention to the ‘miracle of mindfulness’.³ Either way, one cannot simply make the stories of the Buddha’s miracles vanish with the wave of one’s hand. One must account for them somehow.

Classical Buddhist sources characterize the Buddha as special, or even especially special, so much so that Dieter Schlingloff makes a good point when he says:

¹ There are many examples of such a position, articulated with varying degrees of subtlety and sophistication. A recent expression is Bhikkhuni W. Suvimalee, ‘Anusāsani Pātihāri: the Miracle of Instruction in the *Bojjhaṅga-sutta* and the *Girimānanda-sutta*’, *Sri Lanka International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 2 (2012), 171–87.

² Thich Nhat Hanh, *Being Peace* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 2005), 13.

³ Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Miracle of Mindfulness* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987).

The main motive for the conception of a Buddha's life was not, however, to give the sermons an attractive local colour, but to support the dogma that the appearance of a Buddha as the climax and turning point of world affairs was a miraculous event, unlike any other earthly life.⁴

Certain events in the Buddha's life drew more attention than others. For instance, the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* mentions the Buddha's birth, awakening, first sermon, and 'great passing away', and states that commemorative *stūpas*, built in the places where those events occurred, will inspire and encourage people who visit them, as well as bringing peace of mind and, upon death, rebirth among the gods.⁵ Other Buddhist texts and art add to this list of events, creating longer lists, such as the list of the eight 'great sights' (*mahāsthānas*).⁶

One prominent event included among the eight is the so-called 'great miracle' (*mahāprātihārya*), commonly said to have occurred in Śrāvastī, where the Buddha is said to have displayed his extraordinary attainments or powers (*rddhi*) beyond the capability of ordinary human beings (*uttaramaṇuṣyadharmā*). The story of this event is arguably the prototypical Buddhist miracle story, not necessarily in the philosophical sense of miracle that Thich Nhat Hanh suggests – that is part of the reason why it is arguable – but in another, perhaps narrower, perhaps more basic meaning of the term. The Buddha does something utterly marvellous, unprecedented, and unbelievable, which defies explanation. He displays his superhuman powers, teaches the Dharma, and establishes his preeminence. And people respond with awe and devotion, some with fear, trepidation and even cynicism. It is a prototype in that it provides a good basis for evaluating the Buddhist miracle story as a kind or type of story.

Defending this claim requires more argumentation than is possible here, but a few reasons can be given. The story portrays an event identified in both text and art as one of the Buddha's principal miracles. It has an extensive distribution: there are numerous versions of the story extant in Pali, Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan, and Mongolian, as well as many representations of it in sculpture and painting, across a wide expanse of time and space.⁷ The story exerts a kind of centripetal force that pulls other stories into its orbit,

⁴ Dieter Schlingloff, *Ajanta: Handbuch der Malereien, Handbook of the Paintings* (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000), 39.

⁵ Maurice Walshe, trans., *The Long Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston: Wisdom, 1995), 263–65.

⁶ Hajime Nakamura, 'The *Aṣṭamahāsthānacaitiyastotra* and the Chinese and Tibetan Versions of a Text Similar to it', in *Indianisme et Bouddhisme: Mélanges offerts à Mgr Étienne Lamotte* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste, 1980), 259–65. An eightfold list of the Buddha's miracles is also found in the Pali commentaries. For a translation of one such passage, see David V. Fiordalis, 'Miracles in Indian Buddhist Narrative and Doctrine', *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 33 (2010), 381–408. Both shorter and longer lists of the Buddha's great deeds are also found. For further discussion see John Strong, *The Buddha: a Beginner's Guide* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009), 13–18.

⁷ For an extensive, nearly exhaustive bibliography of the texts and art, see Schlingloff, *Ajanta*, 492–97. For further discussion of the art and its relation to the narratives, see Alfred Foucher, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1917), 147–84; Robert L. Brown, 'The Śrāvastī Miracles in the Art of India and Dvāravatī', *Archives of Asian Art* 37 (1984), 79–95; Patricia Eichenbaum-Karetzky, 'Post-Enlightenment

thereby growing itself, by means of concatenation, into something of a miracle cycle. It also exhibits a centrifugal force, as its miracles seem somehow representative, or typical, of what one finds in many other Buddhist miracle stories. In fact, in the two (arguably three) versions of the story still preserved in Sanskrit, it is actually called the ‘Miracle Story’, perhaps even *the* Miracle Story.

Many renditions of it are preserved in a variety of classical languages, and most of these have been translated at least once into a modern language, be it English, French, German, Chinese or Japanese. Among those in Pali, a longer version forms part of a miracle cycle contained in the *Dhammapada* commentary,⁸ and a shorter retelling is found in the *Jātaka* commentary.⁹ Still preserved in Sanskrit are versions in the *Divyāvadāna*¹⁰ and Kṣemendra’s *Bodhisattva-avadānakalpalatā* (BAK).¹¹ Chapter fifteen of the *Avadānaśataka*¹² should arguably also be included in this list of variations, though again this would require more justification than can be given here. The corpus of Chinese Buddhist literature contains several more versions of the story. Among them, one is in the Chinese translation of the *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya* (Taishō [T] 1428), one in the Chinese translation of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* (MSV) (T 1451), one in the so-called *Sūtra of the Wise and the Fool* (T 202), another in T 160, which Ju-hyung Rhi contends was composed in China largely based on T 202, another in T 193, and another in T 211, a translation of a

Miracles of the Buddha’, *Orientalia* 21.1 (1990), 71–77; Ju-hyung Rhi, *Gandhāran Images of the ‘Śrāvastī Miracle’: an Iconographic Reassessment* (PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1991). Another article that discusses the narratives and art is Dieter Schlingloff, ‘Yamakaprātihārya und Buddhapiṇḍi in der altbuddhistischen Kunst’, *Berliner Indologische Studien* 6 (1991), 109–36.

⁸ Edition: Helmer Smith, ed., *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā* (London: Pali Text Society, 1906–15). Translation: Eugene W. Burlingame, trans., *Buddhist Legends: Translated from the Original Pali Text of the Dhammapada Commentary*, vol. 3 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1921), 35–56.

⁹ Edition: M. V. Fausbøll, ed., *The Jātaka, together with its Commentary* (London: Pali Text Society, 1877–96). Translation: E. B. Cowell, ed., *The Jātaka, or Stories of the Buddha’s Former Births*, vol. 4 (London: Pali Text Society, 1990), 166–69.

¹⁰ Edition: E. B. Cowell and R. A. Neil, eds., *The Divyāvadāna, a Collection of Early Buddhist Legends* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1886), 143–66. An e-text of the Sanskrit is easily accessible on GRETIL: <<http://grettil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/grettil.htm>>. French translation: Eugène Burnouf, *Introduction a l’Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1844), 162–89. English translation: Andy Rotman, trans., *Divine Stories: Divyāvadāna, Part I* (Boston: Wisdom, 2008), 253–87. An English translation is also found in Rhi, *Gandhāran Images*. Japanese translation: Miyaji Akira, ‘Divyāvadāna dai jūni sho “Prātihārya-sūtra” wayaku’, *Bunka Kiyō* 13 (1979), 117–41.

¹¹ Edition of the Sanskrit and the Tibetan: Sarat Chandra Das and Hari Mohan Vidyābhūṣaṇa, eds., *Avadāna Kalpalatā: a Collection of Legendary Stories about the Bodhisattva*, vol. 1 (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1888), 411–29. Another edition of the Sanskrit based on Das and Vidyābhūṣaṇa is P. L. Vaidya, ed., *Avadāna-kalpalatā*, vol. 1 (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1969), 111–16. English translation: Bhūṣaṇa Çandra Dās, ‘Story of Prātihāryya’, *Journal of the Buddhist Text and Anthropological Society* 5.3 (1897), 17–20. An e-text of the Sanskrit is also available on GRETIL.

¹² Editions: J. S. Speyer, ed., *Avadānaśataka: a Century of Edifying Tales Belonging to the Hinayāna* (The Hague: Mouton, 1958); P. L. Vaidya, ed., *Avadāna-śataka* (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1958). An e-text is also available on GRETIL. French translation: Leon Féer, trans., *Avadāna-śataka: Cent legends bouddhiques* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1879). English translation: Naomi Appleton, trans., ‘The Second Decade of the Avadānaśataka’, *Asian Literature and Translation* 1.7 (2013), 15–17.

Dhammapada commentary different from the one extant in Pali.¹³ Both Rhi and Lamotte conjecture that the Great Miracle story contained in T 211 may be earlier than other extant versions, but it is difficult to say anything on this point without further analysis.¹⁴ Among the versions preserved in Tibetan and Mongolian are those in the Tibetan translation of the MSV, the Mongolian translation of the *Sūtra of the Wise and the Fool*,¹⁵ and the Tibetan translation of the BAK and its much later prose rendering,¹⁶ which detailed comparison shows to be rather different from the original poetic version.

Only one version has not yet been translated into any modern language, so far as this author is aware: the Tibetan translation of the MSV, which is translated here. Although translated once into English in the late nineteenth century, Kṣemendra's original poetic rendering in the BAK also requires some attention. However, given certain methodological considerations and the basic logistics involved, studying and translating both the Tibetan MSV and the BAK versions and comparing them in one article proved impractical. Each version poses its own challenges and questions.¹⁷ The English translation of the Tibetan MSV presented here amounts to nearly ten thousand words by itself, excluding annotations. As a next step, I intend to offer another article containing a translation and comparative analysis of the poetic rendering by Kṣemendra in the BAK, which I hypothesize to be based mostly on the MSV. Testing this hypothesis will require the preliminary work undertaken here, which involves reading the Tibetan MSV alongside the *Divyāvadāna*.

In order to translate the MSV version, one must consider the relationship between the Tibetan and Chinese translations of the MSV, as well as the MSV's relationship to the Sanskrit rendering in the *Divyāvadāna*. Detailed comparison of the

¹³ For editions of these texts, see J. Takakusu and K. Watanabe, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai, 1924–32). They are also available electronically through CBETA: <www.cbeta.org>. Translations of all of them may be found in Rhi, *Gandhāran Images*. An English translation of T 211 is also found in Charles Willemsen, trans., *The Scriptural Text: Verses of the Doctrine, with Parables* (Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translations and Research, 1999), 165–69. For a nearly complete French translation of T 211, see Étienne Lamotte, 'Vajrapāṇi en Inde', in *Mélanges de Sinologie offerts à Monsieur Paul Demiéville* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966), 122–24.

¹⁴ Rhi, *Gandhāran Images*, 258; Lamotte, 'Vajrapāṇi en Inde', 122.

¹⁵ Translation: Stanley Frye, trans., *Sutra of the Wise and the Foolish* (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1981), 49–65.

¹⁶ *Rtogs brjod dpag bsam 'khri shing gi snyan tshig gi rgyan lhug par bkrol ba mthong ba don ldan* (Delhi: Delhi Karmapae Chodhey, 1981). This nineteenth-century Tibetan prose rendering, which is far from identical to the Tibetan translation of Kṣemendra's original poetry, has been translated three times. English translation: Deborah Black, trans., *Leaves of the Heaven Tree* (Berkeley: Dharma Publishing, 1997), 65–69. French translation: Padmakara Translation Group, trans., *La Liane Magique: Les hauts faits du Bodhisattva contés par le Bouddha pour expliquer la production interdépendante* (Saint-Léon-sur-Vézère: Éditions Padmakara, 2001). Chinese translation: Dai Zuomin, trans., *Baihua ruyiteng shijiamouni bai xing zhuan* (Chengdu: Sichuan Minzu Chubanshe, 1998).

¹⁷ For instance, the Sanskrit text of the BAK is preserved in Tibetan transliteration inter-linearly within the Tibetan translation itself. As the basis for any new translation, the pioneering edition of Das and Vidyābhūṣaṇa needs to be reconsidered in light of the manuscript evidence, though the task of improving their edition is daunting, given that no new manuscripts that include the story have yet come to light.

Tibetan translation of the MSV with the *Divyāvadāna* demonstrates that the two versions are related, with the *Divyāvadāna* likely based upon the MSV.¹⁸ At the same time, they are distinct from one another in numerous ways, distinct enough to be considered different versions of the same story, with the *Divyāvadāna* elaborating upon the MSV and revising it to an extent. Rhi's translation into English of the story in the Chinese MSV has proved extremely helpful for comparison, although his work does not obviate the usefulness of a translation of the Tibetan version – especially one that looks in detail at the textual parallels in the *Divyāvadāna*, as this one does. Ultimately, this translation supports the larger study of Indian Buddhist miracle-story literature, and is offered as work in progress to a broad audience of interested readers.

* * *

The translation is based on reading the Derge (D) and Peking (Q) editions of the Tibetan canon, and sometimes also the Narthang (N) edition.¹⁹ In lieu of providing a critical edition of the Tibetan text, which, while admittedly useful, would have required an exhaustive comparison of all editions of the Tibetan canon, annotations supply the Tibetan for words, phrases and sentences deemed interesting for the reader of Tibetan, sometimes shown against parallel Sanskrit passages from the *Divyāvadāna*. For comparison, Rotman's translation of the *Divyāvadāna* has also been cited, often presented alongside Rhi's translation of the Chinese MSV. For those who wish to read the translation against the Tibetan original, page numbers roughly corresponding to the folios of D (the most easily available version) have been inserted in brackets within the text, marking the end of each numbered folio.

Translation

The Blessed²⁰ Buddha was dwelling in Rājagrha at the bamboo grove of Kalandaka-nivāpa. Kings, ministers, brahmins, heads of households, townspeople, country people, the

¹⁸ General scholarly consensus tends to support this conclusion. See, for instance, Lamotte, 'Vajrapāṇi en Inde', 124–25, including notes 4 and 5.

¹⁹ D: vol. 11 (da), p. 79, lines 1ff. The version of D used is the so-called *sde rge par phud*, available through the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (TBRC): <<http://www.tbrc.org>>. Q: vol. 44 (ne), p. 137, folio 37a, lines 8ff. The version of Q used is the standard: D. T. Suzuki, ed., *The Tibetan Tripitaka* (Tokyo: Tibetan Tripitaka Research Institute, 1955–62). N: vol. 11 (da), p. 458, lines 5ff. The version of N used is the one available through the TBRC.

²⁰ Here the term *bhagavat* is translated 'Blessed One', or 'Blessed' when in an adjectival position modifying Buddha. Blessed One is meant primarily in the sense of one who possesses or is endowed with blessings (*bhaga*) accumulated through great merit. There is no perfect translation of this term. Its usage crosses over different religious traditions, and includes a more common, everyday sense as a term of respectful endearment. From a somewhat high, scholastic perspective, there are traditionally said to be six qualities associated with the term. As the Indian Buddhist philosopher Ratnākaraśānti says, 'Blessings (*bhaga*) are the collection of six, lordship (*aiśvarya*) and the rest. As is said: "Blessing is of six qualities,

wealthy, merchants and tradespeople honoured, revered, and worshipped the Blessed One, and furnished him with bountiful offerings and the necessities of robes, alms, bedding, and medicines for curing sickness.²¹ The rival holy-men²² were not honoured, revered, or worshipped by the kings, ministers, brahmins, heads of households, townspeople, country people, the wealthy, merchants and tradespeople. Nor did they furnish them with bountiful offerings or the necessities of robes, alms, bedding, and medicines for curing sickness.

Then Māra, the Evil One, had an idea. He thought, ‘For a long time I have assailed²³ the ascetic Gautama, but I have not found an opening.²⁴ Now I will assail the holy-men.’²⁵

The six teachers, Purāṇa Kāśyapa and the rest, were staying²⁶ in Rājagṛha at that time. They considered themselves to be omniscient, but they were not omniscient. Now,

collectively: lordship, knowledge (*jñāna*), glory (*yaśas*), splendour (*śrī*), beauty (*rūpa*), and purposeful endeavour (*arthaprayatna*). So it is remembered.” One who possesses these blessings is called a Blessed One (*bhagavat*).’ At the very least, this shows part of the problem. *Bhagavat* is an untranslatable word composed of six untranslatable words! Perhaps picking up some of these qualities, the standard Tibetan translation is *bcom ldan ’das*, a combination of three words meaning triumph, possession, and going beyond, respectively. The standard Chinese translation, 卍 (shizun), may be rendered more or less literally as one who receives honour in or from the world. More can be said, but clearly any translation will involve compromises. For the Sanskrit of the above quoted passage, see Ram Shankar Tripathi and Thakur Sain Degi, eds., *Hevajratnam with Muktāvalī Pañjikā* (Sarnath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 2001), 2–3.

²¹ Tib (Tibetan, versions consulted correspond) = *chos gos dang bsod snyoms dang gzims cha dang snyun gos kyi rkyen sman dang yo byad rnam kyang brnyes so*. Robes, alms, bedding and medicines are the four requisites for the holy life, and here I interpret the Tibetan as such. The *Divyāvadāna* has a corresponding compound, *cīvarapiṇḍapātaśayanāsanaglānapratyayabhaiṣajyaparīṣkānām*, but seems to differ slightly in the overall phrasing. The Tibetan appears to be closer to the Chinese translation of the MSV.

²² Tib = *mu rtegs*, the standard Tibetan rendering of *tīrthika*. I eschew the standard English translation, ‘heretic’, opting here for a somewhat more neutral expression: ‘rival holy-men’, or sometimes simply ‘holy-men’. Sometimes in the Tibetan translation one also finds *ston pa drug po*, ‘the six teachers’, used to refer to these same individuals.

²³ The verb here and in the next sentence is (D =) *rnam par mtho btsams / rnam par mtho bstam*, (N =) *rnam par tho ’tsam pa / tho btsam*, (Q =) *rnam par tho btsams / rnam par tho bstam*. Negi attests *rnam par tho ’tshams* and *mtho ’tsams* as variants of *viheṭha-*, ‘to injure, assail’. See J. S. Negi, *Tibetan–Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 7 (Sarnath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 2001), 3089. The *Divyāvadāna* has *parākṛāntam* in the first instance, and *prahareyam* in the second.

²⁴ Tib = *glags*. The *Divyāvadāna* has corresponding *avatāra*.

²⁵ This is an interesting passage to consider in more depth. If Rhi’s interpretation is correct, then the Chinese translation of the MSV appears to differ slightly from the Tibetan in the wording, making Māra’s thought and motivation not entirely clear. Does he intend to cause trouble for the Buddha, or does he actually intend to cause trouble for the six rival teachers, or both? Rhi thinks the Chinese translation implies that Māra tries to cause trouble for the Buddha by using the *tīrthikas* as puppets. This is not what the Tibetan text says. It reads as follows: *bdag gis yun ring po nas dge sbyong gau ta ma la rnam par mtho btsams na glags ma rnyed gyis, ma la bdag gis mu stegs rnam la rnam par mtho btsam mo snyam mo*. The *Divyāvadāna* basically concurs with the Tibetan. See Rotman’s translation for an understanding parallel to mine. Rhi seems to understand the passage in the *Divyāvadāna* differently as well.

²⁶ Tib = *rten cing ’khod*. The *Divyāvadāna* has *prativasanti*. If this is a standard translation of the term, it isn’t marked as such in the dictionaries. For the Chinese, Rhi has ‘living in Rājagṛha as their base’. If *rten cing* gives the sense of the preverb *prati*, then perhaps ‘based’ is a bit too strong for the Tibetan, and the simpler meaning is ‘dwelling’ or ‘staying’.

Māra, the Evil One, transformed himself into Purāṇa's likeness, went to Maskarin Gośaliputra's place,²⁷ and [79] right in front of Maskarin Gośaliputra he displayed miracles of fire, light,²⁸ rain-showers and flashes of lightning.

Maskarin Gośaliputra said, 'Purāṇa, have you really attained such abilities²⁹ as these?'

'I have attained them,' he said.

Similarly, he displayed miracles of fire, light, rain-showers and flashes of lightning in front of Saṃjayin Vairāṭṭiputra, Ajita Keśakambala, Kātyāyana Kakuda and Nirgrantha Jñātiputra. And they, too, said, 'Purāṇa, have you really attained such abilities as these?'

'I have attained them,' he said.

In the same way, Māra transformed himself into Maskarin Gośaliputra's likeness and went into the presence of all of them. In the same way, he transformed himself into Ajita Keśakambala and went into the presence of all of them.

'Have you really attained such abilities as these?' they asked.

'I have attained them,' he said. And so on, the same as before.³⁰

In the same way, he transformed himself into Saṃjayin Vairāṭṭiputra's likeness, went into the presence of all of them, and so on, the same as before. In the same way, he transformed himself into Kātyāyana Kakuda's likeness, went into the presence of them all, and so on, the same as before. In the same way, he transformed himself into Nirgrantha Jñātiputra's likeness, went into the presence of all of them, and so on, the same as before.

Each one of them thought, 'All of them have such great power and such great superhuman ability. I alone am the exception.'³¹

At another time soon after that,³² the six teachers, Purāṇa Kāśyapa and the rest, came and sat together in a place where debates were held,³³ and this is a sample of what

²⁷ Tib = *kun tu rgyu gnag lhas kyi bu ga la ba der song ste phyin pa*.

²⁸ Tib = *snang ba*. The *Divyāvadāna* has *tapana*, which may well be what the Tibetan is translating here, even though *snang ba* is also attested as a translation of *avabhāsa* and other terms. *Tapana* has the sense of illuminating, warming and burning, with the latter two probably more primary in the Sanskrit. However, the Tibetan word perhaps conveys a more primary sense of illumination.

²⁹ Tib = *yon tan*. A difficult word to translate, this term has a semantic range including virtue, good qualities, attributes, excellence, skills and attainment. It often translates *guṇa*.

³⁰ Tib = *zhes bya ba'i bar snga ma* (N = mo) *bzhin* (Q = yin) *no*. More literally, 'the middle of what was said is the same as before'. The ellipses here, or something very similar, are also found in the Chinese translation. Rhi surmises that the decision to omit the repetition was taken by the Chinese translators, but similar omission in the Tibetan translation suggests that the ellipses were probably already present in Sanskrit manuscripts of the MSV. Repetitions similar though not identical to those found here are elaborated for the most part in the *Divyāvadāna*.

³¹ Tib = *bdag gcig bu ma gtogs pa 'di dag thams cad ni mthu che pa rdzu phrul che pa 'o*. In their edition of the *Divyāvadāna*, Cowell and Neil give *ekaika evam āha riddher lābhī nāham*. The Tibetan suggests a different underlying reading of *te sarve mahānubhāvā mahārddhaya naivāham*, or something like that.

³² Tib = *de nas dus gzhan zhig na*. My sense is that this phrase is trying to express continuity rather than discontinuity between the visits of Māra and the meeting of the six rival teachers. The *Divyāvadāna* reverses the order of the meeting and the visit of Māra. The narrative sequencing of the MSV flows more naturally,

they said:³⁴ ‘Learned ones, formerly kings, ministers, brahmins, heads of households, townspeople, country people, the wealthy, merchants and tradespeople honoured, revered and worshipped us, and furnished us with bountiful offerings, and the necessities of robes, alms, bedding, and medicines to heal the sick. Now, we are not honoured. We are not revered. We are not worshipped. We are not furnished with abundant offerings, or with the necessities of robes, alms, bedding, and medicines to heal the sick. Learned ones, the ascetic Gautama is the one being honoured, revered,’ [80] and so on.³⁵ ‘It is the ascetic Gautama being furnished with the necessities of robes, alms, bedding, and medicines to cure sickness,’ and so on, the same as before.³⁶

‘This being the case, learned ones, we should rope³⁷ the ascetic Gautama into a wondrous display of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings.³⁸ If the ascetic Gautama displays one miracle of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings, then we will display two. If the ascetic Gautama displays two, then we will display four. If the ascetic Gautama displays four, then we will display eight. If the ascetic Gautama displays eight, then we will display sixteen. If the ascetic Gautama displays sixteen, then we will display thirty-two. For as many wondrous displays as the ascetic Gautama makes of superhuman powers beyond the capability of

in my view. The issue of competition for limited resources is raised briefly in the first paragraph, and forms a basis for Māra’s idea. His trick follows, providing a context for the six teachers to meet and boast to one another about their supposed powers.

³³ Tib = *rtog khang*. The *Divyāvadāna* has *kutūhalaśālā*. The term *kutūhala* is an expression of curiosity, wonder, or surprise. Rhi renders the Chinese as ‘chanting hall’, and Rotman renders the Sanskrit as ‘discussion hall’.

³⁴ Tib = *bar skabs kyi gdam ’di lta bu dag gleng*. This seems very close to the *Divyāvadāna*, which reads *ayam evaṃrūpo ’bhud antarā kathāsamudāhāraḥ*.

³⁵ The Tibetan, oddly in my view, reads *zhes bya ba nas*, when one would expect to find *mchod par byas*, as in previous sentences. I have no explanation for what has happened except that something has become corrupted here, and the phrase perhaps marks some minor ellipsis.

³⁶ The intention behind the marking of an ellipsis here is not entirely clear to me, though possibly the *Divyāvadāna* offers a hint at what kind of elaboration might have been possible in this part of the story.

³⁷ Tib = *dgug par bya*, which has the sense of ‘draw in, summon’, possibly ‘invite’. Chandra attests the term as a translation for *āvāhayāmi* in the sense of ‘to marry’, noted as found in the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa*, and *ākāraṇa*, ‘to attract’, from the *Mahāvīyutpatti*. See Lokesh Chandra, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary* (Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1959–61). The sentences in the *Divyāvadāna* that appear to correspond most closely to this particular passage do not have a clearly parallel verb, and this has raised some problems of translation. See Rotman, *Divine Stories*, note 582, where he admits to adding a verb to make his translation work. See also my note 45 below.

³⁸ Tib = *mi’i chos bla ma’i rdzu ’phrul gyi cho ’phrul*. This corresponds to a Sanskrit expression found repeatedly in the *Divyāvadāna*, the precise reading and understanding of which has been subject to some discussion. Cowell and Neil state that the manuscripts read *uttaraṃ manuṣyadharmariddhi-prātihāryam*, which they emend to *uttare manuṣyadharme ṛddhiprātihāryam*. The Tibetan might support emending to *uttaramanuṣyadharmarddhiprātihāryam*, opening the possibility of *uttaramanuṣyadharmā* modifying *ṛddhi*, and not *prātihārya*. However, it could be read to justify the current manuscript reading as well, though not necessarily the editors’ emendation, which I don’t completely understand. See Cowell and Neil, *Divyāvadāna*, 144, and notes. See also Burnouf, *Introduction*, 164, and Rotman, *Divine Stories*, 254 and note 582. However, see also note 45 below, and specifically the way this expression is rendered in that passage of the *Divyāvadāna*, which I think supports my interpretation and translation here.

ordinary human beings, we will make two or three times as many wondrous displays of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings!’

Then the six teachers, Purāṇa Kāśyapa and the rest, went to the residence of King Bimbisāra. After making a wish for King Bimbisāra to have a long life and be victorious,³⁹ they said this to him:

‘Oh Lord,⁴⁰ it’s true that we say we are endowed with superhuman power and possess knowledge. We think it’s true that the ascetic Gautama also says that he, too, is endowed with superhuman power and possesses knowledge. Given that this is so, it is suitable to grant that one who says he possesses knowledge meet with another who says he possesses knowledge in order to display wonders of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. If the ascetic Gautama makes one wondrous display of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings, then we will display two,’ and so on. ‘We will make two or three times as many wondrous displays of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings!’ and so on, the same as before. ‘The ascetic Gautama should be invited to come halfway along the path, and we also will go halfway along the path.’⁴¹

Then Śreṇya Bimbisāra, the king of Magadha, said this to the six teachers, Purāṇa Kāśyapa and the rest: ‘Listen, you are just like corpses. How can you rope the Blessed One [81] into a wondrous display of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings?’⁴² This is what the king said; and they went away.

A short time later, Śreṇya Bimbisāra, the king of Magadha, left his residence to see the Blessed One in order to pay his respects, and as he went into the presence of the Blessed One, the rival teachers went onto his path and, making a wish for the king to have a long life and be victorious, said this to him:

‘Oh Lord, it’s true that we say we are endowed with superhuman power and possess knowledge,’ and so on. ‘We will make two or three times as many wondrous displays of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings! The ascetic Gautama should be invited to come halfway along the path, and we also will go halfway along the path,’ and so on, the same as before.

³⁹ The Tibetan here feels a bit compressed: *rgyal po gzugs can snying po la rgyal ba dang tshe spel* (D = *sbel?*) *ba byas nas*. However, this seems fairly clear as an expression of blessing or greeting.

⁴⁰ Tib = *lha*. The *Divyāvādāna* has corresponding *deva*.

⁴¹ Tib = *shul gyi phyed*. The *Divyāvādāna* reads *upārdhamārgam*. *Shul* is an old Tibetan term for *lam*. The Tibetan and Sanskrit expression here is basically equivalent to the English expression, to meet a person halfway.

⁴² Here the Tibetan seems to parallel Rhi’s rendering of the Chinese, and yet the underlying Sanskrit may have borne some similarities to the *Divyāvādāna*, too (these are not mutually exclusive possibilities). Tib = *kye ro dang ’dra ba khyed kyis kyang bcom ldan ’das...cho ’phrul la dgug gam*. The *Divyāvādāna* reads *yūyam api śavā bhūtvā bhagavatā sārđham rđdhiṃ prārdhadhve*. Despite certain differences, it is possible to imagine the Tibetan rendering *śavā bhūtvā* as *ro dang ’dra ba*. Rotman translates: ‘You’ll be corpses before your magic works on the Blessed One!’ For more on this difficult passage, see Rotman, *Divine Stories*, note 584.

The king said, ‘Listen, this time, it comes down to this: if and when you say the same thing a third time, you will be turned out and banished!’ They were totally put to shame by these words, and went away again to their own places.⁴³ Again they conferred.

‘Learned ones,’ they said, ‘Śreṇya Bimbisāra, the king of Magadha, is biased towards the ascetic Gautama, but we’ve heard that in Śrāvastī, Prasenajit, the king of Kośala, is wise like a judge.⁴⁴ So, when the ascetic Gautama goes to Śrāvastī, at that time we will rope him into a wondrous display of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings.’⁴⁵

A short time later, having dwelled as long as he wished in Rājagṛha, the Blessed One left and gradually wandered to Śrāvastī. After wandering gradually in stages, he arrived in Śrāvastī, where he stayed in the Jetavana Grove in the forest retreat of Anathapiṇḍada.⁴⁶

Then the six teachers, Purāṇa Kāśyapa and the rest, followed the Blessed One to Śrāvastī, and gradually they also arrived in Śrāvastī. After briefly resting to recover from their fatigue, they went into the presence of King Prasenajit. After making a wish for King Prasenajit to have a long life and be victorious [82], they said: ‘Oh Lord, it’s true that we say we are endowed with superhuman power and possess knowledge. We think it’s true that the ascetic Gautama also says that he, too, is endowed with superhuman power and possesses knowledge. Given that this is so, it is suitable to grant that one who says he possesses knowledge meet with another who says he possesses knowledge in order to display wonders of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. If the ascetic Gautama displays one miracle of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings, then we will display two. If the ascetic Gautama displays two, then we will display four. If the ascetic Gautama displays four, then we will display eight. If the ascetic Gautama displays eight, then we will display sixteen. If the ascetic Gautama displays sixteen, then we will display thirty-two. For as many wondrous displays as the ascetic Gautama makes of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human

⁴³ Tib = *thag bcug pa*. Rhi renders the Chinese as ‘they left silently’.

⁴⁴ The Tibetan here is not entirely clear. Tib = *gzu bo lta bu zhes* (D = *zhig*) *yod*. A possible emendation of *zhes / zhig* is *shes (pa)*, and the phrase then becomes ‘wise like a judge’. Otherwise, reading with QN, perhaps ‘is said to be like a judge’. If we go with D, then perhaps ‘is one who is like a judge’? The dictionaries give *gzu pa* as an archaic equivalent of *ḍpaṅ po*, a judge or mediator. The *Divyāvadāna* calls Prasenajit *madhyasthaḥ*, which Rotman translates as ‘impartial’. Rhi renders the Chinese as ‘equitable and has no bias by nature’.

⁴⁵ Here is one place, perhaps the only place in the text, where there seems to be a good candidate in the Sanskrit for a verb corresponding to *dgug pa / dgug par bya*, which I’ve so far rendered as ‘to rope the Buddha into a miracle / wondrous display’. The corresponding *Divyāvadāna* passage reads *uttare manuṣyadharme ṛddhiprātihārye āhvaiṣyāmaḥ*. The verb here is a derivative of *ā + hve*, meaning ‘to call, invite, or invoke’ (as in a ritual context), and also ‘to challenge’. It may be that we can read this verb back into other instances where a verb is not clearly attested, or maybe we shouldn’t, given the limitations of such speculations. For the challenge of deciding how to translate the term, here and elsewhere, see also Rotman’s note 586.

⁴⁶ Tib = *rgyal bu rgyal byed kyi tshal mgon med zas sbyin gyi kun dga’ ra ba na bzhugs so*. ‘Forest retreat’ is an attempt at a better translation for *kun dga’ ra ba* (*ārāma* in Sanskrit) than the standard ‘pleasure garden’.

beings, we will make two or three times as many wondrous displays of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings! The ascetic Gautama should be invited to come halfway along the path, and we also will go halfway along the path.’

Prasenajit, king of Kośala, said: ‘Learned ones, if this is so, then wait while I go and make a request of the Blessed One.’

They said, ‘Lord, very good, please may it be done in that way. We will wait.’

Then Prasenajit, king of the land of Kośala, went into the presence of the Blessed One and, having arrived there, he bowed down before the Blessed One with his head at the Blessed One’s feet, and sat to one side.⁴⁷ After he had sat to one side, Prasenajit, king of Kośala, asked this of the Blessed One: ‘Revered One,⁴⁸ these holy-men invite the Blessed One to a wondrous display of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. Since this is so, would the Blessed One please display a miracle of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings? Please, put these holy-men to shame!⁴⁹ Please, bring happiness to gods and humans! Please, bring joy to the hearts and minds of good people!’⁵⁰

Having thus been asked, [83] the Blessed One responded to Prasenajit, the king of Kośala: ‘Great king, I tell my disciples: “Monks, you should not display a miracle of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings to the brahmins or heads of households that come near to you.” On the contrary, I tell my disciples: “Monks, live with your virtues concealed and your sins exposed.” This is my teaching.’

A second and a third time, Prasenajit, king of Kośala, asked this of the Blessed One, saying: ‘Revered One, these rival holy-men invite the Blessed One to a wondrous display of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. Since this is so, would the Blessed One please display a miracle of superhuman powers beyond the capability of ordinary human beings? Please, put these holy-men to shame! Please,

⁴⁷ The implication of sitting or standing to one side is that it is a gesture of respect. So perhaps this common stock phrase might be rendered as ‘sit (or stand) respectfully to one side’.

⁴⁸ Tib = *btsun pa*. This is the equivalent of *bhadanta* in Sanskrit (*bhadanta*, *bhaddanta* in Pali). It is a common way of referring with respect to a monk or the Buddha. Perhaps something like ‘Your Reverence’ is not too far off the mark, though that perhaps evokes unwanted connotations. ‘Your Holiness’ might give a better connotation, but may cause confusion here given other translation choices. Another problem is that the term has an everyday sense as a familial term of endearment. Since the term here is always directed towards the Buddha, the higher register has been chosen.

⁴⁹ Tib = *thag stsal*. See note 43 for another instance of this old term. There seems to be no exact equivalent in the *Divyāvādāna* for that sentence, but here the *Divyāvādāna* uses the verb *nir + bharts*, ‘to censure, abuse, surpass, eclipse, put to shame, menace’. Rotman also chooses ‘put to shame’.

⁵⁰ Here the Tibetan reads *skyes bu dam pa rnams glo* (N = *klo*?) *ba rangs par bgyir gsol*. The dictionaries give the meaning of *glo ba* as the lungs or upper torso more generally, while *rangs par bgyir* has the sense of bringing joy or rapture. This would yield ‘bring joy to the lungs of good people’, which doesn’t bring much joy to the translator! However, it may be that *glo / klo* is simply a misspelling for *blo*, ‘mind’. The *Divyāvādāna* has *tośayatu sajjanahrdayamanāmsi*, ‘satisfy the hearts and minds of good people’. See note 110 below, where *snying*, ‘heart’, seems to replace *glo / klo / blo ba* in the same expression. My translation more or less reads through the Tibetan to the Sanskrit. Rhi renders the Chinese as ‘make the people with faith leap for joy’.

bring happiness to gods and humans! Please, bring joy to the hearts and minds of good people!’

Having thus been asked, the Blessed One responded a second and a third time to Prasenajit, king of Kośala, saying: ‘Great king, I tell my disciples: “Monks, you should not display a miracle of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings to the brahmins or heads of households that come near to you.” On the contrary, I tell my disciples: “Monks, live with your virtues concealed and your sins exposed.” This is my teaching.’

Now, there are five actions that the Buddhas, the Blessed Ones, must perform. What are the five? First, to cause those sentient beings who have not previously done so to generate the thought for unexcelled, perfect and complete awakening; second, to consecrate as heir apparent a disciple who has accumulated the roots of virtue;⁵¹ third, to establish his mother and father in the truth; fourth, to display the great miracle in Śrāvastī; and fifth, to train in the discipline all those ready to be so trained by the Buddha.

The Blessed One thought, ‘Where did the perfect Buddhas of the past display the great miracle?’ [84] And he saw that it was in Śrāvastī. And then he thought, ‘Within what span of time will the great assembly of living beings be held?’ And then, realizing that it would be held in seven days, he said these words to Prasenajit, king of Kośala: ‘Great king, you may go. May it be done as it is appropriate to be done.’⁵²

Prasenajit asked, ‘Blessed One, when will it be?’

The Blessed One replied, ‘In seven days, great king.’

Then Prasenajit, king of Kośala, bowed down before the Blessed One with his head at the Blessed One’s feet, and left the Blessed One’s presence.

He told the rival holy-men, ‘Listen, in seven days time the Blessed One will display a great miracle of superhuman powers. So go and prepare. You may do whatever you need to do.’⁵³

The rival holy-men conferred: ‘Learned ones, perhaps the ascetic Gautama will run away. Perhaps he will seek out companions. In that case, he will succeed like that.’ They said this: ‘Listen, the ascetic Gautama will unquestionably seek out companions. So we should likewise seek out companions.’

At that time, in Kuśinagara, there was a wandering ascetic named Subhadra, who was aged, weak, and at the end of his life. The wealthy people of Kuśinagara honoured, respected, served, and worshipped him as an Arhat. Having made up a plan, they went

⁵¹ Here the correlations between Buddhahood and kingship are strongly pronounced. The idea is that the Buddha offers a prediction of success to a future Buddha, who thus becomes a *kumārabhūta*, an heir apparent or crown prince next in line to become a Buddha. The Tibetan expression used is *rgyal tshab du dbang bskur bas dbang bskur bar mdzad pa*, suggesting an underlying Sanskrit of *kumārabhūtābhiṣekam abhiṣicayati*, or the like, terminology that evokes the Indian ritual of royal consecration.

⁵² Tib = *de bzhin byas ci rigs par sgrubs shig*.

⁵³ Tib = *khyed cag gis bya zhing bsham dgos ba ci yod pa de gyis shig*.

into his presence and said, ‘Subhadra, you are practising the religious life,⁵⁴ and so are we. We have summoned the ascetic Gautama to a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. Please, act as our companion.’

He replied, ‘Listen, summoning the ascetic Gautama to a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings was not a good thing for you to have done. What is the reason? He has immense superhuman ability and immense power.’⁵⁵

‘How do you know?’ they asked.

‘Indeed, I have a reason,’ he said.

‘What is this reason?’ they asked.

‘Learned ones, at the time before the ascetic Gautama appeared in the world, I used to meditate at the side of a lake by the name of Mandākinī,⁵⁶ [85] and receiving alms, I would go and eat them at the great lake of Anavatapta. Then, while I would stay on one side, the gods who dwell at the lake would draw water and give it to me. Then, at a time after the ascetic Gautama appeared in the world, his foremost disciple, who is named Śāriputra, had an initiate⁵⁷ named Cunda, who came to the great lake of Anavatapta bringing with him a garment of shrouds. The gods who dwell at Lake Anavatapta washed his garment of shrouds and presented it to him. Then they even poured the wash-water over their own heads! Therefore, since we are not even the equals of his pupil’s pupil, summoning the ascetic Gautama to a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings was not a good thing to have done.’

They conferred and said, ‘Listen, this one is on his side, too. So we need to find another companion.’ They sidled away from him, offering a fake salutation as they went. They found another private spot, and conferred. They said, ‘Listen, how are we going to find other companions?’ Then one of them said, ‘In the forest retreat in this town lives a certain person who has the five types of superhuman power and knowledge. We should go to his place and make him our companion.’

Another one said, ‘He has no power. However, it’s said that in a certain forest of ascetics live some ascetics who are said to have the five types of superhuman power and knowledge. We should approach them and make them our companions. At this time, there is a valley in the Himālayas adorned with various groves, springs, flowers, trees

⁵⁴ Tib = *tshangs pa mtshungs bar sbyod pa yin*. That is, they are practising *brahmacārins*, living lives of celibacy, virtue and study. The Tibetan renders this technical term as practising in a way that is similar to Brahmā. I’ve rendered the term a bit more generally here to give a sense of the broader meaning. Rotman renders the term in the same way in a similar context. Rotman, *Divine Stories*, 265.

⁵⁵ The expression used here is stock, but difficult to translate: *mahārdhikaḥ mahānubhāvaḥ*. The Tibetan usually translates *anubhāva* as *mthu*, ‘power’, but the Sanskrit term conveys more than this: *anubhāva* is the power that emanates from the Buddha or another powerful person simply through the wondrous presence of that person, whereas *ṛddhi* refers to a more specific set of superhuman powers – flying, walking through walls, multiplying or transforming the body, and so on.

⁵⁶ Tib = *dal gyis ’bab pa*. Negi attests this term as a translation for ‘Mandākinī’, which the Tibetan renders as something like ‘gently falling’.

⁵⁷ Tib = *dge sbyong*. Here the term is probably used as a translation for *śramaṇera* or novice monk.

abundant with fruits, and waterfalls. In a place made lovely with a small lake,⁵⁸ at least five hundred sages dwell, the majority of whom possess the five types of superhuman power and knowledge. One sage among them who possesses the five types of superhuman power and knowledge came into town, and after wandering here and there, returned to where they live.’

They acted as though it would be good to go there, [86] asking, ‘Will you come there?’ and saying, ‘So, things are going happen in that way.’⁵⁹ Heartened,⁶⁰ they went into the presence of those sages. Having cheered each other up in that way,⁶¹ and recovered from the fatigue of the road, they went to them and said, ‘Listen, you are practising the religious life, and so are we. We have summoned the ascetic Gautama to a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. Please, act as our companions.’

The sages said, ‘Listen, that’s fine. However, when the time comes for acting in that manner, display a sign for us.’ Heartened, the six teachers offered words of respect to them, and left satisfied.

A short while later, Prasenajit’s younger brother from a different mother, whose name was Prince Kāla, perfumed and adorned with a garland of flowers, was walking near the king’s palace. One of the queens, standing above on an upper terrace of the palace, threw away a garland of flowers, and someone saw it land upon his body.⁶² The world consists of friends, enemies, and those somewhere in the middle. So, of course, a minister was informed. The minister, of course, told the king, saying ‘Lord, Prince Kāla is having a relationship with my lord’s queen.’⁶³ The king did not conduct an investigation into the whole affair, and as a consequence he ordered his ministers: ‘Learned ones, I will

⁵⁸ Tib = *mtshe* (N = *tshe*) ‘*us mdzes par byas ba na*. My translation is just a guess, and there may be problems fixing the correct reading here. The Chinese translation appears to have a fuller passage at this point in the text, which Rhi renders as ‘Wind brings music through pine trees, and beautiful birds sing in harmony.’

⁵⁹ Tib = *de rnams gyis de la byon pa legs so zhes bya ba kun tu spyad nas khyod gang nas* (N = *na*) ‘*dir ’ongz zhes dris ba dang | des ji ltar gyur ba rnams brjod do*. My translation is an attempt to piece together what appears to me as a somewhat laconic and disconnected passage, which unfortunately has no clear parallel either in the Chinese translation or in the *Divyāvadāna*.

⁶⁰ Tib = *yid dge ba skyes nas*. One might translate this phrase more literally as ‘having generated a joyful mind’.

⁶¹ Tib = *de nas phan tshun yang dag par dga’ bar byas nas*.

⁶² Both the Chinese translation as rendered by Rhi and the *Divyāvadāna* suggest that the woman in question here had been attracted to or at least taken note of the prince before tossing the garland, but the Tibetan mentions nothing of the kind. So I have chosen to translate *bor ba* as ‘threw away’, in order to imply that the garland was merely dropped by chance or mistake. This also seems to be how Kṣemendra understood it. Incidentally, the Tibetan term *btsun mo* can be translated to mean a queen or consort or another woman of high rank. In his version of the story, Kṣemendra refers to the woman as *rājapatnī*.

⁶³ The Tibetan here reads: *lha rgyal bu gzhon nu na* (N = *na ga* or possibly *nag?*) *gu ni lha’i btsun mo dang ’khri* (D = *khri*) ‘o. This wording seems close, but is not identical, to the syntax of the parallel passage in the *Divyāvadāna*, which reads somewhat elliptically: *deva jānīthāḥ kālena devasyāntaḥpuraṃ prārthitam* (‘My lord, there is something you should know: [a woman of] my lord’s inner chambers has been solicited by Kāla’). Note the absence of a specific word, in the Sanskrit, for ‘woman’. My sense is that the Tibetan has understood the meaning correctly, and supplied such a word in place of the word for ‘inner chambers’.

have Prince Kāla's hands and feet cut off immediately.' Having been instructed in this manner, they arranged to have Prince Kāla's hands and feet cut off. His relatives' eyes filled with tears. A large gathering of other people surrounded them.

Just then, the very same rival holy-men⁶⁴ arrived at the spot. His relatives spoke to them, saying, 'Please, speak words of truth whereby the noble⁶⁵ Prince Kāla's hands and feet, fingers and toes may be restored to the way they were before.'

Lacking confidence, the rival holy-men silently got up and left. However, the venerable Ānanda, while on his alms-round, also went past the spot. Prince Kāla's relatives spoke to him: [87] 'Please, speak words of truth whereby the noble Prince Kāla's hands and feet, fingers and toes may be restored to the way they were before.'

Ānanda said, 'Learned ones, I will ask the Blessed One, and return and tell you if it can be done.' They let out a sigh of relief and said, 'Now he will be cured.'

Then the venerable Ānanda, setting aside his alms-round in Śrāvastī, quickly went into the presence of the Blessed One and explained the situation to the Blessed One in detail. The Blessed One gave the following instruction: 'Ānanda, go and tell Prince Kāla's relatives to place his hands and feet, fingers and toes where they should be, and speak these words of truth:

By such truth, and by such words of truth as these:

Among those living beings with no feet, two feet, four feet and many feet, among those possessing a form and those without a form, among those with perception, those without perception, and those neither with perception nor without perception, and among whatever others, the Tathāgata,⁶⁶ the Blessed One, the Arhat,⁶⁷ the fully, perfectly and completely awakened Buddha is said to be supreme.

⁶⁴ There seems to be some ambiguity as to whether the number of rival ascetics who arrived at the scene is one or more than one. Rhi renders the Chinese as saying that only one, unnamed rival ascetic arrives, but the Tibetan is unambiguous in supplying a plural marker here. The *Divyāvadāna* says specifically that Purāṇa and the other ascetics arrive.

⁶⁵ It is ambiguous to whom the word *'phags* ('noble one') is meant to refer here and in the following instance. It seems most natural to read the Tibetan as saying that *'phags* refers to Prince Kāla, but when one compares the syntax here with that of the parallel passage in the *Divyāvadāna* – which also has some ambiguity in the manuscripts, reading *āryā* rather than *āryāḥ* – it becomes more plausible to read it as a term of address, both there and here in the Tibetan as well. However, the lack of a plural marker in the Tibetan makes me lean toward reading it as an adjective describing Prince Kāla, and implying his innocence and uprightness. Still, there is a good case for reading it, here and in the next instance, as a term of address aimed first at the ascetics and then at Ānanda. See note 72 below. The Chinese, as rendered by Rhi, has neither a term of address nor a similar adjective describing Prince Kāla.

⁶⁶ This is a common epithet of the Buddha, and has no good translation. The standard Tibetan rendering is *de bzhin gshegs pa*, which is a calque, but also an interpretation, meaning something like 'thus-gone' or 'thus-come', which convey little meaning. Dynamically, the term might be rendered 'trail-blazer', the one who has gone ahead (and returned into view) in way that one should go (and come).

Among whatever things (*dharmas*) are conditioned or unconditioned, the thing (*dharma*) that is free from desire is said to be supreme.

Among whatever congregations, crowds, gatherings and assemblies, the community of disciples of the Tathāgata is said to be supreme.

Among the maintenance of whatever types of moral precepts (*śīlas*), vows (*vratas*), physical asceticism (*tapas*), and the practice of celibacy (*brahmacarya*),⁶⁸ the moral precepts that are pleasing to the noble ones are said to be supreme.

By this truth, and by these words of truth,⁶⁹ may Prince Kāla's hands and feet, fingers and toes be restored to the way they were before.

'Speak those words and Prince Kāla's body will be restored to the way it was before.'⁷⁰

'Revered One, it shall be as you have asked,' the venerable Ānanda promised the Blessed One.⁷¹

⁶⁷ This term, which might be rendered as 'worthy person' or even more loosely as 'saint', refers technically to someone who has attained awakening and eliminated all the seeds for future rebirth. Thus all Buddhas are technically Arhats, but not all Arhats are Buddhas.

⁶⁸ There is no parallel passage corresponding to this sentence in the *Divyāvadāna*, making the determination of specific terminological parallels at least somewhat speculative.

⁶⁹ There is a correlative construction framing the truth statements here in the Tibetan, which is not found in either the Chinese translation or the *Divyāvadāna*. The Tibetan translates this as *bden pa dang bden pa'i tshig gang gis...bden pa dang bden pa'i tshig 'dis*. The basic wording here clearly reflects what we find in the Sanskrit, except that the latter includes only the second half of the correlative. It reads *anena satyena satyavakyena*. Rotman translates this as 'By this truth, by this declaration of truth...' The Tibetan seems to understand the phrase similarly. Yet I wonder if the Chinese as rendered by Rhi is not more natural here: 'If these words of truth are not false...' In this case, the Tibetan passage might be translated as: 'By the truth of such words of truth as these...by the truth of these words of truth...' Whichever grammatical interpretation one chooses to accept, the power of the act of truth would seem to derive from the truth, from the truthful words, or from both of them, and it is this underlying ambiguity that is at issue here. For more on the act of truth, see Eugene W. Burlingame, 'The Act of Truth (Saccakiriya): a Hindu Spell and its Employment as a Psychic Motif in Hindu Fiction', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (July 1917), 429–67; William Norman Brown, 'Duty as Truth in Ancient India', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 116.3 (1972), 252–68; and Gregory Schopen, *The Bhaisajyaguru-Sūtra and the Buddhism of Gilgit* (PhD thesis, Australian National University, 1978), 191–94.

⁷⁰ Here, to fill out my translation of the Tibetan, I have supplied words that actually come from the parallel passage in the *Divyāvadāna*.

⁷¹ The passage here is challenging, and my translation is a compromise solution, based in part on an apparent parallel in the *Divyāvadāna*, which reads: *evam bhadanteti āyuṣmān ānando bhagavataḥ pratiśrutya*. I would translate the Sanskrit as follows: "[It shall be done] in that way, your reverence," the venerable Ānanda promised the Bhagavat.' The Tibetan translation reads: *tshé dang ldan pa kun dag 'bos btsun pa de ltar 'tshal lo zhes bcom ldan 'das gyi ltar mnyan nas*. This appears to reflect the Sanskrit fairly well, and one can see how the Tibetan may have attempted to render an elliptical passage in the Sanskrit. Problems remain,

Prince Kāla's relatives placed his hands, feet, fingers and toes where they should have been, and Ānanda began to formulate the words of truth in this way: 'By such truth, and by such words of truth as these: [88] Among those living beings with no feet,' and so on, up to 'the moral precepts that are pleasing to the noble ones are said to be supreme. By this truth, and by these words of truth, may Prince Kāla's hands and feet, fingers and toes be restored to the way they were before.'

And they became the way they were before! Through the words of truth, his hands and feet, fingers and toes were restored to the way they were before! Then the crowd of people widened their eyes in wonder and yelled, 'Ah, La, La!! The noble⁷² Ānanda has defeated the holy-men!'

Then the venerable Ānanda led Prince Kāla into the presence of the Blessed One, bowed down before the Blessed One with his head at the Blessed One's feet, and sat to one side. Sitting to one side, Ānanda said, 'Blessed One, this is Prince Kāla – about whom I spoke to you, Revered One.'

Then Prince Kāla bowed down before the Blessed One with his head at the Blessed One's feet, and sat to one side. The Blessed One perceived his nature, personality, tendencies, and thinking, and preached the Dharma to him in accordance with them. Immediately upon hearing the teachings, Prince Kāla gained a clear view of the truth, obtained the resultant stage of non-returner, and also acquired superhuman powers.

King Prasenajit of Kośala heard that the noble Ānanda had spoken words of truth, and that Prince Kāla's hands and feet, fingers and toes had been restored to the way they were before. After hearing this he went to see Prince Kāla, and having arrived he said this to Prince Kāla: 'Come home, young man.'⁷³

Prince Kāla responded, 'Lord, I wish to serve the Blessed One, and nothing else.'

Saying 'Good, do that,' the king had a forest retreat built for that purpose. Because Prince Kāla stayed there, and because his hands and feet, fingers and toes had been in pieces and were later reassembled, his name became Pieces the Grove-keeper, and the forest retreat became known as the Grove of Pieces.⁷⁴ [89]

however, such as the use of the apparent correlative, *de ltar...gyi ltar*, and the inclusion in the Tibetan of the word 'tshal.

⁷² The fact that Ānanda is here called noble may be a reason to read the previous occurrences of 'noble' as terms of address. See note 65 above.

⁷³ Rhi notes that the Chinese translation includes words of apology on the part of the king, and that Kāla forgives him. However, the Tibetan, like the *Divyāvadāna*, contains no such apology.

⁷⁴ In the *Divyāvadāna*, Kāla himself is referred to as Pieces (Gaṇḍaka), and it is he who offers the grove to the Buddha, where Kāla then dwells. No mention is made of the name of the grove in the *Divyāvadāna*, while Rhi notes that the Chinese translation of the MSV appears ambiguous here about whether Pieces also refers to Kāla or simply to the grove. However, my sense of the Tibetan is that it refers to both: Pieces refers to Prince Kāla and Grove of Pieces refers to his *ārāma*, which means a pleasure grove or, in this case, a forested place where religious practices are undertaken. Here and in the *Divyāvadāna*, Kāla is referred to as the *ārāmika*, which can mean gardener, but here means the caretaker of the retreat site where monks or religious practitioners dwell and practise. This wordplay continues later in the story when 'Gaṇḍaka the *ārāmika*' (Tib = *bum ba'i kun dga' ra ba pa*) brings trees from the northern continent of Uttarakuru and replants them where the miracles are going to be performed. See below.

Then King Prasenajit of Kośala went to see the Blessed One, and having arrived he bowed down before the Blessed One with his head at the Blessed One's feet, and sat to one side. Sitting to one side, King Prasenajit of Kośala asked the Blessed One this question: 'If the Blessed One permits it, I will build a pavilion for the demonstration of the great miracle at the midpoint between Śrāvastī and the Jetavana Grove.'

The Blessed One responded, 'Good, great king, go ahead,' and instructed that it be large enough to hold within it a large assembly of people without any doubt.

King Prasenajit of Kośala had the area between Śrāvastī and the Jetavana Grove cleaned, and a pavilion was laid out for the demonstration of the great miracle. It was covered with canopies⁷⁵ numbering in the hundreds and thousands. The area was sprinkled with water scented with sandalwood. Bowls of sweet-smelling incense were set out. Flags and pennants were raised. Masses of silken tassels made music. Flowers of many colours and types were scattered. The place was made lovely just as if it were one of the pleasure groves of the gods. A golden lion-throne was prepared for the Blessed One, and it was studded and ornamented with rubies,⁷⁶ large azures,⁷⁷ sapphires,⁷⁸ pearls, lapis lazuli,⁷⁹ and diamonds.

The lay followers of the rival holy-men also used their own fortunes to build six pavilions covered with canopies for the six teachers. The rival holy-men arrived ahead of time and sat there, surrounded by crowds of their followers. They said to the king, 'Lord, we've arrived. Please summon the ascetic Gautama.'

When he heard the news, the king went to the pavilion⁸⁰ for the great miracle accompanied by royal ladies⁸¹ and young men,⁸² and other members of his household. Then he addressed a brahmin youth named Uttara:⁸³ 'Come here, my young brahmin. [90] Go to where the Blessed One is staying, and after bowing down before the Blessed One with your head at the Blessed One's feet, inquire on my behalf as to whether he has any small ailment, concern, or agitation, or whether he is getting along fine, feeling fit and able, without any complaint. After asking about his health, say these words: "Your reverence, the holy-men have assembled and are waiting. May the Blessed One please come when he deems it time to do so."' "

'Lord, it shall be done as you ask,' the brahmin youth promised King Prasenajit of Kośala. Then he went into the presence of the Blessed One. After arriving, he came face to

⁷⁵ Tib = *gos*. This seems a fairly generic term for cloth or sheet. It is often used in the sense of a garment, but here the context suggests an awning or canopy.

⁷⁶ Tib = *padmarāga*.

⁷⁷ Tib = *mthon ka chen po*.

⁷⁸ Tib = *an drnyila*, a transliteration for the Sanskrit *indranīla*.

⁷⁹ Tib = *baidurya*.

⁸⁰ I have so far been translating '*dun khang*' as 'pavilion', though perhaps 'stage' might be better, as the term more literally means a place for viewing something.

⁸¹ Tib = *btsun mo*, rendered here in a more general sense than previously.

⁸² Tib = *gzhon nu*, also rendered here in a more general sense.

⁸³ Tib = *bla ma*. According to Rhi, the Chinese differs by reading '*Māṇava*' or 'Youth' as the proper name of the boy. The Tibetan passage accords better with the *Divyāvadāna*, where the boy's name is Uttara, which means 'higher'.

face with the Blessed One. After making the various greetings and pleasantries, he sat to one side. While sitting to one side, the brahmin youth Uttara said these words to the Blessed One: ‘Listen, Gautama,⁸⁴ King Prasenajit of Kośala bows down at your feet, and he inquires as to whether you have any small ailment, concern, or agitation, or whether you are getting along fine, feeling fit and able, without any complaint. In this way, he asks about your health.’

The Blessed One said, ‘Uttara, my young brahmin, may you and Prasenajit, the king of Kośala, both be well.’

The brahmin youth said, ‘Prasenajit, king of Kośala, sends this message: “Listen, Gautama, the holy-men have assembled and are waiting. May the Blessed One please come when he deems it time to do so.”’

The Blessed One responded, ‘You may go, Uttara. I will come too.’ Then the brahmin youth Uttara got up to leave, but the Blessed One used his superhuman powers⁸⁵ to make the brahmin youth rise up into the air like a king of geese spreading its wings. As he flew in the air towards the pavilion of the great miracle, the hundreds of living beings who saw him stared with astonishment and issued peals of laughter and exclamations of ‘Ah, La, La!’ [91]

Witnessing such accomplishments, King Prasenajit of Kośala was amazed and faith arose in his mind. He said to the rival holy-men, ‘Look, the Blessed One has displayed a miracle beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. Now your turn has come to display one.’ They said, ‘Lord, please wait. A great number of people have gathered here. This being so, who can know who performed this great miracle, the ascetic Gautama or us?’

Just then, Pieces the Grove-keeper used his superhuman powers and flew up to Mount Gandhamādana (Sweet-Fragrance). He removed a mango tree with branches that were covered with leaves and white flowers, and in which many flocks of birds were singing. He placed it on the northern side of the pavilion of the great miracle. Having seen this too, the king developed a mind of faith, and a second time he said to the rival holy-men: ‘The Blessed One has displayed a miracle beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. Now your turn has come to display one.’ They said, ‘Lord, did we not ask you before? A great number of people have gathered here, Lord. This being so, who can know who performed this great miracle, the ascetic Gautama or us?’

Just then, Lūhasudatta,⁸⁶ the head of a household, used his superhuman powers to remove a wish-fulfilling tree from the heaven of the thirty-three gods, and placed it on

⁸⁴ The forms of address used here seem to express a level of equality or familiarity that is a bit surprising. Both the *Divyāvadāna* and the Chinese translation of the MSV seem to maintain a greater level of formality, but perhaps here in the Tibetan one finds an indication that this particular brahmin youth was somehow respected, as his name perhaps implies.

⁸⁵ Tib = *byin gyis brlabs nas*. This is the standard Tibetan equivalent for *adhiṣṭhāna*, a term that may refer to a subset of superhuman powers, or sometimes to the powers more generally.

⁸⁶ Tib = *ngan legs sbyin*. Rhi concurs that the Chinese translation also translates ‘Lūhasudatta’. The meaning of the epithet remains unclear to me. Does it mean ‘one who gives generously to the destitute’? Rotman suggests ‘Stingy Benefactor’. See Rotman, *Divine Stories*, 276.

the southern side of the pavilion of the great miracle. Having seen this too, the king became even more delighted and pleased, and a third time he said to the rival holy-men: ‘Look, the Blessed One has displayed a miracle beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. Now your turn has come to display one.’ They said, ‘Since you have asked, we must ask you a third time. [92] A great number of people have gathered here, Lord. This being so, who can know who performed this great miracle, the ascetic Gautama or us?’

At that time, there were many hundreds of thousands of living beings present, and many hundreds of thousands of deities in the sky, all of them eager to see the great miracle of the Blessed One. The Blessed One washed his feet outside the main hall of the monastery, went inside the main hall, arranged his seat, and entered into the fire-element concentration. Then, through the cracks in the door emerged rays of light, which began to set fire to the entire pavilion of the great miracle.

The rival holy-men exclaimed, ‘Lord, the ascetic Gautama’s great-miracle pavilion is on fire. So the ascetic Gautama should come here and put it out if he can.’ The king understood, but said nothing. Similarly, Queen Mallikā,⁸⁷ Princess Varṣākārā,⁸⁸ the fortune-tellers Ṛṣidatta and Purāṇa, the household head Anathapiṇḍada, Viśākhā the mother of her foe⁸⁹ Mṛgāra, many others of the faithful, and still more who were neutral, all remained silent. The rival holy-men and their followers were extremely pleased.

Then the fire that was burning the entire pavilion of the great miracle died down on its own. In that way, through the power of the Buddhas, which the Buddha possesses, and through the power of the gods, which the gods possess, the pavilion of the great miracle was not burned by the fire, but became clean and beautiful. Then the king became happy and joyful of mind again, as though seeing a person rise from the dead. He said this to the rival holy-men: ‘Look, the Blessed One has displayed a miracle beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. Now your turn has come to display one.’ [93] Lacking confidence, they said nothing.

Then the Blessed One formed an intention and placed⁹⁰ his right foot within the Perfumed Chamber, and the great earth shook in the six different ways that the earth can shake: it quaked; it quivered; it shivered; it shuddered; it tremored; and it trembled. The eastern edge of the earth rose and the western edge sank. The western edge rose and the eastern edge sank. The northern edge rose and the southern edge sank. The southern

⁸⁷ Tib = *btsun mo phreng ldan ma*. Rhi supplies the Sanskrit name for the Chinese, and I have followed him as seems appropriate here.

⁸⁸ Tib = *rgyal rigs dbyar tsul ma*. Rhi again supplies the Sanskrit name for the Chinese and again I follow him.

⁸⁹ Tib = *ri dags dgra'i ma sa ga*. Rhi renders the Chinese as ‘mother of Viśākha’, but this rendering is not clear to me. Some question remains as to the person being referred to here. However, see Edgerton’s dictionary entry for Mṛgāra as well as Malalasekera’s entries for Viśākhā and Migāra, which may help to explain why Mṛgāra is called a foe. Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953); G. P. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names* (London: J. Murray, 1937–38).

⁹⁰ Tib = *bsnun ba*.

edge rose and northern edge sank. The middle rose and the edges sank. The edges rose and the middle sank.

The earthquake roused those sages who were living in the forest retreat in the Himālayas, and they said to one another, ‘Learned ones, since those fellow practitioners of the religious life are displaying the sign, we should go.’ And they went. So that they would perceive the discipline, the Blessed One emitted golden-hued rays of light, which exceeded that of a thousand suns.⁹¹ The light-rays bathed in a golden light⁹² the intervening distance between the Buddha’s immediate vicinity and that of the sages.

The sages gazed upon the Blessed Buddha.⁹³ He was splendorous like the aura of the first rising sun or a heap of accumulated pieces of burnished gold. He was bright like a mass of yellow flowers free of blemishes. His melodious voice, pleasant and wholesome to hear, was clear in its depth and steadiness like a drum, an ocean, a thundercloud, or a chief among bulls. He was adorned by a storehouse of white brilliance, like a mass of crystals, a jasmine flower, a swan, the root of a lotus flower, a string of pearls, or the froth that separates from an ocean of milk. He was endowed with immeasurable quantities of excellent qualities inconceivable to the mind. He was free of defects, such as taking pleasure in receiving honour or finding happiness and pleasure in existence, which stain one as if in a mire. [94] He was celebrated for being decorated with the adornment of stores of unexcelled, supreme knowledge, accumulated from time without beginning. When the jewelled tree of Indra, chief of the gods, was felled, it touched his two feet. He was honoured by gods, titans, human beings, divinities,⁹⁴ nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, users of spells and mantras,⁹⁵ and praiseworthy serpents.⁹⁶ In short,⁹⁷ he was adorned with the thirty-two marks that appear on the body of a great man,⁹⁸ and he also possessed the eighty other characteristics of greatness. He appeared excellent in every way, like a being from the Jewelled Mountain, adorned with a six-foot halo of light exceeding the radiance of a thousand suns.⁹⁹

⁹¹ Tib = *nyi ma stong bas lhag pa'i 'od gser*.

⁹² The verbal phrase here remains unclear to me. Tib reads *...de gser bzhun* (Q = *gzhun*) *ma lta bur gyur*. Here is Rhi’s rendering into English of the corresponding Chinese: ‘[The light] reached from the place of the Buddha the five hundred sages shining every place in between [sic].’

⁹³ In what follows, the Tibetan translation of the MSV differs significantly from both the Chinese translation of the MSV and the *Divyāvadāna*. Though it is perhaps closer to the latter in its elaborate description of the Buddha, many of the specifics have no exact parallel in either source.

⁹⁴ Tib = *lha*. This term is the first member of the list, translated above as gods, and then it is repeated here, but given a different translation.

⁹⁵ Tib = *rigs sngags 'chang*.

⁹⁶ Tib = *brang 'gro mchod 'os*.

⁹⁷ The next two sentences of the Tibetan translation have a rough parallel in the Chinese translation, though their order is reversed there.

⁹⁸ Tib = *sku skyes bu chen po'i mtshan*.

⁹⁹ Tib = *'od 'dom gang bas brgyan ba, 'od nyi ma stong bas lhag pa, rin po che'i ri 'gro ba lta bu kun nas bzang ba mthong ngo*. Rhi renders the Chinese somewhat differently: ‘His halo had beautiful colors as if the king of the Treasure Mountain shines by the light of a thousand suns.’

The sages gazed upon him in the same way that a person who has accumulated the roots of virtue would when seeing a Buddha for the first time. Neither the development of a yogi's mind through twelve years of calming meditation practice, nor the birth of a son to one who has no son, nor the sight of treasure to a poor person, nor the first royal consecration ceremony for one who desires kingship can compare to that.

The sages approached, and bowed down before the Blessed One with their heads at the Blessed One's feet. Then they sat to one side. The Blessed One perceived their natures, personalities, tendencies, and thinking, and then gave them a sermon on the Dharma so that they came to realize the four noble truths. Having heard the sermon, they took the mallet¹⁰⁰ of knowledge and shattered the mountain of belief in a substantial self – a mountain that rises up in twenty peaks – and realized the resultant stage of the stream-winner. Having seen the truth, they got up from their seats, and each one of them, raising his hands with the palms pressed together in a gesture of respect towards the Blessed One, said this to the Blessed One: 'Revered One, we wish to receive ordination, become monks, and go forth into these teachings and this discipline, which are so well stated. We wish to practise the religious life in the presence of the Blessed One.'

The Blessed One gave his instructions, and they were made fully ordained. [95] Through their exertions and their care and effort, they came to understand the five divisions of this very wheel of existence, the mobile and the immobile, and realized all manner of compounded phenomena, including fear,¹⁰¹ failings, things to be done,¹⁰² and things to be overcome. Having abandoned all defilements, they directly realized the state of being an Arhat. Being Arhats, they were free from desire for the three realms, and regarded a lump of dirt and a piece of gold as being the same, the sky and the palm of their hand as being equal, and a piece of sandalwood and an axe as being the same. With knowledge, they destroyed the storehouse that gives birth to ignorance. They obtained the special types of knowledge,¹⁰³ and extraordinary knowledge and powers.¹⁰⁴ They were unmoved by increases in honour and riches, and by desire for gain or existence.¹⁰⁵ They were revered, worshipped and served by a number of divinities possessing greater and lesser power.¹⁰⁶

Then the Blessed One, together with the five hundred Arhats, who surrounded him like a half-moon, approached the pavilion of the great miracle, and when he had arrived he sat upon the lion throne in the midst of many assemblies. Then the laywoman

¹⁰⁰ Tib = *rdo rjes*, that is, *vajra*.

¹⁰¹ Q = *'jigs pa* (D = *'jig pa*).

¹⁰² Q = *bgyis pa* (D = *'gyis pa*).

¹⁰³ Tib = *so so yang dag par rig pa*, which is the equivalent for *pratisamvid*.

¹⁰⁴ Tib = *mngon par shes pa*, equivalent to *abhijñā*.

¹⁰⁵ Tib = *srid pa dang rnyed pa la chags dang bsnyed bkur la rgya ba kyis* (D = *kyi phyogs pa*). This sentence remains unclear to me, and my translation emends *bsnyed* to *snyed bkur*, 'honour and riches', and assumes a missing negation: *ma phyogs pa* or the like, rather than *phyogs pa*.

¹⁰⁶ The preceding paragraph finds no parallel in the *Divyāvadāna*, and nearly all of it is absent in the Chinese translation of the MSV. It nevertheless consists mostly of stock phrases often applied to the Arhat.

known as Ṛddhīlamātā went into the presence of the Blessed One, bowed down before the Blessed One with her head at the Blessed One's feet, and said this to the Blessed One: 'The Blessed One needn't have much concern over this. If you permit me,¹⁰⁷ I will exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power along with the rival holy-men, one that is beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. I will bring happiness to gods and humans. I will bring joy to the hearts and minds of good people.'¹⁰⁸

The Blessed One responded, 'Ṛddhīlamātā, you needn't concern your mind much with this. You could exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power along with the rival holy-men, one that is beyond the capability of ordinary human beings, and put the rival holy-men to shame.¹⁰⁹ You could bring happiness to gods and humans. You could bring joy to the hearts and minds¹¹⁰ of good people. However, they [96] did not call upon you to exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings; they called upon me to exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings, and I will be the one to exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. If you were to exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power along with them, one that is beyond the capability of ordinary human beings, then these holy-men would say that the ascetic Gautama is not exhibiting a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings, but rather this female disciple, Ṛddhīlamātā, has such great superhuman power and such great ability, and she has exhibited a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. You may sit back down in your seat.'

She sat back down in her seat, and it went the same way for the household head Anathapiṇḍada, the novice monk Cunda, the novice nun Unforgettable,¹¹¹ and the nun Utpalavarṇā, and many others from the great assembly who also possessed superhuman powers. At that point the great Maudgalyāyana went into the presence of the Blessed One, bowed down before the Blessed One with his head at the Blessed One's feet, and said this to the Blessed One: 'The Blessed One needn't have much concern over this. If you permit me, I will exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power along with the rival holy-men, one that is beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. I will put these holy-men to shame. I will bring happiness to gods and humans. I will bring joy to the hearts and minds of good people.'

The Blessed One responded, 'Maudgalyāyana, you needn't concern your mind much with this. You could exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power along with the rival holy-men, one that is beyond the capability of ordinary human beings, and put

¹⁰⁷ This whole series of statements concludes with *lags so*, implying that Ṛddhīlamātā is asking for permission.

¹⁰⁸ See note 50 for discussion of the phrase found here.

¹⁰⁹ Tib = *thag gzhuqs pa*. See notes 43 and 49 on this term.

¹¹⁰ Tib = *snying*. Compare with the phrasing at notes 50 and 108 above.

¹¹¹ Tib = *brjed med*. There is no corresponding Sanskrit in the *Divyāvadāna* to supply a clear equivalency of name. Rhi supplies the name as *Jatā* for the Chinese translation of the MSV, given that the Chinese seems to mean 'one with knotted hair', but admits that the underlying Sanskrit name is unclear to him.

the rival holy-men to shame. You could bring happiness to gods and humans. You could bring joy to the hearts [and minds] of good people. However, they did not call upon you to exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings; [97] they called upon me to exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings, and I will be the one to exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. If you were to exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power along with them, one that is beyond the capability of ordinary human beings, then these holy-men would say that the ascetic Gautama is not exhibiting a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings, but rather this monastic disciple, Maudgalyāyana, has such great superhuman power and such great ability, and he has exhibited a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. You may sit back down in your seat.'

He, too, sat back down in his seat. Then the Blessed One addressed Prasenajit, king of Kośala: 'Great king, who will be the one to ask the Tathāgata to exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power along with these holy-men, one that is beyond the capability of ordinary human beings?'

King Prasenajit of Kośala rose from his seat, draped his robe over his shoulder, and bowed in the presence of the Blessed One, his hands raised with the palms pressed together. Then he said this to the Blessed One: 'Revered One, would the Blessed One please exhibit a wondrous display of superhuman power, together with the holy-men – one that is beyond the capability of ordinary human beings? Please, put these holy-men to shame! Please, bring happiness to gods and humans! Please, bring joy to the hearts and minds of good people! It is I who asks! Please! It would bring merit, welfare, and service to all types of living beings, including ascetics and brahmins, gods and humans, and to all for a long time.' The Blessed One responded to Prasenajit the king of Kośala with silence, and King Prasenajit of Kośala sat back down in his seat, understanding the Blessed One to have accepted the request with his silence. [98]

Then the Blessed One entered into such a state of meditation that he completely disappeared. He then became visible in the sky in the eastern direction and displayed the four types of noble bearing – that is, walking, standing, sitting, and lying down – all while remaining fixed in meditative equipoise. Then he entered into the fire-element concentration; and once the Blessed Buddha had entered the fire-element concentration, multi-coloured rays of light emanated from his body, rays of blue, yellow, red, white, maroon¹¹² and crystal. Displaying the Twin Miracle,¹¹³ fire blazed from the lower half of his body and water flowed from the upper half, and then fire blazed from the upper half of his body and water flowed from the lower half. And the same miracles he displayed in

¹¹² Tib = *btsod ka*, which appears to be a dark reddish colour. The precise hue is a subject of some debate. Rhi translates the Chinese as 'pink', as is the common interpretation in East Asia.

¹¹³ Tib = *zung gi cho 'phrul*. This phrase is found affixed, as it were, at the head of the sentence, and appears somewhat grammatically disconnected from the rest of the sentence, though I take it with the verb, *ston par mdzad*, at the end of the sentence. Its mere presence is noteworthy, as it is not mentioned in either the Chinese MSV or in the *Divyāvadāna*.

the eastern direction, he also displayed in the western, southern and northern directions. He displayed these four miracles of superhuman power in the four directions, and after curtailing his superhuman powers he went back to sitting on the lion throne.

Then the Blessed One addressed King Prasenajit of Kośāla: ‘Great king, all disciples and independently awakened ones have the capability to perform this miracle just performed by the Tathāgata. Great king, who will be the one to ask the Tathāgata to display an unsurpassed, great miracle¹¹⁴ in front of this assembly of living beings and holy-men?’ Then Prasenajit the king of Kośāla rose from his seat, draped his robe over his shoulder, and bowed in the presence of the Blessed One, his hands raised with the palms pressed together. Then he said this to the Blessed One: ‘Revered One, would the Blessed One please display an unsurpassed, great miracle in front of this assembly of living beings and holy-men, and put these holy-men to shame? Please, bring happiness to gods and humans! Please, bring joy to the hearts and minds of good people! [99] It is I who asks the Blessed One! Please! It would bring merit, welfare, and service to all types of living beings, including ascetics and brahmins, gods and humans, and to all for a long time.’ The Blessed One responded to Prasenajit king of Kośāla with silence, and King Prasenajit of Kośāla sat back down in his seat, understanding the Blessed One to have accepted the request with his silence.

[Minor Precepts of the Discipline (*vinayakṣudraka-vastu*): Chapter Thirty-Two]¹¹⁵

Then the Blessed One touched the earth with his hand¹¹⁶ held in the gesture of allaying fears. His fingers were webbed and his palm was marked with a wheel and an auspicious mark (*svastika*), arising as a result of many hundreds of lifetimes of merit. Then the Blessed One had a worldly thought: ‘Oh, what nāga will bring a lotus flower as large as a chariot’s wheel and made entirely of gold, its stem made of jewels and its stamens made of diamonds?’ As a rule, when a Blessed Buddha has a worldly thought, all living beings, even tiny ants, perceive the thought in their minds. If an otherworldly thought arises, however, not even the disciples or the independently awakened ones can perceive the thought of the Blessed One, not to speak of the nāgas or the animal realm.

[Speaking of nāgas, however,]¹¹⁷ some of them then thought, ‘For what reason has the Blessed One touched the earth? It is in order to display the great miracle!’ They brought a lotus flower as large as a chariot’s wheel and made entirely of gold, its stem made of jewels and its stamens made of diamonds. As that lotus rose out of a chasm in

¹¹⁴ Tib = *blan med pa'i cho 'phrul chen po*. The *Divyāvādāna* does not put the words ‘great miracle’ in the Buddha’s mouth, but has him refer to a miracle that uses superhuman powers the disciples do not share. A short while later in the *Divyāvādāna*, however, the gods do refer to it as the ‘great miracle’.

¹¹⁵ Here, for some reason, the Tibetan text inserts a brief reminder of the section and chapter of the work as a whole.

¹¹⁶ D = *bcom ldan 'das gyis phyag*; Q = *bcom ldan 'das gyi byag (?)*.

¹¹⁷ Here I deviate from the practice of avoiding brackets, in order to highlight this added phrase. Rhi notes that the Chinese translation of the MSV also seems to lack a clear transition here. Similarly, the Tibetan has only a pronoun seemingly referring back to ‘nāgas’, which is the nearest antecedent noun.

the earth, the Blessed One sat down in its centre. Then many, many more lotuses appeared to the left and the right of the Blessed One. On each one of them sat a magically created Buddha. [100] And to the left and the right of each of those lotuses others appeared just the same as before, until a whole array of Buddhas were magically manifested¹¹⁸ all the way up to the highest heaven (*akaniṣṭha*). Some Buddhas were blazing fire, while others were producing clear light. Some were producing a shower of rain, while others were producing lightning. Some, omniscient, were making prophecies, while some were asking a question, and others were giving an answer. Some were walking, while others were stationary. Some were standing up, while others were sitting, and others were lying down. Through the powerful intent¹¹⁹ of the Buddha, even small children could perceive the Buddha-bodies.

Seeing the miracle, Prasenajit king of Kośala, his assembled queens and princes together with assembled courtiers, hundreds of thousands of people in the assembly who had arrived from various regions, and hundreds of thousands of gods in the sky, all smiled and stared at the Blessed One's great miracle, and bowed down immediately before him. Some of the gods in the sky also beat drums. Drums were sounding everywhere. Conch shells were being blown in unison. Music and songs of various kinds were issuing forth. In some places there was dancing. Even living beings from the animal realm were delighted and made various sorts of noise in a similar fashion. For instance, horses neighed; elephants trumpeted; camels grunted; cows mooed; peacocks cried. Gods and humans in the joyful realms became exceedingly more joyful as they vied¹²⁰ to make offerings to the Blessed One. Then gods threw divine flowers such as blue lotuses, red lotuses, white water-lilies, white lotuses, and *mandāra* flowers. Divine aloe-wood powder, incense powder, sandalwood powder, as well as scarves and clean clothes were scattered. In that way, the intervening space between the human beings and [101] non-humans also became purified.

When the great festival had taken place in that manner, then, in order to exhort those living beings ready for the discipline, the Blessed One himself uttered the following verse:

Strive! Go forth! Apply yourselves to the teaching of the Buddha!
Destroy the army of death, like an elephant would a hut made of reeds!
Whoever practises this discipline and these teachings without wavering
Will abandon this cycle of existence and make an end of suffering.

Then the remaining magically created Buddhas all simultaneously uttered the following verse:

¹¹⁸ Tib = *sangs rgyas phal po che sprul*. The *Divyāvādāna* reads *buddhapiṇḍī nirmitā*, but a bit later also reads *buddha-avatamsaka* in the same sense in a passage that has no parallel in the MSV. The latter occurs in a slightly expanded rendering of the sentence, describing how even a small child could see all the Buddhas. See Cowell and Neil, *Divyāvādāna*, 162–63, and Rotman, *Divine Stories*, 280.

¹¹⁹ Tib = *byin gyis brlabs*. See also note 85 above.

¹²⁰ Q = *sdo bar*; D = *sbro bar*. I have followed Q.

So long as the sun hasn't risen, the glow-worms glow.
Once the sun has risen in the sky, even a lamp grows dim.
So long as the Tathāgata has not yet appeared, the sophists shine.
Once the light of the Buddha has shone in the world, the sophists pale, and
so do their students.

Then the Blessed One addressed the monks: 'Monks, hold onto this image in your minds,¹²¹ because it will disappear in a moment.' Just as the Buddha was speaking those words, it disappeared.

Once it had disappeared, Prasenajit the king of Kośala said this to the rival holy-men: 'Look, the Blessed One has displayed a miracle of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. Now your turn has come, so you display one.' Then Purāṇa Kāśyapa was silent, and he elbowed¹²² Maskarin Gośaliputra, who then elbowed Saṃjayin Vairatṭiputra, who then elbowed Ajita Keśakambala, who then elbowed Kātyāyana Kakuda, who then elbowed Nirgrantha Jñātiputra. And so neither Purāṇa Kāśyapa nor anyone else said or did anything at all. The king ordered them a second and a third time, but they just went on elbowing each other and not saying anything. Ashamed and embarrassed, [102] they hung their heads. Deep within their hearts, they had no confidence.

Then Vajrapāṇi the yakṣa had this thought: 'Since these stupid people will assail¹²³ the Blessed One for a long time, I will employ methods to make them all run away.'¹²⁴ So he sent heavy wind and rain, such that the miracle pavilion did not come into the path of their sight.¹²⁵ Some, out of fright, entered mountain caves; some went into deep grasses,

¹²¹ Tib = *mtshan ma zung shig*. The *Divyāvādāna* has *pratigrhṇita...buddhapiṇḍyā nimittam*. The verb seems to have a sense of holding the image in the mind. Rhi translates the Chinese as 'remember'; Rotman translates the Sanskrit as 'contemplate'.

¹²² Tib = *gru phugs byed*.

¹²³ The Tibetan verb here reads (D =) *tho btsam pas*, (Q =) *tho 'tsham pas*. If one emends D to *mtho btsam*, then it would agree with the future form of the same verb in the same text identified above in note 21. However, I remain a bit uncertain about the tense and mode of this verb. Could it be interpreted as present continuous, 'are assailing', or past continuous, 'have assailed'? Rhi translates the Chinese as 'have afflicted'. However, the *Divyāvādāna* gives a clear future form: *viheṭhayiṣyanti*. Rotman translates, 'are going to harass'. See notes 23 and 25 for other forms of the verb, and further discussion.

¹²⁴ The second half of this sentence is interesting to consider a bit further. The Tibetan reads: '*di rnam kun tu 'bros par 'gyur ba'i thabs shig bya 'o*. There is no corresponding phrase in the *Divyāvādāna*, but *thabs* is a common translation for *upāya*. Here we see the connection of *upāya* to warfare, political stratagems, and so on. So 'employ methods' can perhaps sound a bit flat, and may not fully convey the polysemy of the term *upāya*, which also involves creative skill in a broader sense. One needs a translation that expresses both the planning and the execution of such a strategy or creative skill. In regard to the agent here, one may also note that the *Divyāvādāna* attributes the thought, phrased differently, not to Vajrapāṇi, but to Pāñcika, the 'great general' (*mahāsenāpati*) of the yakṣas. For a general comparison and discussion of the different attributions, see Lamotte, 'Vajrapāṇi en Inde', 124–26.

¹²⁵ The Tibetan here reads: *des gang gyis na cho 'phrul gyi mdun khang de de rnam gyi mig lam du yang mi 'bab pa de lta bu'i rlung mar dang char drag gtang ba dang*. There may be some echo here of the passage in the

and some into dense forests. Some entered nearby buildings,¹²⁶ and some went into temples.¹²⁷

As for the Blessed One, he remained in the pavilion of the great miracle, and he uttered the following verses:

Many people, frightened by fear,
Seek refuge in mountains and forests,
Groves, gardens, and fields,
And also in temples.

But that is not the best refuge.
That is not the supreme refuge.
From seeking for such a refuge,
One does not become free from all suffering.

When one seeks refuge in the Buddha,
And in his teachings and community,
One sees, with wisdom,
The noble one's four truths:

Suffering, the cause of suffering,
Completely transcending suffering,
And the noble one's eightfold path
Leading to ease and to rest.

These refuges are sovereign.
These refuges are supreme.
Relying upon these refuges,
One becomes free from all suffering.

Then, perceiving the natures, personalities, tendencies and thinking of the assembly, the Blessed One gave a teaching so that, hearing it, many hundreds of living beings obtained great attainments.¹²⁸ For instance, some realized the resultant stage of

Divyāvadāna, which reads: ...*tumulaṃ vātavarṣaṃ saṃjanya mahāntam utsṛṣṭavān | tumulena vātavarṣeṇa tīrthyānāṃ maṇḍapā 'darśanapathe kṣiptāḥ*. What is confusing about the Tibetan is that it seems to lack at least one sentence that is present in the Chinese translation of the MSV, and which makes it clear that the holy-men have dispersed. The next sentence or phrase of the Tibetan simply begins: *de na kha cig ni...*

¹²⁶ Tib = *mdun khang*.

¹²⁷ The whole passage feels abbreviated here. At least, the Tibetan rendering is less elaborate than the Chinese MSV translation, though it is still closer to the Chinese than either of them is to the more elaborate passage in the *Divyāvadāna*. Perhaps it is best explained, as Lamotte seems to do, by putting the MSV on a continuum of development from T 211 to the *Divyāvadāna*.

¹²⁸ Tib = *khyad par chen po*.

stream-winner. Some realized the resultant stage of once-returner. Some realized the resultant stage of non-returner. Some, eliminating all afflictions, realized the state of the Arhat. Some [103] produced an aspiration for awakening as a disciple. Some produced an aspiration for awakening as an independently awakened one. Some produced an aspiration for unexcelled, perfect and complete awakening. Most of that assembly became disposed towards the Blessed One, inclined towards his teachings, and favourably established towards the community.

With his words of teaching, the Blessed One then instructed those members of the assembly in the good. He caused them to receive the good. He exhorted them in the good. He made them find joy in the good. And then he rose up from his seat and departed.¹²⁹

Then Purāṇa Kāśyapa's students inquired of him: 'Teacher, tell us, what is the nature of reality?'

Then, among the students, one gave the following statement, saying, 'This world is permanent. Such is the nature of reality.'

'It's impermanent,' said another.

'It's both permanent and impermanent,' said another.

'It's neither permanent nor impermanent,' said another.

'The world has limits,' said another.

'It has no limits,' said another.

'It has both limits and no limits,' said another.

'It has neither limits nor no limits,' said another.

'The body has life-force,' said one.

'The body is one thing and life-force is another thing,' said another.

'After death, there is another world,' said one.

'There is not,' said another.

'There is and there is not,' said another.

'After death, it's not that there is another world, nor is it that there isn't another world. This is true, and all else is false,' said another. In that way, they deceived one another.

And so Purāṇa Kāśyapa¹³⁰ hung his head out of shame, and as he felt scorched by the fire of suffering and had a desire for some cool water, he left for a pond. A eunuch saw him on the road, and spoke the following verse:

From where are you coming so quickly and looking so drawn,
Like a ram powerless without a horn?

¹²⁹ The preceding two paragraphs, and those corresponding to them in the Chinese MSV translation, roughly parallel the final section of the story in the *Divyāvadāna*, although in the latter work the passage is a bit more fully developed. Could this have been the end of the story at some point in time? In the Tibetan version there is almost no clear transition to the next section of the story, the death of Purāṇa Kāśyapa. The *Divyāvadāna* also contains this, but folds it elegantly into the story just after the Buddha's poetic remarks and before the conclusion.

¹³⁰ As Rhi notes for the Chinese MSV translation, here, too, there is simply a pronoun with no clear antecedent. The context suggests that it is Purāṇa.

One that knows not the teachings of the Śākya
Wanders about aimlessly, just like a donkey.

Purāṇa spoke the following verses:

The lord of death appears before me.
My body has no strength or energy.
I've felt all types of material pleasure and suffering.
Free now, [104] I go to find peace.

This sunlight makes me burn.
My body and mind are worn out by ascetic practice.
So, uncouth-looking one,¹³¹ tell me straight away:
Where may I find a very cool pond?

The eunuch spoke the following verse:

Lowly and sinful man, you are no great person.
Here is a pond, filled with clean lotus flowers
And water as pure as snowmelt.
Do you not see this very fine pond?

Purāṇa spoke the following verse:

You are neither a man nor a woman.
The path to enter is made clear by pointing to it.¹³²
So that I may quench this scorching torment,
I go to this pond, filled with clear, cooling water.

Then Purāṇa sidled up that path and arrived at the pond. He hung a pot filled with sand from his neck, and jumped in the pond. Right there he gave up his life.

Then Purāṇa's disciples asked one another, 'Have you seen our teacher?'

'We haven't seen him,' they said.

'Who among us has been taught the doctrine by our teacher?'

Then one said, 'Learned ones, the teacher taught the doctrine that the world is permanent, and that this is true and all else is false.'

Another one said, 'He taught that it is impermanent.'

'He taught that it is both permanent and impermanent,' another said.

¹³¹ Tib = *mi srun thong*.

¹³² This quarter of the verse remains unclear to me. The Tibetan reads: *de brda* (Q = *brda*) *phrad kyis zung* (*zud?*) *la lam phye dang*. The Tibetan seems similar to the Chinese. Both seem fairly different from what is in the *Divyāvadāna*.

‘He taught that is neither permanent nor impermanent,’ another said.

‘He taught that it has limits,’ said another.

‘He taught that it has no limits,’ said another.

‘He taught that it both has and doesn’t have limits,’ said another.

‘He taught that it neither has nor doesn’t have limits,’ said another.

‘He taught that after death there is another world,’ said another.

‘He taught that after death there is no other world,’ said another.

‘He taught that after death there is and there isn’t another world,’ said another.

‘He taught that after death there neither is nor isn’t another world. This is true and all else is false,’ said another.

They said to one another, ‘Learned ones, since opinions vary and we are all in disagreement, right now we should seek out our master by all means, and ask him what is true.’

On the path, they saw a young woman [105], and they asked her in verse:

Someone named Purāṇa passed this way.

He wears only the clothes of the Dharma,¹³³

Vowing to eat only a few morsels per day.

Good lady, have you not seen him?

The young woman spoke the following verse:

Destined for a bad rebirth, going to hell,

He went about with his arms extended.

Purāṇa lies here buffeted by the water,

With his arms and his feet turning white.

And they spoke the following verse:

He is a sage practising the religious life.

He wears only the clothes of the Dharma.

You shouldn’t speak about him, good lady,

So disrespectfully, as you have done.

The young woman spoke the following verses:

Who in the world deems him wise?

His penis displayed,

He wanders about town naked,

In full view of everyone.

¹³³ The implication here is that he goes naked.

Walking about with one's penis hanging out.
What sort of dharma is that?
One like him might wish for King Vaiśravaṇa
To cut it off with a sharp knife!¹³⁴

Hearing this, they left in silence. Shortly thereafter they arrived at the pond, and saw Purāṇa Kāśyapa with a pot filled with sand hanging from his neck. His time was come. Among them were some devoted to the discipline. They said, 'Learned ones, this is true, and all else is false!' And they too hung pots filled with sand around their necks, and they too met their end. The remainder of them turned away, and went to the borderlands, where they remained.¹³⁵

The Blessed One, the guide of those living beings ready for the discipline, his power over the assembly unexcelled and unlimited, a Buddha who had awakened to unexcelled, perfect and complete awakening, turned the wheel of Dharma. On that occasion all the holy-men invited him for a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings, and all the holy-men were put to shame. They were conquered. They were made to turn their backs. They were made speechless. They were made to find support in the outlying districts and borderlands.

Then the monks gave rise to a doubt: 'Revered [106] One, we see that the Blessed One, a Buddha who has awakened to unexcelled, perfect and complete awakening, was invited for a wondrous display of superhuman power beyond the capability of ordinary human beings, and put all the holy-men to shame, conquered them, made them turn their backs, and made them speechless.'

The Blessed One explained, 'Monks, at present I am free from desire, free from aversion, free from confusion; free from birth, old age, sickness, and death; free from sorrow, sadness, and suffering; free from disquiet and the desire to harm. I am an all-knowing one. I know all things. I have mastery over all that is or may be known. I am the guide of those living beings ready for the discipline. Having awakened to unexcelled, perfect and complete awakening, I have put to shame all the holy-men. I have conquered them. I have made them turn their backs. I have made them speechless. What is more

¹³⁴ The editors of the *Divyāvadāna* emend the text to suggest that an unnamed king cuts off such a naked ascetic's two ears, reading *tasya vai śravaṇau rājā kṣurapreṇāvakṛntatu*. Rotman follows them in his translation. However, the Tibetan, like the Chinese MSV translation, is quite clear about reading King Vaiśravaṇa, and this would seem to result in the implication that something other than the ears is meant.

¹³⁵ Does this mark the end of the story? At this point, any further parallel with the story told in the *Divyāvadāna* ceases. As pointed out above, the latter switches the order of the final two sections, placing the section on the death of Purāṇa before the Buddha's final sermon. Rhi ends his translation of the Chinese MSV translation here, with a brief sentence to the effect that gods and men rejoiced as the Buddha performed the great miracle. That sentence does not appear in the Tibetan, however. Instead, what follows is almost a plot summary, which simultaneously forms a transition leading to the next story in a style very much like that of many, many other tales in the corpus of Buddhist *avadāna* and *jātaka* literature. One wonders about the development of this version of the story. It makes good sense to include the episode of Purāṇa's death here, before a transitional section that simultaneously concludes the story and introduces a *jātaka* story elaborating upon the relationship between the Buddha and the six rival holy-men in a past life.

wondrous than this? In the past, I had desire. I had aversion. I had confusion. I was not free from birth, old age, sickness, and death. I was not free from sorrow, sadness, and suffering. I was not free from disquiet and the desire to harm. But, alongside the group of six teachers, I put these things to shame. I conquered them. I made them turn their backs. I made them speechless. I made them find support in the outlying districts and borderlands insofar as I destroyed them. Pay attention and listen well to my explanation of it.¹³⁶

Abbreviations

BAK	<i>Bodhisattvāvadānakalpalatā</i>
CBETA	Chinese Buddhist Electronic Tripitaka Association
D	Derge edition of the Tibetan canon
GRETIL	Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages
MSV	<i>Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya</i>
N	Narthing edition of the Tibetan canon
TBRC	Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center
Tib	Tibetan, editions consulted correspond
Q	Peking edition of the Tibetan canon

¹³⁶ Even though the preceding three paragraphs form a transitional section leading to the next story in the MSV, I have included them here because they provide material relevant to the story, and because I want to give readers a sense of how the story of the Great Miracle connects to the next story in the voluminous *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*. At this point in the text, the Tibetan MSV begins to tell the long story of Mahauṣadha (Pali = Mahosadha), a story of one of the past lives of the Buddha also found in the Pali *jātakas*, where it is the penultimate story in the collection. For the English translation of the Pali tale, see Cowell, *Jātaka*, vol. 6, 156–245. For the edition, see Fausbøll, *Jātaka*, vol. 4, 329–476. In the MSV the story of Mahauṣadha is also quite long, over twice as long as that of the great miracle. The overall principle of organization seems to be to draw a parallel between the two stories, and indeed the MSV version of the story of Mahauṣadha concludes by identifying Mahauṣadha with the Buddha in his past life, and the wicked ministers in that story with the six holy-men of this one. So far as I am aware, the two stories are not connected in any other source. However, the MSV here also suggests a deeper, more philosophical sense of wonder, one that points to the wonder of cultivating virtue – specifically, the perfect virtues on the path to becoming a wondrous Buddha, and more specifically, the cultivation of the perfect virtue of knowledge, which, one might argue, leads to the Buddha’s omniscience. More needs to be said, but this sense of wonder also ties back into the connection between knowledge or omniscience and the Buddha’s superhuman powers, as demonstrated in the story of the Buddha’s great miracle and other stories.