Buddhaghośa's Padyacūḍāmaṇi As a Biography of the Buddha

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis is to present the Padyacūḍāmaṇi, a previously untranslated Sanskrit poem on the life of the Buddha. This text has been ascribed to the Pāli scholar Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa.

My study will focus upon this text as a biography of the Buddha. To do so, I will present only those verses which move the Padyacūḍāmaṇi’s narrative forward. These verses will be presented within the thesis and recollected in an Appendix.

To study the Padyacūḍāmaṇi as a biography of the Buddha I will compare it with the traditional Buddha biographies. These are the Buddhacarita, Lalitavistara and Mahāvastu [all Sanskrit works] and the Nidānakathā, the only biography of the Buddha written in Pāli. What is illuminated by such a comparison is the striking similarity between the Padyacūḍāmaṇi and the Avidūre Nidāna [Intermediate Epoch] of the Nidānakathā biographical account. This similarity is made more interesting by the fact that the Nidānakathā has also been ascribed to Buddhaghosa. However, Buddhaghosa’s authorship of the Nidānakathā has been questioned due to its difference in style and expression from his other works.

I will argue that the Padyacūḍāmaṇi is also a peculiar work for the Buddhist scholar Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa, for, it is his only Sanskrit work, his only poem and, unlike his other works, is primarily not a Buddhist work. I will argue that the association of Buddhaghosa’s name with the Padyacūḍāmaṇi is not to indicate his authorship of this text but a way of highlighting the relationship between the Padyacūḍāmaṇi and the Nidānakathā, which has been ascribed to Buddhaghosa.

By presenting the PC as a biography of the Buddha, two avenues for further exploration are illuminated. Firstly, more research should be done on the relationship between the Padyacūḍāmaṇi and the Nidānakathā biographical accounts. Secondly, it seems that there are good grounds to question whether the Pāli scholar Buddhaghosa was indeed the author of this text.
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to introduce the Padyacūdāmani [the crest jewel of verse] a previously untranslated Sanskrit text ascribed to Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa. This text presents a life story of the Buddha divided into ten cantos (sargas) and written in verse form. In introducing this text, I have chosen to focus upon it as biography, a cohesive account of the Buddha's life. My aim will be to present the narrative framework of this text and to compare it with other biographies of the Buddha. The traditional biographies which I will be utilizing for my comparison are the Buddhacarita, Lalitavistara, Mahāvastu and Nidānakathā. The Nidānakathā was written in Pāli. The other three are Sanskrit works. I will also be referring to the biographical and autobiographical material which can be found in the Pāli canon. I have relied on translations for my knowledge of these earliest sources on the Buddha’s life, specifically, Johnston’s translation of the Buddhacarita [1936], de Foucaux’s French translation of the Lalitavistara [1988], Jones’ translation of the Mahāvastu [1949] and Jayawickrama’s translation of the Nidānakathā [1990]. For the Pāli canonical literature, I have relied on translations done by the Pāli Text Society.

There is a plethora of secondary material written on the Buddha’s life which I have used with caution, for, I have found that it usually falls into two categories. Those studies which aim to create a picture of the Buddha as a god-like being and those which describe him as a completely ordinary man. In a famous work by Émile Senart, entitled, 'Essai sur la Legend du Bouddha,' he treats the Buddha legend as a mass of mythical tales and identifies the belief in the Buddha with the belief in a sun-god. In contrast such works on the Buddha’s life as Rhys Davids’ [1928] and Oldenberg’s [1882] insist that there was

1 According to tradition, the compilation of the Pāli canon began immediately after the death of the Buddha about 483 B.C. at the council of Rājagaha. It was further developed a hundred years later at the council of Vesāli, the chief cause of which was the cropping up of certain wrong views, which were threatening to undermine monastic discipline. At the third council, under King Asoka [264-227 B.C.], the canon in all its essential parts seems to have been brought to a formal completion. This council was also of importance on account of the resolution to send missions to neighbouring countries. The tradition is here supported by epigraphical discoveries. Mahinda [Skt-Mahendra, the son of King Asoka] went to Ceylon as the messenger of the teachings of the Buddha. He brought to Sri Lanka the Canon in its Theravāda form [Geiger 1978, 7].
nothing extraordinary about the Buddha. They extol the fact that he was a very ordinary man. Rhys Davids begins her study of the Buddha's life, which she fittingly calls 'Gotama the man' with the following statement:

I am the man who is called the Buddha, Śakyamuni, Bhagavat. I am the man Siddhattha Gotama...I am every man. I am not anything of the nature of a wonder being. [C. Rhys Davids. 1928, 9].

Similarly, Oldenberg states,

What makes a Buddha a Buddha is, as his name indicates, his knowledge. He does not possess this knowledge, like a Christ, by virtue of a metaphysical superiority of his nature, surpassing everything earthly, but he has gained it, or, more strictly speaking, won it by a struggle. [Oldenberg. 1882, 84]

The traditional biographies show that both perspectives are limited in what they admit and in what they omit. In Senart's image of the Buddha it is the human being that is missing; in Rhys Davids' and Oldenberg's it is any recognition of the extraordinary aspects of this being. In the traditional biographies there seems to be no problem in stating that the Buddha was both ordinary and extraordinary.

Although there is this tendency toward taking one of these positions on the Buddha's life, there are nevertheless some notable and useful studies, in the secondary literature. Oldenberg's work, entitled, Buddha: His Life, His Doctrine, His Order [1882], should be noted as the pioneering effort in providing a detailed and historical presentation of the Buddha's life. He bases his study on the biographical material found in the Pāli canon. Another useful study of the Buddha's life, based on Pāli sources, has been done by E. H. Brewster. It is called The Life of Gotama the Buddha [1926] and is a translation and compilation of all the biographical information found in the Pāli canon. E. J. Thomas's work, entitled the Life of Buddha as Legend and History [1927] and A. Foucher's, Life of the Buddha According to the Ancient Texts and Monuments of India [1949] are also worth noting. Their works draw not only upon the Pāli canonical sources but also on the later Buddha biographies and works in Tibetan and Chinese that contain biographical information.
Although, this secondary material has been useful for the clarification of details of the Buddha’s life, my focus has been on the primary sources. I am interested in seeing how the Padyacūḍāmani compares with these traditional biographical accounts.

The edition of the Padyacūḍāmani [PC] that I will be basing my comments and translations on was edited by M. Raṅgāchārya and S. Kuppusvāmi Śāstri in 1921 and printed by the Madras Government Press. It is based on three manuscripts from South India. The first is a copy on paper in Devānāgarī characters of the Śrī-tāla palm-leaf manuscript, belonging to the Palace Library at Tripūrita, Cochin state, and written in Malayālam characters. It contains the work to the end of the tenth canto. The next is a palm-leaf manuscript in Grantha characters which breaks off in the tenth canto. The third is a manuscript written in Telugu characters and complete in ten cantos.

This edition is also based on an edition in Pali characters published in 1908 in the Baudhā Granthamala series at Colombo, as its second number. It is reported to consist of forty six pages and contains the work up to the sixteenth stanza of the ninth canto. Unfortunately, I have not been able to get a copy of it.

My knowledge of this text has also been greatly aided by the Sanskrit commentary which is included in Raṅgāchārya’s and Kuppusvāmi’s edition of the text. The commentary was prepared by Pandits K. Venkaṭeśvara Śāstri and D.S. Śāṭhakopāchārya. Although it may seem unusual for brahmanical pandits to work on a Buddhist work, we find similar modern commentaries on the Buddhist poet Aśvaghoṣa’s epics. The Pandits may be interested in these texts for their poetic value.

That this work has been appreciated as a piece of poetry is evident from the list of similarities between the PC and two famous Mahākāvyas [Classical epic poems], the Raghuvamśa and Buddhacarita, which have been included in the brief preface to the edition I used. Here, Kuppusvāmi and Raṅgāchārya provide a detailed list of the verses and episodes contained in the PC which correspond with verses and episodes found in the aforementioned poetic works. Current work is also being done on the relationship between this work and the works of Kālidāsa. Although, I will not discuss the poetry

2 In many places this text prints च where other editions have च.

3 The development of Sanskrit poetry can be viewed in three distinctly separate stages; the Vedic [3000 B.C.], the Epic [1000 B.C.], and the Classical [400 B.C.]. Joshi [1976, 11-33 of Intro] refers to Kālidāsa as the brightest star in the firmament of Classical Sanskrit poetry. Kālidāsa’s dates are
of the PC in this thesis, I will briefly mention some of the characteristics of a Mahākāvyā [Classical epic poem] in the first chapter of this text where I present the sources for the PC’s narrative. For it is apparent that the narrative of this text is effected by its compliance with some of the rules of this poetic form. An area that has not been explored in previous studies, and which I hope to elucidate by focusing upon the PC as a biography of the Buddha, is the peculiarity of the PC’s association with the fifth century C.E., Pāli scholar, Bhandantācarīya Buddhaghosa. In the brief preface to their edition, the editors deem him the author of this work. Buddhaghosā is renowned among the Southern [Theravāda] Buddhists of Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand and has been deemed the foremost commentator on the Pāli canon, the earliest extant source for the Buddhist tradition. In light of the fact that the PC’s manuscripts are confined to South India and in light of its subject matter, presenting a life story of the Buddha, it is not surprising that this association with a famous name in Southern Buddhism has been made. Moreover, the editors suggest that the style of poetry contained in the PC can support this connection. They say,

The Padyacūdāmani may well be assigned to the period of Sanskrit poetry and poetics to which Bhāravi, Dāṇḍin and Māgha can be assigned, viz., 5th–7th century, A.D. [from Preface, 5]

These dates would coincide with the dates of Bhadantācarīya Buddhaghosa who is said to have lived in the fifth century A.D.

However, from even a superficial investigation of Buddhaghosa’s other writings, it becomes apparent that the PC is a conspicuously different work. For, it is unique in being his only Sanskrit work and his only piece of poetry. He is renowned for his commentarial works in Pāli which have a very different tone from this text. In my concluding remarks, I would like to illuminate the peculiarities of the PC and thereby, raise some doubts about attributing this work to Bhandantācarīya Buddhaghosa. Moreover, in the first chapter of this thesis, where I present the sources for the PC’s

uncertain. He has been placed anywhere between the first century B.C. and the fourth century C.E. The authentic works of Kālīdāsa are six in number, three of them being poems and the remaining three plays. The poems are Raghuvansha ‘Raghu’s Dynasty’, Kumārasambhava ‘Birth of Kumāra’ and Meghadhūta ‘Cloud messenger’. The three plays are Mālavikāgnimitra, Vikramorvaśīya and Abhijñānaśākuntala [Sakuntala for short].
narrative, I would like to highlight a connection between Buddhaghosa and the PC which is not that of authorship. To do so, I will introduce the Nidānakathā, the only continuous biography of the Buddha in Pāli, as a most important source for the PC. What will come to light in the third chapter, where I compare the PC with the other Buddha biographies, is its striking similarity with the Nidānakathā [NK] account. This similarity is made more interesting by the fact that the NK has also been ascribed to Buddhaghosa. In my concluding remarks, I will argue two points, firstly, that the author of the PC was probably not the Buddhist scholar Bhadantacariya Buddhaghosa and secondly, that the association of Buddhaghosa’s name with the PC was a way of acknowledging the PC’s indebtedness to the NK account.
CHAPTER ONE

THE SOURCES FOR THE PADYACŪDĀMANI’S NARRATIVE:

According to the editors of the text, the main sources for the PC’s narrative are the biographical material pertaining to the Buddha’s life which can be gleaned from the Pāli canonical literature and two Sanskrit works which take as their theme the life of the Buddha, the Buddhacarita [BC] and the Lalitavistara [LV]. From my research, I have found that the PC also draws from a compendium of legendary material called the Mahāvastu [MV] and, most clearly, from a text called the Nidānakathā [NK], the only continuous biography of the Buddha in Pāli.

Authobiographical references from the Pāli canon

The earliest material for the study of the Buddha’s life is found in the Pāli canon.4 In the Sutta and Vinaya Piṭakas we are presented with scattered, autobiographical statements employed for the purpose of teaching. In these accounts, the Buddha reflects upon his past experience only to exemplify the Dharma [teaching]. Thus, we find references to his disenchantment with worldly life, his renunciation of life as a prince, his struggle for enlightenment, and even his experience of enlightenment. The tone of such references is shown by the following passage from the Ariyapariyesana Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya [MN]:

And I too monks, before awakening, while I was still the bodhisattva, not fully awakened, being liable to birth because of self, sought what was likewise liable

4The canon is broken into three baskets [Tripiṭaka] which contain the Suttas, the Vinaya and the Abhidhamma. The Sutta Piṭaka contains the discourses of the Buddha, the Vinaya Piṭaka is concerned with the rules and regulations pertaining to the organization of the Buddhist Sangha [community] and the Abhidhamma Piṭaka provides an impressive systematisation of reality as it is of concern to one’s liberation from suffering. The Sutta [Piṭaka] is mainly composed of four ‘collections’ [Nikāya], partly arranged in accordance with the length of the pieces they contain, as is the case with the Vedic hymns. They are the Majjhima Nikāya [Middle Length Sayings], Aṅguttara Nikāya [Gradual Sayings], Samyutta Nikāya [Grouped Sayings] and Dīghanikāya [Long Sayings] [Renou 1964, 69–70].
to birth... Then it occurred to me, suppose that I should seek the unborn, the uttermost security from the bonds, Nibbāna? [I., 207]

These earliest autobiographical references can be found in the Digha Nikāya, Aṅguttara Nikāya and Majjhima Nikāya [part of the Sutta Piṭaka] and in the Mahāvagga of the Vinaya Piṭaka. In the Anguttara Nikāya, the Buddha describes his early life to his disciples. He mentions that he enjoyed great luxuries but grew disenchanted with them [see Vol.1, No.38]. The accounts in the Majjhima Nikāya [see Vol.1, No.26 and 36], describe the Buddha's search for truth. In the account in the Mahāvagga of the Vinaya Piṭaka, he relates the commencement of his ministry. The Digha Nikāya contains two important suttas, the Mahāpadāna sutta and the Mahāparinibbāna sutta. In the Mahāpadāna sutta, the Buddha describes his life in relation to numerous other Buddhas. The Mahāparinibbāna sutta deals with the last weeks of the Buddha's life. Autobiographical references can also be found in the Sutta Nipāta [see Padhāna Sutta, Nālaka Sutta and Pabbajjā Sutta].

It is in light of the early tradition's focus on the Buddha's teachings rather than his life that we can understand the absence of a continuous biography in the earliest portions of the canon. According to A.K. Warder [1970, 44],

The Buddha's life was evidently inessential for the doctrine of Early Buddhism and did not interest the compilers of the Tripiṭaka, who were content to record as carefully as they could the words of their teacher, the words which were their 'master' once the Buddha was no more.

Oldenberg makes a similar observation in his pioneering work on the life of the Buddha:

The idea of biography was foreign to the mind of that age... To this was added that, in those times, the interest in the life of the master receded entirely behind the interest attached to his teachings. [Oldenberg 1882, 80].

Despite the early tradition's focus on the Buddha's teachings rather than his life we can still find evidence, within the canon, of a belief and interest in the remarkable
personality of the founder. The Khuddhaka Nikāya⁵, which is deemed the fifth nikāya, is particularly useful for illuminating this growing Buddha legend.

In the Buddhavamsa of the Khuddaka Nikāya, the Buddha is presented not simply as an insightful teacher but as part of a lineage of extraordinary beings who, through past actions, have become destined for enlightenment. The Buddhavamsa describes the Buddha as one in a line of twenty four Buddhas. A similar sentiment is recorded in the Mahāpadāna Sutta of the Dīghanikāya. Here, the Buddha discusses his existence in relation to six previous Buddhas. Such texts downplay the significance of Siddhartha’s particular life experience and focus on the inevitability of his enlightenment. According to this tradition, the Buddha belongs to a line of chosen men. Thus, he is possessed of thirty two characteristic marks and at his birth there are auspicious and glorious signs. The meritorious acts and deeds which have made Buddhahood inevitable are described in the Jātaka and Apadāna [commonly Avadāna in Skt] literature and in the Cariyāpitaka, all part of the Khuddaka Nikāya. The Jātaka literature focuses upon the previous lives of the bodhisattva and describes the illustrious deeds that he performed which resulted in great merit. The Apadāna literature, similarly, focuses on the bodhisattva’s heroic feats and the Cariyāpitaka pursues the express purpose of showing how the bodhisattva came to possess the pāramitas or perfections in several of his earlier births.⁶ In these accounts, the Buddha’s glory is a glory which is even greater than that of the gods. For, the gods, unlike the Buddha, are not free from rāga/lobha [passion/greed], dosa [hatred] and moha [delusion]⁷ [Haldar 1977, 70]. Thus, the gods of Brahmanism are often characterized as subservient to the Buddha.

⁵The Khuddaka Nikāya is a compilation of miscellaneous works which are both small and voluminous. Winternitz says that these works almost certainly originated from different time periods and were not intended to form parts of a collection. [Winternitz 1983, 11., 76]

⁶For a discussion of this literature see, Studies in the common Jātaka and Avadāna Tales, by Sadhan Chandra Sarkar, or, Buddhist Avadāna, by Dr. Sharmistha Sharma. Also, see the introductions to the three volumes of Jātakas translated by E.B. Cowell and Peter Khoroche’s translation of Ārya Sūra’s Jātakamālā.

⁷The three principle roots [mūla] which are said to account for all suffering [duhkha] existence are the roots of hatred [dosa], greed [lobha] and delusion [moha]. The term root has the sense of firm support, cause, condition and producer, as well as the conveyor of the nourishing sap; in this light, the originating cause of kamma, our life affirming and rebirth producing, intentional actions. According to the Buddhist tradition, even the experience of the gods is not free from these three unwholesome roots [Akusala Mūla] [Nyānaponika Thera 1986, 98] and [Angaraika Govinda 1961, 9]].
In the Sakkapañha Sutta of the Dīghanikāya, the supreme god Sakka [equivalent to Indra] asks the Buddha various questions and gains deep insight from the Buddha’s answers. In the Mahāsāṃyā Sutta, thousands of gods are described surrounding the Buddha and his followers, praising them and rejoicing in their practice. [DN, II. 258, 317] In the Mahāpadāna Sutta, the creator god Brahmā is described encouraging the Buddha to preach the dharma after enlightenment. He says,

Lord, let the lord teach dhamma, let the well-farer teach the Dhamma. There are beings with little dust in their eyes who are perishing through not hearing the Dhamma: they will become knowers of the Dhamma. [DN, II. 39, 214]

The suggestion is that Brahmā is worried because he understands that his creation will be destroyed without the Buddha’s insight. [Warder 1970, 50]

Interestingly, the traditional story of the Buddha’s life, contained in the later biographies of the Buddha, synthesizes these two perceptions of the Buddha gleaned from the Pāli canon. For, these texts present the Buddha both as an ordinary being who has insight because he suffers and struggles like everybody else and as an extraordinary being. He is out of the ordinary because, prior to birth, he resides in the Tuṣita heaven, is immaculately conceived, and is aided by the gods towards his inevitable enlightenment.

Biographies of the Buddha

The two biographies [cohesive accounts of the Buddha’s life] that have been cited as sources for the PC are the Buddhacarita [BC] and Lalitavistara [LV].

The BC is a Sanskrit work written by the famous Buddhist/poet, Aśvaghoṣa. Aśvaghoṣa is said to have been a contemporary and protege of King Kanishka, which means he was probably alive in the last quarter of the first century A.D. The BC was written in twenty eight cantos and covers the Buddha’s life, from his conception to his death. It also describes the first Buddhist council and reign of King Aśoka. Unfortunately, only cantos number two to thirteen are extant in their entirety in Sanskrit, together with

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8 The complete manuscript of the Sanskrit original does not exist but translations of this text in Tibetan and Chinese have been preserved. It is from these translations that scholars conjecture the length and content of the original.
three quarters of the first canto and the first quarter of the fourteenth [Johnston 1984, 19]. The extant portion covers the Buddha’s life from his conception up to his enlightenment.

The PC is similar to the BC both in its content, being a life story of the Buddha and in its style. The BC is the only other known Mahākāvyā written on the life of the Buddha. The characteristics of a Mahākāvyā are described in the eighth century text by Daṇḍin called the Kāvyādarśā. Here, he highlights the fact that the poet’s objective is to invest an already existing story with intricate description and not to create an original narrative. He says,

The subject should be taken from old narratives, not therefore, invented. The hero should be noble and valiant. There should be descriptions of towns, oceans, mountains, seasons, the rising and setting of the sun and moon, sport in parks or the sea, drinking, love dalliance, separations, marriages, the birth of progeny, meeting of councils, embassies, campaigns, battles and the triumph of the hero, though his rivals’ merits may be exalted. [Caitanya 1962, 240]

This focus upon description rather than narration is exemplified by the PC. For, here the narrative is quite secondary to the embellishment of certain events or the elaborate description of places and people. Buddhaghosa utilizes a particularly interesting technique for embellishment. With almost mathematical precision he hangs descriptive verses throughout the narrative structure [see appendix]. In the first chapter, he introduces Kapilavastu [the birth place of Siddhārtha Gautama] and describes it with twenty seven verses. Then, he introduces Śuddhodhana [the father of Siddhārtha] and describes him in twenty verses, then, Queen Māyā [Siddhārtha’s mother] is described in twenty five verses and so on. Thus, in a poem of 641 verses only 100 provide the narrative of the Buddha’s life. As Buddhaghosa’s objective was to elaborately describe moments in the Buddha’s life, he does not provide a comprehensive rendering of the Buddha legend. His narrative often skips from one event to another without providing the logical connections. He seems to have assumed that his reader would be familiar with the story and capable of filling in the missing details.

Aśvaghoṣa is famous for two other works besides the BC. They are the Saundarananda, and the Śāriputraprakaranam. The Saundarananda is also a Mahākāvyā. It has for its subject matter the conversion of the Buddha’s half brother Nanda to Buddhism. The Śāriputraprakaranam is a play describing the conversion of the Buddha’s chief disciples
Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. Āśvaghoṣa's thematic interest in conversion is said to be a reflection of his own experience, for Āśvaghoṣa was a Brahman who converted to Buddhism. His brahmanical background is reflected in his works which draw heavily from brahmanical traditions. In Johnston's translation of the BC, he makes the following point:

Āśvaghoṣa writes for a circle in which brahmanical learning and ideas are supreme; his references to Brahmans personally and to their institutions are always worded with the greatest respect, and his many mythological parallels are all drawn from Brahmanical sources. [Johnston 1936, 16].

We will see that this comment could also be applied to the PC. For, it is clear that the author of this text had knowledge of, and respect for, the brahmanical tradition. In this respect, the legend surrounding Buddhaghosa's life is fitting. For, Buddhaghosa, like Āśvaghoṣa, is described as a brahmin who converted to Buddhism.

That the BC was valued not only as a poem but as a Buddhist teaching text is illuminated by the account of the Chinese Pilgrim I-Tsing. For, he documents the fact that the BC was widely read and sung throughout India and the countries of the Southern sea [the Malay Archipelago, Sumatra, Java and the neighbouring islands] [Caitanya 1962, 244]. The Buddhist flavour of this poem sets it apart from the PC and other biographies, which tend to simply describe the events of the Buddha's life and not elaborate upon the insights of the tradition.

Another text which has been cited as a source for the PC is the Lalitavistara [LV]. The LV describes the time from the Buddha's descendence from the Tuṣita heaven up to his first sermon to the group of five brahmans at the Deer Park in Vārāṇasī, in twenty seven chapters which are written in both prose and poetry. It has been described as a compilation from different times and different authors, the earliest material being dated from around the first century C.E. [Winternitz 1983, II., 243]. The LV is considered as one of the holiest texts of the Mahāyāna and described as a Vaipulya Sūtra [elaborate teaching text] which is a common term for Mahāyāna Sūtras. The title LV, i.e., the extensive description of the Delightful/Charming, corresponds to the Mahāyāna idea that the life and work of the Buddha on the earth parallels the sport of a supernatural being. In this way, it describes the emerging deification of the Buddha which becomes characteristic of the Mahāyāna traditions. [Khosla 1991,12] Thus, this
biography of the Buddha emphasizes the Buddha's extraordinary characteristics. Here, his life is adorned with miraculous and supernatural events. Since no satisfactory English translation of the LV is available, my knowledge of this source is based upon a French translation, prepared by P. E. de Foucaux, and summaries found in Khosla [1991] Winternitz [1983] Caitanya [1962] and Krom [1974].

From my own research, I would suggest that two other works should also be mentioned as sources for the PC. The first is the Nidānakathā [NK], literally, 'the story of the origins' [or antecedents]. It contains three different types of text. First, there are verses, then a prose commentary and finally, a word commentary. The verses are deemed the oldest layer of the text and the prose and word commentary have been dated from around the fifth century C.E. This work serves as an introduction to the collection of stories of the past lives of Gautama Buddha called the Jātaka and is the only connected biography of the Buddha in Pāli. The second is the Mahāvastu [MV]. The name MV is literally translated as the great subject or story, here referring to the life of the Buddha. [B.T. Rahula 1978, 1]

The material for this text was collected from the second century B.C. and not completed until approximately the third or fourth century C.E. This text has been deemed the Vinaya of the Lokottaravādins, a branch of the Mahāsāṅghikas, the earliest Buddhist schismatics. However, this text does not have much to do with rules of discipline and is more interesting as a compendium of legendary material. [MV, I., 11-12]

Both the NK and MV divide their narrative into three parts. The first section of the NK narrative is called the Distant Epoch [Dūre Nidāna]. This contains the story of how Siddhārtha Gautama, in a previous life as the ascetic Sumedha, made a vow to become a Buddha himself, rather than join Sumedha's Buddhist community [sangha] as a monk and attain Nirvāṇa there and then, followed by a list of the ten perfections which must be fulfilled on the path to Buddhahood. The second section, the 'Intermediate Epoch' [Avidūre Nidāna], takes the story from the bodhisattva's descent from the Tuṣita heaven and birth as Siddhārtha Gautama to the attainment of enlightenment after his defeat of the evil lord Māra. The third section, called the 'recent epoch' [Santike Nidāna], deals with the Buddha's temptation by Māra's daughters, his decision to teach and various events in the early days of his teaching, up until the donation of the Jetavana monastery by the great lay follower Anāthapiṇḍika. [NK, 7-8]. The MV similarly divides the Buddha's life into three phases. The first section deals with the life of the bodhisattva
in relation to earlier Buddhas. The second section is the same as the Avidūre section of the NK, describing the Bodhisattva's descent into the world, life as Siddhārtha Gotama, battle with Māra and subsequent enlightenment. While, the third section narrates the history of the earliest conversions to Buddhism and the origin of the community of monks. [Winternitz 1983, II., 231].

I would suggest that the author of the PC had knowledge of such a tradition of dividing the Buddha's life into three sections and, knowingly, restricted the PC's narrative to the intermediate epoch or middle section of this three section divide. That is to say, that his choice to begin his work with the descent of the bodhisattva from Tuṣita heaven and to end it with the Māra conflict before enlightenment is not simply from personal preference, but in light of a tradition which presented this as one part of the Buddha's life story. The only detail included in the PC's narrative which falls outside of the boundaries of the Intermediate epoch [Avidūre Nidāna] is the temptation by Māra's daughters. This detail is not included in the MV account. However, it is the first episode in the recent epoch [Santike Nidāna] of the NK.

The PC also corresponds with the NK and MV in including Jātaka material within its narrative of the Buddha's life. The MV utilizes an abundance of Jātakas and the NK makes reference specifically to two, the Sarabhaṅga Jātaka and Palāsa Jātaka. What will be illuminated in the presentation of the PC's narrative is that Buddhaghoṣa was also familiar with the Jātaka literature and, interestingly, included the central details of these two Jātakas in his narrative.

**General biography of the Buddha gleaned from the aforementioned sources:**

According to these sources, the bodhisattva dwelt, before his birth, in the Tuṣita heaven. There, he was entreated by the gods to descend to the earth for the benefit of human beings. He did so and became the son of Queen Māyā and King Śuddhodhana. He was named Siddhārtha because he fulfilled all of their desires. These sources state that King Śuddhodhana was the ruler of the Śākya kingdom. The Pabbajā Sutta of the Sutta Nipāta describes this kingdom as subject to the powerful king of the neighbouring Kosala which lay in the South. Thus, Śuddhodana was not an all-powerful king, but more aptly, a wealthy landowner and elected chief of the Śākya clan [Seth 1990 29]. Queen
Māyā is described as having come from Koliya, a city to the east of the Śākya kingdom. [Sadhatissa 1976, 13]9

The capital city of the Śākya kingdom was called Kapilavastu [Kapilavatthu in Pāli]. The Buddhacarita relates the name of this city to the famous sage Kapila, the founder of the Śāṅkhya system. [see I. 89]. In other places, Kapilavastu, which could mean red place, is related to the city's characteristic redness of the earth. [see Oldenberg 1882, 99]

According to all the accounts, Siddhārtha's birth was extraordinary. He was born from the side of Queen Māya in the Lumbinī grove. Moreover, this birth was accompanied by miracles and glorious signs. As a newborn, Siddhārtha was possessed of the thirty-two characteristic markings of a great man. King Śuddhodana invited a great sage named Asita to read these signs and Asita predicted that Siddhārtha would see certain visions which would cause him to renounce his present life and become a Buddha. To prevent his son from such a fate, the king ensured that Siddhārtha had a carefree and indulged existence. The sources state that King Śuddhodhana built pleasure palaces for Siddhārtha in which he could pass the various seasons. Despite such pleasures and comforts, Siddhārtha grew bored and longed to voyage outside the palace grounds. On this excursion, he saw the four signs predicted at his birth. These were the sights of an old man, a sick man, a dead man and an ascetic. These sights provided the seeds for Siddhārtha's growing disenchantment with worldly life. He began to reflect upon the reality of duḥkha [suffering] and was propelled to renounce the world and dedicate himself to an understanding of this condition. Thus, he fled from the palace, aided by the gods, his charioteer [Channa or Chandaka] and a swift horse [Kanthaka].

On first renouncing the world, he studied with various teachers but found their methods limited. He also partook in extreme ascetic practices but realized that these were not conducive to enlightenment. To regain the strength that he had lost from such mortifications, the sources state that he took milk-rice from a young girl who passed by. This milk-rice provided Siddhārtha with the strength needed to pursue his practice. Thus, he created a seat for himself, under the bodhi tree on the banks of the river

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9 The home of Buddhism lies in what is now South Bihar, west of Bengal and South of the Ganges. This was the country of the Magadhas with the capital at Rājagaha. East of these were the Angas, whose chief city was Campā. North of the Magadhas and on the other side of the Ganges were tribes of Vajjis [chief town Vesālī] and still further north the Mallas. West of the Magadhas were the Kāsīs, whose chief city was Benares on the Ganges. The kingdom of the Kosalas [capital city Sāvatthī or Śrāvasti] extended north of the Kāsīs as far as the Himalayas, and on the northern borders were settled the Śākyas and their neighbours on the east, the Koliyas. [Thomas 1931, 13]
Nairaṅjarā, and sat with the firm resolution not to rise until he had attained liberation. In his striving, he was attacked by the Evil lord Māra. Siddhārtha withstood Māra's advances and finally, overcame Māra's forces. Thus, he became known as the Buddha: the one who has overcome all obstacles and attained Nirvāṇa [liberation].

The structure of the PC's narrative:

The narrative found in the PC corresponds to this general Buddha biography. In the first canto, the author focuses upon describing Kapilavastu [here referred to as Kapilā], King Śuddhodhana and Queen Māyā. In the second canto, he describes the gods entreating the bodhisattva to descend to the world for the benefit of others. He ends this canto by describing the bodhisattva entering into Queen Māyā's womb.

In the third canto, he focuses upon Queen Māyā's pregnancy and the birth and boyhood of Siddhārtha. The fourth canto describes Siddhārtha's marriage and his new bride. In the fifth canto, the author describes the pleasure palaces built by the king and the various pleasures contained within them. In the sixth canto, he describes Siddhārtha's journey outside of the palace grounds. On this trip, he sees the four visions predicted at his birth: the sight of an old man, sick man, dead man and ascetic. The seventh canto focuses upon Siddhārtha's play in a pleasure grove. In canto eight, the author describes the setting of the sun and the rising of the moon. This indicates that Siddhārtha has spent a full day at play. In canto nine, he focuses upon the prince's disenchantment with and renunciation of worldly life. The final canto, canto ten, describes Siddhārtha's battle with, and victory over, the forces of Māra.

In the following chapter, I will present a translation of significant segments of the poem, namely, those verses which move the PC's narrative forward. They will enable one to see the overall structure of the text and to understand better what the author elaborates upon.
CHAPTER TWO:
THE PRESENTATION OF THE PADYACŪḍĀMAṬI’S NARRATIVE:

Canto One

The PC begins with three salutary verses which identify it as a Mahākāvya. A convention in the writing of a Mahākāvya is that the author start his/her work with a benediction (āśis), a respectful greeting (namaskriyā), or an indication of events to come (vastunirdeśa) [Shastri 1986 115]. It is in accordance with this convention that the author says,

यस्येकदेशां यत्योशिपि बक्तुं
नालं बभुधूरं नलिनासनाधाः ।
शासुम् तदवत्च् चरितापदां
वक्तुं मनीषा मम मौन्द्यम् एव ॥ २ ॥

10 The PC highlights Māra’s association with the god Kāma, who also attacks with flower arrows. in fact, all the names used to describe Māra in this text are also epithets of the god Kāma. Here, we find Māra referred to as Kandarpa, Kāma, Ātmayoni, Makaraketu, Makaraketana, Cetobhava, etc. Māra, like Kāma, is the one who intoxicates beings with desire and distracts them from their practice.

11 One of the trees of heaven or Indra’s paradise which has the power to bestow anything one desires. There are five Kalpavrksṇas in the Deva-loka. The other trees are named Mandāra, Pārijāta, Santāna and Haricandana. [Mani 1989. 378]
My intention is nothing but foolishness to speak [about] that very famous life of the Buddha, about which, even the restrained ones [such as Brahmā, etc.] were not able to speak, even a little portion. [1:2]

Nevertheless, I have become capable to narrate on the strength of devotion pledged [in respect] to him [the Buddha]; because, by resorting to his feet, even dust beautifies men [or bestows wealth/glory on men]. [1:3]

According to the PC, Siddhārtha was born in a glorious city called Kapilā.

There is a certain praiseworthy city named Kapilā, the wishfulfilling cow of the subjects, having beheld which, [even] Indraloosens [gives up] the desire to praise his capital.12 [1: 4].

His parents were King Śuddhodana and Queen Mâyā.

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12a) In Indian mythology there are references to both a wishfulfilling cow [Kāmadhenu] and a wishfulfilling tree [Kaipavṛkṣa]. Both of these have the power to bestow whatever is desired. The wishfulfilling cow, variously referred to as Kāmadughā and Surabhi is described as the first mother of cattle. She is a goddess with marvellous powers who gives milk whenever it is needed by the gods and the sages [Stutley 1977, 140]. Similarly, Kapilā bestows wealth on its subjects.

b) Indra's capital is called Amarāvati, one possessing/housing immortals. It is said to be situated on the eastern side of Mount Meru. It is described as 2500 yojanas in length with one thousand gates and a hundred palaces. It is also referred to as Devapura [city of the gods]. This verse suggests that Kapilā was even more glorious than this glorious city of the gods. [Stutley 1977, 10]
In this [city] there was a respected King who was from the Śākya lineage, whose royal glory [or wealth] was constant and, whose conduct was pure through the acquisition which comes from compliance with dharma. [teaching, law, virtue]. Indeed, he was fitly named Śuddhodana. [1:31]

Like a river to the ocean, like a lotus to the sun, like a digit of the moon to the moon, like Lakṣmī to Viṣṇu and like lightening to a rainy cloud, he had a Queen named Māyā. [1:51]

According to the PC, King Śuddhodhana and Queen Māyā wanted a child but were unable to have one.

The King, who was desirous of a son by that Queen, who was resplendent on account of respectable qualities, was devoted to propitiating the gods with such substances as lamps and incense and the like. [1:77]

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13 Viṣṇu's spouse is Lakṣmī, or Śrī, the goddess of good fortune and prosperity. In the Purāṇas she has no independent identity of her own, but always appears as consort and counterpart of Lord Viṣṇu. Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu sometimes appear to be a single divinity [Dimmitt 1978, 62].
He [the King], together with his Dharmapatni, bathed in sacred bathing spots, repeated mantras, extended gifts, performed penance, heard religious discourses [dharma] and served the good people for the sake of a son. [1:78]

Although a very long time had passed in performing meritorious actions, the Lord among the Kings' did not obtain the jewel [best] of sons. Even then, his earnest desire for a son increased because the effort of [real] men does not cease prior to the accomplishment of what is to be done. [1:79]

Canto Two

While King Śuddhodana and Queen Māyā ruled in Kapilā, a great being dwelled in the Tuṣita heaven. According to the PC, the gods saw certain signs and then, entreated this being to descend into the world for the benefit of humankind.

14 The meanings of Dharma-patni are varied. This could signify that Māyā was Śuddhodana's chief wife. For, it is probable that Śuddhodana had more than one wife. Or this could suggest that she was his wife for religious and ritual purposes. The title Dharmapatni could also be a means of describing her character, a way of highlighting the fact that she was a dutiful and respectable wife.

15 The Tuṣita heaven is one of the six heavens of the Deva-loka [world of the gods]. The other five are the Cātummahārājika, the Tāvatīrśa, Yāma, Nimmānarati and Paranimmittavasavatti. The dwellers of the Tuṣita heaven are characterized by their generally contented and satisfied states. [Haldar 1977, 22]
In the meanwhile in the world, there were omens. Having seen these miraculous signs, the hosts of immortals assembled. They went to the city of the Suraguru\textsuperscript{16} [preceptor of the gods] called Tuṣita to say, “This is the right time for your omniscience. \[2.1\]

The hosts of the gods saw that [lord of the gods] stationed there on the throne, which was studded with various precious jewels and the colours of numerous elements, [seated] like a lion on the plateau of the Meru\textsuperscript{17}. \[2.8\]

After being entreated by the gods, the great being reflected upon the proper time and place for his entrance into the world.

\textsuperscript{16}Here, the author draws from the brahmanical tradition to describe the importance of the bodhisattva. He is deemed the Suraguru [teacher of the gods]. This title is most often associated with Brihaspati, the chief priest [Purohita] of the gods who is known for his wisdom and eloquence. [Monier-Williams, 737]

\textsuperscript{17}Mount Meru is the central mountain of the earth and the abode of the gods [Basham 1967, 490–91].
Having heard that unique speech of those [gods], the Treasure of Good Conduct, the One whose Noble Deeds are Celebrated [the bodhisattva], having become momentarily intent upon thinking of the time, etc. [for his descent into the world][and] having determined indeed all of that, replied again to those [gods]. [2:52]

He said,

शुभ्रोवनस्य सुतताम् अहम् एत्य सत्यं 
संबोधनं त्रि-जगतान् नियतं करिष्ये । 
अज्ञैर् धनैर् असुमिर् अप्य अहं एतं एव 
संप्राधयं पुण्य-निचयं कृत्वान् पुरूषितं II ५३ II

"I, having become the son of Śuddhodana, will inevitably awaken the three worlds. I, previously [in other lives], made much accumulation of merit, having sought just that [the awakening of the three worlds] with limbs, possessions and even vital breaths.19 [2:53]

According to the PC, the gods were pleased with his answer and departed from the heaven.

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18 The three worlds for the classical period are heaven, earth and the lower regions.
19 Here, the author makes a reference to the Jātaka stories which describe the previous lives of the Buddha. In these stories the bodhisattva does various illustrious deeds one of which is the giving up of his own life for the satisfaction of others. This self sacrificial aspect of the bodhisattva is particularly emphasized in the Jātakamālā, a late, 6th century A.D., Sanskrit version of thirty four of the Pāli Jātakas. In the Jātaka about the hungry tigress the Bodhisattva gives up his body to satisfy the animal's hunger and by doing so, prevents the tigress from eating her cubs. In another Jātaka, called Maitribala, the bodhisattva gives up his blood to satisfy ogres. In the Jātaka, entitled Sibi, he gives away his eyes and in the Jātaka about Viśvantara or Vessantara he gives away his wife and children.
When he, whose promise is true, whose being [or thought] is intent upon the benefit of others, who is stationed on the other [shore] of perfection, had made a promise, they [the gods], whose minds were joyful [and] whose limbs were swept over with clusters of swollen goosebumps [which looked like] sticks, agreeably left. [2:54]

To descend into the world, the great being entered into the womb of Queen Mâyā. The conception is described in the following verse,

अथ कानिष्ठव एव बासराणि
क्षययित्वा त्रिव-दिवे स देव-राजः ।
विद्धे विविध-क्षताभ्यताँ
प्रतिसन्धिं पृथिवीपतेर् महिष्याम् ॥ ५५ ॥

Then, having spent some days in heaven, that King of gods brought about a contact with the Queen, who was luminous from various vows. [2:55]

Canto Three

The joy of Queen Mâyā's pregnancy is highlighted by the author:

अथोदयम् शाक्य-मही-पतीनाम्
आनन्दम् आलो-जन-लोचनानाम् ।
आस्त्रासम् सज्ज-जन-मानसानाम्
आध्यतम् सा वौहव-ठिकर्म् आयाम् ॥ १ ॥

That noble Queen acquired the symptoms of pregnancy which were uplifting for the Kings of the Śākya lineage, which were a joy to the eyes of the female friends [and] which were reassuring for the minds of the good people. [3:1]

Fittingly, the foetus was protected with great care.
The elderly women protected the son, who was stationed in the womb, with various herbal medicines. That very activity [of protecting the son] was also the activity of protecting the three worlds which were afflicted by the attacks of Smara. [Māra in his association with the god Kāma]. [3:8]

The birth of the child is described in the following way.

Like the morning time giving birth to the sun, like the beauty of the evening giving birth to the moon, at the auspicious moment, the lawful wife [or chief wife] of the King gave birth to a son, who was the unique eye of the world. [3:10]

Queen Māya gave birth to her son in a delivery room waited upon by attendants. Suddhodana heard the news of his son’s birth from the attendants of the inner quarters and was overcome with joy.

That lord of men, hearing the unprecedented news of the birth of his son from the attendants of the inner quarters, became dazed and confused as to what he should do. His thoughts were completely crowded with confusion that was bliss. [3:27]
Apparently, miraculous events took place at the child's birth.

A cloud, whose sound was deep like the ocean, rained although it was not the time for rain. In this way, astonishing actions occurred when the prince, who was at the head of good men, was born. [3:21]

The author highlights the excitement that gripped the three worlds.

Moreover, this baby was so beautiful his body radiated light.

Because of the splendour of his body, which was spreading about and was shining like heated gold, the lamps, stationed in the inner room of the delivery, became comparable to stars at daybreak. [i.e. because of the splendour of the child the lights lost their luster; they paled in comparison]. [3:26]

Thus, he was a source of pride and joy for his parents. The following verse describes Śuddhodana's affection for his son.
The King of Kings attained contentment, having very much drunk the round [disc-like] race of the suckling infant, which was a receptacle of nectar in the form of striking beauty, with the cup of [his] eyes. [3:31]

The King fittingly named the child Siddhārtha [lit: one who has accomplished his object/goal].

He, having completed an extremely impressive birth ceremony for the son with the chief priest, made a name for him which was praiseworthy of the world and which was fitting for no other. [He was named] Siddhārtha. [3:32].

According, to the PC, Siddhārtha was also an intelligent child.

He took in all the sciences and all the arts, being taught by the best of teachers, in no time with his intellect, like the rain cloud takes in the water of the ocean. [3:43]

He became all the more impressive when he became a young man.
Like light of the sun, like imaginative expression of a poet, like a flame of light of a lamp, like compassion from a good person, like moon-light from the moon, like nectar from the ocean, his glory of new youth had arisen. [3:46]

The King prepared for this accomplished child to take over the responsibility of ruling the kingdom.

The King, whose greatness was similar to the King of the gods [Indra] [thought] of his son as one whose arms are fitting for the bearing of the bracelet which is just the orb of the earth. He made the coronation of the station of heir apparent with sacred waters which were sanctified with jewels and mantras [and] which were stored in jewelled pitchers. [3:64]

Canto Four

At the appropriate time, the King arranged for his son’s marriage.

Then, the King in order to perform the wedding of the prince, who was the elevator of the family, considered, along with his relatives, ‘who could be that young girl who is suitable for him on the earth?’ [4:1]
The King of Koliya offered his young daughter as the most suitable bride.

At that time, the King of Koliya sent a letter to him saying, 'By all means, I will give my young daughter, whose light is like a jewel in the family, to your son'. [4:2]

King Šuddhodana agreed to his offer and the preparations for the wedding began.

Having heard the account from the mouth of the messenger, the King’s mind was contented. In return, he sent a message to him [the King of Koliya] saying, 'Let the preparations be made by you, accordingly [as you wish]. [4:3].

Delight arose on his part [on the part of the King of Koliya], having received the letter. He proceeded to arrange the impressive festival for the vow of marriage of the young girl. [4:4].

Siddhārtha travelled to his bride’s house for the wedding ritual.
The young prince [for whom] the glory of the pearl umbrella was raised [and] in whose case the service of shaking the choweries was observed, went to the relatives house, having mounted the nuptial royal vehicle. [4:36].

The King who governed the Koliya country, having gone afar by his own feet [to greet] that one who had come, who was the light of the Śākya family, led him to the nuptial hall. [4:37].

In the following verse, the author describes Siddhārtha’s first sight of his new bride.

The Steadfast One [Siddhārtha] saw the daughter of the king stationed there, her face like the moon. She was shining like Lakṣmī with a lotus for play held in her hand. [4:38]

Having crossed over the bank, the ocean of bliss flowed afar for the prince who was observing, with a great deal of affectionate anticipation, the young princess, the princess whose limbs were shaming the glory of the moon. [4:39]

Then, the young couple were married.
In front of the fire, which was blazing upwards, burning even more with oblations, the priest, who had excercised his mind in respect to marriage rites, joined the young girl and prince. [4:41]

To highlight their extraordinary beauty, the author says that even the ritual fire was observing them.

The sacrificial fire, having observed the prince and the young girl, whose forms were very attractive, the like of whom were not seen before, made as if the moving of its head with praise with the pretext of the flame trembling to the right. [4:46] [The idea is that the fire’s flame bent to the right as the couple moved to the right in circumambulation. The flame was as if nodding its head in appreciation].

After the marriage, Siddhārtha returned to his city [Kapilā] with his new bride.

The prince, who was united with a wife, having honoured all other classes of relatives, the Most Excellent One, went forth from there to circumambulate his own capital. [He probably wandered through the streets visiting temples and so forth]. [4:54]

Women gathered on the balconies to observe the glorious couple.
At that time, passionate acts, initiated by Madana [Māra], of the women of Kapilā, who were intent upon seeing the prince, took place on each terrace. [4:55]

They said,

‘Indeed, did this red-lipped woman gain immeasurable merit in other lives to obtain this young prince as a husband who carries the mountain-like responsibility of the family and who is supremely pleasing?’ [4:78]

After circumambulating his city, the prince entered his father’s house.

Hearing the extremely impressive speech [praise] of [i.e. coming from] those women, which was delighting to the ear, the prince, having circumambulated the city, entered the inner chamber of the King. [4:83]
Canto Five

The PC mentions the fact that Suddhodana built seasonal pleasure palaces for Siddhārtha in which he could pass his time.

ततः कुमारस्य समय-वैभवो
नराधिनाथो नव-यौवन-शिष्यः |
ऋतूसबानाम् उपसेवन-श्रमान् |
आकार्यतः श्रीनु अतुलान् महालयान् II १ II

Then the supreme lord of men, whose riches were complete, made three incomparable palaces which were suited to the enjoyment of the seasonal festivals for the prince who was glorious in his youth. [5:1]

स तेषु सबस्त्र अधि-राज-नन्दनो
विचित्र-विन्यास-विशेष-शालिभि: |
विनोदमानो वर-वार-योषितां |
विलास-नृतौर विज्ञाहार हारिभि: II २ II

The Prince, being amused in those palaces, entertained by the attractive and amorous dances of the best of the courtesans, which had very distinctive and diverse placings [of the limbs], passed time. [5:2]

The conclusion of this canto describes an episode where Siddhārtha’s competence in archery is questioned.

अन्तःतरे राज-कुमारसं एनम्
आहूः पृथवी-पतिर आचभाषे |
अर्थ जनं पुत्र तत्वांशिष्या- |
विलोकनः प्रत्येक्षान्-छातीति II ५६ II

Meanwhile, the lord of the earth, having called the prince, said, ‘O son, the people long to have a close look at your training in archery.’ [5:56]

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20 This reference to pleasure palaces suited for each season provides Buddhaghosa with the opportunity to insert a lengthy description of the seasons [see vs. 3-55]. This fulfills one of the requirements for a Mahākāvyā as was specified by Daṇḍin.
For his part, having heard that [i.e. his father's speech], he, who is an ornament to the lineage of the sun, replied to the foremost of kings. 'O father, let my competence in archery be observed in a week.' [5:57]

Then, when the end of the week had arrived, the King, together with [his] relatives, occupied the throne with deep interest, for the purpose of observing [Siddhârtha's] competence in archery. [5:58]

Being so impressed with his skill the spectators exclaimed,

'Has the god of love [Kâma21] assumed a physical form, or has Indra descended with his bow?.' In such a way, the doubts of the subjects, whose minds were astonished, manifested itself. [5:60]

Canto Six

The first portion of this canto contains an elaborate description of the spring season22. The latter portion describes Siddhârtha's journey to the pleasure grove. The author says,

21 Both Kâma and Indra are known for their skill with a bow and arrow and their pleasing appearance.
22 Vs 1-33 describe the spring season. Once again, Buddhaghosa reveals his poetic inclination.
When the glory of the spring months had commenced, the son of the king became eager to play in the pleasure grove. Having mounted a chariot, he went forth with the women of the harem. [6:34]

On this trip, he saw four visions which had been orchestrated by the gods as a means for his awakening.

Then, the gods showed to him an old man, a sick man and a dead man in the [specified] sequence, in order to awaken [him] saying, 'This is the time for the awakening of the prince whose glory is like Indra's'. [6:35]

The PC describes Siddhārtha’s response to the visions in the following way:

Seeing those who stood before him in the [specified] sequence, the prince’s mind became exceedingly distressed. He, in whom confusion was placed, asked the charioteers, in front of him, ‘What is this?’. [6:36]

The charioteers were possessed by the gods to aid in the prince’s awakening. They described, in detail, the experiences of old age, sickness and death.
They, on their part, were possessed by the gods. Gradually, they informed him of the transformations of old age, sickness and so forth of them [i.e. of the old person etc.] which was to cause the disenchantment of the prince. [6:37]

The prince was distressed by such sights and asked that the horses be turned back.

Having heard the speech of the charioteers, the prince’s heart became affected with much disenchantment. His curiosity for sporting in the pleasure garden was arrested. He said to the charioteer, ‘Turn the horses back.’ [6:38]

It was upon returning to his palace that he was struck with the sight of an ascetic.

Then, an ascetic, whose sorrow was calmed, whose wide eyes have rested on the pinnacle of the waves of the swelling ocean of compassion, whose yellowish body was like heated gold, whose pleasing, reddish, bark garment was like a fragment of the coral tree, whose face was beautiful like the clear and
full moon [and], whose heart was overflowing with much affection, was shown in front of him by the foremost of gods. [6:39]

Being so impressed, Siddhārtha asked the charioteers who this man was.

And, having observed that One who was at the head of ascetics, Siddhārtha was astonished. He asked his charioteers who were nearby, ‘Who is that and what is his skill in conduct?’ [6:41]

The charioteers replied,

‘He, O Great One, is someone whose mind is purified [and] whose conduct is purified. He is a teacher of the highest truth who has got rid of all faults as well as the inclinations for them. He is the foremost of the good.’ [6:42]

‘Whoever has resorted to his teachings, he, in time, having crossed the ocean of birth which breaks into waves of old age, changes, etc., goes to the unsurpassed state of Nirvāṇa.’ [6:43]

Despite the impact of these visions, Siddhārtha continued his journey to the pleasure grove.
Thus, having heard the speech of the charioteers, the means was obtained for his [Siddhārtha's] going forth from [renunciation of] worldly life. The prince, whose mind was contented, once again, wished to play in the pleasure grove. [6:45]

Canto Seven

Arriving at the pleasure grove, Siddhārtha enjoyed himself amongst its various pleasures.23

Thus, the sun, as if for the observing of the prince, who was sportively enjoying the pleasure garden with the women of the harem, ascended to its highest point in the middle of the sky. [7:22]

Siddhārtha's play in the garden was followed by a bath in the pool.

Having left behind the mid-day heat on the garden ground, the Protector of the Middle World [Siddhārtha], who was being attended to by women of superior complexion, entered a well for the purpose of playing in the water. [7:27]

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23 Verses 1-55 describe Siddhārtha's play in the pleasure grove. Here, there is no expression of Siddhārtha's growing disenchantment with worldly life just an elaborate description of him enjoying himself amongst the various pleasures of the pleasure grove.
After his play, he rested in a pavilion where he was entertained by various women and musical enjoyments.

Thus, he, whose eyes were like lotuses, having completed his play in the pond with the women of the harem [and] having come out of the pool, entered a house which stood on the bank [and] in which service was done.[7:56]

The Teacher of the Three Worlds, the Beloved of the Earth, passed the remainder of the day in that hall with initiatives in dancing by the dancing girls which were unparalleled in aesthetic sentiment and, with the pleasing sounds of drums, viṇās and flutes. [7:59]

Canto Eight

In the evening, the prince returned to his palace in Kapilā.

When evening came, the prince, whose shining ornaments were made by the divine craftsman, once again, approached his own house. He was served by courtesans who held lamps of jewels arround [him]. [8:47]

24 Canto eight provides a description of the setting of the sun and rising of the moon in forty seven verses. This, once again, reveals the author's interest in creating a poetic work.
Canto Nine

Siddhārtha entered his house and was, once again, entertained by the pleasing movements of dancing women.

Attractive courtesans proceeded to show the extraordinary and enticing movements of the dance in front of him. [9:3]

This time, Siddhārtha was not interested in his entertainment but was weighed down with his thoughts.

He, whose heart was not attached to their dramatic dance performance, although it had new songs [and it] was pleasing because of the movements of limbs, inwardly took to pondering. [9:4]

At that moment, the gods and celestial beings fanned and praised him.

Then, the prince appeared with the choweries, which were lifted by the gods, like the ocean appears with the waves which are raised by the wind. [9:5]

The Vidyādharas [bearers of knowledge] and Gandharvas [celestial musicians], whose hands were full of vīṇās, went before him, resounding his previous noble feats. [9:11]

According to the PC, it is at that moment that Siddhārtha renounced his worldly life.
Upon renouncing his worldly life, he first travelled to a river called Anavamā [Anomā in Pāli].

In this way, the one who was propitiated by the gods, having crossed over the path which was thirty yojanas, came to the river Anavamā [9:13]

The author suggests that Siddhārtha’s crossing of the river on his horse was like the crossing of the ocean of samsāra.

As if for extending a rope [or spreading a net] for the crossing of the great ocean [of Samsāra], he crossed that river [Anomā] with a worried horse. [9:18]

After crossing the river, he gave up his worldly possessions and turned back his horse and companion, named Channa.

Having crossed [that river], he descended from the horse onto the bank of the river. Having given up his ornaments and chariot, he turned back Channa. [9:19]

He accepted the attire of an ascetic from the lord Brahmā.

The One who is at the Head of Men [Siddhārtha] accepted the attire of the ascetic which arose in the first Kalpa [and] which was brought by the foremost [first] Brahmā. [9:20]

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25 A yojana is a measure of distance equal to eight or nine miles [Apte 1965, 789]
Then he donned the ascetic’s clothing.

Having taken the ascetic’s clothing, which was woven with the strands of great qualities and, having covered himself with that, he engaged himself in the practice of austerities. [9:21]26

On the following day, he went forth for the purpose of collecting alms and came to the city of Bimbasāra.27

Then, on the following day, the Supreme Mendicant [or the first mendicant] who was feeling hunger, went forth for the purpose of collecting alms. Having crossed a long path, he came to the city of Bimbasāra. [9:35]

There [in that city], the Crest Jewel of Those Whose Only Wealth is Austerities, the Distinguished Leader, in order to receive alms, wandered slowly in each street. [9:42]

Having received the alms he took them to a mountain.

26Guṇa can mean a thread or a virtue. Here, Buddhaghosa makes a pun on the countless strands of thread needed to weave a garment and the countless strands of virtue which characterize an ascetic’s garb.

27This probably refers to Bimbisāra. Bimbisāra was the King of Magadha and a generous patron of the Buddha. He ascended the throne at fifteen and reigned in Rājagaha for fifty two years. He was starved to death by his son Ajātasattu. [Malalasekara 1981, II. [m-n], 265–269].
Having received alms at that place, the One Who was Skilled in the Precepts (Shikṣāpāda28), immediately turned towards a nearby mountain. [9:45]

There, he ate the almsfood.

Siddhārtha, having bathed in a nearby pond of that mountain [and] having stationed himself on a stone slab, experienced the taste of the alms. [9:51]

Leaving the mountain, he arrived at a forest where he began to perform strict austerities.

On the following day, having departed from that [mountain], he, having done the injunction of Pīṇḍapāta [receiving alms] in another city, reached a nearby forest. [9:52]

The One whose Heart was Steadfast, performed, in the blessed penance groves, austerities which were difficult to accomplish for the pacification of the defilements29 of saṃsāra. [9: 54]

28Sikkhāpada [in Pāli] refers to the steps of training or moral rules. The five moral rules (pañcasīla) for lay people are abstaining from killing any living thing, from stealing, from unlawful sexual conduct, from lying and from the use of intoxicants. The monks have five additional precepts (dasāsīla - the ten precepts). They include not eating after midday, no involvement in dancing, singing or music shows, no use of garlands, scents or cosmetics, no luxurious beds and no accepting of gold or silver. [Nyantiloka 1972, 170]

29The Defilements (Kilesa in Pāli and Kleśa in Sanskrit) are usually described as a list of ten: greed (lobha), hatred (dosa), delusion (moha), conceit (mana), speculative views (diṭṭhi), sceptical doubt (vicikicchā), mental torpor (thina), restlessness (uddhacca), shamelessness (ahirika) and lack of moral
Siddhārtha realized that these austerities were not conducive to liberation.

Having not reached the state of Nirvāṇa [liberation] with actions which are difficult to do [strict ascetic practices], he [Siddhārtha] was perplexed, thinking, 'By what method indeed can I attain Nirvāṇa?'. [9:55]

Then, he immediately had five propitious dreams which affirmed that he would attain enlightenment.

At once, the Treasure of Good Conduct saw five dreams at dawn, which revealed the maturation of fortune that is perfection. [9:56]

Having seen, having woken up and, having understood the meaning of the dreams, The Clear-Sighted-One determined, 'Just today I should obtain peace'. [9:57]

According to the PC, Siddhārtha was mistaken for a tree deity by a young girl who passed by. She offered him milk-rice which she placed in a golden bowl.

He, having done the morning routine [and] having waited for alms time, sat below a fig tree which was honoured through acts of worship.

They are both a characteristic of Samsāric [suffering] experience and promote further Samsāric experience.
Then, some large-eyed woman, who was intent on seeking [something], having intended the deity stationed in that tree, placed milk-rice there.

Suspecting him to be that [tree deity], she gave to him the boiled milk-rice with a bowl. Then, having received it, the Great One went to the bank of the Nairaṅjarā [river]. [9:58–60]

The Learned Sage, having bathed in the water of that river, which was clear like the Autumn night sky, ate the milk-rice which was stationed in a golden bowl. [9:61]

At the end of the day, the bodhisattva approached the bodhi tree.

Then, when the end of the day had arrived, with about three hours left, the Revered One, having arisen, reached the Bodhi tree taking lofty strides. [9:69]

He prepared a seat to the east of the Bodhi tree from grass which was given to him by the Lord Brahmā.

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This is specifically described as the Asvattha tree. In the Mahāpadāna Sutta, each Buddha is said to come to enlightenment under a different tree. It says—The lord Buddha Vipassī gained his full enlightenment at the foot of a trumpet-flower tree; the lord Buddha Sīkhī under a white-mango tree; the lord Buddha Vessabhū under a Sālī tree; the lord Buddha Kakusanda under an acacia-tree; the lord Buddha Conāga under a fig tree; the lord Buddha Kassapa under a banyan tree; and I became fully enlightened at the foot of an assattha tree. [DN II., 5, 200].
Having taken the darbha grass, which was deposited by the Lord Brahmā, with his own hand, the Best of the Teachers placed it on the surface of the earth to the east of the Bodhi tree. [9:70]

Siddhārtha then mounts the seat of enlightenment.

Siddhārtha mounted the lofty [and] extraordinary seat, which was verily the enemy of Anaṅga [Māra in his association with Kāma], like the sun, which is the awakener of all people, mounts the eastern mountain. [9:72]

According to the PC, the gods praised Siddhārtha as he sat determined for enlightenment.

The gods proceeded to praise that one [Siddhārtha] who had mounted the seat of enlightenment, whose virtue was indestructible [and] who was beyond the realm of speech and mind [i.e. his qualities are so glorious they cannot be described].

Such praises alerted the evil lord Māra.

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31 Anaṅga=bodiless. Kāma is described as bodiless because one day he attempted to distract Śiva from his ascetic practice and was turned into ash by the fire shooting forth from Śiva’s eye. Rati [Kāma’s wife] pleaded with Śiva to revive her husband. Śiva agreed but added that Kāma could only exist in a bodiless form.

32 Etymologically the term Māra is related to the Pāli, Maccu and the Sanskrit, Mṛtyu which means death. Māra is the nomen actoris to the root mr. Māra means, therefore, the one who slays or causes to die. [Boyd 1975, 73] Interestingly, however, the death that Māra deals is not characterized by the extinguishing of life but the incitement to life, a particular kind of life which ensures one’s bondage to the cycle of birth and death. Māra is also referred to as Kanha [Kṛṣṇa-black or dark one], in the sense of obscuring and Pamattabandu [Pramattabandhu-friend or relative of the careless] [Khosla 1989, 72]
By the praises of those gods, the Mind-Stirrer [Māra] heard about the enlightened one stationed at the root of the Bodhi tree, whose arisal of good qualities was increasing. [9:82]

Māra became distressed and wondered how to distract Siddhārtha from his practice.

Having heard [the praises], the Mind-Born One [Māra in his association with Kāma], whose heart was disturbed, became pained with the fever of his thoughts. Immediately, he said, 'Indeed by what means on the earth can I conquer that low man, the indifferent Buddha?' [9:83].

Canto Ten

He first attempted to distract Siddhārtha with an army and a menacing elephant.

The term Namuci is also found as an alternative way of addressing or referring to Māra. In this association, Māra's power to actively hold one from the experience of liberation is emphasized. In Vedic mythology, Namuci was a drought demon who 'withheld the waters'; he was smitten by Indra's thunderbolt in order for the rains to be released. In Buddhist demonology, Namuci, with his associations of death-dealing hostility, was taken up and used in order to build up the symbol of Māra. Māra is like Namuci, because he threatens the welfare of humankind. However, he does this on a grander scale than the Vedic Namuci, not by withholding the seasonal rain, but by withholding or obscuring the knowledge of truth. [Ling 1962, 55]
Meanwhile, the excited Anaṅga [Māra as the bodiless one], who was desirous of marching against the best of the ascetics [i.e. the Lord Buddha], who had taken steadfastly to the root of the Bodhi tree, having mounted his rutting elephant called Giri-mekhala, as one who had summoned a troop of soldiers, came out. [i.e. he summoned his troop and departed from his dwelling]. [10:1]

Mara’s forces caused great noise in the world.

Kampanāt-kāl-ghatman-dhanaśnuto-
Gambhir-chor-dhan-gajīta-virāya-
Apanātīte mukraketaṇa-bādayakārere-
Aṭambhamāt apamāt abhavat-pattav-prṇaṃ - II 11 -

The world [anāṇa-brahmāṇḍa] resounded with the sounds of the kettle drums which were produced by Māra’s musicians. [This sound was] no different from the deep, horrible, uninterrupted, thundering of the dense rainclouds gathering at the time of the end of a universe cycle [Kalpa]. [10:11]

They also caused much dust to be raised which coated the world in darkness.

Adbhutā-sampd-avalūṣṇaṇa-kūmḥ-yonoṁ-
Adbhuto mukraketaṇa-saṇya-reṇa -
Adbhutonī-pitaro aṣṭo mam vairi-banḍhuṇu-
Ity antrahiti-sreṣṭha tirasckara - II 21 -

The raised dust of the army of Makarketana [Māra] [i.e. the columns of dust raised by Māra’s army] which was [which acted] like Kumbhayoni [Agastya]33 in robbing the wealth of the ocean, covered the Lord of the lotus plants [the sun] as if out of the anger placed in the heart [thinking], ‘That is the relation of

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33According to a myth, the gods, who were fearful of the power of the asuras called Kālakeyas, went to Viṣṇu to plead for his protection. Viṣṇu informed them that the Kālakeyas could not be caught unless the ocean was dried up, and this task could only be performed by Agastya. So the gods approached Agastya and told him what Viṣṇu had informed them. Accompanied by the gods and hermits, he neared the swaying and surging ocean. While all were watching, Agastya brought the ocean into his palm and drank it up easily. Thus, the Kālakeyas were exposed and killed [Mani 1989, 4-9]. Hence, the dust raised by Māra’s army acts like Agastya in so far as it drinks up [dries up] the water of the ocean.
an enemy of mine'. [10:21] [The enemy is Siddhârtha and this is a reference to Siddhârtha being from the lineage of the sun].

As the dust and darkness did not defeat the bodhisattva, Mâra approached him with his flower arrows 34. These, however, were also ineffective before Siddhârtha's great determination and became flowers.

The sharp arrows despatched by Makaradhvaja [Mâra], who had recourse to a fully stretched bow, having approached the Buddha, became flowers [also: full of good-mindedness]. What does association with the good not bring about like the divine creeper [the wish-fulfilling tree]? [10:37]

Even those arrows of the Mind-born One [Mâra] which had been effective elsewhere became useless, having reached that one [Siddhârtha], whose heart was pacified. When Fate turns its face [i.e. when Fate is unfavourable], indeed even the thing in hand [a sure attainment/objective] is lost. [10:39]

Mâra's next plan was to create a great wind.

34 Mâra's association with the Kāma is particularly highlighted in Aśvaghoša's Buddhacarita. In the following verses Aśvaghoša compares Mâra's temptation of the Buddha with Kāma's temptation of Śiva. He says—"But when the arrow was shot at him [Siddhârtha], he paid no heed to it and did not falter in his firmness. Mâra, seeing him thus, became despondent and, full of anxiety, said to himself—"When Śambhu [Śiva], god as he was, was pierced with this arrow, he became agitated with love towards the mountain-king's daughter [Pārvatī]. That very arrow causes this man no feeling. Is it that he has no heart or that this is not that arrow?.[13: 15-16] For the myth of the temptation of Śiva by Kāma see the Śiva Purāṇa and Kālidāsa's Kumāra-sambhava.
When indeed all the arrows which were capable of overpowering the three worlds had thus become ineffective, Māra, whose heart was overpowered by the feeling of enmity, ordered the Great Wind of Dissolution for his [Siddhārtha's] crushing. [10:40]

As even the great wind proved useless he tried the arrows of speech.

He said, 'That [seat] is ours [mine], indeed not yours. Having arisen quickly, go away from there immediately. Only by me, the greatest perfection has been completed [achieved]. My large army was a witness to that.' [10:44]

It was with a mere gesture that Māra was defeated.

No sooner had the supreme mendicant [Siddhārtha], whose ascetic power was kindled, begun to speak, having raised a blossom-like [tender] finger from [his] lap, then Māra, who was frightened, fled, together with his great/mighty army, whose umbrellas, chariots, flags and cloths [coverlets] had fallen down. [10:45]

After the defeat of Māra's army, the women of Māra performed a grand dance for Siddhārtha.
After that [fleeing of Māra], the women of Māra, whose glances were slow [moving], whose bejewelled bracelets and anklets of the foot were jingling, immediately, having assembled together, performed an extremely powerful dance on the ground in front of him [Siddhārtha]; a dance which had [i.e. used] the four-sided mid-region [of the ground] [10:46]
[A square dance of impressive proportions (and of a charged, erotic nature) seems to be intended].

When those delights were not effective, the women approached him with sweet speech:

Having observed him, who was attached to the flavour of Samādhi well-placed in the heart, who was delighting to the Śākya family and as someone who was unshakeable, the women of Kāma [Māra], whose eyes [i.e. glances] were [invitingly] timid, made speeches which were nectar for the ears and which had compassion-invoking syllables [i.e. words] in them. [10:47]

They said,

How do the elders say that you gave a pair of eyes to a prominent twice-born, having uprooted [the pair from your own body], you, who are unable to do even the placing of the eyes on this woman [i.e. myself] subjected to the attacking arrows of Madana [Māra] [10:48] [i.e. if you can’t give a glance, how could you have given your eyes]!
According to the PC, Māra's women were also ineffective in distracting Siddhārtha from his practice. Thus, Siddhārtha overcame all the manifestations of Māra's opposition and attained liberation. Thereafter, he was known as the Buddha [the enlightened/awakened one].

In the following chapter, I will compare the details of the PC's narrative with the traditional biographies of the Buddha.

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35In these verses, Buddhaghosa makes reference to Jātakas in which the bodhisattva gave away his head and eyes. Specifically referred to are the Jātaka's Sibi and Maitribala. In the Jātaka Sibi, the bodhisattva in a previous birth as a King gave away his eyes to a blind man. In the Jātaka Maitribala, the bodhisattva gave away his own body to appease the hunger of ogres. [Khoroche 1989, 10 and 47].
CHAPTER THREE:

A COMPARISON OF THE BIOGRAPHIES OF THE BUDDHA:

Dwelling in the Tuṣita heaven

According to the NK, MV, LV and DN [see Mahāpadāna sutta], the bodhisattva [the Buddha-to-be] dwelt in the Tuṣita heaven before descending into the womb of Queen Māyā. The NK mentions that all bodhisattvas reside in the Tuṣita heaven before descending to the world and they enter this heaven due to the attainment of the ten perfections [pāramitas]. These are described as Dāna [charity], Śīla [morality], Naiskāmya [abnegation], Prajñā [wisdom], Virya [exertion], Kṣānti [patience], Satya [truth], Abhiṣṭhāna [resolution], Maitri [good-will] and Upeksā [equanimity].

It is in this light that the PC describes a great being dwelling in Tuṣita. The PC, however, does not specify that this being is a bodhisattva.

The NK, MV and LV, commonly state that the devas [gods] of Tuṣita heaven were instrumental in the bodhisattva's descent into the world. They recognized that the signs were right for the birth of a bodhisattva and implored him to take birth out of compassion for humanity. The NK says,

When they request, they do so at the first appearance of the signs. On this occasion all of them [the gods] went to the bodhisatta in the Tuṣita heaven and begged of him,... Now Sire, the moment has come for your Buddhahood; the time has come for your Buddhahood. [p.64]

The importance of seeing signs suggests that the occurrence of a Buddha in the world is understood to be a recurring event. This is exemplified in the Mahāpadāna Sutta of the DN. Here, the Buddha discusses his life in relation to a number of previous Buddhas. What is illuminated by the sutta is the unoriginality of Śākyamuni's experience. For, despite different names and family situations, all bodhisattvas have pre-ordained life experiences which inevitably result in Enlightenment.

36 Interestingly, the Pāramitas are not referred to in the four Nikāyas. Here, Śīla [conduct], Samādhi [concentration] and Prajñā [wisdom] are emphasized [Khosla 1989, 3].
The PC follows such a tradition when it describes the bodhisattva as being entreated by the gods. Here, the gods recognize the auspicious signs and then, approach this great being with the request for him to enter the world. After being entreated to take birth, this great being is described contemplating the appropriate situation for his birth. Similar deliberations are found in the NK and MV and LV. The NK says,

Then the Great being, even before giving an assurance to the deities, looked for the Five Great Considerations, which consist of the time, the country, the district, the family and the mother and her age limit. [NK, p. 64]

The MV says,

Now the bodhisattva at the time of his passing away from Tuṣita makes his four great surveys, namely, of the time in which he is to be reborn, the place, the continent, and the family. [MV, II., 1].

In the PC, the great being agrees to descend to the world and become the son of King Śuddhodana. In the MV, NK and LV, the bodhisattva identifies not only King Śuddhodana but also Queen Māyā as his suitable parents. The MV says,

This King Śuddhodana, thought he, is worthy to be my father. He then sought a mother who should be gracious of good birth, pure of body and tender of Passion. [MV II., 3]

According to the LV,

Dans tout le pays des Śākyas, il est le seul roi qui soit honore...L’espouse du roi Śuddhodana est Māyā Devi. [LV, ch. 3., 27]

[in the whole country of the Śākya’s there is only one king to be honoured...the spouse of the king is Māyā-devī]

In the PC, there is the suggestion that King Śuddhodana and Queen Māyā wanted a child but were unable to have one. This fact is not highlighted in the other biographies of the Buddha and seems to be drawn from the Raghuvaṃśa. Here, King Dilipa and Queen Sudakshinā are cursed by the divine cow Surabhi and therefore, cannot beget children. In an effort to dissolve the curse they propitiate Surabhi’s daughter, Nandinī. [Kale 1972, canto 1]
Conception

According to all the sources, the conception takes place in association with a dream. In this dream Queen Māyā sees a white elephant entering into her womb from her right side.

Before she conceived, she saw in her sleep a white lord of elephants entering her body, yet she felt thereby no pain [BC 4:1]

The MV explains the significance of a white elephant:

The woman who in her dream has seen a white elephant enter her womb will give birth to a being as select as the elephant is among animals. He will be a Buddha who knows the good and the true. [MV II., 12]

Winternitz provides another suggestion; he says that the elephant symbolizes both the strength of the baby and the mother. The bodhisattva is naturally strong and the mother of a bodhisattva has to have the strength of an elephant to carry this child in her womb. [Winternitz 1983 II., 240]

The PC leaves out this vision of an elephant and simply states that the bodhisattva entered into Queen Māyā's womb.

The LV and Mahāpadāna sutta of the DN highlight that the bodhisattva's entrance into Queen Māyā's womb was in full awareness.

Le Bodhisattva etant descendu de l'excellent sejour du Touchita, ayant le souvenir et la science, entra dans le sein de sa mere; par le flanc droit de sa mere livree au jeune, sous la figure d'un petit elephant blanc...[LV, ch.6., 55]

[The bodhisattva having descended from the excellent sojourn of Tuṣita, with memory and awareness, entered into his mother's womb, by the right side, in the shape of a white elephant.]

And so, monks, the Bodhisattva descended from the Tuṣita heaven, mindful and clearly aware into his mother's womb [DN [Mahāpadāna sutta] II. 13, 203]
According to all the sources, the conception was accompanied by miraculous events. Such things as flowers falling from the sky and sick people being cured took place at this auspicious moment. The PC does not highlight the significance of the conception but instead focuses upon the miracles that took place at Siddhartha’s birth. The length of Queen Maya’s pregnancy is not specified in the PC but the other sources commonly state that the duration of a bodhisattva’s stay in the womb is exactly ten months.

“It is the rule that whereas other women carry the child in their womb for nine or ten months before giving birth, it is not so with the Bodhisatta’s mother, who carries him for exactly ten months before giving birth. That is the rule.” [DN [Mahapadana sutta] II. 15, 204]

In the LV, the gods are said to create a palace with precious stones in Queen Maya’s womb so that the bodhisattva may not be made impure during these ten months. The bodhisattva is described sitting in this palace of precious stones with admirable gentleness. His body is said to shine with splendid beauty causing light to spread for miles from the body of his mother. [LV. ch. 7., 78]

The NK, MV and DN mention that Queen Maya’s womb was protected by four gods.

It is the rule that when a bodhisattva has entered his mother’s womb, four devas come to protect him from the four quarters, saying, ‘Let no man, no non-human being, no thing whatever harm this bodhisatta or this bodhisatta’s mother’. [DN [Mahapadana sutta] II. 13, 203]

The NK similarly states,

When the bodhisatta had thus taken conception, four deities with swords in hand stood guard from the time of conception over the bodhisatta and his mother to ward off any danger. [NK, 69]

Instead of four gods guarding the Queen’s womb, the PC mentions elderly women protecting the foetus with various herbal medicines. The PC corresponds with the other accounts in highlighting the fact that the bodhisattva did not cause pain to the mother as he rested in her womb, but was a source of delight and joy. The MV says,
When the bodhisattva has entered his mother's womb, his mother is comfortable whether she moves, stands, sits or lies down, because of the power of the bodhisattva. [MV, II, 13].

According to the PC, Queen Māya gave birth to the bodhisattva in a delivery room along with attendants. This is different from all other accounts which emphasize that the birth took place in the Lumbini grove. Just before delivering the child, the Queen is described as having had a strong desire to visit her parental home. As she travelled from Kapilavastu, she stopped to rest in a pleasure grove of Sāla trees located between the two towns. This was called the Lumbini park. Here, Queen Māyā gave birth standing up.

Having walked up to the foot of the hallowed Sāla tree she wished to take hold of a branch. The branch bent low like the tip of a well-seasoned cane and came within reach of the queen's hand. She stretched out her hand and held it. At that very instant labour pains seized her. Then the people drew a curtain around her and withdrew. As she stood there clinging to the branch of the tree she was delivered of her child. [NK, 69-70]

The BC, MV, LV and DN add that the birth was from Queen Māyā's side and that she suffered no pain or illness. The PC corresponds with all the other sources in describing the birth of a bodhisattva as being marked by miraculous events. Thus, the world was filled with the resounding sounds of drums, shaking mountains, rich scents and starry skies. According to the BC,

At his birth the earth, nailed down as it was with the king of mountains, trembled like a ship struck by the wind; and from the cloudless sky there fell a shower perfumed with sandalwood and bringing blue and pink lotuses. [BC 1: 21]

The PC highlights the joy that King Śuddhodana and Queen Māyā felt upon their child's birth. Fittingly, the King organized an impressive birth ceremony for his son and bestowed him with the appropriate name, Siddhārtha [one who has fulfilled/ accomplished all desires/goals].
The choice of the name Siddhārtha is explained in the BC:

Since the prosperity of the royal race and the accomplishment of all objects had been thus brought to pass, the King named his son accordingly, saying, 'He is Sarvārthasiddha' [one who has accomplished all ends/goals]. [BC 2: 17]

The MV similarly states,

When the chief of all the world was born, all the kings affairs prospered. Hence, he who was the boon of men was named Sarvārthasiddha. [MV, II., 20]

The Newborn

The PC differs from the other biographies in that it does not mention the extraordinary and rather frightening aspect of this newborn. For, according to all the accounts, this baby had the thirty two marks of the Great Man. These characteristic marks are described in the Lakkhaṇa Sutta of the DN.

And what are these thirty-two marks? He has feet with level tread. This is one of the marks of a Great Man. On the soles of his feet are wheels with a thousand spokes, complete with felloe and hub. He has projecting heels. He has long fingers and toes. He has soft and tender hands and feet. His legs are like an antelope's. Standing and without bending, he can touch and rub his knees with either hand. His male organs were enclosed in a sheath. His complexion is bright, the colour of gold. His skin is delicate and so smooth that no dust can adhere to his body. His body-hairs are separate, one to each pore. His body-hairs grow upwards, each one bluish-black like collyrium, curling in rings to the right. His body is divinely straight. He has the seven convex surfaces. The front part of his body is like a lion's. There is no hollow between his shoulders. He is proportioned like a banyan-tree: the height of his body is the same as the span of his outstretched arms, and conversely. His teeth are even. There are no spaces between his teeth. His canine teeth are very bright. His tongue is very long. He has a Brahmā-like voice, like that of the karavīka bird. His eyes are deep blue. He has eyelashes like a cow's. The hair between his eyes is white and soft like cotton down. His head is like a royal turban. This is one of the marks of a Great Man. [DN [Lakkhaṇa Sutta] III. 146, 442 ]
This baby was also peculiar in that, upon his birth, he took seven steps to the various directions and announced the knowledge that he was the 'Buddha to be'. The Mahāpadāna sutta of the DN says,

> It is the rule that as soon as he is born the bodhisattva takes a firm stance on both feet facing north, then takes seven strides and, under a white sunshade, he scans the four quarters and then declares with a bull-like voice: "I am chief in the world, supreme in the world, eldest in the world. This is my last birth, there will be no more re-becoming." That is the rule. [II. 17, 205]

Moreover, all the sources state that just after his birth two streams of water came out of the sky and washed his body and the body of his mother.

> It is the rule that when the Bodhisatta issues forth from his mother's womb, two streams of water appear from the sky, one cold, the other warm, with which they ritually wash the Bodhisatta and his mother. That is the rule. [DN [Mahāpadāna sutta] II 15, 204, see NK, 70]

In the BC, both the streams of water cleanse the bodhisattva.

> Two streams of water, clear as the rays of the moon and having the virtue, one of heat, one of cold, poured forth from the sky and fell on his gracious head to give his body refreshment by their contact. [I:16]

The ambivalence of the parents to this different baby is nicely captured in the BC.

> On seeing the miraculous birth of his son, the king, steadfast though he was, was much disturbed, and from his affection a double stream of tears flowed, born of delight and apprehension. The queen was filled with fear and joy, like a stream of hot and cold water mixed, because the power of her son was other than human on the one hand, and because she had a mother's natural weakness on the other.[I: 28–29]
Another absence in the PC account which has been recorded in all the other sources for the legend is its failure to mention Queen Māyā's death. This took place exactly one week after the birth of the bodhisattva. The DN says,

\[ \text{It is the rule that the Bodhisatta's mother dies seven days after his birth and is reborn in the Tuṣita heaven. That is the rule [DN Mahāpadāna Sutta II. 15, 204]} \]

To explain why Queen Māyā dies, the BC says that she was overcome by joy.

\[ \text{But when Queen Māyā saw the vast power of her son, like that of a divine seer, she was unable to bear the joy it caused her; then she went to Heaven to dwell there. [2: 18]} \]

The death of the Queen led to Siddhārtha being raised by his mother's younger sister, Mahāprajāpatī Gautami. The BC says,

\[ \text{Then the queen's sister, who equalled her in majesty and did not fall below her in affection and tenderness, brought up the prince, who was like a scion of the gods, as if he were her own son. [1: 19]} \]

The LV mentions that she was selected because she was the most capable of raising the child. In all, thirty-two nurses were said to have been appointed to serve the Bodhisattva, eight nurses to carry him, eight to suckle him, eight to bathe him and the other eight to play with him. [ch. 7., 90–91]

All the sources state that one of the first visitors to the King after the birth of his son was a venerable sage named Asita [Kāladevala]. Asita was renowned for his wisdom and powers of clairvoyance. The meeting between the Sage Asita and the young prince is described in the Nālaka Sutta of the Sutta Nipāta.

\[ \text{To see the prince was to see brightness - the brightness of the flames of a fire; the brightness of the star constellations crossing the night sky; the brightness} \]

\[ \text{Mahāprajāpatī is credited with being the first ordained nun [Bhikkhuni] and being the first Buddhist teacher who was a woman. [Murcott 1991, 19]} \]
and clarity of the autumn sun shining on a cloudless day. It was a sight that filled the hermit with joy, and he experienced great delight....

The long-haired sage, the 'Dark splendour', as he was called, looked at the baby lying on the orange clothes, shining like a golden coin, with the white sunshade held up above him. With great joy he picked him up.

Now the lion of the Sākyas was in the arms of a man who had waited for him, a man who could recognize all the signs on his body—a man who now, filled with delight, raised his voice to say these words: 'There is nothing to compare with this: this is the ultimate, this is the perfect man.'

Just then the hermit remembered that he was going to die quite soon—and he felt so sad at this and he began to cry. The Sākyas asked him why he was crying: 'Is the prince in some danger?' they asked. To settle their worries, the sage explained to them why he felt sad, 'No' he said, 'there will not be any danger or threat to the prince's life, as far as I can see. In fact, for him there won't be any obstacles at all. There couldn't be for him; he is not an ordinary being. This prince will come to the fulfilment of perfect Enlightenment; this prince of supremely pure vision will start turning the wheel of truth out of compassion for the well-being of many. The religious life will be fully expounded. But for me there is a grain of sadness and pain in this. For I will not live much longer now and during his life I shall die. So I won't be able to see this man of such unparalleled strength teaching how things are—and that's the only reason that I felt sad' [SN, 9-16, 80]

In order to test Asita's interpretation, the king summoned eight of the most learned Brahmins in the land.

The Nidāna Kathā says,

Rāma, Dhaja, Lakkhaṇa and Mantī, Koṇḍaṇṇa and Bhoja, Siyāma and Sidatta, these were the eight brahmins adept in the six [Vedaṅgas] who then expounded the science [of reading the signs]. [NK p.74]

Seven of the Brahmins concluded that there were two possible outcomes for his son. Siddhārtha would either remain in the world and become a great emperor, or, renounce the world, seek enlightenment and become a Buddha. But the eighth Brahmin, called Koṇḍaṇṇa, was unequivocal—
"His markings show that his future can go only in one way" he told the king, 'a
time will come when he will witness four special signs and as a result he will
renounce the world and go out to seek enlightenment' [NK, 74-76]
Marriage

According to the BC, Siddhārtha was married at a young age to a beautiful and devoted young princess named Yaśodharā. The PC refers to her as the daughter of the King of Koliya. The LV refers to Yaśodharā as Gopā and adds that she is the daughter of Śakya Daṇḍapāṇī [LV, ch. 12, 128]. The MV calls Yaśodharā the daughter of the Śakyan Mahānāma [MV, II., 70].

The BC describes Yaśodharā in the following way,

Then from a family possessed of long-standing good conduct he summoned for him the goddess of Fortune in the shape of a maiden, Yaśodharā by name, of widespread renown, virtuous and endowed with beauty, modesty and gentle bearing [2:26]

Interestingly, the NK account, which usually corresponds closely with the PC, only makes a passing reference to Yaśodhara. Here, she is described as Siddhārtha’s chief consort and the queen mother of Rāhula. [see NK, 77].

The PC distinguishes itself in its lengthy description of the marriage preparations and ceremony, for, this marriage is not elaborated upon in any other biography of the Buddha. The LV, which typically embellishes events, only devotes two verses to the marriage. The BC discusses the marriage in one verse and the NK and MV fail to mention it at all. The PC devotes the entire fourth chapter which has eighty seven verses to this event.

The famous description of the young women flocking to their balconies to watch the splendour of the young prince returning from the pleasure garden, found in canto three of the BC, has a parallel in this fourth chapter of the PC. Here, the women gather on their balconies to watch the prince as he returns from his marriage. This episode is very similar to one found in the Raghuvamśa describing the wedding of Indumatī and Aja. Here, the women watch Indumatī and Aja as they parade through the streets of the city and praise them in various ways.

The Pleasure Palaces

To further ensure his son’s happiness and attachment to worldly life, Śuddhodhana built three palaces for Siddhārtha, one for the rainy season, one for the hot season and one for
the cold season. This biographical detail is common to all the sources and recorded in the Anguttara Nikāya [see sutta no. 38]. Here, the Buddha describes his past, pleasure-filled experience to his disciples:

Monks, I was delicately nurtured, exceedingly delicately nurtured, delicately nurtured beyond measure. For instance, in my father’s house lotus-pools were made thus: one of blue lotuses, one of red, another of white lotuses, just for my benefit. No sandal-wood powder did I use that was not from Kāsi: of Kāsi cloth was my turban made; of Kāsi cloth was my jacket, my tunic and my cloak. By night and day a white canopy was held over me, lest cold or heat, dust or chaff or dew, should touch me. Moreover, monks, I had three palaces: one for winter, one for summer, and one for the rainy season. In the four months of rain I was waited on by minstrels, women all of them. I came not down from my palace in those months. Again, whereas in other men’s homes broken rice together with sour gruel is given as food to slave-servants, in my father’s home they were given rice, meat and milk-rice for food. [l. no. 38, 128]

The display of the Bodhisattva’s skill

The conclusion of the fifth chapter of the PC includes an unusual event in the life of the Buddha which seems to be based on similar episodes found in the NK, MV and LV. In this episode, Siddhārtha is called upon to show his competence in archery. The PC gives no indication of why Siddhārtha has been called upon to prove his skill. However, we find some explanation for this episode in the other biographical accounts. According to the NK, Siddhārtha has been accused of indulging in pleasure and neglecting work and hence, his competence in various skills is being questioned.

Whilst he was thus enjoying this great prosperity, one day the following talk arose amongst a group of his kinsfolk: ‘Siddhatthapasseshisdaysintheenjoymentofpleasures. Hedoes not learnany of the arts. What will hedo if warbreaks out? The kinsmen say, 'Siddhatthaspendshis时限intheenjoymentofpleasureswithoutlearninganyofthearts’. ‘What do you think of it when this [accusation] is made?’ ‘Sire, it is not necessary for me to learn the arts. Proclaim in the city
by beat of drum that I will display my skill in the arts. Seven days hence I will show my skill in the arts to my kinsmen.' The king did so. The bodhisattva assembled such archers as would shoot at their target during a flash of lightning or split a horse’s hair, and in the midst of the assembly displayed to his kinsmen his skill in twelve ways not shared in common with other archers. Then did his kinsfolk dispel their doubts. [NK, 78]

The NK says that this episode is based on a particular Jātaka called the Sarabāṅga Jātaka. In this Jātaka, an archer [identified as the bodhisattva] displays wonderful feats of skill in shooting. He declines the honours offered to him by his king and retires to a forest hermitage [Jātaka, V–VI., 522]

The MV also includes such an episode in its narrative. Here, Siddhārtha’s skill in archery is tested as a prerequisite for his marriage to Yaśodharā.

"Your son", said he [Yaśodharā’s father], "has grown up among the women. He has nowise been trained in the arts, in archery, in skill with elephants, chariots and bows, I shall not give my daughter to him"

On hearing this the young prince said to his father, "Be not vexed, father. Cause a proclamation to be made in the towns and provinces that the prince will on the seventh day from this hold a tournament." [MV, II., 75]

In this story Siddhārtha beats his competition and wins Yaśodharā’s hand in marriage. This competition for Yasodharā is similarly described in the LV. [see ch.12]

The four visions

All the sources state that, despite the diversions provided by the king, the prince felt bored one day and asked his charioteer, Chandaka [Channa], to take him for a ride to the pleasure gardens which were located outside the palace grounds. Hearing of his son’s decision to travel outside the confines of the palace, the King ordered that all distressing sights should be removed from the surrounding roads. The BC describes the king’s efforts to provide Siddhārtha with a carefree existence in the following verses:

And reflecting that the prince’s tender mind might be perturbed thereby, he forebade the appearance of afflicted common folk on the royal road.
Then with the greatest gentleness they cleared away on all sides, those whose limbs were maimed, and the wretched, and made the royal highway supremely magnificent. [3:4-5]

Despite the King's efforts, all the sources mention that it was on this trip and three subsequent excursions, that the prince was exposed to the four signs predicted at his birth: the sight of an old man, a sick man, a dead man and an ascetic. Like the other accounts, the PC states that these sights were orchestrated by the gods. For only the gods could defy the king's strict command.

The PC also mentions that the charioteers were possessed by the gods to cause the awakening of the prince. Hence, they disobey the King and explain to Siddhārtha that all existence is invariably subject to old age, sickness and death. This possession of the charioteer by the gods is also highlighted in the other biographies.
The BC says,

When the chariot-driver was thus spoken to, those very same gods confounded his understanding, so that, without seeing his error, he told the prince the matter he should have withheld. [3: 29]

The PC distinguishes itself, however, in mentioning more than one charioteer. In the other accounts, Siddhārtha is always accompanied by a single charioteer. The reference to many charioteers is probably a way of highlighting Siddhārtha's wealth. However, it takes away the intimacy that Siddhārtha felt towards Channa which is emphasized in the other sources.

According to the NK, when Channa is told of Siddhārtha's decision to renounce his worldly existence, he also decides to become a renunciant. He says,

'I too wish to renounce the world.'

The bodhisatta refused him thrice, saying, 'It is not meet that you become a religious mendicant now; you go back.' [NK, 86]

Channa's dedication to the prince is also expressed in the BC. There, he says,

You should not abandon me. For, your feet are my sole refuge. [6:35]

The PC is also peculiar in its summary treatment of the witnessing of these four signs, which, in other texts, is marked as the crucial event in the prince's life. The author's lack of interest in this episode is highlighted by the fact that just preceding it is an elaborate description of the spring season in thirty-five verses. [see verses one-thirty-five of Chapter six]. This makes the ten verses dedicated to Siddhārtha's sight of the visions and the impact they make on him seem all the more sparse. [see verses thirty-five-forty-five of chapter six.]

Instead of portraying four different trips whereby each sight is respectively seen, first old age, then disease and then death and finally the mendicant, the PC presents this as all taking place on one trip.

The sources commonly mention that Siddhārtha was deeply impressed by these visions. These sights eroded the defences erected by the King, and gave Siddhārtha his first understanding of the truth of suffering [duḥkha].
This insight into the reality of *duhkha* is described in the Añguttara Nikāya, where the Buddha speaks of his own experience to his disciples:

To me, monks, thus blest with much prosperity, thus nurtured with exceeding delicacy, this thought occurred: surely one of the uneducated many folk, though himself subject to old age and decay, not having passed beyond old age and decay, when he sees another broken down with age, is troubled, ashamed, disgusted, forgetful that he himself is such an one. Now I too am subject to old age and decay, not having passed beyond old age and decay. Were I to see another broken down with old age, I might be troubled, ashamed and disgusted. That would not be seemly in me. Thus, monks, as I considered the matter, all pride in my youth deserted me....[the same insight is articulated with respect to disease and death]...Thus monks all pride in health deserted me.....Thus monks, all pride in my life deserted me. [l. no. 38, 128]

Although, the PC describes Siddhārtha as being distressed by the four visions, even asking that the horses be turned back, it states that Siddhārtha continued his journey to the pleasure grove. Evidently, upon seeing the mendicant, Siddhārtha became contented and decided to continue his planned outing. This is similar to the NK account. There, Siddhārtha sees the visions on four consecutive days. After seeing the old man, sick man and dead man, Siddhārtha's interest in the pleasure garden is checked and he returns to the palace. On the fourth day, he sees the mendicant and then, continues his journey to the pleasure grove.

Once again, one day when the bodhisatta again went to the park he beheld an ordained monk well-clad and well-draped, presented by the deities, and asked his charioteer, 'Friend, who is he?'. Even though the charioteer was ignorant as to what a monk was, or what his distinctive features were, as it was not a time when the Buddha had appeared on earth, by the supernatural power of the deities he was prompted to say, 'Sire, this is a mendicant friar' and he extolled the virtues of recluseship. The Bodhisatta, cherishing a desire for renunciation, continued his journey to the park that day. [NK, 79].
According to the DN [see Mahāpadāna sutta], LV and MV, Siddhārtha sees the four visions, one after the other, and immediately decides to renounce the world. That is to say, there is no mention of his continued journey to the pleasure garden.

An interesting difference in the legendary account contained in the BC is that Siddhārtha does not see the vision of the mendicant until after he has returned from the pleasure garden. It is also unique in focusing upon the experience of the pleasure garden as a lengthy temptation. What is emphasized is the general lack of interest Gautama feels for such worldly pleasures. In this way, the pleasure garden symbolizes the necessary test for Siddhārtha's growing insight and conviction. This is exemplified by the fact that the charioteer is said to bring Siddhārtha to the pleasure garden despite his command to turn back the horses.

Though the king's son spoke to him thus, he not merely did not turn back but, in accordance with the king's wishes, went to the Padmaśānta grove, which had been provided with special attractions. [3:43]

According to the BC account, such disinterest in the pleasures provided in the pleasure garden leads to Siddhārtha's longing for spiritual peace. Thus, he gets permission to journey into the forest. His changing state of mind is beautifully described by one of the experiences he has on this journey.

Desire for the forest as well as the excellence of the land led him on to the more distant jungle-land and he saw the soil being ploughed with its surface broken with the tracks of furrows like waves. When he saw the ground in this state, with its young grass torn up and scattered by the ploughs and littered with dead worms, insects and other creatures, he mourned deeply as at the slaughter of his own kindred. [5:4-5]

It is on this journey to the forest that the Buddha sees an ascetic and thus, is inspired to renounce worldly life.

The Pleasure Grove:

In the PC there is no indication that Siddhārtha was disinterested in the pleasures of the pleasure grove or that he was becoming steadily disenchanted with worldly life. The
NK also describes Siddhärtha as carefree and enjoying himself amongst various pleasures. Here, Siddhärtha’s play in the garden is followed by a bath in the pool.

The NK says,

Then he disported himself in the park during the remaining hours of day-light and bathed in the royal pond; and when the sun had set, he sat on the stone slab meant for the use of royalty, wishing to have himself dressed. [p. 80]

The PC also refers to Siddhärtha playing in a pool after his play in the garden.

The conclusion of Chapter seven of the PC describes Siddhärtha passing the remainder of the day in a pavillion of the pleasure garden. There, he is entertained by the music and dancing of various women. The NK does not describe the bodhisattva as residing in a pavillion but does highlight the fact that he is being pampered by others. It states,

Then his attendants stood around waiting on him with garments of many colours, with various kinds of garlands, perfumes and ointments ready at hand. [p. 80]

The PC describes Siddhärtha returning to his palace at nightfall. It mentions that upon entering he is lavished with the entertainment of musicians and dancing girls.

We find a strikingly similar episode in the NK:

As for the bodhisattva, he returned to his mansion in great splendour, ascended it and lay on his couch of state. Almost immediately, women decked with ornaments, proficient in dancing and singing and other arts, as enchanting as heavenly maidens, stood around him with their diverse musical instruments, and engaged themselves in dancing, singing and playing their instruments to entertain him. [p. 82]
**Disenchantment**

According to the PC, the prince was not interested in the entertainment placed before him and seemed burdened by his thoughts. Such a sentiment is also expressed in the Nk. It says,

> As the Bodhisatta’s mind was detatched from the defilements he took no delight in the dance and so forth and fell asleep for a while. [p.82]

The PC gives no indication of the reasons for the sudden shift in Siddhärtha’s attitude towards entertainment. For up to this point, we have only been given lengthy descriptions of Siddhärtha enjoying himself amongst the various pleasures.

In the NK, some explanation is given. Here disenchantment with the world seems to be spurred by two events. The first is the encounter with Kisāgotamī. She is referred to as Mṛgī in the MV [ii, p.153]. In that episode, the bodhisattva is described as one returning to Kapilavastu from the pleasure grove in all his glory. He is seen by a young girl who makes the following comment. She says,

> Tranquilled indeed is the mother, tranquilled is the father and tranquilled is the woman who has a lord like him. [NK, 81]

This comment inspires Siddhärtha to reflect upon what is really necessary for tranquility. The legend says that because Kisāgotamī’s words brought the bodhisattva deep insight he gave her the expensive pearl necklace he was wearing as a teacher’s fee. She, on her part, rejoiced at the gift believing it to be a token of love from the young prince.

Another cause of disenchantment, highlighted in the NK biography, is the sight of the beautiful turned ugly. In the following episode, Siddhärtha sees a vision of the now ugly bodies of the dancing girls strewn before him.

> As the Bodhisatta woke up and sat cross-legged upon the couch he saw those women who had lain aside their musical instruments and were sleeping, some of them with saliva pouring out of their mouths, some with the bodies wet with saliva, some grinding their teeth, some talking in their sleep, some groaning, some with gaping mouths and some others with their clothes in disorder
revealing plainly those parts of the body which should be kept concealed for fear of shame. He saw the disorder in which they were and became all the more detached from sensual pleasures. The large terrace of his mansion, magnificently decorated and resembling the abode of Sakka, appeared to him as a charnel ground full of corpses scattered here and there. The three states of existence seemed to him as a house in flames. He made the inspired utterance. “Alas, this is beset with obstacles! Alas, it is constricted!” His mind was greatly drawn towards renunciation. [NK, 82]

This image is described in all the Buddha biographies. In the BC, Siddhrtha returns to Kapilavastu impressed by the vision of the renunciant and convinced of the need to abandon worldly ways. Upon going to his chamber to rest, he sees the unattractive bodies of women, who he had once considered beautiful, strewn around him.

Thus these womenfolk, lying in various attitudes according to their natures, family and breeding, presented the appearance of a lotus-pond whose lotuses have been blown down and broken by the wind.

When the king’s son saw the young women lying in these different ways and looking so loathsome with their uncontrolled movements, though ordinarily their forms were beautiful, their speech agreeable, he was moved to disgust. [5:62-63]

The MV says,

And when the Bodhisattva saw them one and all lying on the floor in the harem there arose in him an awareness of the burial ground. [II., 155]

Due to such disenchantment, at the age of twenty-nine, Siddhrtha decided to renounce his life in the palace.

Renunciation

This resolution to strive for enlightenment is stated in the following way in the MN [see Mahasaccakasutta]. Here the Buddha is conversing with one of his disciples, Aggivesanna. He says,
Now, Aggivessana, before my Self-awakening, while I was still the bodhisatta, not fully awakened, it occurred to me: narrow is the household life, a path of dust, going forth is the open, nor is it easy while dwelling in a house to lead the Brahma-faring completely fulfilled, utterly purified, polished like a conch-shell. Suppose now that I, having cut off hair and beard, having clothed myself in saffron garments, should go forth from home into homelessness? [I. 240-241, 295]

The BC describes Siddhärtha approaching King Śuddhodhana to tell him of his decision. The King is very upset and attempts to persuade his son to stay in the palace and enjoy the fortunes of his worldly life. Siddhärtha replies by saying he will stay only if he is given a surety against four things.

I will refrain from entering the penance grove, O king, if you will be my surety on four points. My life is not to be subject to death. Disease is not to injure my health. Old age is not to impair my youth. Disaster is not to take away this my worldly fortune. [5:34]

Of course, the king cannot provide him with these securities and thus, realizes he is powerless to stop his son.

The MV, NK state that Siddhärtha had a son, called Rāhula, who was born on the very day that he resolved to renounce the world. According to the NK, he responded to the news of the newborn, in the following way:

At that time the great king Sudhodhana, hearing that the queen, mother of Rāhula, had given birth to a son, sent a message saying, 'Convey by felicitations to my son'. The Bodhisatta on hearing it, said, 'An impediment [Rāhula] has come into being, a bond has arisen'. [NK, 81]

However, to show the human side of the bodhisattva and the difficulty of his decision, the following episode is included in the NK. Here, Siddhärtha is described pausing at the room where his baby and wife are sleeping. He has not yet seen his son's face and is torn between the curiosity to see his child and his resolve to renounce his present life.
Rhula's mother was sleeping in her bed strewn with flowers such as the large jasmine and the Arabian jasmine; and she was resting her hand on her son. Stepping upon the threshold and standing there the bodhisatta looked at him and thought, 'If I remove the queen's hand and take my son into my arms she will wake up and that will prevent my journey. I will come back after gaining Enlightenment and then see him.' [p.83]

The PC like the BC does not mention the birth of Rhula.

In all the accounts, Siddhärtha flees from the palace attended by his charioteer [Chandaka], and the swiftest horse, Kanthaka. The PC refers to Siddhärtha's charioteer as Channa. The only other source which describes the charioteer as Channa is the NK.

He rose from his bed resolving, 'It is meet that I go forth in the Great Renunciation this very day, and went up to the door and called out, 'Who is there?.' Channa, who was reclining with his head resting on the threshold, replied, 'Sire, it is I, Channa.' [He commanded: 'I wish to set-out on my great renunciation to-day. Prepare a horse for me.'] [p. 82].

According to all accounts, the gods are instrumental in the bodhisattva's flight. They unlock the gates and steep all the subjects of Kapilavastu in a deep sleep. Thus, the PC fittingly describes the gods and celestial beings attending to the bodhisattva [fanning him] and singing his praises.

Like the NK, MV and LV, the PC mentions that Siddhärtha and Chandaka first journied to a place called Anomā [Anavamā in Skt]. Both the PC and NK associate this place with a river. The MV speaks not of a river, but of a town Anomiya, twelve leagues away among the Mallas. In the LV, Anomā is refered to as Anuvaineya or Anumaineya. It is described as a township six leagues away. These statements seem to point to an actual locality somewhere east of Kapilavastu, which was traditionally, at least, the place to which Siddhärtha first fled, but, they also point to the absence of any real knowledge of its nature. [Thomas 1931, 61]

The PC specifically refers to the journey being thirty yojanas. This detail is also found in the NK.
Proceeding with such splendour, the Bodhisatta traversed three kingdoms in one
night and arrived at the bank of the river Anomā covering a distance of thirty
yojanas. [p. 85]

The PC makes an allusion to the crossing of the river Anomā being like the crossing of
the ocean of Samsāra. This is also found in the NK. Here, upon deciding to renounce the
world the bodhisattva speaks to his horse and says,

My good Kanthaka, today, take me across in one night and I will, with your
assistance, become a Buddha and take across the inhabitants of the world
together with the deities. [p. 83]

The PC describes the horse as a worried horse. This is explained in the BC. Here the
horse is said to cry from distress after hearing that Siddhārtha will, indeed, renounce
the world.

On hearing the speech, Kanthaka, the finest of steeds, licked his feet and shed
scalding tears. [6:88]

This is elaborated upon in the MV and NK. For, in these texts, Kanthaka is said to die of a
broken heart.

But Kanthaka who stood nearby listening to the Bodhisatta’s conversation with
Channa, was unable to bear the grief at the thought that he would no longer be
able to see his master. And going out of their sight he died broken-hearted and
was reborn in Tāvatīmsa heaven as the deity Kanthaka. [NK, 87]

The MV mentions,

He [Kanthaka] starved through grieving for the bodhisattva and died because he
could not see him. [II., 183]

In all the accounts, Siddhārtha renounces the world, first by cutting off his hair and
then, by abandoning his worldly clothes and ornaments. In the Ariyapariyesana Sutta of
the MN, this is done before leaving home. The Buddha says,
Then I, monks, after a time, being young, my hair coal-black, possessed of radiant youth, in the prime of my life—although my unwilling parents wept and wailed—having cut off my hair and beard, having put on yellow robes, went forth from home into homelessness. [l.163-164, no. 26, 207]

In the NK and PC accounts, he abandons his possessions on the banks of the river Anomā. After doing so, he is said to have dismissed the horse and charioteer.

The PC mentions that the bodhisattva then accepted the attire of an ascetic given by a great Brahmā. We find a similar description in the NK. After discarding his clothes and possessions the bodhisattva is described as thinking,

'These silken garments of mine are not suitable for a monk.' Then the Great Brahmā Ghatikāra, his erstwhile companion in Kassapa Buddha's time, with his friendship not grown cold during one whole Buddha-period, thought, 'To-day my friend has gone forth in the Great Renunciation. I will go to him taking with me the requisites of a monk.' [p. 87]

The legend contained in the BC differs from the other accounts in that, upon renouncing the world, Siddhārtha is said to go straight to a hermitage and not to a place called Anomā. There, he discarded his ornaments and clothes and sent back his horse and charioteer. Unlike the other accounts, the BC explores the psychological pain experienced by the ones Siddhārtha has abandoned. Canto 8 focuses upon the lamentations in the palace and canto 9 describes the visit of the prince's purohita [chief priest] and minister to the hermitage to plead with Siddhārtha to return to worldly life.

**Begging for Alms**

According to all the biographies, Siddhārtha's first excursion as a mendicant was to Rājagaha, the city of King Bimbisāra. He is said to have entered for alms and then taken those alms to Mount Paṇḍava.

The PC also includes this event in its narrative. However, the king is named Bimbasara and there is no identification of the Mountain as Paṇḍava.
A detailed presentation of this episode is contained in the Pabbajjā Sutta of the Sutta Nipāta. It says,

The beggar [Siddhārtha] walked on from house to house watching the sense doors, well restrained, alert and mindful. Soon his bowl was full. When his begging-round was over [for the hills] and made his way towards mount Pañḍava. The messengers now knew that he would stay there. Seeing that he was going to stay there, some sat down and watched while another messenger went back to inform the king. ‘Your majesty’, he said, ‘the monk has settled down on the east side of mount Pañḍava. He’s sitting there in his mountain lair like a lion or a tiger or a bull!’. Hearing the messenger’s words the warrior king had his special chariot prepared and then set off with the greatest haste to Mount Pañḍava.

[SN [Pabbajjā sutta] 9-13, 46]

According to all the accounts, King Bimbisāra approached Siddhārtha, who was dwelling on the mountain, to attempt to persuade him back to worldly life. He went so far as to offer him the leadership of his army and other forms of power and wealth. The Buddha refused and explained his conviction in the following way:

I have seen the miseries of pleasures. I have seen the security involved in renouncing them. [Pabbajjā Sutta 20, 47]

Āḷāra Kāḷāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta

All the sources state that upon renouncing the world Siddhārtha went successively to two teachers, Āḷāra Kāḷāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta, who taught him how to attain high meditative states.

The Bodhisattva went in due course on his wanderings to Āḷāra Kāḷāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta, and evolved the attainments... [NK, 89]

These encounters are described in detail in the MN [see Ariyapariyesana Sutta, no. 26], where the Buddha explains his own history of striving to his disciples. The aim of Āḷāra’s practices is stated to have been the attainment of Akīncaññāyatana, [the state
of nothingness]. Uddaka pursued a doctrine proclaimed by his father, Rāma. The point was to attain the state of neither consciousness—nor—unconsciousness [corresponding to the fourth jhāna 38]. Siddhārtha practiced their methods for liberation and even achieved the, hoped for, exalted states, but, in the end, found such practices limited and hence, not satisfactory. In the Ariyapariyesana Sutta the Buddha says,

I, monks, not getting enough from this dhamma [teaching], disregarded and turned away from this dhamma. [I. 164, 209]

The PC does not refer to Siddhārtha’s encounter with these teachers and thus, leaves out a formative event in the Buddha’s life. In the other accounts, it was through such experiences that the Buddha distinguished his own path.

**Austerities**

All the sources says that due to the inadequacy of all other methods, Siddhārtha was forced to find his own method for liberation. He is said to have spent six years wandering about the valley of the Ganges, with a group of five mendicants, submitting himself to rigorous ascetic practices. [see Mahāsaccaka sutta of the MN for a detailed description of these austerities.] The PC does not refer to Siddhārtha’s five companions but does refer to Siddhārtha’s futile practices. According to the PC, Siddhārtha reflects upon his practice and realizes that there must be another method for attaining liberation. This reflection is mentioned in all the sources. In the MV, Siddhārtha says,

Those worthy recluses and brāhmans who undergo unpleasant, bitter, cruel, and severe feelings which assail their souls and their bodies do so to gain perfection, but in no way do they attain it. [MV, II., 125]

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38 jhāna [Dhyāna in Skt] [absorption] is a technical term for the progression through certain mental states, the climax of which is a special experience of enhanced physical vitality. Usually four stages are distinguished. First, there is the concentration of the mind on a single object. Then, an experience of mental and physical joy and ease, thirdly, just a feeling of ease and lastly, an experience of perfect clarity and equanimity. [Ling 1981, 115]. The Jhānas are described in the Sāmañña-phala sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya. [sutta no.2 of Div. I]
According to all the accounts, Siddhartha’s change in practice is spurred on by recalling the effective and deep meditation of his childhood seated under the Jambu [rose apple] tree at his father’s ploughing festival [the NK describes the bodhisattva seated in a tent p. 77]. In his solitude, he is said to have attained the first jhana of meditative concentration.

This reflection is contained in the MN [see Mahāsaccakasutta] where the Buddha discourses with his disciple Aggivessana.

This, Aggivessana, occurred to me: I know that while my father, the Sakyan, was ploughing, and I was sitting in the cool shade of a rose-apple tree, aloof from pleasures of the senses, aloof from unskilled states of mind, entering on the first meditation, which is accompanied by initial thought and discursive thought, is born of aloofness, and is rapturous and joyful, and while abiding therein, I thought: ‘Now could this be a way to awakening?’ [I. 10. 36, 246, p. 301]

The BC similarly mentions,

This is not the way for passionlessness, for enlightenment, for liberation. That is the sure procedure which I won that time beneath the Jambu tree. [7:101]

This realization is accompanied by an insight into the importance of regaining strength and taking nourishment for concentration.

This occurred to me, Aggivessana: ‘Now it is not easy to reach that happiness by thus subjecting the body to extreme emaciation. Suppose I were to take material nourishment—boiled rice and sour milk?’ So I, Aggivessana, took material nourishment—boiled rice and sour milk. [MN Mahāsaccakasutta I. 247, 301]

The BC records a similar reflection:

How can the result to be attained by the mind be reached by a man who is not calmly at ease and who is so worn out with the exhaustion of hunger and thirst that his mind is unbalanced with exhaustion?. [12:103]
The PC does not mention such deliberations but states that Siddhärtha’s change in practice was a result of five propitious dreams which indicated the fulfillment of his objective. The NK and MV, also portray Siddhärtha as having five dreams before enlightenment. However, in these accounts the dreams took place after Siddhärtha had accepted nourishment. The NK states,

The bodhisatta, who had dreamt the five great dreams that night, arrived at the conclusion, on examining their significance, that without doubt he would become a Buddha that day. [p. 91]

The NK and PC do not elaborate upon the content of these dreams. However, we find the following enigmatic statement in the MV. It says,

Monks, before the Tathāgata had awakened to complete enlightenment he saw five great visions in dreams. What five? Monks, before the Tathāgata had awakened to complete enlightenment he dreamt that this great earth was a high vast bed for him. Sumeru, monarch of mountains, was his pillow. His left arm rested in the eastern ocean, his right in the western, and the soles of his two feet in the southern. This monks, was the first great vision the Tathāgata saw before he has awakened to enlightenment.

When the Tathāgata, monks, as yet had not awakened to enlightenment, he dreamt that the grass called kṣīriki sprouted from his navel and reared up to heaven. This, monks, was the second great vision the Tathāgata saw before he had awakened to enlightenment.

When the Tathāgata, monks, as yet had not awakened to enlightenment, he dreamt that reddish creatures with black heads stood covering him from the soles of his feet up to his knee-caps. This monks was third great vision—enlightenment

When the Tathāgata, monks, as yet had not awakened to enlightenment, he dreamt that four vultures of different colours came flying through the air from the four quarters, and having kissed the soles of his feet went away all white. This, monks was the fourth great vision—enlightenment.

When the Tathāgata, monks, as yet had not awakened to enlightenment, he dreamt that he walked to and fro over a great mountain of dung without being soiled by it. This monks was the fifth great vision—enlightenment. [MV, II., 133]
Acceptance of the Milk-rice:

According to all the accounts, to gain strength for his meditation, Siddhärtha accepted milk-rice [pāyasā] from a young girl. The LV, MV and NK refer to her as Sujātā. The BC names her Nandabaliā.

In the LV and MV, the gods first approached the bodhisattva and suggested that they insert food through his pores. They said,

You can live in full consciousness, for we shall make you absorb divine strength through the pores of your hair. [MV, II., 126]

The bodhisattva refused thinking that he would not be accepting responsibility for his action if he agreed to their offer. Instead, he accepted the milk-rice offered to him by Sujātā. Siddhärtha took the milk-rice Sujātā had prepared and placed in a golden bowl, to the banks of the Nairaṅjarā river.

The BC describes this episode in the following verses:

He [Siddhärtha] bathed and, as in his emaciation he came painfully up the bank of the Naireṅjanā, the trees growing on the slope bent low the tips of their branches in adoration to give him a helping hand.

At that time on divine instigation, Nandabalā, the daughter of the cowherd chief, went there, joy bursting from her heart.

Her delight was enhanced by faith, and her blue-lotus eyes opened wide, as doing obeisance with her head, she caused him to accept milk rice. [12:108-109 and 111]

The NK is considerably different from the other accounts. For, here Siddhärtha's meeting with Sujātā is a case of mistaken identity. The bodhisattva is mistaken for a tree deity who has assumed a human form. Sujātā is described as daily worshipping a tree-god in return for a boon. On this particular day, approaching the tree to give her daily offering, she sees the bodhisattva gloriously seated under it and mistakes him for her god. Hence, she prepares special milk-rice for him and places it in a most valuable gold bowl.

Overcome with great joy in beholding the bodhisattva, thinking him to be her tree-god she went up to him bowing in a humble manner from the place where she
first espied him, and taking down the bowl from her head she uncovered it; and taking, in a golden water-pot, water, perfumed with sweet-smelling flowers, she walked up to the Bodhisatta and stood near him. The earthenware vessel, given by the Great Brahmā Ghaṭikāra, which had remained with the Bodhisatta so long, disappeared at this moment. Not being able to find the bowl, the Bodhisatta stretched out his right hand and accepted the water offered to him. Sujātā placed in the hand of the Great Being the milk-rice together with the bowl which contained it. [p.92]

According to this account, the Buddha takes this bowl of food to the bank of the Nairaṅjarā. He eats the food and then, places the golden bowl in the river. Upon doing so, he says,

If I succeed in becoming a Buddha, on this day, let this bowl go upstream; if not, let it go down the current. [NK, 93]

Of course, the bowl is carried forcibly upstream, foreshadowing the bodhisattva’s impending enlightenment.

This episode seems to be based on a Jātaka called the Palāsa Jātaka. Here, a bodhisattva comes to life in the form of a tree spirit and the brahmin who honours this tree spirit is rewarded by the discovery of a buried treasure. [Jātaka, III-IV.,15]

We find a strikingly similar episode in the PC. Although, it does not describe the bodhisattva placing the bowl in the river as the confirmation of his enlightenment.

According to all the sources, Siddhārtha’s five companions become disillusioned with him, because he has taken nourishment. They leave him and take up residence in the Isipatana park of Vārāṇasi.

The five mendicants, holding that he had renounced the holy life, left him, as the five elements leave the thinking soul when it is liberated. [BC 12:114]

All the accounts describe Siddhārtha’s enlightenment as taking place, in solitude, on the banks of the Nairaṅjarā river. This detail is probably based upon the following excerpt
from the MN [see Ariyapariyesana sutta]. Here, the Buddha describes to his disciples the setting for his enlightenment.

Then I, monks, a quester for whatever is good, searching for the incomparable, matchless path to peace, walking on tour through Magadha in due course arrived at Uruvelā, the camp township. There I saw a delightful stretch of land and a lovely woodland grove, and a clear flowing river with a delightful ford, and a village for support nearby. .... So I, monks, sat down just there, thinking: ‘Indeed this does well for striving’.[I. no.26, 166-167, p. 210-211]

Preparing the seat of Enlightenment:

All the biographies state that Siddhārtha prepared himself a seat made of Darbha grass under a tree, now known as the Bodhi tree [Bo tree], the tree of enlightenment. The BC mentions that he received grass for his seat from a grass-cutter.

Then, after the lordliest of serpents [Kāla] had thus extolled him, he took clean grass from a grass-cutter, and, betaking himself to the foot of the great pure tree, he made a vow for enlightenment and seated himself. [12: 119]

The NK also mentions him receiving grass from a grasscutter and names the grass-cutter, Sotthiya.

At that time a grass-seller named Sotthiya, who was coming from the opposite direction carrying a bundle of grass, offered the great being eight handfuls of grass, impressed with his bearing. [p.91]

The PC differs in mentioning the grass as being deposited by the Lord Brahmā. This reference to the god Brahmā bringing grass to the Buddha could be a way of showing the Buddha’s superiority over all beings, over even one of the supreme gods of Hinduism. It could also indicate a different understanding of the Brahmā world seen in Buddhist literature. Here, Brahmās are mentioned; but none of them is regarded as the highest

39 Uruvilā or Uruvelā in Pāli is a locality on the bank of the Nerañjarā, in the neighbourhood of the bodhi tree at Buddhagayā. [MV II., 119]
being in all creation. Those who give up their attachments to sense-desires and meditate on Mettā [love], Karunā [compassion], Muditā [sympathetic joy] and Upekkhā [equanimity] are reborn in the Brahmā world. Thus, the occupants of the Brahmā world are characterized by their interest in, and practice of, meditation. In this light, it seems fitting to have a Brahmā support Siddhārtha in his spiritual undertaking. [Story 1972, 26-28].

The PC mentions that the seat of enlightenment faces to the east. The reason for this is explained in the NK. It says,

The seat of meditation of all Buddha's is on the eastern side. It trembles not and shakes not. [p.94]

Here, the bodhisattva sits with the firm resolution not to rise until he attains enlightenment.

Then, he took up the supreme, immovable cross-legged posture with his limbs massed together like the coils of a sleeping serpent, saying, 'I will not rise from this position on the ground until I achieve the completion of my task.' [BC 12: 120]

Such resolve is similarly stated in the NK. Here, Siddhārtha says,

'Let only my skin, sinews and bones remain and let the flesh and blood in my body dry up, but not until I attain the supreme enlightenment will I give up this seat of meditation', and he sat down cross-legged on his seat, from which he could not be dislodged even if thunderbolts were hurled at him in the hundreds [pg.94].

According to all accounts, Siddhārtha was praised by the gods as he sat determined for enlightenment.

At this time the deities of the ten thousand world-spheres stood around the Great Being singing songs in praise of him. Sakka [Indra], the king of the deities, stood there blowing his conch-shell Vijayuttara. And this shell was two thousand cubits in circumference. When it is sounded once by blowing air into it, its blast lasts four months before the sound finally dies down. The Nāga king
Mahākāla stood singing his praises with over a hundred verses. The Great Brahmā stood there bearing the white parasol. [NK, 95]

The PC also describes the gods praising Siddhārtha before his enlightenment. Moreover, it mentions that these praises alerted the evil lord Māra.

**Battle with Māra**

What Māra symbolizes has been discussed at length in the Buddhist tradition. In brief, Māra is symbolic of the hindrances [āvarana] or obstacles [antarāya] which come in the way of the Buddhist practitioner. These can be manifested as internal desires or external nuisances which cause the practitioner to stray from the path. In Barua's article on Māra he says,

Māra represents a particular psychological aspect of man's nature. What makes a man's nature particularly human is a certain weakness of the will-power which asserts itself under varying circumstances of human life. This weakness is implanted deep in our nature; it overtakes or is apt to overtake all, though none feel its brunt so strongly as those who try to resist it constantly. It is, thus, through Māra that the Buddhist poets tried to bring the truly human character of the mendicants into prominence. [Barua 1915, 201-202]

It is in this light, that the Buddha associates Māra's forces with the mental defilements [Kilesas]. These are said to be factors which bring about degeneracy of the human mind and thereby, make more and more remote the prospects of release from the bonds of samsāra. [Malasekara 1961, 253]. In the following verses, the Buddha identifies Māra's forces with these defilements and says,

40 According to the legend, after eating the milk-rice given by Sujāta, Siddhārtha placed the bowl in the river. The bowl then went to the abode of the Nāga [serpent] king Mahākāla. Here, it came into contact with the bowls which had been similarly launched by the three previous Buddhas of this Kalpa. [Malalasekara 1960, 484]

41 The path refers to the Noble Eightfold Path which leads to the erradication of suffering [duhkha]. Its eight factors are right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. This path is called the middle way between the extremes of Indulgence in sense pleasures and self mortification. [Bhikkhu Bodhi 1984]
The foremost of your armies is that of Desire, the second is called Dislike, the
Third is Hunger/Thirst and the fourth is Craving.
The fifth is the army of Lethargy/Laziness and the sixth is Fear. The seventh is
Doubt and the eighth is Obstinacy/Restlessness.
Then there are also material gain, praise, honour and fame obtained by wrongful
means. One may also think highly of oneself and disparage others. [SN [Padhāna
Sutta] 12-14, 48 ]

This conflict with Māra under the Bodhi tree is not considered the sole struggle with
Māra, for according to the SN [see Māra Samyutta], Māra pursued the Buddha for seven
years, six years before and one year after his enlightenment.42 This encompasses the
time after he renounced his worldly life, the time of the struggle for enlightenment, and
includes the first year in his career as a teacher, the time he was working towards the
establishment of the Dhamma [teaching] and Sangha [Buddhist community].
Māra also visited the Buddha just prior to his death as is recorded in the important
Mahāparinibbāna Sutta of the DN. Here, he encourages the Buddha to pass into the state
of final/complete liberation which is death. He says,

Lord, may the Blessed Lord now attain final Nibbāna. Now is the time for the
Blessed Lord’s final Nibbāna....
At this the Lord said to Māra—you need not worry Evil One. The Tathāgata’s final
passing will not be long delayed. Three months from now, the Tathāgata will
take final Nibbāna. [i 107, 247]

Māra’s temptations have been elaborated upon in later Buddhist literature. The
biographies of the Buddha highlight the extraordinary fortitude and discipline of the
Buddha by embellishing Māra’s forces. Here, distraction is in the form of an army which
provides a horrifying opposition to the Bodhisattva. Āśvaghoṣa describes this menacing
force in the following verses:

42 The Māra Samyutta and Bhikkhuni Samyutta of the Samyutta Nikāya contain the most substantial
material on Māra’s temptations in the Pāli canon.
Having the faces of boars, fishes, horses, asses and camels, or the countenances of tigers, bears, lions and elephants, one-eyed, many-mouthed, three-headed, with pendulous bellies and speckled bellies.
Without knees or thighs, or with knees as vast as pots, or armed with tusks or talons, or with skulls for faces, or with many bodies, or with half their faces broken off, or with huge visages...[13: 19-20].

According to the PC, Siddhartha is assaulted by Mara and his four-limbed army, comprised of elephants, chariots, cavalry and infantry. A four-fold army is also mentioned in the MV. It says,

The wretched Mara, discomfited, consumed by the sting within him armed his great four-fold army and advanced to the bodhi tree. [MV, II., 264]

In the NK, LV and BC, what is emphasized is the magnitude of Mara's forces. The NK says,

Mara's army in battle array was a column twelve yojanas long in front of him and twelve yojanas each on either flank [to the right and left of him]; behind him it extended as far as the edge of the universe, and upward to the height of nine yojanas. [NK p.95].

The PC mentions that Mara first approached Siddhartha on a spectacular elephant called Girimekhala. The NK is the only other text which associates Mara with this elephant.

At that time the devaputta Mara, thinking, 'Prince Siddhattha wishes to go beyond my control: but I will not give him the opportunity to do so", went and announced to his forces and marched forward with them uttering the characteristic battle-cry of Mara...

The devaputta Mara, mounted on the elephant called Girimekhala, which was one hundred and fifty yojanas in height, armed himself with diverse weapons creating a thousand hands. [p.95]
According to the PC, Māra used various means to distract Siddhārtha. First, he caused great noise and dust to disturb the ascetic. Then, he used his flower arrows. When those were ineffective he resorted to a great wind, and finally the arrows of speech. A multi-faceted attack by Māra is also described in the NK.

Māra was unable to put the bodhisattva to flight with these nine storms of wind, rain, rocks, missiles, embers, ashes, sand, mud and darkness. He ordered his followers, ‘My men, why do you stand so still? Capture this prince or smite him or put him to flight.’ He, himself, advanced upon the bodhisatta, mounted on the back of Girimekhala, armed with a disc-weapon, and cried out, ‘Rise, Siddhattha, from the seat...It is not meant for you. It goes to me.’ [p.97]

What is emphasized, in all the accounts, is the complete ineffectuality of such forces on Siddhārtha’s person. The BC states,

As they stood there in such guise, horrible in appearance and manner, he was no more alarmed by them or shrank before them than before over-excited infants at play. [13:36]

Moreover, Māra’s forces are said to be transformed when they encounter the bodhisattva. The PC describes Māra’s arrows being turned into flowers. The BC and NK also record such transformations.

But the shower of hot coals, scattered full of sparks at the foot of the Bodhi tree, became a shower of red lotus petals through the exercise of universal benevolence on the part of the best of the sages. [BC, 13:42]

Being unable to restrain the vehemence of his temper, Māra hurled his discus at the Great Being. But it turned into a canopy of garlands and remained above him while he was reflecting on the ten perfections...[NK p.97]

The greater and different strength of Siddhārtha is nicely described in the PC. Here, Māra’s forces are said to be dispelled by his mere tapping of the earth. This is also highlighted in the MV. It says,
He, the Lord of the Bipeds, struck the earth with a hand soft as cotton....
Then, because of the might of the Bodhisattva, Māra left the neighbourhood of the Bodhi tree. [MV, II, 366]

In the same text, Māra is said to have been defeated by the sound of Siddhārtha's cough.

Māra, having donned his great armour and coming near to the Bodhisattva was routed by the mere sound of the Bodhisattva’s cough.[MV, II, 364]

These episodes seem to be based upon a tradition contained in the Māra Samyutta of the SN. Here, Māra is defeated simply upon being known by the Bodhisattva.

Then Māra thought: The Exalted One knows me! The Blessed One knows me, and sad and sorrowful, he vanished there and then. [SN, I, 137]

Hence, it is the knowledge of Māra and Māra’s forces which render them ineffective. In the later Buddha biographies, the emphasis is not so much on the bodhisattva’s knowledge/wisdom as the means for defeating Māra’s opposition, but on the bodhisattva being invincible through the cultivation of perfections. According to the LV and NK accounts, the tapping of the earth by the bodhisattva is symbolic of his calling upon the earth to act as a witness to these great virtues.

"Let this great and solid earth, non-sentient as it is, be my witness to the seven hundredfold great alms I gave when I was born as Vessantara43;" and extricating his right hand from underneath the folds of his robe he stretched it out towards the earth saying, “Are you or are you not witness to my having given the seven hundredfold alms in my birth as Vessantara?” And the great earth resounded with a hundred thousand echos as though to overwhelm the forces of Māra, and saying as it were, “I was your witness to it then.” [NK, 98]

43This refers to a very famous Jātaka describing the Buddha’s last human birth before Buddhahood. Here, King Vessantara practiced the perfection of giving [Dāna Pāramīta] by bestowing on his suppliants, not only his wealth, but even his wife and children.
The earth responds with great tremblings and these scare Māra and Māra's forces. The PC does not include the response of the earth. It simply describes Māra's army fleeing after the bodhisattva taps the earth.

The account contained in the BC is slightly different. Here, Māra's forces flee after being convinced by 'Some Great Being' of the futility of their opposition.

Then a certain being of high station and invisible form, standing in the sky and seeing that Māra was menacing the seer, and without cause of enmity was displaying wrath, addressed him with imperious voice: "Māra, you should not toil to no purpose, give up your murderous intent and go in peace. For this sage can no more be shaken by you than Meru, greatest of mountains, by the wind." [13: 56].

According to the NK and l. V, the bodhisattva is lastly approached by beautiful women who tempt him with various pleasures and sensual delights. These women are usually referred to as the daughters of Māra. The BC associates them with the psychological phenomena of Discontent [Arati], Delight [Priti] and Thirst [Trṣṇa]. Although Aśvaghoṣa refers to them, he does not describe them tempting Siddhārtha. According to the Lalitavistara, the three daughters are called Pleasure [Rati], Discontent [Arati] and Thirst [Trṣṇā]. The Pāli canon [see Māra Samyutta] refers to them as Passion [Ragā], Discontent [Arati] and Thirst [Tānḥā]. Here, they approach Siddhārtha and say,

Is it because you are sunk in grief that you meditate in the woods.? Or, Are you downcast at the loss of wealth? Perhaps, you are desiring wealth.? Or, has some misdeed taken place within the village.? Why don't you make friends with other folks.? Is there no one with whom you can be friends.? [SN [Māra Samyutta] I. no.5, 156 ]

The PC mentions women tempting Siddhārtha after Māra's other forces have failed. They are not, however, identified as Māra's daughters.

In the NK account, the temptation by the daughters of Māra also takes place after Māra's opposition has failed. The suggestion is that they feel sorry for their father [Māra] and attempt to do what he has been unable to accomplish. According to this account, the Buddha, after attaining enlightenment, spends seven weeks dwelling under various trees
reflecting upon his newfound insights. It is in this context that Māra’s daughters approach him.

At that time Taṅha, Aratī and Rāgā, the three daughters of Māra, looked for him [Māra] saying, 'Our father is not to be seen, where could he be now?'; they saw him, dejected as he was, scratching on the ground. Seeing him, they ran to their father and asked, 'Father, why are you so sad and down-hearted?'

My dears, this Great Recluse, has now passed beyond my control. I have watched for so long, yet have not been able to see an opportunity to seize him. Therefore, I am sad and down-hearted'.

'If that be so, do not vex yourself. We will bring him under our power and lead him to you.' [NK, 105].

In the NK, Māra’s daughters tempt the Buddha by taking on the forms of various women:

The daughters of Māra went up to the Blessed One six times, saying, 'O monk, we will attend on you as your wives', each one having miraculously presented herself in a hundred different guises as virgins, as women who had not borne children, who had given birth to one child, who had two children, or as women in middle age or as elderly women, thinking to themselves, 'Varied are the expectations of men; some are attracted by virgins, some by women in the prime of youth, some by women in middle age and some others by older women. Let us entice him in all possible ways.' And the Blessed One paid no attention even to that. [NK, 106, Recent Epoch]

This is different from the PC where temptation is in the form of a grand and erotic dance and then, in the form of alluring speeches. In these speeches, the women make reference to the self sacrificial quality of the bodhisattva. They refer to his past lives where he gave away his head and eyes for the sake of others. In their attempt at seduction, the women ask Siddhārtha why, when he has been so generous with his being in other contexts, he is now unable to even look at them appreciatively. The NK also mentions this self sacrificial quality of the bodhisattva. Just before being approached by Māra’s daughters, the Buddha is described as having had the following reflection.
It is for the sake of this throne of victory that during this long interval I severed my crowned head from my neck and gave it away, gave away my colyrinum-painted eyes, tore out the flesh from my heart and gave it away, and gave away to work as slaves for others such sons as Prince Jāli, such daughters as Kaññāji and such wives as Princess Maddī. [pg. 104 recent epoch NK]

The temptation by Māra's daughters is the first episode in the recent epoch [Santike Nidāna] of the NK. This is the only event in the PC narrative which falls outside of the boundaries of the Intermediate epoch [Avidūre Nidāna] as recorded in the NK.

Since, the biography of the Buddha contained in the PC ends with Siddhārtha's overcoming of Māra, I will not present the details of the Buddha's life after enlightenment in this work. This information can be found in the Mahāvagga of the Vinaya Piṭaka and the Majjhima Nikāya [Sutta no.26] of the Sutta Piṭaka.44

44According to the legend, after attaining enlightenment the Buddha was unsure whether to teach his new found insights. For, he suspected that the dhamma would be difficult to understand and that people would have resistance to hearing such truths. However, he is persuaded to teach others by Brahmā Sahampati. The legend says, that the Buddha first thought of his teachers Āḷara and Uddaka as suitable to hear the dhamma but was told by the deities that they had recently died. He then thought of his five companions of his wanderings and ascetic practices before his enlightenment. Through his insight he placed them near Vārānasi [Benares] in the Deer Park of Isipatana. On seeing him approaching, the ascetics first resolved to treat the Buddha with disrespect, remembering him as the one who had give up strict austerities. However, the five former companions are portrayed as receiving the Buddha with respect, in spite of themselves, and becoming the Buddha's first disciples.
CONCLUSION:

THE Padyacūḍāmaṇi AS A BIOGRAPHY OF THE BUDDHA:

The Padyacūḍāmaṇi and its relationship to the Nidānakathā

What comes to light in comparing the PC with these other biographies of the Buddha is its striking similarity to the Aṣṭavijñāna Nidāna [Intermediate Epoch] of the NK account. In fact, it is hard to believe that the author of the PC did not have this portion of the text in hand when composing his work. The following are the similarities between these two texts. The agreement in relatively insignificant details, in details that do not matter much to the central theme [enlightenment] of Buddha biographies is particularly revealing.

The NK begins by describing the gods approaching the bodhisattva and imploring him to take birth for the benefit of humankind. This scene is strikingly similar to the one contained in the PC. The NK mentions that, in his youth, the bodhisattva is called upon to prove his skill in weaponry. We find a similar episode included in the PC. According to the PC, the bodhisattva continues his journey to the pleasure grove despite seeing the four visions predicted at his birth. This continued journey to the pleasure grove is also included in the PC account.

The NK mentions that Siddhārtha enjoys himself in the pleasure grove. In this account his mood does not seem to have been affected by the four visions. Similarly, the PC portrays Siddhārtha enjoying himself amongst the various pleasures. Moreover, the NK states that the prince not only plays in a park but also in a pool of the park. The details of his play in both a park and a pool are also found in the PC’s narrative.

In the NK, there is a scene which describes the bodhisattva’s disenchantment with worldly life. Here, the bodhisattva is being entertained by the seductive dances of beautiful women and it is at that moment that his disinterest in worldly life is expressed. We find a strikingly similar scene of disenchantment in the PC.

The name of Siddhārtha’s charioteer is Channa in the NK. The PC also refers to Siddhārtha’s charioteer as Channa. This deems the PC different from the other Sanskrit biographies [see the BC, MV and LV] where the charioteer is referred to as Chandaka.

According to the NK, Ānoma, the place to which Siddhartha first flees, is the name of a river, thirty yojanas away. The PC also associates Ānoma with a river and specifies it
as being thirty yojanas from Kapilā [Kapilavastu]. The NK makes an allusion to the crossing of the river Anomā being like the crossing of the ocean of Samsāra. This is also found in the PC.

According to the NK, after abandoning his worldly possessions, the bodhisattva receives ascetic's attire from a great Brahmā. The PC also refers to a Brahmā depositing the attire of an ascetic for Siddhārtha.

The NK includes the Buddha’s first excursion as a mendicant in its narrative. He is said to have gone to the city of King Bimbisāra. This excursion to Bimbisāra’s city is also present in the PC. According to the NK, after having received alms in Bimbisāra’s city, Siddhārtha takes those alms to Mount Paṇḍava. An episode describing the bodhisattva seated on a mountain eating his alms is also included in the PC. The NK mentions five dreams that the bodhisattva has before enlightenment. The PC also makes reference to these five dreams.

According to all sources, Siddhārtha receives milk-rice from Sujātā in order to regain his strength for meditation. The NK contains a peculiar version of this meeting with Sujātā, which is not found in any other biography of the Buddha. Here, Sujātā mistakes the bodhisattva for a tree god and worships him with food which is placed in a most valuable golden bowl. A parallel episode is found in the PC.

In the NK, the seat of enlightenment is made of grass and is specified as facing the eastern direction. The PC includes both of these details in its narrative.

The NK says that the bodhisattva is praised by the gods as he sits determined to attain enlightenment. The PC includes a long description of these praises and also makes reference to Māra hearing these praises and then becoming aware of the Bodhisattva’s intention.

According to the NK, Māra first approaches the bodhisattva seated upon a magnificent elephant named Girimekhala. The PC also describes Māra approaching the bodhisattva seated on this elephant. This elephant is not mentioned in any of the other biographies. In the NK, Māra is defeated when the bodhisattva calls upon the earth to act as a witness to his virtue. This event is included in the PC’s narrative.

The NK describes Māra’s attack upon Siddhārtha as a multi-faceted attack. This is also highlighted by the author of the PC.

According to the NK, when Māra’s forces have failed his daughter’s attempt to distract the bodhisattva. The PC also includes women tempting the bodhisattva after Māra’s troops fail. The NK draws upon various Jātakas to illuminate the self sacrificial quality of the bodhisattva. In the temptation by Māra’s daughters, contained in the PC, a
reference is made to the bodhisattva's past lives where he gives away his eyes and head for the sake of others. These specific incidents are also mentioned in the NK.

The only narrative detail, found in the PC, which falls outside the bounds of the Avidüre Nidāna [Intermediate epoch] of the NK is the temptation by Māra's daughters. This, however, is the first incident in the Santike Nidāna [Recent epoch] and is thematically related to the previous section.

The similarity between the NK and the PC is made more interesting by the fact that the prose and word commentaries of the NK have, also, been attributed to Buddhaghosa. However, Buddhaghosa's authorship of the NK has been questioned because of its very different style from his other works. B.C. Law says,

I have omitted the Jātaka commentary from my list of the works of Buddhaghosa although this may appear to be somewhat astounding to many. A careful comparison of the style and language of the Jātaka commentary with the style and language of the works of Buddhaghosa shows convincingly that the Jātaka commentary was not the composition of Buddhaghosa. [Hazra 1991, 121].

Winternitz agrees with Law and also questions Buddhaghosa's authorship of the Dhammapada commentary. He says,

In the case of these two works the term 'commentary' is indeed as ill-suited as the expression 'author'. For, in both these works only very little space is taken by the commentary, i.e. the grammatical and lexical explanation of the verses, whereas stories, more precisely, sermons in the form of stories form the main constituent. [1983 II., 186]

These comments about the peculiarity of style of the Jātaka and Dhammapada commentaries could, all the more, be applied to the PC which distinguishes itself in being Buddhaghosa's only poem and only Sanskrit work.

In the following section I would like to present the legend surrounding Buddhaghosa's life to give a more clear picture of why the PC would be an unusual work for him. What I would like to suggest is that Buddhaghosa's name has been associated with the PC, not because Buddhaghosa was the author of this text, but because this text corresponded so closely with the NK account which was ascribed to Buddhaghosa. This
name could have been given by the author as a recognition of his/her indebtedness to this work or by someone else who recognized the similarities between these two biographical accounts.

BHADANTĀCARIYA BUDDHAGHOSA

The legend surrounding Buddhaghosa's life:

Very little is known about Buddhaghosa's life. The little information that is available comes primarily from two sources, the Mahāvamsa, [late 5th-6th century A.D.], a historical piece on the chronology of the Sinhalese Kings, and the Buddhaghosuppatti, composed in Burma45 by an elder called Mahāmañgala, probably in the fifteenth century. Both these sources highlight that Buddhaghosa was formerly a brahmin who, upon being impressed by a Buddhist monk Revata, converted to Buddhism.

There was a Brahman student who was born near the site of the Enlightenment Tree. He was acquainted with the arts and accomplishments of the sciences and was qualified in the Vedas. He was well versed in what he knew and unhesitant over any phrase. Being interested in doctrines, he wandered over Jambudīpa [India] engaging in disputation.

He came to a certain monastery, and there in the night he recited Pātañjali's system with each phrase complete and well rounded. The senior elder there, Revata by name, recognized, 'This is a being of great understanding who ought to be tamed'. He said 'Who is that braying the ass's bray?'. The other asked, 'What then, do you know the meaning of the ass's bray?'. The elder answered, 'I know it', and he then not only expounded it himself, but explained each statement in the proper way and also pointed out contradictions. The other then urged him, 'Now expound your own doctrine', and the elder repeated a text from the

45 This interest in Buddhaghosa by the Burmese Buddhists is due to the fact that Buddhaghosa is credited with bringing the Buddha's teachings to Burma. The Burmese tradition says that after Buddhaghosa finished his work in Sri Lanka he went to Burma. Scholars doubt this as a historical fact. Nevertheless, it is clear that his works, like the Visuddhimagga and Aṭṭhasālini, influenced Buddhism in Burma from a very early time [Hazra 1991, 98. Also see Rahula 1956].
Abhidhamma\textsuperscript{46}, but the visitor could not solve its meaning. He asked, ‘whose system is this?’, and the elder replied, 'It is the Enlightened One's system'. 'Give it to me', he said, but the elder answered, 'you will have to take the going forth into homelessness.' So he took the going forth, since he was interested in the system..... [Mahāvamsa, ch.37, vs. 215-47].

The Mahāvamsa states that after his conversion to Buddhism, Buddhaghosā wrote a book entitled Nānodaya [the arising of knowledge] and then a commentary upon the Dhammasaṅgani\textsuperscript{47} called the Atthasālinī. He then began to compile a commentary upon the Paritta, but was advised to go to Sri Lanka, for only there was the commentarial tradition preserved.\textsuperscript{48} [K.R. Norman 160].

Revata says-

Here only the text has been preserved. There is no commentary here, and likewise no Teachers' Doctrine; for that has been allowed to go to pieces and is no longer known. However, a Sinhalese commentary still exists, which is pure. It was rendered into Sinhalese tongue by the learned Mahinda with proper regard for the way of commenting that was handed down by the three Councils as taught

\textsuperscript{46} The Thera\textv{ā}da tradition deems the Abhidhamma the domain proper of the Buddhas. Its initial conception in the Buddha's mind, according to the Aṭṭhasālinī, is traced to the time immediately after the great enlightenment. It was on the fourth of the seven weeks spent by the Buddha in the environ of the Bodhi tree that the Abhidhamma was conceived [Nyanaponika 1949, 2-3].

\textsuperscript{47} The Dhammasaṅgani is the first book of the seven books of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka. It consists of an enumeration of various possible psychic elements or dhammas and brings together into systematic arrangement terms which occur throughout earlier books of the Sutta Piṭaka [Dharmasena 1963, 5]. The Paritta [in Pāli, Paritṛaṇa in Sanskrit and Pirit [Pirith] in Sinhala] consist of twenty four discourses selected from the five Nikāya's. These discourses are said to give protection to those who listen to them or recite them. [Piyadassi 1975, 12].

\textsuperscript{48} The Piṭakas or teaching of the Buddha which were being handed down orally were committed to writing in 397 B.E [87 B.C] in Sri Lanka. The commentaries on these, composed in Sinhalese, were also committed to writing at this time. Since this period much by way of exegetical work in Sinhalese was added and during the next five hundred years literary activity progressed considerably. By about 896 B.E. [410 A.D], when king Mahānāma reigned at Anurādhapura, the fame of Buddhist literature in Sri Lanka was recognized throughout India. Tradition mentions Sinhalese Buddhist monks visiting India, China and other countries and introducing the literature produced in Sri Lanka. Also, monks from India and China were said to have visited Anurādhapura to procure Buddhist books. It was about this time that Buddhaghosā Thera came to Sri Lanka. [Perera 1988, 38]
by the Enlightened One and inculcated by Sāriputta and others. Go there, and after you have learnt it translate it into the language of the Magadhans\textsuperscript{49}. That will bring benefit to the whole world’. As soon as this was said, he [Buddhaghosa] made up his mind to set out. [Mahāvaṃśa 37, 215–47]

Buddhaghosa is said to have arrived in Sri Lanka during the reign of King Mahānāma [409–431] and stayed at the Mahāvihāra monastery in Anurādhapura [Perera 1988, 39]. It is here that he is said to have worked on his numerous translations of the Sinhalese Aṭṭhakathās [commentaries]. The Aṭṭhakathās are best described as exegetical treatises on the texts of the Pāli canon. Their main objective was to explain difficult words and obscure points of doctrine that occur in the texts and also to give additional explanatory information, wherever it was deemed necessary. [Malalasekara 1928, 89]

In this light, Buddhaghosa’s role was not to be a original thinker or to create original works, but to faithfully translate those texts which elucidated the teachings of the Buddha. However, in so far as Buddhaghosa selected to leave out materials from the Sinhalese literature, which he felt were unnecessary or repetitive, he has also been deemed creative of the Pāli Buddhist tradition.\textsuperscript{50} Thus, Malalasekara says,

Faced often with conflicting views, contradictory assertions, and sometimes incompatible doctrines, he [Buddhaghosa] had to expunge, abridge, enlarge, and make new a commentary of his own. [Malalasekara 1928, 93]

\textsuperscript{49} The original language of the canon is said to have been Māgadhī, the language of the Magadhans, among whom the doctrine was first spread. But the present scriptures are preserved by the Sinhalese, Burmese and Thai in a dialect known from the time of the commentaries as Pāli [lit., ‘text’ of the scriptures]. There is no general agreement among scholars as to the district where this dialect originated [Thomas 1931, 19].

\textsuperscript{50} The old Sinhalese commentaries from which Buddhaghosa drew material for the compilation of the Pāli commentaries are occasionally named in his works. The Mahā [or mūla] Aṭṭhakathā occupied the foremost position among them while the Mahāpaccari Aṭṭhakathā and the Kurundi Aṭṭhakathā were also important. These three major works probably contained exegetical material on all the three Piṭakas. Apart from these there were other works like the Sankhepatthakathā, Vinayaṭṭhakathā, Abhidhammaṭṭhakathā and separate commentaries on the four Nikāyas. References to numerous other sources like the Andhakatthakathā, the Ācariyā [or teachers] and the Porāṇā [or Ancient masters] are also found in Buddhaghosa’s works. Buddhaghosa’s commentaries become all the more important since the old Sinhalese commentaries gradually went out of vogue and were completely lost after the tenth century [Perera 1988, 40].
Buddhaghosa's works

What is highlighted by the legend surrounding Buddhaghosa's life is his keen interest in the Buddha's teachings. We are told that upon hearing the dharma [teachings] he was inspired to write and reflect upon these insights. Thus, it is not surprising that he is credited with a great number of works whose objective is the clarification of the Buddha's words.

The works traditionally ascribed to Buddhaghosa are commentaries on the Vināyapiṭaka [Samantapāsādikā], the Dīghanikāya [Sumanagalavīlāsini], the Majjhimanikāya [Papañcasūdanī], the Samyuttanikāya [Sāratthappakāsini] and the Aṅguttaranikāya [Manorathapūraṇī]. Perhaps his most famous work is the Visuddhimagga [the path of purification] which serves as a manual for meditation.

Moreover in the Gandhavamśa, probably written in Burma in the seventeenth century, the commentaries Kaṇkhāvitaranī [to the Paṭimokkhas], Paramatṭhakathā [to the seven books of the Abhidhamma piṭaka] and the commentaries to the Khuddakapāṭha, to the Dhammapada, to the Suttanipāta, to the Jātaka and to the Apadāna are ascribed to him. [Winternitz 1983 Vol.2, 185] As was mentioned before, the Jātaka and Apadāna commentaries have been questioned as authentic works of Buddhaghosa due to their very different style and language.

According to the legend, Buddhaghosa was a Buddhist scholar. That is to say, his primary interest was in elucidating the Buddha's reflections and teachings. From the presentation of the PC's narrative, it is obvious that this was not the primary concern of its author. For, the author of this text often leaves out, or scantily mentions, those events in the Buddha's life which are characteristically Buddhist. We find no reflections on Siddhārtha's disenchantment with worldly life or his struggle to find a path for liberation recorded in this poem. Furthermore, the author is not concerned with presenting a comprehensive account of the Buddha's life, for he often excludes important details and formative events recorded in the other Buddha biographies. In the following discussion, I will note what has been excluded or scantily dealt with by the author of the PC. This will support the position that this text should not be considered primarily as a Buddhist work. It also raises doubts as to whether this work is indeed that of the Buddhist scholar Bhadantačariya Buddhaghosa.
THE PECULIARITIES OF THE PADIYACŪDĀMAṆI:

Why the PC is primarily not a Buddhist work:

According to the Buddhist tradition, a bodhisattva is an extraordinary being. The author of the PC highlights this fact by recording the many miracles that take place at the bodhisattva’s birth. However, he fails to mention many details, included in the other biographies, which exemplify this point. For example, the PC does not mention the dream Queen Māyā had before Siddhartha’s conception. In this dream, an elephant enters her side. This incident symbolizes the immaculate nature of the conception. Nor, does the PC mention the length of Queen Māyā’s pregnancy which is specified as being an unusual, ten months. Furthermore, the PC describes the bodhisattva’s birth as taking place in a very ordinary manner. According to this account, the child is born in the inner apartments of the palace, along with attendants. The other biographies state that Queen Māyā gives birth standing up in the Lumbinī grove. The PC also fails to mention the newborn’s extraordinary characteristics. For, he is said to be possessed of the thirty-two marks of a great man. This highlights the belief, contained in the Pāli canon, that the Buddha is one in a line of Buddhas and hence, can be distinguished by his characteristic markings. Moreover, the PC does not mention that, upon this baby’s birth, he is supposed to have articulated the knowledge that he is the Buddha—to-be. Since the emphasis in the PC is on illuminating the joy that King Śuddhodana and Queen Māyā feel at the bodhisattva’s birth, there is no mention of Queen Māyā’s death one week after the birth of her son. According to the tradition, all mothers of bodhisattvas die one week after giving birth. Due to the absence of this detail, the PC does not mention Mahāprajāpati Gautamī [the younger sister of Queen Māyā], who is, in the other biographies, given credit for raising the bodhisattva. A very significant absence in the PC is its failure to mention the visit by the Sage Asita. Asita is able to read the signs of a great man and, through such powers, prophesied that this newborn will be the saviour of human beings. The PC also leaves out the visit by the brahmins who predict that Siddhārtha will see certain signs that will lead him to enlightenment. With these absences, it is not clear why the prince has been indulged in pleasure and protected from distressing and painful situations. Although, the PC’s narrative includes Siddhārtha’s sight of these four prophesied visions, it only makes a brief reference to this episode and does not investigate the psychological impact these sights may make on Siddhārtha.
According to the PC, after seeing these visions Siddhârtha continues his pleasure outing. The author describes, in great detail, Siddhârtha's play in the pleasure grove. From this presentation it is not apparent that these visions have had any impact on Siddhârtha's being. For, we find no articulation of disillusionment with these pleasures or any indication of a growing disenchantment with his present state. The PC fails to mention Râhula's birth, which is said to have taken place on the very day that Siddhârtha decides to renounce his princely life. This episode illustrates the inevitable and human pain involved in the bodhisattva's commitment to enlightenment. The PC briefly mentions that Siddhârtha became engaged in severe ascetic practices as he forged his path to enlightenment. However, it does not mention such important and formative details as his meeting with his first teachers or his wanderings with his five companion ascetics. Although the PC states that Siddhârtha was engaged in practices which were not conducive to enlightenment it does not give reasons as to why these practices were ineffective or provide us with any reflections that Siddhrthâ may have had as he sought to change his method.

In describing the battle with Mâra on the banks of the Nairâñjâra which is, according to all the biographies, an event that takes place before enlightenment, the PC simply presents a heroic episode where the army of the Evil Lord is overcome by the fortitude of the bodhisattva. Such a presentation of the Mâra-bodhisattva episode is lacking in its Buddhist associations which can be found in the other biographical accounts. Here, the focus is on a horrifying, four-limbed army, comprised of elephants, chariots, cavalry and infantry and not the ten psychological defilements which are deemed 'Mâra's army' in other texts. The symbol of Mâra is used in a very different way in Buddhaghosa's other works. For example, in the Visuddhimagga, Buddhaghosa illuminates how Mâra can be utilized to explain the characteristics of a Bhagavâ or enlightened one:

He [the Buddha] can be called this because the following menaces have been abolished by him. He has abolished all the hundred thousand kinds of trouble, anxiety and defilement classed as greed, hatred and delusion, and as misdirected attention, as anger and enmity, as contempt and domineering, as envy and avarice, as deceit and fraud, as obturacy and presumption, as pride and haughtiness, as vanity and negligence, as craving and ignorance; as the three roots of the unprofitable, kinds of misconduct, defilement, stains, fictitious perceptions, applied thoughts, bonds, bad ways, cravings and clingings; as the
five wildernesses in the heart, shackles in the heart, hindrances, and kinds of delight; as the six roots of discord, and groups of craving; as the seven inherent tendencies; as the eight wrongnesses; as the nine things rooted in craving; as the ten courses of unprofitable action; as the sixty two kinds of [false] view; as the hundred and eight ways of behaviour of craving—or in brief the five Māra's, that is to say, the Māra's of defilement, of the aggregates, and of kamma formations, Māra as deity and Māra as death. [Visuddhimagga VII 59]

Here, Māra is fivefold; associated with the defilements, the aggregates\textsuperscript{51} (khandha) Kamma, death and a deity. Such an understanding of Māra is discussed at length in James Boyd's book entitled, Satan and Māra. Here, he draws upon discussions found in the Śravakabhūmi of Asaṅga and the Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra ascribed to Nagarjuna [see Boyd 1975, 108-111]. Boyd shows how this reference to a plurality of Māra is a way of highlighting the Buddhist insight into the extent of pain and suffering that characterize samsāric experience. For we are trapped by the Evil lord Māra through our psychological states [defilements], through our wrong conceptualization of self [the skhandhas], through our actions which further promote suffering experience [kamma], through our adherence to an everenduring cycle of death and birth, and because most of our experience seems out of our control, that is to say, under the lordship of some evil lord, like Māra. Thus, Māra becomes an important way of talking about both our suffering experience and the possibility to break from this state. In the following passage, the Buddha teaches his disciples by identifying the conditions for Māra's power. He says,

\begin{quote}
The pleasure seeker who finds delight in physical objects, whose senses are unsubdued, who is immoderate in eating, indolent and listless, him Māra [the Evil One] prevails against, as does the monsoon wind against a weak rooted tree.

He who perceives no pleasure in physical objects, who has perfect control over the senses, is moderate in eating, who is unflinching in faith, energetic, him
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{51}What is illuminated here is the dangers involved with identifying the five khandhas [the five khandhas are the aggregate of matter [rupakkhandha], the aggregate of sensations [vedanākkhandha], the aggregate of perceptions [saññākkhandha], the aggregate of mental formations [saṃkhārakkhandha] and the aggregate of consciousness [viññānakkhandha]], with the notion of a permanent and unchanging self. For this identification will inevitably result in suffering due to the inherently impermanent nature of these constituent parts. [Rahula 1959, 21-28]
Māra does not prevail against any more than does the wind against a rocky mountain. [Dhammapada vs. 7 and 8]

In this light, how Māra is understood by the PC may indicate the the unlikelihood of the PC being a text by Buddhaghosa. For, we can see that Buddhaghosa was clearly aware of the Buddhist insights revealed through the Māra symbol. The description of Māra presented in the PC seems to be strangely physical for one so well versed in the meanings of the Buddhist tradition.

Moreover, the author of the PC does not explore the content of the bodhisattva's enlightenment or what has been overcome for enlightenment. He simply states that Siddhārtha, after overcoming Māra, is now free. Buddhaghosa's other works are keenly interested in the experience of liberation and what is overcome for this experience. [see the Visuddhimagga].

Buddhaghosa's only poem:

The PC is also peculiar in being Buddhaghosa's only poem. The poetic focus of this work is exemplified by the choice of a title for this work. For, in deeming it the crest jewel of poetry, the author gives us no indication of the subject matter of this work. Instead, he highlights his objective which is to create a superior work of poetry. This differs from the other biographies of the Buddha which attempt to suggest the subject matter of the works through the titles. It seems that for this author there was nothing particularly inspiring about the Buddha's life. He simply picked a well known story that had poetic potential.

To create his poetry, the author presents Siddhārtha's life as a series of selected and embellished moments instead of a detailed and comprehensive account. He selects those events which he sees as having poetic potential such as Siddhārtha's youth, his marriage, his play in the pleasure grove, his battle with Māra, and provides these events with elaborate description. Moreover, he inserts descriptions of the seasons and the setting of the sun and rising of the moon within the narrative of the PC which, although not intrinsic to the Buddha's life, are suggested by Danḍin as ingredients for a Mahākāvya.

It is possible that this title was given to the work by another person. Nevertheless, the choice of title is significant. It highlights the fact that what was appreciated about this work was its poetry.
The objective of such poetry is to range over the whole field of human experience and thus, all the ends of human existence should be explored by the poet. These ends are traditionally referred to as *Artha* [wealth, including power], *Kāma* [pleasure], *Dharma* [virtue] and *Mokṣa* [release from transmigratory existence]. Warder notes that because of such a convention, the story tends to lose its individual character and to become a general expression of the pursuit of these ideals, a generalized symbol of human endeavour. [Warder 1972, 171]. Thus, the author does not simply present the Buddha legend as a story of renunciation but illuminates Siddhārtha in all his youthful glory, in his love for Yaśodharā, enjoying himself amongst various pleasures, and in his fortitude against the frightening and powerful opposition of Māra. Correspondingly, because the focus is on the universal experience rather than the particular, it is fitting that the author of the PC has not included too many of Siddhārtha’s personal reflections or specific and defining characteristics in this work.

This poetic focus is uncharacteristic of Buddhaghosa’s other works and hence, the PC is abberant in its style and expression.

**Buddhaghosa’s only Sanskrit work:**

The PC is also unique in being written in Sanskrit, for Buddhaghosa is renowned as a Pāli scholar. The significance of Buddhaghosa’s role in the elevation and revitalization of the Pāli language is discussed tangentially, in Steve Collin’s article “On the very idea of the Pāli Canon.” Here, he highlights the importance of the rivalry between the Abhayagiri and Mahāvihārin monks to the formation of the canon. He shows how the construction of a closed body of literature, like the Pāli canon, should be seen as linked to a strategy of self definition and self legitimation by the Mahāvihārin monks [Collins 1990, 10].

As it was first used, the term Mahāvihāra was appropriately applied to the first great monastery at Anurādhapura, established by Devānampiya Tissa. The monks residing at the Mahāvihāra were naturally called Mahāvihāraravāsins, ‘Residents of the Mahāvihāra’. Originally, all the Bhikkhus [monks] in Sri Lanka, wherever they lived, owed their ecclesiastical allegiance to the Mahāvihāra at Anurādhapura; and thus all monastaries were affiliated to the great monastery as its branches. In the course of time, however, the unity of the Buddhistsangha [community] was disturbed. In the first century C.E., we find the rise of the Abhayagiri monks. These monks had begun to study the new
Mahāyāna ideas from India which were written in Sanskrit. In the fourth century, another dissenting branch called the Jetavana came into view. Thus, the term Mahāvihārin became particularized. The Mahāvihārin monks, became those monks committed to a strict orthodoxy based on the Pāli language who provided an opposition to the rival monks of the Abhayagiri monastery who publicly studied the new, Sanskrit texts from India. [Rahula 1956, 303]

Buddhaghosa's association with the Mahāvihārin monks is clear, for in all the works that have been accepted as his we find an attached postscript. This postscript mentions the title of the work, Buddhaghosa's name, and his affiliation with the Great Monastery [Mahāvihāra]. One can see an example of this in the Visuddhimagga.

This path of Purification [Visuddhimagga] was made by the elder who is adorned with supreme and pure faith, wisdom and energy, in whom are gathered a concourse of upright, gentle, etc., qualities due to the practice of virtue, who is capable of delving into and fathoming the views of his own and others' creeds, who is possessed of keenness of understanding, who is strong in unerring knowledge of the Master's dispensation as divided into the three Pāṭīkñas with their commentaries, a great expounder, gifted with sweet and noble speech that springs from the ease born of perfection of the vocal instrument, a speaker of what is appropriately said, a superlative speaker, a great poet, an ornament to the lineage of the elders who dwell in the Great Monastery [Mahāvihāra] and who are shining lights in the lineage of elders with unblemished enlightenment in the superhuman states that are embellished with the special qualities of the six kinds of direct-knowledge and the categories of discrimination, who has abundant purified wit, who bears the name Buddhaghosa conferred by the venerable ones, and who should be called of Morandacetaka53. [p.742]

Nāṇomoli adds that this postscript was probably appended, presumably contemporaneously, by the Great Monastery at Anurādhapura in Sri Lanka as their official seal of approval. [Nāṇamoli [Visuddhimagga 1991 [5th ed], 29]

53 Other readings are Morandakhaṭa, Mundaṭakhedaka, and Morandakheṭaka. The exact location has not yet been identified. Nāṇamoli says this name refers, most probably, to Buddhaghosa's birth place [Visuddhimagge, note 8 of introduction].
Thus, Buddhaghosa's creativity was very closely linked to the mission of the Mahāvihārin monks which was to establish Pāli as the language of Buddhism and thereby, secure their influence. In this light, it would be almost blasphemous for Buddhaghosa to write in Sanskrit and hence, a text like the PC seems all the more peculiar as his work.

Is Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa the author of the Padyacūḍāmaṇi?

As has been mentioned earlier, there are some reasons to associate the authorship of the Padyacūḍāmaṇi with Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa. The editors highlight the significance of the Southern origin of the PC's manuscripts, for Buddhaghosa is renowned in the Southern [Theravāda] school of Buddhism. They also mention that the style of poetry contained in the PC could coincide with the dates of Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa who lived in the fifth century C.E. Moreover, from the legend surrounding Buddhaghosa's life we are told that Buddhaghosa was a Brahmin who converted to Buddhism. This fact could help explain the many brahmanical references found within the PC.

However, from this brief discussion it becomes evident that the PC differs, in some significant ways, from Buddhaghosa's other writings. It differs in style, for it is not a commentary but a piece of poetry. It differs in language, for it is written in Sanskrit rather than Pāli. It is conspicuously absent from the traditional list of Buddhaghosa's works found in the Gandhavaṃśa. It is also devoid of the characteristic postscript appended to his other works which marks the seal of approval of the Mahāvihārin monastery. Moreover, what is obvious from the presentation of the narrative of this text, is that the author was not concerned with creating a Buddhist work but a piece of poetry. This attitude is peculiar in light of what we know about the Pāli scholar Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa. For, his other writings focus, primarily, on illuminating the Buddha's insights. Thus, it would seem that there are good grounds to question whether the renowned Pāli scholar, Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa, was indeed the author of the PC.

As I have state earlier, I think that the association of Buddhaghosa's name with this work was a way of indicating the author's indebtedness to the Nāṇakathā account. This name could have been given by the author himself/herself or by someone who recognized the similarities between these two works. There is also the possibility that
there could have been a poet named Buddhaghoṣa who was named after the Pāli scholar Buddhaghoṣa. After all, it is not unusual for the names of famous people to be given to children.
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APPENDIX

THE NARRATIVE VERSES OF THE PADYACŪḍĀMĀNI

प्रथमः सर्गः:

मझलाचरणम्

कारण्य-कल्लोलितःह्यति-पातः
कन्दपर्य-धर्मपिलकः-कार-मेघम् ।
कैवल्यः-कल्पदुम्ब-मूल-कन्दः
वन्दे महः:-कन्दलम् अर्ककन्दधुम्॥ १ ॥

पय्येकवेशं यत्योष्पि बकतृः
नारं बभूवर् नलिनासनाया्ः ।
शास्तुस्वं तदेवत्: च चतापावशः
वक्तुं मनीषा मम मौषध्यम् एव॥ २ ॥

tथापिः तत्राहितः-भक्तिः-शक्त्याः
तदेवतं आत्मातम् अहं प्रकीर्णः ।
tथा हि तत्-पाद-समाश्रयः
रजोश्चिः लक्ष्मीः कुलते हि पुषाम्॥ ३ ॥

[सप्त-विंशतिः पद्यः: कपिलां नगरों चर्चितति]-
[The poet describes Kapilā with twenty seven verses].

अरित प्रशास्ता कपिलेति नाम्ना
कारिन्त् पुरी कामवुधा प्रजानाम् ।
यां बीक्षय शक्रो निज-राज-धान्यः:
श्लाघाभिसनिधि सिधिलीकरोति॥ ४ ॥ [४-३०]
[The poet describes King Śuddhodana with twenty verses]

मही-पतिस् तत्र बभूव मान्यः
शाक्यान्वयः शास्त्र-राज-लक्ष्मीः।
धर्मानुरोधार्जन-शुद्ध-बृत्तः
शुद्धोबनो नाम पथार्थे नामा॥ २९॥ [३१-५०]

कलेव चेन्दोः कमलेव बिष्णोः।
सौदामिनीबामुधरस्य तस्य
मायेति नामना महिषीं बभूव॥ ५१॥

[Then the poet describes Queen Māyā with twenty five verses]

मही-पतिर् मान्य-शुद्धोजजर्जवायां
तस्यं महिष्यं तनयाभिलाषी।
पदीय-धूप-प्रभुधः पदार्थः
स देवताराधन-तत्परोशुभू। ७७॥

ममजज तीथेषु जजाप मन्त्रं
ततान वानानि तपस्या चकार।
शुश्राव धर्म सुजनं सिवेवे
स पुत्र-हेतोः सह धर्म-पदन्या॥ ७८॥

इति गतविति पुष्पेर् दीर्घ-दीर्घेष्वपि काले
पतिरं अचरि-पतीनां पुत्र-रतनं न भेजे।
तद्व अपि च चवृधि तत्-प्राधना तस्यः पुंसा
विरमिति न हि यतः कार्य-सिद्धेः पुरस्तात्॥ ७९॥
उत्तर: सर्गः

तत्र रिंगन्ते जगति पूर्वैः स्निन्ततम् आसीद्
दुष्टव्या तद् अहुःतम् अमत्य-गणण: समेता: ।
सर्वजनताबसर एष तवेति वचनः
जम्मू-पुरीं सुर-गुरुस् तुषिताभिधानाम् ॥ ९ ॥

[षडभिः पद्धौ: कुलकेन तुषिताभिः-नगरीं वर्णयति]-
[२-१७]
[Tuṣīta heaven is described in six verses]

तत्र सिद्धर्मं सूर-गणा द्रश्यस् तम् एवं
रिंगासने विविध-रतन-शिला-निबब्दे ।
विभ्रामान-वहु-धातु-विपिन-वर्गे
मेरोर् मृगेन्द्रम् हव सानु-तत-प्रवेसे ॥ ८ ॥

[त्र्यो-विशाल्या पद्धौ: तुषिताधिपं वर्णयति]-
[८-३१]
[The poet describes the Lord of Tuṣīta in twenty three verses]

दुष्टव्या जगत्त्रय-गुरुं शिरसा प्रणेमुर्
दूरान्तेन तुषिताठय-पारिजातम् ।
पञ्चाभाम् अस्तीत्य पद्यवीम् अभिबर्तमानम्
आरेरिमे स्तुतिभिर् अर्चिपितः च देवः ॥ ३२ ॥

[तुषिताधिपः-स्तोत्रम्][३२-४८]
[The praise of the gods is described in verses 32-48]

आकर्ष्यं तद् वचनम् अश्रुत-पूर्वम् एवां
कालादि-पिन्तन-परः क्षणम् एष भूतवा ।
निद्रिष्ठत्वं तत्सकलम् एव निधिर् गुणानां
प्रत्यज्ञवीत् पुनर् अमून प्रधितापदान: ॥ ५२ ॥
शुद्वोदनस्य सुत्तानां अहम् एत्य सत्यं
सब्जोधनं व्रि-जगनां नियतं करिष्ये।
अन्नु धनैरु असुभिरु अत्य अहम् एतद् एव
संप्रार्थं पुष्प-निरचं धृतवान् पुरेति ॥ ५३ ॥

इति कृतवति तस्मान सत्य-सन्ध्ये प्रतिभाः
पर-हित-पर-भावे पारमी-पार-निष्ठे।
प्रमुदित-मनसस् ते स्फोत-रोमावच-दण्ड-
प्रचय-निचुर्लिताः: प्रत्यगच्छन् यथेचछम् ॥ ५४ ॥

अथ कानिचिचत् एव वासराणि
क्षपितवा त्रिदिसी स देव-राजः।
बिदधे बिदीध-ब्रतोज्जवलाः
प्रतिसनिधं पृथिवीपतरेः महिष्याम् ॥ ५५ ॥

तृतीयः सर्गः:

अथोदयं शाक्य-महै-पतीनाम्
आनन्दम् आली-जन-लोचनानाम्।
आश्वासनं सज्ज-जन-मानसानाम्
आचतं सा दौहदं-छिन्नं आर्यं ॥ ९ ॥

ब्रह्म वितेनुरं बिविधोपधीभि:
पुत्रस्य रक्षाम् उदरसिधतस्य ।
सैव समरोपद्रव-पीतिताः
बभूष रक्षा भुवन-त्रयाणाम् ॥ ८ ॥

प्रभात-बेलेव सहस-भानुः
प्रदोष-लक्षम्निः इव शीत-रस्मिः
भद्रे मुहूर्तेन नृप-धर्म-पत्नी
प्रसूतं पुत्रं भुवनेत्र-नेत्रम् ॥ १० ॥
[Accisum - kāl-vaṇṇapāñca] [11-26]
[The events that take place when the bodhisattva enters the world are described in verses 11-26]

वर्षोऽवर्षीयं विशायपि
वलाहको वारिधिरं होरि-घोषं।
आस्थयं कर्मविणि बभुवुर्व इत्यथं
जाते सताम् अग्रसरे कुमारे॥ २१॥

अन्योक्यं संवर्ध-विशीर्णं हारं
मुक्तावली-तारकितं स्यालीनम्।
प्रक्षण-पिछ्टालकं पांसु-मुष्टि
शून्यरिताष्ट्रं दिग्नताराणाम्॥ २३॥

प्रतत्तं-चामीकरं-भास्वरेण
प्रसर्पतं तस्य शारीर-भासा।
प्रस्फूतिका-गर्भं गृह-प्रदीपः
प्रत्यूषं-तारा-प्रतिमा बभूव॥ २६॥

अत्यद्वृत्तम् आलंक-जनम-वारत।
शृण्वन् स शुद्धान्तं जनान् नरेन्द्रः।
आनन्द-मुच्छांकुलं-पितं-वृत्तः
कर्त्तव्यं-मूहं रितमितो बभूव॥ २७॥

स्तत्तत्त्ववस्तुंनन्-चन्द-बिल्मभं
अमन्द-सौन्दर्यं-सुधा-निधानं।
नित्येय नेत्राण्यजलिना नितानं
नृपाधिपो नित्यारम्भम् आससाद॥ ३१॥

स जात-कर्मविक्रमं अत्युवारं
सूनोऽ समाप्पण्य पुरोहितेन।
सिद्धार्थं इत्यं अरुषं जगातं-प्रशस्याम्
अनन्यं योग्याम् अकरोदं अभिभयाम्॥ ३२॥

स देशिकन्द्रे उपासिमानाः
Siddhartha’s youth is described from verses 45-63.
सदेशपत्र समुदीर्ण-हर्ष: ।
प्रचक्रमे कारयितुं कुमारी
विचाह-दीश्रोतस्वम् अत्युदारम् ॥ ४ ॥
उक्षिप्त-मुक्तातप-वारण-श्रीर्
उदूतवाल-व्यजनोपचारः ।
आरूढः वैवाहिकम् औपवाञ्च
जगाम संबन्धिधगृहूं कुमारः ॥ ३६ ॥

tम् आगर्त शाक्य-कुल-प्रदीप
क्षोणोपिनि: कोलिय-चक्रवर्ती ।
स्वरं पदाध्यायम् अभिगम्य दूरं
वैवाहिकं मण्डपम् आनिनाय ॥ ३७ ॥

dदर्शं धीरं: क्षिति-पाल-पुत्रा
तत्र सिस्तां तारक-राज-वक्त्राम् ।
लीलाविन्देन कर-सिस्तेन
पयोधि-कन्याम् इच्छ भासामानाम् ॥ ३८ ॥

सोलकण्ठम् आलोकयतः कुमारी
सुधाशु-शोभा-परिभावकादिम् ।
अतील्य वेलाम् अधिराजसूत्नौर्
आनन्द-सिन्धु: प्रससार दूरम् ॥ ३९ ॥

umवर्णिषस् तस्य ह्यताशस्य
हविभिर्चु उच्चार ज्ञलतं: पुरस्तात् ।
क्रिया-कलापे कृत्वधी: पुरोधा:
संयोज्यामास वधू-कुमारी ॥ ४१ ॥
कन्या-कुमारी कमलीय-रूपावः
आलोक्य होमानिर्द्रहस्त-पूवीः।

प्रवंक्षिणार्चिः-स्फुरण-चछलेन
श्लाघा-शीरःकम्पम् हवाचचारः॥ ४६॥

अन्यांशः च सर्वाधिपि बन्धु-वर्गान्
सभान्य जाया-सहितः कुमारः।

निगृहिता तर्मानु निज-राज-धानी-
प्रवंक्षिणाय प्रवरो जगाम || ५४॥

तस्मिन् मुहुः कपिलाङ्कानां
कुमार-निम्यान-परायणानां।

सौधेषु सौधेषु समुद्रबुधुः
शृङ्गार-चेष्टा मदनोपविष्टा: || ५५॥

कुमारस्व एवं कुल-शैल-धुर्यः
भर्तराम मापुं परममृतृप्यम्।

विम्ब्राधरेयं जननातंतरेयं
किं वाकरोत् पुष्पम् अग्न्य-रूपम्॥ ७८॥

इत्यादिम् आसां गिरम् अत्युदाराम्
आकर्षणं कर्ण-सुखायमानाम्।

प्रवंक्षिणी-कृत्व पुरां कुमारः
प्रविक्षुद् अन्तर्भवनं नृपस्य || ८३॥

पुष्पम्: सर्गः।

ततः कुमारस्य सम्य-वैभवो
नराधिनाथो नव-यौवन-श्रियः।

आतृसवानाम् उपस्वेते-श्रमान्
अकार्यत्र श्रीन् अतुलनः महालयान्।॥ ९॥

स तेषु सबरस्त्र आधिराज-नन्दनो
विचित्र-विन्यास-विशेष-शालिभिः ।
विनोदमानो वर-वार-योषिताः
विलास-नृत्तैः विजहार हारिभः ॥ २ ॥

अन्नान्तरे राज-कुमारम् एम्
आहृय पृथ्वी-पतिर् आन्नान् ।
अर्थ जनः पुत्र तवास्त्रशिक्षा-
विलोकनं प्रस्थभिवच्छिद्वैति ॥ ५६ ॥

श्रव्या तु तत् सूर्य-कुलवर्तसः
प्रत्युपजगद्य धर्मं नूपाणाम् ।
आलोकयतां तात ममास्त्र-शिक्षा
प्राप्ते निने सप्तम-संख्येयति ॥ ५७ ॥

अथागते सप्तम-वासरान्ते
प्रजापतिर् बन्धु-जनेन साध्यम् ।
तत्स्यास्त्र-शिक्षा-प्रविलोकनार्थम्
अध्यास्त भद्रासनम् आदरेण ॥ ५८ ॥

एकेन बाणासनम् आततत्वाद्यम्
अन्नेन हस्तामुखुषण बाणम् ।
समादवान् स फिनह-मूर्तिः
अग्रे गुरोर्आवितरभूत् कुमारः ॥ ५९ ॥

किं पुष्प-धन्वा प्रतिलब्ध-मूर्तिः
किं वावतीणो मधवान् सधन्वा ।
एवंविधा प्रादुरभूत् प्रजानां
विकल्पना विस्मित-मानसानाम् ॥ ६० ॥
सप्त: सगःः
प्रादुर्भावसंयमः सुभोगो वसन्तः
प्रस्तावनानासिककुल-कोकिल-कूजितानाम्।
बाणाशयो मकरकेतन-सापकाना
मौहूर्तिको मलय-मासु-निर्गमानाम्॥ १ ॥

[वसन्त-काल-वर्णनम्] [१-३३]
[Spring time is described from verses 1-33]

इति प्रावृत्ते मधु-मास-वैभवे
विधातुम् उदान-विहारम् उत्सुकः।
रथं समारुः नरेन्द्र-नन्दनः
सहारोधेन विनिज्ञेगाम सः॥ ३४ ॥

ततः कुमारस्य पुरन्दर-श्रियः
प्रबोध-कालोऽध्यम् हि ति प्रबोधितम्।
क्रमेण वृद्धातुर-लुप्त-जीवितान्
प्रदशयामासुर् अवृष्टयेवतः॥ ३५ ॥

क्रमेण पश्यन् पूरतः स्थितान् अमृत्
निदानमुद्धिगमना नूपातमजः।
किम् एतद् इत्य आहित-विभ्रमः स्वयं
पुरोगतान् पर्यन्त्युद्गतं सार्थीन्॥ ३६ ॥

सकिस्तरं तेशं सुरैरूः आधिगितरा
नरेन्द्र-पुत्रस्य विरिक्षत-कारणम्।
क्रमेण तेषाम् आतिमान्-दुःसहं
जरायिकाराविकम् आच्छादिरे॥ ३७ ॥
निशम्य तेषां वचनं नृपात्मजो
निमकम-निवेद-विभाविताशयः।
नियन्त्रतोधान-विहार-कौतुको
निवर्त्यास्वान् इति सूतम् अस्वबीत्॥ ३८॥

अनन्तरं तस्य पुरः सुराधिपतर्
अवर्शीं शान्तानुशयस् तपोधनः।
विन्दु-कारण्य-समुद्र-बीचिका-
विटक्ष्ण-विश्रान्त-विशाल-लोचनः॥ ३९॥

प्रतप्त-चामीकर-गौर-बिहरः
प्रवाल-भज्जरण-चारु-चीवरः।
प्रसन्न-पूर्णन्तु-निभानन-द्रुतिः।
प्रभूत-मैत्री-परिवाहिताशयः॥ ४०॥

तम् एनम् आलोक्य च शाक्य-नन्दनस्
तपरिवनाम अग्रसरं सविस्मयः।
क एष का वायस्च चरित्र-चालुरी-
तस्य अपूर्णदूर अभ्याशजुषः सब-सारथीन्॥ ४१॥

अर्थ महाभाग बिन्दु-मानसः
पवित्र-शीलः परमाधेविकः।
सवासनोभुजित-सर्व-किलिचिकः
तपोधनः कसिद्ध अपविच्यः सताम्॥ ४२॥

अमुख्य यः शासनम् आश्रितो ज्ञो
जराविकाराविच-तरङ्ग-भवुर्म्।
क्रमेण निम्नतर्यं स जन्म-सागरं
प्रयाति निर्वाण-पदं निरुत्तमः॥ ४३॥

इति प्रवीरा: क्षितिपाल-नन्दन-
प्रत्येकनाथं विभुधानुभावतः।
वितेनिरे वज्ञमंसातिगोचरं
तपोनिधेः तस्य चरित्र-वर्णनम्॥ ४४॥
उदाहन-वर्णनम् [२-२६]
[The pleasure grove is described from verses 1-26]

पराग-संपत-सिकतावकीण
पर्युक्ते पुष्प-रसे: पतंजः।
कृतोपहारे कमले: प्रसूनेचर
उदाहन-मध्ये विजहार बीरः॥ ४ ॥

इस्थे कुमारस्य सहावरोधे:
सलीलम् आराम-विहार-भाजः।
आलोकनायेव सहस-भानुरः
आकाश-मध्ये परस् अध्यक्षतः॥ २२ ॥

आराम-भूमाव्य अतिवाद्य तापः
माध्याहिकं मध्यम-लोक-पालः।
आसनेष्मानो बर-वर्णीनिमित्
अम्भो-विहारायथम् अवाप वापिम्॥ २३ ॥
[वापी-वर्णनम्][२८-३१]
[Verses 28-31 describe a pool in the pleasure grove]

[जल-क्रीडावर्णनम्][३२-५५]
[Verses 32-55 describe Siddhartha’s play in the pool]
[सूर्यास्तमय-वर्णनम्]
(The setting of the sun is described)

[चन्द्रदुर्ग-वर्णनम्]
(The rising of the moon is described)

स्पष्टं प्रदोषं-समये नर-पालं-सूनुस्
त्वष्ट्रा समारचित-महं-मण्डन-श्रीं।
वाराहनामिर् अभितो मणि-दीपिकामिर्
आसेवितं स्वभवनं पुनः आजगाम् ॥ ४७ ॥

नवम: सर्गः

वार-वामालकास् तस्य मधुराकृत्यं: पुरं।
आरेमिरे दशितिं अद्वृतं नृचं-विभ्रमम् ॥ ३ ॥

असकलत-हर्षपस्तासाम् अभार-मनोहरे।
संगीते नव-मीलेष्पि स चिन्ताम् अन्तराद्वै। ॥ ४ ॥

तवा बभी कृमारोशसौ चामरेर् अमरोच्छते।
समीरणं-समुद्रतैसू तरंड्रे हव सागरं। ॥ ५ ॥

बिद्याधराः च गन्धर्वी वीणा-गर्भितं-पाणयः।
पूर्वीपदान-मुखराः पुरस्त सरस्रे प्रतिरथे। ॥ ९ ॥

इत्यम् आराध्यतो देवेवरं दश-त्रितयं-योजनम्।
अतीतं पन्थाम् असाध्गाद अनवम। नदीम्। ॥ १३ ॥

अथ चतुर्मिऽ: पदार्थ अनवमं वर्ण्यति- [१४-१७]

तारणाय महाभोजेः तन्वन गुणानिकाम् हव।
चिन्ता-पुकलेन वाहन तां नदीम् उदतीतर्त। ॥ १८ ॥
उत्तीर्थ तस्यः पुलिणे तुरगाद् अवतीर्थः सः।
छन्नं निवर्त्यामास दल्वा भूषाश् च बाहनम्॥ १९॥

आदि-कल्प-समुद्रताम् आदि-ब्रह्म-समाहताम्।
अग्रहीवः अग्रणीः पुस्यां तपोधनः परिप्रक्रियाम्॥ २०॥

आदाय तापसाकल्पम् अनल्प-गुण-गुप्तितम्।
आच्छाद तेन चार्तानम् अधर्म तपसि सिद्धिम्॥ २१॥

मनोरथ-शत-प्राप्त-प्रद्वन्यारस-निर्वृत्तः।
दिनानि कालिन्धित्त तस्यास्तीरे स्थितेष्य देशिकः॥ ३४॥

अन्येद्यूरं अथ भिक्षार्थम् आदि-भिक्षुर बुहुश्चितः।
व्यतीत्य दूरस्य अध्वर्ण बिब्रसार-पुरीम् अग्रात्॥ ३५॥

[बिब्रसार-पुरी-वर्णनम्] [३६-४२]
[Bimbasāra’s city is described from vs. 36-42]

तत्र भिक्ष्यं समावातुः तपोधन-शिखामणि।
वीथिषु वीथिषु शार्मैर विजहार विनायकः॥ ४२॥

तत्र भिक्ष्यं समावाय शिक्षापाद-विच्छक्षणः।
तद्भण्न्यं-गतं तूण्य शिलोच्चायनं अशिष्ठितं॥ ४५॥

अथ पर्याप्तः पद्मस्तेव पर्वत कुलकेन विशिष्ठितः। [४६-५०]
[The mountain is described in vs. 46-50]

तटके तस्य सिद्धार्थः स्नात्वा निकट-वालिनि।
स्थित्या तव-शिलापट्ट्ये भिक्षण्ड-रसम् अन्वभूतः॥ ५१॥

अपरेद्युर विनिर्गत्य तस्याद्य एष पुरान्तरे।
पिण्डपापः-विधिः कृत्वा प्राप्तं अभ्यर्ण-काननम्॥ ५२॥
तटाक-निकटे नद्यासू तटे शैले च काने।
विवसान् विवसान् एष निन्ये मान्यो वहून् अपि ॥ ५३ ॥

tapo-baneshu dhanyeshu du:sadhanani tapasya apii.
charya dhira-huday: sansaar-klesha-shaantaye ॥ ५४ ॥

अप्राप्य निर्वाण-पदं दु:स्वरूपं चारितेऽर्थ अपि।
को वाभुपापासं तस्यां भवेव इत्याकुलोऽभवत् ॥ ५५ ॥

एकदा पारमी-भाग्य-परिपाक-प्रकाशनम्।
स्वप्न-प्रलंकाम् अद्राशीत्सुपरित्र-निधिः प्रगे ॥ ५६ ॥

रहस्या अवबुध्य स्वप्नार्थ प्रत्यपेत्य विचक्षणः।
निर्मिचकायाम् अधव निर्मितीं प्राण्यासम् इति ॥ ५७ ॥

कृत्वा दिन-मुखाचारं भिषावेलां प्रतिक्ष्य सः।
आसांपके चतुर्थपाधः पूजा-विहित-सत्कृते ॥ ५८ ॥

अथ काचिद् विशालाक्षी देवतां तन् निवासिनीन्।
अधिकृत्य तदा निन्ये पापसं प्रार्थना-परा ॥ ५९ ॥

तत्प्रकृत्य सा तस्मै बदरी पात्रेण पापसम्।
तदावाय महा-सत्तो यथो नैर्मण्यात्रातं तदम् ॥ ६० ॥

tasya: sharananishakasa-vimarsho samhite muhini:।
snala sushyam-pata-rtho bhuhujape paryasa budy: ॥ ६१ ॥

[तत्: सप्तभिः पद्ध्व: सालकाण्डं वर्णयति] - [६२-६८]
[A forest of trees is described from verses 62- 68]

दिनावसाने संप्राप्ते याम-मात्रावधौ ततः।
उत्तराय भगवान् बोधिं प्रवेशे प्राज्य-विक्रमः ॥ ६९ ॥
[The following verses describe Siddhārtha's battle with, and victory over Māra's forces].