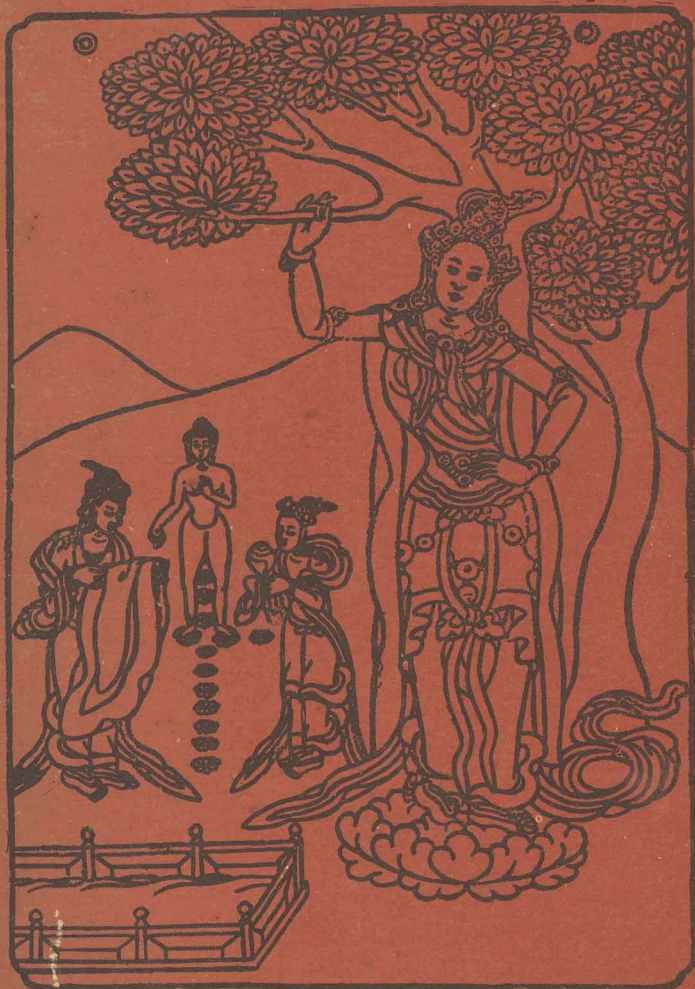


FORTUNATE TO BEHOLD



Ngawang Khyenrab Legshe Gyatso
The Twenty-sixth Chogyé Trichen

FORTUNATE TO BEHOLD

An explanation of the nativity of
Śākyamuni Buddha at Lumbini Garden,
together with an historical account
of Kapilavastu and Devadaha, and some
additional discourses

Ngawang Khyenrab Legshe Gyatso
The Twenty-sixth Chogyé Trichen
Dharma Swami Mahārāja Buddha Vihāra
Lumbini, Nepal

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

This edition of Fortunate to Behold, originally written in Tibetan by Chogye Trichen Rinpoche, has been translated and edited over a period of two months. It has been translated under Rinpoche's personal guidance, without which it could not have been completed in such a short time.

Due to the brief period available for research, it is possible that some errors may be found in the text, most notably in the translation of names from Tibetan back into the original Sanskrit. Those Sanskrit names which are uncertain have been marked with an asterisk (*). The questions from the Lumbini Development Committee, which are presented in Chapters III and IV, were originally written in Nepali, and translated into Tibetan for Chogye Rinpoche. The present English translation of these questions is based solely on the earlier Tibetan rendering.

I would like to thank my wife Maruta for her skillful editing, and invaluable assistance in the translation of difficult passages. My friends, David Jackson and Ngawang Samten Chopel, were kind enough to read portions of Chapter I, and make very helpful corrections and suggestions. Thanks are also due to Sahayogi Press for printing the book in time for the World Buddhist Conference.

I hope that Fortunate to Behold will be of value to all who are interested in the life of Śākyamuni Buddha, and the development of Lumbini Garden.

Cyrus Stearns
Boudhnāth, Nepal
November 13, 1986

INTRODUCTION

Our Enlightened Teacher, the Buddha, this Blessed One Śākyamuni, appeared here in this world to train living beings not trained by other Buddhas, at a time when five-fold degeneracy is rampant. For this purpose, he left Tuṣita heaven, entered a womb, was born at Lumbini attended by inconceivable miracles, amused himself as a youth by training in the martial arts, enjoyed a retinue of queens, experienced renunciation and practiced austerities, subdued Māra and actualized Buddhahood, turned the Dharmacakra, and passed into Nirvāṇa. Yuvarāja Ajita [Maitreya] stated in the Uttaratantra:

Taking a deliberate birth, leaving
the realm of Tuṣita, and entering a
womb,

Being born, becoming skilled in the
martial arts and enjoying a retinue of
queens,

Experiencing renunciation, practicing
austerities and traveling to Bodhgayā,

Vanquishing the hosts of Māra,
gaining perfect enlightenment, turning
the Dharmacakra, and passing into
Nirvāṇa,

These deeds are demonstrated in
thoroughly impure worlds for as long as
existence remains.

He demonstrated infinite deeds, such as these Twelve, at each place in India and Nepal where the splendor of benefit and happiness was established without exception for this world as well as for that of the gods. From among these, the city of Kapilavastu was the place where he entered the womb and where he maintained a kingdom, Lumbini was the birthplace, the Viśuddha stūpa was the place where he cast aside the kingdom of a Universal

Emperor like spittle and experienced renunciation, the Nirañjanā River was the place where he practiced austerities for six years, the Vajrāsana [in Bodhgayā] was the place where he vanquished the hosts of Māra and actually Awakened, the city of Sāṅkissa was the place where he descended from heaven, Varanasi was the place where he turned the Dharmacakra, Śrāvastī was the place where he displayed great miracles, Kuśīnagara was the place where he passed into Nirvāṇa, and Rājgir was the place of settling discord. He walked in such places as these, and they are blessed like stūpas, down to the particles of earth there.

From among these, the Enlightened Teacher stated in his last testament when he was at the point of passing into Nirvāṇa, that we who did not actually see the face of the Buddha should visit these four great holy places. As he stated in the Vinayaksudrakavastu:

"Monks, after I have passed away, faithful males and females of good family should visit and remember these four places for as long as they live. What are the four? Here (Lumbini) the Blessed One was born. Here (Bodhgayā) the Blessed One actualized perfect Buddhahood. Here (Varanasi) the Blessed One turned the Dharmacakra. Here (Kuśīnagara) the Blessed One passed into Parinirvāṇa.

Monks, after I have passed away, this should be told to those who come on pilgrimage and offer homage at those stūpas."

Following that, he spoke at length, stating, "All who die with faith in me will go to happy destinies in higher worlds." And in other Sūtras he stated that by going on pilgrimage to these four great holy places, even heinous sins would be purified.

Although there has been much talk that it is possible to identify equivalents for the four great holy places elsewhere, such as in east and west India, and even in Afghanistan to the west, the real ones are unmistakably these which are in central India and Nepal. The areas are related to each other, and because there are also stone pillars of Aśoka at the four great holy places, and at Kauśāmbī, Bhakhra, Saṅkissa, Sanchi, and elsewhere, we can know them to be correct.

Aśoka was of the Maurya royal lineage. The Maurya capital was at Patna. The first of the Maurya royal lineage was Candragupta, whose rule was a happy one for his subjects. He passed away in 298 B.C. His son Bindhusaragupta ruled for twenty-five years, and passed away in 274 B.C. He had three sons by his elder and younger queens, and Aśoka, who was also the son of that king, was born to the wife of a merchant in 302 B.C., one hundred and eighty-one years after the passing of the Enlightened Teacher.

Their father the king asked the soothsayers, "Which of my four sons is able to be king?" They replied, "The one who sits on the best seat, the one who eats the best food; he will rule the kingdom." And they said, "The three sons enjoy thrones and silken cushions, in jeweled mansions within the palace. They enjoy for food the hundred flavors of the court cuisine. This son [Aśoka] sits only on the surface of the earth, for the best seat is the ground. And since he enjoys only rice, which is the best food, Aśoka should be king."

Aśoka accordingly became king of Taxila in 273 B.C. With the exception of the youngest one, he fought with his own brothers such as Susim, and was victorious in battle. In 269 B.C., two hundred and fourteen years after the

Nirvāṇa of the Enlightened Teacher, he assumed control of the sovereign throne of all India. In 261 B.C, two hundred and twenty-two years after the Nirvāṇa of the Enlightened Teacher, he led a great army to Kalinga. Many hundreds of thousands of people were killed and captured, and he was victorious in battle, but when he saw the endless suffering that had occurred, Aśoka fell into despair, and decided to seek a path for liberation from saṃsāra.

He relied upon the Arhat Upagupta, who is universally known as the fourth of the seven successors to the disciples of the Enlightened Teacher, although some say it was the Arhat Kirti. In 258 B.C., two hundred and twenty-five years after the Nirvāṇa, the Dharmarāja Aśoka entered the dharma gate of the Buddhist doctrine. From the time Dharmarāja Aśoka entered the Buddhist doctrine, he looked upon all his subjects with only compassion and kindness. With the intention that they meet with this very doctrine of the Buddha which is the foundation of benefit and happiness for living beings of this world, he despatched countless messengers to many other countries on the outskirts of the Indian subcontinent, to encourage the people towards the Dharma.

He constructed ten million stūpas on the Indian subcontinent, as prophecied by the Blessed One: "The king of Taxila will construct ten million stūpas on the Indian subcontinent." Stūpas of Aśoka are known to be in many areas. He constructed ten million stūpas, and established stone pillars for verification in the great holy places and elsewhere. Particularly in Lumbini, this can be clearly known from the text inscribed at that time on the stone pillar of Aśoka, which has been translated in the present day into such languages as Nepali, Tibetan, and English.

Those deeds of Aśoka were spoken of by Ācārya Daṇḍin:

The famous image of the kings of old can be found in the natural mirror of oral tradition,

And even if those [kings] disappear, see the undisintegrated nature [of their fame]!

As stated, even though Aśoka passed away long ago, his achievements such as the many stone pillars and many stupas are evident even now. It is certainly true that they will remain and not disintegrate until the aeon is finished.

There were several thoughtful succeeding kings and ministers who performed minor restorations at Lumbini, beginning with the supervision of the Nepalese King Tribhuvan. Particularly, His Majesty Late King Mahendra, like the Dharmarāja Aśoka coming again for the benefit of this holy place, erected a stone pillar at the holy place, and implemented development, as is clear there from the temple, guest house, water facilities, hospital, and so on. During that period, in 1967, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. U Thant of Burma, had similar concerns, and appealed for the development of Lumbini. As a result, the International Development Committee was founded.

In 1973, His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev ascended the golden throne and publicized the implementation of peace through non-alignment. In addition to the development at Lumbini, his administration has seen to the construction of a highway from Bhairawa to Lumbini, a garden of saplings, and so forth. In 1986 he appointed His Royal Highness Prince Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah as Chairman of the

Lumbini Development Trust, which function he is performing.

I shall praise these vast deeds performed by Their Majesties, father and sons, as well as Mr. U Thant, by speaking of their acts in verse.

The sun, moon, and planets illuminate the realms of earth and space.

From the joint resolutions of Their Majesties and U Thant, the flower of development adorns this world.

I, the present author was born into the Je clan, in a lineage descended from the gods of clear light. When I was seven years old, I was taught reading, writing, and memorization by my elder brother, Jetsun Tartse Kenpo [1905-1939, 71st Abbot of Ngor Monastery], and was able to recite the Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīta from memory. When I was memorizing and practicing the recitation of the Praise of the Twelve Deeds of the Enlightened Teacher Śākyamuni, composed by Ācārya Nāgārjuna, the hairs on my body repeatedly stood on end upon reciting the line "When you were born in the auspicious Lumbini Garden..." Was it a sign that a link had been established from my past prayers, by which I would live in this great holy place in the later portion of my life?

H.H. the Thirteenth Dalai Lama appointed me at the age of nine to be the master of the doctrine at Nalendra Monastery to the north of Lhasa. I was installed on the throne at age twelve while still engaged in studies. From then until age thirty-nine, I stayed and maintained the traditional customs of past Gurus so that they did not decline. In 1959, when I was forty years old, there was a great

change in circumstances, and I left Tibet for Mustang. In 1961-1962 I traveled on pilgrimage to the holy places in India and Nepal. At Sārnath, Kunu Lama Tenzin Gyaltzen said to me, "The four great holy places have great blessing, and from among them, Lumbini is extremely sacred, and the supreme holy place, because if the Buddha had not been born he would not have performed the other deeds." I then felt intense faith in the birthplace, Lumbini.

For several years, beginning in the end of 1962, I worked as Secretary of Religion in Dharamsala. In 1963, my elder sister, the Mustang Rani passed away, and the Mustang Rāja came with his son to Dharamsala. "If possible you should return to Mustang. If that isn't possible if you would stay in the monastery of His Majesty's Government in Lumbini, permission will be given. We will request for you," they said, and left.

In 1965 the Mustang Rāja and his son made the appeal. His Majesty [Late King Mahendra's] reply was, "It is all right if you stay in the old temple. I have spoken with Secretary General U Thant, and it would be good if you were able to construct a new temple as part of the development of Lumbini." I replied that there was a resident in the old temple, so it would be good if we requested land to construct a new one. In 1967 the appeal was submitted, and approval was granted.

In 1969, Mr. Ramesh Jung Thapa, Director of the Department of Archeology, was sent to the holy place, and granted ten kata of land. Together with him, village panchayat leaders, town panchayat leaders, the land tax collector of Bhairawa, and the Lumbini Zonal Commissioner, measured the land, and gave the official land documents. Construction of the

monastery was then begun, and I stayed in Lumbini. In 1973 and 1974, according to a request from the Department of Archeology that a history of Tilaurakot was needed, I wrote one which was translated into Nepali and English, and submitted on two occasions. They may have it in the Department, but my own notes were lost.

In February 1977 I was given a set of seven questions from the Administrative Officer of the Lumbini Development Committee. I offered my replies, in Tibetan, on March 3rd. In 1985, Wangchuk, one of my own students of literature emphatically told me, "It would be a shame if the usefulness to others of your composition were to be lost. But if there were a book summerizing the story of Lumbini, it would not be lost, and later would be of mutual benefit to everyone, including the Department." Aside from these reasons, it is also difficult to comprehend the entire story from the questions and replies alone. As a result, I have compiled the complete story, entitled "A Spectacle for the Mind," the story of Lumbini, a discourse fortunate to behold, and I present it here as Chapter I.

Chapter II: The Honorable Tsechu Rinpoche, who is Head of both the Dhurgamchetra and the Nepal Buddhist Societies, and a member of the Rajsabha, emphatically requested together with a long silk scarf and a gift, that I present a clear statement concerning Kapilavastu and Devadaha. Accordingly, these can be known from the presentation of the page and paragraph numbers within "A Spectacle for the Mind." There is also additional explanation of what is not clear therein.

Chapter III: The seven questions from the Administrative Officer of the Lumbini Development Committee are clearly presented here together with the page and paragraph numbers in "A Spectacle for the Mind."

Chapter IV: Five further questions and replies to them are presented together here because they are most clear if arranged in sequence.

Chapter V: This chapter concerns the manner in which the temple structure, as well as its contents, was constructed upon the land bestowed by His Majesty Late King Mahendra to the Mustang Rāja and Chogye Trichen within the holy place of Lumbini. Also included here is a catalogue of the consecrated contents within the gilt image of the Sage, and a numbered identification of the stories corresponding to each of the excellent murals, such as those of the Twelve Deeds of the Enlightened Teacher.

Chapter VI: This chapter concerns the establishment at Lumbini Garden of a three-year retreat center for meditation upon the essence of the doctrine, and the corresponding practice for three years from 1978 through 1980, with six practitioners successfully completing the preliminaries, the main practice, and the conclusion.

Chapter VII: This chapter concerns the establishment of the second three-year meditation retreat in Boudhnāth, and future plans for a retreat building.

Chapter VIII: This chapter concerns the construction of the Great Maitreya Temple structure, as well as its contents, which is beside and very close to the precious [Boudhnāth] Stūpa, from its inception at the 1983 celebration of the [Buddha's] Descent from

Heaven until its successful completion two years later at the 1985 celebration of the Descent from Heaven.

These eight chapters were begun and composed as described above, and are intended as repayment for the kindness of our Enlightened Teacher, and as an historical service, a rejoicing in the policies of Their Majesties, father and sons.

This was begun with deep sincerity by Subhāṣita, who has the title Chogye Jetsun Tri, in the Great Maitreya Monastery of Yiga Chudzin at the Boudhnāth Stūpa, on 27/3/043, or July 11, 1986, the 4th day of the 6th Tibetan month, which is the celebration of the Enlightened Teacher's turning of the Dharmacakra. It was completed at Lumbini Garden, in the monastery of Dharma Swami Mahārāja Buddha Vihāra, Tashi Rabten Ling, on 2/6/043, or September 18, 1986, the 15th day of the second 7th Tibetan month.

On the occasion of their visit to this holy place, I offer this book with affectionate respect to the delegates of the fifteenth World Buddhist Conference, which is being held in Kathmandu.

May it bring benefit to the doctrine and all living beings!

SIDDHI RASTU

HOMAGE

BUDDHA ŚĀKYAMUNI, THE BLESSED ONE

A MARVELOUS SPECTACLE FOR THE MIND

Though all the Victors are equal in
form and primordial wisdom,
May we be nurtured by the Lord of
Sages, whose exceptional awakened mind
of loving kindness for degenerate
beings

Is a golden flower whose fame
magnificently beautifies all the three-
fold universe.

Behold a Spectacle for the Mind, a
narrative_story worthy of Brahma's
praise,

About Lumbini Garden with which any
connection is meaningful,

The place where all the auspicious
conditions of every excellent attribute
in saṃsāra and nirvāṇa combined,

And from which shone forth the Lamp
of the World.

The Creation of the Present Aeon and the Origin
of the Śākya clan

The result of the manifold karma, virtuous
and sinful, [accumulated] by all infinite
sentient beings, appears as the structure of
the animate and inanimate world, [in all its]
manifold happiness and suffering. As stated by
Ācārya Vasubandhu in the Abhidharmakośa,
"Manifold worlds arise from karma." Thus there
appear manifold manifestations of karma, in
which the shape of the world is such as round,
flat, or square.

In any case, the animate and inanimate world
is created by the four elements at the
beginning of an aeon [kalpa]. For the length
of its duration, there is a long low point of

decline in [average] lifespan, a long high point of increase in lifespan, and a period in between. At the end of a long period of many years, the animate and inanimate are scattered and destroyed by fire, water, and air, and there is nothing. Each [cycle] of creation, duration, destruction, and nothingness, is referred to as an aeon.

Among those aeons, the aeons in which a Buddha does not appear in the world are known as "dark aeons," because without the teaching of an unerring path to the creatures of this world, they experience only the causes and results of suffering, as though in utter darkness.

The aeons in which a Buddha appears in this world are known as "aeons illuminated by a lamp," because through the illumination of the Buddhadharma, the darkness of inner and outer attachment, aggression, and ignorance are cleared away, and only the causes and results of virtue and happiness are experienced.

Because in this world each "lamp aeon" does not appear except in the midst of many "dark aeons," it is rare for a Buddha to appear in this world. Having appeared, it is rare for the Dharma to be taught. It is rare for the doctrine which is taught to remain. To obtain a human body is extremely rare, and so at this time when the four rarities have come together, if one is able to enter the Buddhist doctrine it is extremely fortunate and very meaningful.

Question: If it is stated that one thousand and two Buddhas appear in this present aeon, why are there no "dark aeons" in between?

Answer: This great aeon is a special one, unlike others. According to the Acintāguhyanirdeśa-Sūtra, at a time in the

past, many aeons ago, during the aeon known as Beautiful Illumination, the completely perfect Buddha named King of Infinite Precious Qualities appeared in the world known as Ornamentation. At that time there was a king named Arenemi who ruled the four continents from his perfect palace, and who had seven hundred thousand queens and a thousand princes. During that time the king honored that Buddha together with the saṅgha of monks for ten million years. Then he thought, "All these thousand princes have for ten million years only dwelt in the presence of the Buddha while awakening the thought of enlightenment. It is certain that in the future when a good aeon appears, they will successively become enlightened. I shall investigate who will first become a Buddha."

He wrote the names of the thousand youths, and placed them in a vase of seven jewels. He made offerings in front of the Buddha for seven days, and then in the midst of the retinue of queens, the thousand sons, the ministers, and many people, he drew forth the written names from within the vase where they had been shuffled. First was Krakucchanda, second was Kanakamuni, third was Kāśyapa, fourth was our Enlightened Teacher Śākyamuni, fifth was Maitreya, and so on until the last of the thousand, the youngest prince Anantamati.

Question: How can these be known?

Answer: Our Enlightened Teacher, the Buddha, the Blessed One, knows what can be known exactly as it is and in full extent, with no confusion of circumstances, and is free of the four causes of ignorance. What the clan of each Buddha will be, together with the name of each father, mother, son, queen, and attendants, such as the Supreme Pair, is clear

and precise within the Bhadrakalpika-Sūtra, and thus is something we can believe in.

According to the word of the Blessed Buddha, the way the present aeon was created and the source of the origin of the Śākya clan is described below. The word of the Buddha is composed of statements which he actually spoke, such as the Pratimokṣa-Sūtra, questions and replies between Bodhisattvas and Arhats which he endorsed at the conclusion, such as the Prajñāpāramitā, which are approved statements, and blessed statements in which Arhats and Bodhisattvas spoke after having been blessed by the Buddha focusing his attention upon them.

[According to the Pitaputrasamāgama-Sūtra:]

When the Blessed One was residing in the Nyagrodha pleasure grove at Kapilavastu, the Śākyas asked how their own clan had originated. The Blessed One blessed Maudgalyāyana with his attention, and told him to tell how the Śākya clan originated. This, then, was both a blessed and approved statement. Maudgalyāyana looked with the eye of primordial wisdom, and described [the origin of the clan].

In the very beginning of this world, in an empty vacuum of space a great wind stirred, from which fire blazed forth, and a vast mandala of water was created as condensation from the fire and wind. The fire and water was agitated by the wind, and like butter from churned milk, it gradually was created in the form of the earth, and became solid, endowed with such things as color, taste, texture, and odour.

At the same time as this, the sentient beings of the first aeon descended from [the realm] of the gods of clear light. They had complete sense faculties and limbs, and were

beautiful like gods. Their own bodies shown with light, they were able to fly unimpeded in the sky, and they subsisted on the food of concentrated meditation. And yet, through desire they became attached to the taste of the film on the nectar, which was like honey, and taking it with their forefingers, they ate it. Consequently their bodies became heavy and coarse, and took on a bad color. When that was finished, they ate the quintessence of soil, which had a somewhat sweet taste. Then they ate uncultivated rice. The male and female organs then formed, their bodies became dull, and they began to build homes. From their collective merit, the sun and moon then appeared. They sowed fields, and when it was time to gather the fruit, conflict ensued. One from among them, who was endowed with intelligence, allocated land to each one, and caused there to be no conflict. The land was allocated equally among everyone, but he himself was excluded from a share of land. As a result, everyone gave him one-sixth of their own shares of land, and he then had more than anyone.

In his hereditary lineage was the king Mahāsammata.¹ There were many generations in the famous royal lineage of Mahāsammata. After a thousand generations, King Kṛkin appeared. The Buddha Kāśyapa appeared at that time, when lifespans were twenty thousand years. From Sujata, the son of Kṛkin, there successively descended one hundred kings in the city of Potala.

Karṇika was the last of the one hundred kings, and he had two sons, Gautama and

¹ The following section is based on the Vinayavastu, Derge edition, vol. 3, beginning on f. 266.

Bharadvāja, the latter of whom ruled. The elder brother Gautama became a renunciate, and relied upon the Seer Asita. The Seer Gautama [was wrongly accused of murder and] met with bad circumstances, but because he was blameless and spoke the truth, [his teacher] the Ācārya became gold in color. The Golden [Ācārya] inspired Gautama, from whose member drops [of semen] fell into a bunch of sugarcane at the base of the torture tree [from which he was hung]. They were nurtured by the sun, and burst forth as two eggs, from which two youths appeared. The Golden Seer identified them as of the royal lineage of Mahāsammata, and the younger brother was [eventually] placed on the throne.

Thereafter, the royal lineage was known by four names: Gautama, Āṅgīrasa, Sūryavaṁśa, and Ikṣvāku. One hundred members of the royal lineage of Ikṣvāku appeared in the city of Potala in the Noble Land. The last of the one hundred was known as [Ikṣvāku] Virūdhaka, and to him were born four sons, Ūlkāmukha, Karakarnaka, Hastikaśirṣa, and Nūpura. When his wife died, the king was plunged into despair. Through the efforts of the ministers, he took a new queen. A son, Rājyananda, was born, and through the powerful means of the ministers, he was placed on the throne.

The four sons of the good queen were exiled to a place near to the dwelling of the Master Kapila on the bank of the Lohita river close to the Himalayan mountains. Their brethren, such as relatives from their mother's side, many young boys and girls, followed after the four sons, and all abandoned attachment and longing for their own land. They settled in the place of Kapila, and so it became known as Kapilavastu.// They slew deer for food and clothing, and prospered in that place. All were happy and content in their youth, and when

they reached maturity, the Seer Kapila gave them guidance, saying, "You are of a high royal line, and it would be meaningless for you to join with a common line. You should marry with your mother's relatives!"

Their race greatly increased, and the ensuing clamour was harmful to the meditation of the Seer Kapila. Consequently he said, "There are four main royal lineages, the principal and most important of which should remain in Kapilavastu. The great remainder of you should move to the place known as Devadaha, because this place was prophecied by the gods." Accordingly they moved, and there also, from the single hereditary line a second one expanded, and a great city began. —

// On one occasion [Ikṣvāku] Virūdhaka, the king of Potala, missed his banished sons, and dispatched his ministers to summon the boys. They returned, and then told him, "O King, you needn't worry. Those sons have taken Kapilavastu. They slay deer, make tents with the hides, have fine food and clothing, and live happily. Not only that, they have married with girls from their mother's side, and they have very many descendants."

King [Ikṣvāku] Virūdhaka exclaimed, "They are daring to act like that, very daring." Daring is called "śākya," and so thereafter the royal lineage of Ikṣvāku was known as the royal lineage of Śākya. When the father [Ikṣvāku] Virūdhaka and Rājyananda both died, the royal lineage of Potala was taken over by the Śākya royal lineage, in succession from eldest to youngest between the four sons of the first queen of [Ikṣvāku] Virūdhaka. Finally Nūpura, the youngest of the four brothers acted as king of the Śākyas. His son was Vasiṣṭha, whose son was Guha. His lineage passed to his son, grandson, and great-grandson, down through

twenty-five thousand Śākya kings in the city of Kapilavastu.

At that point there were six kings with the name Ratha, such as Daśaratha. From Daśadhanu, who was the son of the last one, there were six with the name Dhanu. Dhanusthira, the sixth, had two sons: Siṃhahanu and Siṃhanāda. From King Mahāsammata down to Siṃhahanu there were various changes in the name of the royal lineage, but the unbroken line of descent was of a single lineage.

Siṃhahanu had four sons, Śuddhodana, Śuklodana, Droṇodana, and Amṛtodana. He also had four daughters, Śuddhā, Śuklā, Droṇā, and Amṛtā. From among the eight brothers and sisters, the eldest was the daughter Śuddhā. This daughter Śuddhā went to become queen to the king of the city of Devadaha.

The reason this great holy place has the name Lumbini Garden

There was a son [Suprabuddha] born to the king of Devadaha and Śuddhā, and he was endowed with qualities of intelligence. He came to have as his queen a king's daughter who was known as Lumbini, "good woman of the city." Near the city capital Devadaha, a rich householder had a pleasure grove, a place for recreation. It was a garden perfectly replete with the finest water, flowers, and fruits, and with the calls of various birds therein. It was a place such as one might wish for. The king and his group of queens sometimes went there to amuse themselves. Queen Lumbini liked that pleasant garden, and wanted it. She asked [the king], "Please give it to me."

But the king said, "This is the householder's, and so it would be inappropriate for me to give it. If you want it, I shall

make one even better than this in another place."

On this site [of Lumbini] there would appear many marvels at the birth of the Buddha. It was created as a place where there were more lotuses, more flowers which grow in swamp and grow on land, a greater variety of fruits, meadows, and a perfect abundance of waters, than there were even in the garden grove of the householder. In this place various kinds of birds such as peacocks, parrots, mynas, krauñca [GSprey], and kādamba [dark -grey-winged goose] gave forth captivately beautiful calls, and various kinds of wild animals such as herds of elephants wandered peacefully. The king made a wonderful, unprecedented place, like a divine garden grove, with such things as mansions, pleasure groves, and ponds. Because it was constructed for the sake of that queen, it was also given the name Lumbini.

So it is stated in the Vinayavastu.

During that period of time, King Siṃhahanu ruled the city state of Kapilavastu. In Devadaha it was the period during which Suprabuddha ruled. To Lumbini, the excellent queen of Suprabuddha, there was born a marvelous daughter named Māyā who was endowed with the marks and signs of one who would give birth to a king that would rule the world with his power. After that, a daughter even more marvelous than her, Mahāmāyā, was born. She was one who had transcended mundane activity, and whom the soothsayers prophecied would give birth to a Universal Emperor, endowed with excellent marks.

Siṃhahanu thought, "How excellent it would be if a Universal Emperor appeared in my lineage." As Suprabuddha had aspirations to become related to Siṃhahanu, there was a mutual exchange of letters between the kings, and the

daughter of Suprabuddha, Mahāmāyā, who was endowed with the marks and signs of one who gives birth to a Universal Emperor, was taken to be married to Śuddhodana, the son of King Siṃhahanu. Later, he also took the older [daughter] Māyā after consultation in the assembly, it not being against Sākya custom. After his father, King Siṃhahanu, passed away, Śuddhodana acted as king of Kapilavastu. King Śuddhodana and queen Mahāmāyā both lived enjoyably and pleasantly in the pinnacle of Haṃsāvati, the palace of the royal court at Kapilavastu.

At that time in Tuṣita heaven, the Sage, the great Bodhisattva, decided to display the manner of enlightenment here in this world. He saw five sights: his caste, country, time, lineage, and mother.

1.) Caste: Most Buddhas appear in the ruling caste [Kṣatriya] or the priestly caste [Brahmin]. Seeing that at the present time the ruling caste was accorded respect, he decided to appear in the ruling caste.

2.) Country: So that it would not be said that the Bodhisattva had taken birth in a barbarian borderland, he decided to appear in the central country.

3.) Time: Buddhas do not appear while lifespans are as long as eighty thousand years, because renunciation and sadness cannot be awakened. Nor do they appear when lifespans have decreased to less than one hundred years, in a place where five-fold degeneracy is rampant. Hence he decided that in order to train living beings with lifespans of one hundred years, who were not the trainees of other Buddhas, he would appear during a time when lifespans were one hundred years.

4.) Lineage: From among the ruling caste, he decided to appear in the lineage of the Śākya King Śuddhodana, which was a lineage accorded respect and in which both maternal and paternal ancestors had behaved faultlessly for seven generations.

5.) Mother: He decided to appear as the son of mother Mahāmāyā, a woman endowed with such qualities as excellent physique and intelligence, who would not become distracted by selfish aims, one who had prayed in front of past Buddhas, "Oh! May I become the mother of a Buddha!" and who was able to hold a great Bodhisattva within her womb for ten months.

Then, at Hamsāvati in Kapilavastu, he entered into his mother's womb in the form of an elephant endowed with six tusks. Beginning from the time he entered the womb, his mother naturally maintained a moral discipline which shunned the ten nonvirtues, wished to release the prisoners of the Kapilavastu state, and wanted to give generously to the poor and beggars. King Śuddhodana accomplished [these things] in accordance with her wishes. Furthermore, as she wished to gaze upon pleasant garden groves, and wanted to be at the base of a tree in the Lumbini Garden Grove when it was time to give birth, the king sent a message to King Suprabuddha, saying, "Your daughter wishes to be in the Lumbini Garden Grove, so decorate it with ornaments!"

From Kapilavastu as well, preparations were made to beautify the garden grove, and when it was nearly time for her to depart, a horse-borne palanquin made from four kinds of jewels was arranged. Queen Mahāmāyā was surrounded with groups of elephants, horses, youths, and chariots, as well as hosts of troops and gods, filling all the earth and sky. Together with

this retinue, she departed and traveled to Lumbini Garden.

(Thus it is stated in the Abhinīṣkramaṇa Sūtra.)

When the time came for the Perfect Buddha, the Blessed One, to be born in Lumbini Garden, his mother stretched up and held the branch of a tree with her hands. What kind of a tree was it? It was a plakṣa tree [waved-leaf fig tree, *Ficus Infectoria*].

It is stated in the Vinayavastu: "Then, when she [ie. Māyādevī] went to the Lumbini Garden she saw an aśoka tree [*Jonesia Asoka* Roxb.] with extremely wide flowers. She wished to give birth there, and while she was there holding that tree..."

It also says in the Buddhāvataṃsaka-Sūtra: "The preceding omens [of impending birth], those ten great illuminations, occurred before the arrival of the Buddha. They also thoroughly illuminated all the dense darkness of the thoughts and minds of boundless and limitless sentient beings.

"O Son of a good family [i.e. Maṇibhadra], when the mother Mahāmāyādevī arrived at the site of the plakṣa tree, the bodies as well as all the masses of offerings of all those who were intent upon presenting offerings to the great Bodhisattva, all the powerful ones of the worldly realm who had assembled, the sons and daughters of the gods of the three realms together with their retinues, and the nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, and mahoragas, with their assembled retinues, were thoroughly illuminated by the magnificent splendor, glory, color, and form of Mahāmāyādevī."

Hence it is certain it was a plakṣa tree, with perfectly petalled flowers.

When the Blessed Buddha subdued the Māras in the evening, and directly and fully Awakened at dawn at the Vajrāsana [of Bodhgayā], the tree against which he rested his back was a bodhivṛkṣa [Indian fig tree, Ficus religiosa]. Nowadays they are well known at the Vajrāsana [of Bodhgayā] and in such areas as this [Lumbini] and Śrī Lanka. Everywhere they are regarded as blessed, they are planted, and they grow.

The tree beside which the Blessed Buddha passed into parinirvāṇa in Kuśīnagara, in the Malla country, was the well known sāl tree [śāla, Vatica Robusta].

Also, some say that the tree which the mother held with her hand when giving birth, and the tree at the occasion of passing into nirvāṇa are the same, known as sāl.

Nevertheless, it is stated in the Abhiniṣkramaṇa - Sūtra: "The mother Mahāmāyā descended from a jeweled palanquin in the Lumbini Garden, and saw an aśoka tree in full bloom. With a joyful and contented mind she went there, and held to a limb bent with the weight of flowers and leaves."

Therefore, if the sāl has flowers, it is possible to accept it as being the same, but if the sāl has no flowers, it cannot be accepted as the same. It appears certain that the birth tree was one with flowers.

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A brief explanation of those especially marvelous transformations which occurred on the occasion of the birth of the Buddha, the Blessed One

The following is an abbreviated version of the section concerning Lumbini Garden which is found in "Adorning the Wooded Grove with Trees," Chapter One hundred and Six of the Buddhāvataṃsaka-Sūtra.²

The merchant's son Maṇibhadra relied upon as many as fifty-three spiritual friends. When he had mastered the essential precepts of the thirty-ninth one, who was the Goddess of Night, Light of Energy in Prayer for the Protection of all Living Beings, he finally went to where the Wooded Grove of Lumbini was, and while searching and searching, performed clockwise circumambulations around the Wooded Grove of Lumbini. The fortieth spiritual friend, Splendor which Delights in the Excellent Maṇḍala of Grandeur, who was the Goddess of the Wooded Grove of Lumbini, was seated in the heart of a lotus upon a lion throne which was within a maṇḍala palace formed by all the limbs of the jeweled trees in the Wooded Grove of Lumbini. With a retinue of one hundred billion, twenty thousand Goddesses of the Wooded Grove in front and surrounding her, she was teaching the Dharma.

When [Maṇibhadra] saw her completely teaching the set of Sūtras known as the Thorough Presentation of the Ocean of Lifetimes of all Bodhisattvas, he offered prostrations by bowing his head at the feet of the Noble Lady, sat in front of her, and said this: "Noble Lady, I have awakened the thought of supreme

² Buddhāvataṃsaka, Derge edition, vol. Ah, beginning on f. 208.

→ but if p. 33 infra:
not just "abbreviated" only
26 [comparisons & more of

enlightenment, but I still do not know how Bodhisattvas appear in the lineage of the Tathāgatas. I still do not know how Bodhisattvas engage in conduct, and perform the illumination of sentient beings."

The Noble Lady replied as follows to the merchant's son Mañibhadra, giving a detailed explanation concerning ten different lives of a Tathāgata:

"I know about the births of Bodhisattvas in this great universe composed of one billion world systems. Because of previous prayers, I was born for the purpose of witnessing the appearance of the Bodhisattva in the Wooded Grove of Lumbini, on the fourth continent, the fortunate continent of Jambudvīpa. As such, I closely examined this, and cultivate the memory of the appearance of the Bodhisattva here in Lumbini. I have lived here for a long time. Furthermore, a hundred years ago was the time known as the descent of the Blessed One from the divine palace of Tuṣita, at which time ten preceding omens appeared here in the Wooded Grove of Lumbini."

What were these ten? They were as follows:

The first preceding omen was that the ground became level; all of this Wooded Grove of Lumbini became free of non-level ground, and free of any precipices or ravines.

The second preceding omen was that this Wooded Grove of Lumbini became free of gravel and shards, and free of stumps and thorns. The land became made of vajras, and then completely filled with many jewels.

The third preceding omen was that all this Wooded Grove of Lumbini became fully adorned

with a circle of intertwining trees of all variety of jewels together with sal trees, and tāl trees [palmyra, *Borassus flabelliformis*].

The fourth preceding omen was that in all this Wooded Grove of Lumbini there sprang forth new sprouts of aromatic trees more excellent than the offering substances of the gods, and stands of trees from which incense powder could be made. And it came to be encircled and purely adorned with trees in the form of precious incense, such as trees which gave off clouds of smoke and mist.

The fifth preceding omen was that Lumbini became filled with flowers of divine substance, garlands of jewels, and a full variety of treasure hanging [in the air].

The sixth preceding omen was that all the trees of the Wooded Grove of Lumbini actually became excellent treasuries of precious jewels.

The seventh preceding omen was that likewise in all the groves of lotus flowers in the Wooded Grove of Lumbini, all the flowers which grew from the water bloomed, and having sprung from the [muddy] earth, rose up through the water and remained above the water's surface.

The eighth preceding omen was that each and every worldly powerful being such as gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, kinnaras, and mahoragas of the three realms, and those powerful ones among living beings, took their place here in the Wooded Grove of Lumbini.

The ninth preceding omen was that each and every one of the sons and daughters of the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kinnaras, and mahoragas, all with various forms of joyful mental offerings held in their hands, took their places after looking

directly at the branch of the plakṣa tree, bowing, and offering prostrations.

The tenth preceding omen was that from within the navel center of the bodies of all the Buddhas of the ten directions there issued forth many light rays known as "the lamp which projects the birth of a Bodhisattva." Having illuminated all of the Wooded Grove of Lumbini, the light rays remained, and from them all the qualities of the Bodhisattva were proclaimed, issuing forth in the vocal tones of a Buddha.

Seeing those ten preceding omens [which occur] before the birth of a Buddha, all the powerful and wise ones in the world also knew that a Buddha would be born.

[Thus the Goddess spoke:]

"Maṇibhadra, son of a good family, when I saw these ten preceding omens, I gained faith and joy of inconceivable strength.

"Furthermore, son of a good family, when Māyādevi emerged from the vicinity of the great city of Kapilavastu, ten preceding omens appeared here in the Wooded Grove of Lumbini."

[The ten omens were as follows:]

1.) A radiant light appeared in all constructed buildings which existed on the surface of the earth in this world.

2.) From all the petals of the blooming jeweled lotus flowers a radiant light shone forth, and from them there also issued forth the pleasant sound of "Birth, birth, an excellent birth!"

3.) All the radiant light which shines forth when the thought [of enlightenment] is

first awakened by all of the Bodhisattvas in the ten directions, appeared.

4.) The radiant light which emanates forth when all the Bodhisattvas' spiritual stages [bhūmis] are fully gained and penetrated, appeared.

5.) All the radiant light which shines forth at the total completion of the perfections and mastery of primordial wisdom by the Buddhas and their Sons throughout the ten directions, appeared.

6.) All the radiant light of primordial wisdom which controls prayers shone forth.

7.) All the radiant light of primordial wisdom which actually accomplishes vast prayers shone forth.

8.) All the radiant light of primordial wisdom which shines forth when sentient beings are fully matured and trained by the Great Beings of the ten directions, appeared.

9.) All the radiant light which shines forth when those Great Beings of the ten directions, the Sons of the Victors, master the primordial wisdom of the true nature of reality, appeared.

10.) All the radiant light which shines forth at the deeds of all the Victorious Buddhas and their Sons in the ten directions, such as those of magical emanation, actual birth, awakening in supreme enlightenment, and mastering primordial wisdom, appeared.

All of those ten different radiant lights appeared in this Wooded Grove of Lumbini. The appearance of the preceding omens of those ten radiant lights also caused the thorough

illumination of all the dark and gloom within the thoughts and minds of infinite sentient beings.

[Thus the Goddess spoke:]

"Maṇibhadra, son of a good family, when the mother Mahāmāyādevī arrived before the plakṣa tree, the individual bodies as well as all the gathered offerings of all who were intent upon presenting offerings to the Bodhisattva, the many hundreds of thousands of all the taintless children of the gods in the three-fold universe who had all gathered together with retinues of nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, and mahoragas, were all thoroughly illuminated by the magnificent splendor, color, and form of Māyādevī. All of the light in the universe was outshone."

[There were ten inconceivable magical emanations of the mother, as follows:]

1.) The matchless lights which shone from Māyādevī's body spread in all directions, completely alleviating all suffering as the result, and passion as the cause, which are found in the continuums of the six kinds of living beings who are on the path of existence.

2.) Moreover, the second of the inconceivable magical emanations of the mother to appear in the Wooded Grove of Lumbini was that the vastness of a billion world systems was included in the body of Mahāmāyādevī like a reflected image. And within each of those billion world systems, there also appeared kings of different names, various Wooded Groves, and trees of various form in front of which there appeared a Mahāmāyādevī completely surrounded by all the chief and powerful beings of the world, waiting in preparation for the birth of the Bodhisattva.

3.) Furthermore, the third magical emanation to appear at the birth in Lumbini Garden was that those acts of service to all the Buddhas and whatever teachings of the Buddhist doctrine had been performed by this Enlightened Teacher of ours in the past when engaging in the conduct of a Bodhisattva, were announced from each of the hair follicles of the mother Māyādevi. It was, for example, as when the assembly of sun, moon, planets, and stars in the sky sparkles in very clear water, and when the sound of thunder rolls from gathered clouds. The images that were reflected were seen by all.

4-5.) The fourth and fifth events concerning the birth, to appear in Lumbini Garden were that there shone forth from all the hair follicles on the body of Māyādevi, clear and distinct images of the shape and scenery of the land, houses, cities, countries, and towns in a vast ocean of worlds, a billion world systems, [such as they were] when our Enlightened Teacher previously performed the conduct of a Bodhisattva. And there shone forth images of the enclosure of trees there, the lakes, the gysers, the sky and clouds, the names of aeons, their number, the lifespan of sentient beings, what types of sentient beings [the Buddha] associated with, what type of spiritual friends he associated with, and just how he energetically applied himself to virtuous dharmas.

Furthermore, there shone forth such images as those of what conduct of body, speech, and mind were engaged in by the Blessed One after reaching the state of No Return, and his dress, possessions, what happiness and sorrow he experienced, with what lifespan and lineage he was endowed, and how Mahāmāyādevī was also his mother on those occasions.

6.) Likewise, from the hair follicles of Māyādevī's body, brilliantly clear images were projected of when the Blessed One previously engaged in the Bodhisattva conduct of giving away all outer and inner objects, giving away son, daughter, and queen, and the conduct difficult to perform--the giving away of his head and limbs. Images in these situations appeared, including his bodily appearance, how he gave, who was the recipient, and what was the object which was given, even down to the manner of giving and what was spoken.

Just as when a motion picture (cinema) is shown, where a tangible machine causes the clear unblurred appearance of such things as countries upon the surface of a white screen, and various voices are caused to appear distinctly by the playing of a tape recorder, the magical emanations of primordial wisdom with vocal accompaniment were clearly seen issuing from the hair follicles of the body of Mahāmāyādevī.

7.) Likewise, when the Tathāgatas who had already appeared in the past were born from the bodies of their mothers, there was the miraculous appearance of decorations of the Buddha fields, and decorations of the realm of sentient beings, such as food, trees, flowers, incense garlands, salve, powder, garments, parasols and victory banners, banner ornaments, a full array of precious gems and the finest emanated ornaments, [as well as] music, song, praise, and the sound of chimes. All of those without exception appeared when Māyādevī arrived in the Wooded Grove of Lumbini.

8.) Moreover, this Wooded Grove of Lumbini was fully adorned with many mansions beyond the wealth of gods and men, jeweled palaces, gems, decorative strands of beads <hanging in loops and in loose strands>, grains, forms, and ornaments, fine and appropriate wealth which

issued forth individually from the womb of Māyādevi, and remained.

9.) Likewise, from the body of the mother Māyādevi, there issued forth, clear and radiant, Enlightened Teachers adorned with the fine marks and characteristics of a Blessed One, together with retinues and realms, equal to the number of atoms in one hundred billion Buddha realms.

10.) When the time came for the birth of the Blessed One, a large area in the vajra ground in front of the mother burst forth into a flower of finest jewels, a vast lotus known as "fine with ornaments of jewels," endowed with stem, stamens, garland of petals, and leaves of only jewels with boundless colors. Draped with countless dangling strands of the finest jewels, it covered the ground, and was surrounded by all kinds of gods.

The gathered nāgas caused perfume and scented water to rain down, all the yakṣas held double handfuls of various flowers which they scattered, all the gandharvas proclaimed songs of praise, all the asuras bowed deeply in homage, the assembly of garuḍas held silken canopies which adorned the sky, and all the uragas [serpent deities], joyful and devoted, watched while making pleasant sounds. These things together made up the tenth event concerned with the occasion of the birth of the Buddha in the Wooded Grove of Lumbini.

This concludes the abbreviation compiled from "Adorning the Wooded Grove with Trees," Chapter One hundred and Six of the Avatamsaka Sūtra.

If you think, "I can't believe these miracles on the occasion of the Buddha's birth," for what reason can you not believe? If material technology is able to display

various nonexistent appearances, then the inconceivable primordial wisdom and magical abilities of a Buddha are certainly able to display various forms of miracles, and as such, they are things we can believe in.

The Birth of the Buddha

At that time, Indra, the mightiest of gods, thought, "This queen Mahāmāyā is modest and will not dare to give birth in the midst of a large retinue like this of gods, men, and so on, so I shall do something."³ He sent down a fierce wind and rain, causing everyone to flee in all directions. Indra remained, having actually emanated in the costume of an old nanny who was experienced in birthing and caring for children.

At that time, from the right side of mother Māyādevi's womb, there shone forth an inconceivable, infinite light, at which it was impossible to stop gazing. Just as when the sun shines from the womb of the sky, the light of lightning strikes through the dense darkness from the womb of gathered clouds, or a great lamp appears in the womb of absolute darkness, kingdoms without distinction in the ten directions were filled with light and light rays. While all who were gathered there, such as gods, nāgas, and humans, were insatiably experiencing the wondrous spectacle, the Great Sage was born without harm to his mother.

The Bodhisattva was born, and Indra received him with a hide blanket. Then the Bodhisattva realized that Indra would become arrogant, thinking "I took the Bodhisattva," and so

³ This section is based upon the Vinayavastu, Derge edition, vol. 3, beginning on f. 280.

blessed himself with the vajra body, causing Indra, the mightiest of gods to tremble, because he couldn't hold him.

Then the Bodhisattva spoke: "Kauśika, let me go! Let me go! Let me go on!"

It is natural that whenever a Bodhisattva, a Blessed One, is born, at that time also this great earth will quake.

It is natural that when a Bodhisattva is born, no one holds him, and he looks in the four directions, takes seven steps in each, and also speaks these words: "This direction is East. From here the one who will attain nirvāṇa first appears. This direction is South. I shall become an object of devotion for all living beings. This direction is West. This shall be my final birth. This direction is North. I shall cross over the sea of existence."

Above his head the gods held a white parasol and fans with jeweled handles.

It is natural that when a Bodhisattva is born, there fall upon the crown of his head two streams of water from the heavens, one of cool water and one of warm water, which bathe the Bodhisattva.

It is natural that when a Bodhisattva is born, a large spring appears and flows in front of the mother who has given birth, and that the mother uses the water there to bathe.

A summary of those events

Birth, standing, and seven steps,
two streams of water, a spring, and the
gods.

The light at the birth was greater than that of a hundred suns. It filled and penetrated the three-fold universe with light, down to the realms of darkness not illuminated by the sun and the cavities underground. At that time there lived on Mt. Kailaś a seer named Niṣkleśa who was knowledgeable about destruction and creation. His nephew was named Agnidatta. At that time Agnidatta was living in a cave, and when he was meditating he saw the illumination and spoke to Niṣkleśa, thus:

"O Master! Have all the passions been purified here in a single instant, or what?

This mountain and cave were in this way made bright with light."

Niṣkleśa said to him:

"Sunlight is always keen, my only son.

If this illumination touches your limbs, the light is cool, and so it is certainly the light of a Sage.

It is the great light of a Bodhisattva who has certainly been born from a womb.

After birth, these immaculate light rays of the great Bodhisattva, which are like gold, illuminate the three worlds."

They rejoiced with happiness and pleasure.

Question: [It is said] he took seven steps in each of the four directions, but why is the number seven certain?

Answer: [Āryā Nāgārjuna] stated that while on the [Bodhisattva] path,

Faith, generosity, and learning,
Highest moral discipline, modesty,
self-respect, and knowledge;
The Riches of a Noble One number
seven.

A great Bodhisattva such as a Universal Emperor who is successively traversing the spiritual stages and paths is endowed with the wealth of the Seven Limbs of Enlightenment [in a form] such as the Seven Gems of the Kingdom (cakra, ²jewel, ³queen, ⁴minister, ⁵elephant, stallion, and ⁷general). [The Seven Limbs of Enlightenment are] perfect mindfulness as a limb of enlightenment, perfect investigation of phenomena as a limb of enlightenment, perfect diligence as a limb of enlightenment, perfect joy as a limb of enlightenment, perfect refinement as a limb of enlightenment, perfect meditative concentration as a limb of enlightenment, and ⁷perfect equanimity as a limb of enlightenment.

Because of diligence in the Seven Riches of a Noble One, [the Buddha] possessed in his being the Seven Limbs of Enlightenment. Therefore, if he had taken six [steps] it would be incomplete by one, and if it had been eight, there would be an excess of one. Thus it should be understood that there is a connection between path and result in the taking of seven steps at birth.

Additional Explanation for Removal of Doubts

In the Āryaupāyakaśalyamahāyāna-Sūtra: it is stated: "Question: 'Why was the Bodhisattva born in the wooded solitude of Lumbini, and not born in a town or city?'

"Reply: 'The Enlightened Teacher was born in the wooded solitude of Lumbini because for aeons in the past he had praised isolation and

lived in isolation, practicing pure conduct; because if he were to appear in the home of the king of Kapilavastu, the gods, nāgas, and yakṣas would not be able to continuously offer the scents, powders, and flowers of the gods; and also he was born there for the purpose of pleasing the sentient beings of the city of Kapilavastu, and [enabling] them to quickly meet that Great Being.'

"Question: 'Why was the Bodhisattva born while his mother was standing upright and turned, holding the limb of a plakṣa tree?'

"Reply: 'He was born easily in order to remove the kind of doubt that would think 'the Bodhisattva was born like an ordinary sentient being, causing pain to his mother.'"

The thirty marvelous omens on the occasion of the birth in Lumbini Garden as recounted above, were abbreviated from "Adorning with Trees," Chapter One hundred and Six of the Avatamsaka-Sūtra. Following that, the previously cited events of the moment of birth were all abbreviated from the Vinayavastu, beginning with "At that time, Indra, the mightiest of gods thought, 'This queen Mahāmāyā is modest and will not dare to give birth in the midst of a large retinue like this, of gods, men, and so on, so I shall do something,'" continuing with the light of the birth filling all this world of Jambudvīpa, causing the Seer Niṣkleśa and his nephew Agnidatta to engage in a series of questions and replies, and ending with "...illuminate the three worlds."

The manner of birth as explained from the Vinayavastu has Indra receiving [the Buddha] with a hide blanket. Although the related explanation concerning the manner of taking the seven steps is similar [in both texts], the

explanation from the Vinayavastu concerning each direction, and the statements [made by the Buddha] are different in the Abhiniskramaṇa Sūtra.

The explanation of those events [as recounted in the Abhiniskramaṇa - Sūtra] according to Chapter Twenty-five of the Kalpalatā [of Kṣemendra] is as follows:

At that time, the gods Brahma and Indra both carefully took [the Buddha] in the finest pristine Benares muslin [cotton] blanket. The mansion in which the Bodhisattva had lived within the womb was carried away by gods for worship in the realm of Brahma.

[The Buddha] said "Kauśika, let me go!" and as soon as he landed on the ground, the Earth Goddess offered a vast white lotus as a cushion. The Nāga King⁵ bathed him with streams of cool and warm water which came from midair.

[The Buddha] took seven steps in each of the four directions, or six directions if above and below are included, and proclaimed his peerlessness in each direction, saying "I am supreme in this world." A lotus flower emerged from the earth at the spot where each footstep had fallen. The taking of seven footsteps applies to the path and result, such as the Seven Riches of a Noble One, and the Seven Limbs of Enlightenment.

Moreover, to display physical miracles, auditory miracles, and to show he was a superior being, it was necessary to display what no one had done before, and so he took the seven steps and stated, "I am supreme in this world."

Furthermore, the seven steps taken in each of the four directions, and the statements of

fearlessness, are explained in some Sūtras through questions and replies, with [the Buddha] pointing his hand and [asking] Indra, "What is this direction?" In some Sūtras there is no mention of questions and replies.

Whatever the case, he looked to the east and said, "From here I shall arise to attain Nirvāṇa." He looked to the south and said, "I will be in harmony with worldly understanding." He looked to the west and said, "This is my final birth, at the end of which I shall disappear." He looked to the north and said, "I have purified all my deeds in saṃsāra." These four [statements] accord well with the Tibetan language. In the Vinaya and Sūtras there appear many different sets of four statements.

The following praise is said to have been made [by King Śuddhodana]:

When you, the most important of men,
were born, you took seven steps upon
this earth.

Homage to you who were skillful at
that time, and said, "I am supreme in
this world."

At that time the earth quaked in six ways, various pleasant sounds such as the chimes of the gods rang forth, and continents not illuminated by the sun and moon, as well as the underground, were filled with light.

After seven days the mother [Mahāmāyā] passed away. The father, together with the maternal aunt Māyā, and also a retinue of ten million gods and men accompanying the king because of his dignified splendor, returned to the city of Kapilavastu.

At that time, four sons were born to the kings of the four great countries, five hundred fine sons were born in Kapilavastu, eight hundred girls such as Yaśodharā, five hundred servants such as Chanda, and two thousand colts and so forth such as the riding horse Kanthaka, were born. In the center of the continent the bodhi tree sprouted, five thousand mines emerged, and five hundred gardens also appeared.

In brief, because the desires and goals of all sentient beings were fulfilled, his father named [the Buddha] Siddhartha. Because the yaksa Śākyavardhana* prostrated at his feet when they were making offerings to the Śākya gods, [the Buddha] was known as God of Gods [Devātideva*]. Because he sat quiet as a sage among the noisy speakers of the Śākyas, he was known as Śākyamuni [Sage of the Śākyas].

He was then given to his maternal aunt Prajāpatī [the name of Māyā when she later became a nun], and together with thirty-two nursemaids, she attended him, raising and caring for him.

Explanation concerning the town of Lumbini

As can be clearly known from the ancient inscription on the upper portion of Dharmarāja Aśoka's stone pillar, there is mention of a "Lumbini village." But, as to whether or not there is any information concerning the town of Lumbini before or after that [requires some explanation]. As mentioned above, before the birth of the Enlightened Teacher, there were pleasure groves and mansions constructed for the sake of Lumbini, the mother of [the Buddha's] mother Mahāmāyā. As a preceding sign of the impending birth of the Bodhisattva, Mahāmāyādevi wished to release prisoners and practice generosity, desires which were

fulfilled by the King Śuddhodana. She wished to drink water from the four directions around Mt. Meru, which was impossible to actually get, but the magician Ajāla* emanated waters of the four oceans from which she drank, and her mind was satisfied.

She wished to see Devadaha, her ancestral birthplace, and especially wished to give birth in the garden grove of Lumbini. As a result, the two kings mutually arranged a series of offerings equally on the roads of both cities. Villagers of both countries lived between the cities of Kapilavastu and Devadaha. This, and the manner in which [Mahāmāyā] traveled to the auspicious Lumbini Garden is clear in the explanations of the Jātakas within the minor Sūtras, and so it can be known that there were villagers of both Kapilavastu and Devadaha at Lumbini. After that, there is no doubt that the king of the city Devadaha developed it extensively.

The Buddha, the Blessed One, lived for eighty-one years, and about one hundred and eighty years after his Nirvāṇa, the Dharmarāja Aśoka was born. Aśoka ruled over all of the Indian subcontinent, and came here to Lumbini when he had been on the throne for about twenty years. He erected the stone pillar which states "The Buddha was born in this place," and gave exemption from taxation to the town when about three hundred and twenty years had passed after the birth of the Blessed One.

During that period it is certain that there was a town for protection of the garden grove, and furthermore that there would have been the establishment of settlements, one springing up from another, as is occurring in our present experience. Hence, it is certain that there was a large Lumbini city upon the occasion of Aśoka's visit here. Not only that, it is

possibly appropriate to refer to the entire territorial domain of the king of Devadaha city by the general name of Lumbini Township, because the famous Lumbini was included therein. For example, even today this large district is referred to as the Lumbini Zone [of the Kingdom of Nepal].

The Major Deeds of the Buddha

At the time of [the birth of the Buddha], Bimbisāra was born as the son of Mahendrapadma at Rājgrha, Udaya as the son of Śatayutū at Kauśāmbi, Pracandrabha as the son of Nemunanta* at Ujjayani, and Prasenajit as the son of Brahmadata at Śrāvastī. With the birth of the four sons, excellence came to all the lands. They arrogantly thought it was from the merit of each of the princes who had been born, but as it is said:

Fire can be known from smoke, and water from the kalahasa [spoon bill water fowl].

Likewise, the possession of the intellect of a Bodhisattva can be known from the family and the characteristics.

Accordingly, aroused by the light of the birth of the child, our Enlightened Teacher, to the mother Māyā in auspicious Lumbini Garden, the Seer Asita or Niṣkleśa, who was on the glacial Mt. Kailāś and was endowed with five-fold clairvoyance, joined together with his nephew Agnidatta, and traveled to the city of Kapilavastu to gaze upon the Bodhisattva. When the father, King Śuddhodana, showed him, they saw a great person whom they never tired of looking at, with a body adorned with the thirty-two characteristics.

The soothsayers said that both his feet were beautiful, red, and supple like a lotus, with long toes, and marked with cakras. The fingers were webbed like a swan, and his ^{calves} were like those of a deer. His hands reached down to his knees, his genitals were concealed, and his body was of a harmonious proportion. The tuft of hair between his eyebrows swirled to the right, and he was untainted by traces of dirt or impurities. He blazed with light like the gold of Jambu waters. His upper body was like a lion, and his limbs were bright and beautiful. Forty white teeth adorned his mouth. He had a beautiful nose, his tongue was long and slender, and his voice was like the sound of thunder and drums. His eyes were azure, with fine lashes, and his head was shaped like a parasol and endowed with an uṣṇīṣa protrusion. An auspicious light blazed at his heart, figures of conches and lotuses were clear on his hands, and so on. The thirty-two excellent characteristics were complete without exception.

[The soothsayers] prophesied that if this one lived as a householder he would become a Universal Emperor, and if he took ordination, he would become a perfect Buddha. Universal Emperors do not appear in a contentious aeon, and their characteristics and marks are not clear. The characteristics and marks of this one were utterly clear, and so he would certainly become a Buddha.

In this way, the sons of the four kings were humbled, and because the light, characteristics, and marks were clear [on the Buddha], all the world knew that all the excellence and fulfillment of aims in all countries were due to the power of the Blessed One's birth.

Our Enlightened Teacher, the Buddha, the Blessed One, first awakened the supreme enlightenment thought, and next accumulated the assemblies [of merit and primordial wisdom] for three great aeons. Finally, although he had already become Buddha many aeons before as the Tathāgata Indraketu*, he had love for living beings who have life spans of one hundred years during a time when five-fold degeneracy is rampant, and who are not trained by other Buddhas, so he illustrated the way to actualize enlightenment by such means as the twelve deeds of a supreme emanation in this world. He stated himself:

At the time when Dīpaṅkara prophesied me,

I had achieved the eighth spiritual stage [bhūmi] and also, obtained the ten powers.

In the past, when the Enlightened Teacher was [born] as the child of a brahmin incense seller, he praised the Buddha Dhvājatārā*, saying such things as "Were I to travel all around the vast three-fold universe, in what land could there be a supreme person assiduous in virtue such as you?" Because he did such things as circumambulations while hopping on one foot, a great assembly [of merit] was rapidly gathered in proportion to the force of his mind.

During the time when lifespans were twenty thousand years, the third Buddha of the fortunate aeon, Kāśyapa appeared. This Enlightened Teacher of ours had then become the Brahmin Dārakaguru*. The great Kāśyapa prophesied: "At the time when lifespans are one hundred years, you will become Śākyamuni, the fourth Guide of the fortunate aeon." Accordingly, right after his lifetime as the

Brahmin Dārakaguru*, he took birth as Svetaketu in the divine realm of Tuṣita. This is the meaning of the statement, "taking a deliberate birth," in the Uttaratantra. After training and taming the mental states of his trainees, the gods of Tuṣita, he saw five sights, and decided to go to this world. He passed his own tiara to Maitreya, and appointed him as regent. In the form of an elephant with six tusks, he then entered into the womb of his mother Māyādevi, at the Hamsāvati palace of Kapilavastu, on the 15th day of the moon in Pūrvā āsādhā, in 564 B.C. This deed is spoken of by Ācārya Nāgārjuna in the Maṅgalagāthā which concerns the ten deeds of the Buddha:

Surrounded by Brahma and the gods, the Tathāgata came here from the central palace of the gods in Tuṣita in order to benefit living beings.

May the auspicious benefit which came from that bring peace to all living beings.

He remained in the womb for nine months and twenty-one days, and was born along with thirty miraculous omens on the seventh day of the 4th month of Vaiśāka in 563 B.C. The filling [of the world] with light, the taking of steps, the proclamation of fearlessness, and so forth are merely referred to by Nāgārjuna in the Maṅgalagāthā:

When the Lord was born attended by numerous gods in delightful Lumbini Garden, the leaves and flowers blazed with light.

May the auspicious benefit which came from one who has reached the end of existence, bring peace to all living beings.

The story of the manner in which the perfect Buddha, the Blessed One, was born in the great holy place of auspicious Lumbini Garden, is the main subject under discussion in this book. It has already been clearly explained above in very great detail.

There is explanation about the city of Kapilavastu in Chapter II below, where information is given concerning [the Buddha] entering into a womb, his amusements as a youth, his training and competition in the sciences, archery, and athletics, and about his amazing arrow which can be visited. There is also a clear explanation concerning his retinue of queens and upholding of the kingdom, as well as about the places and areas where the father and son later met, and the military invasion against the Śākya by Virūdhaka, the king of Kosala.

[Prince Siddhartha] upheld the kingdom until he was twenty-nine years old. He was then urged toward enlightenment by the Buddhas of the ten directions, and genuine renunciation was born in him upon seeing birth, old age, disease, and death at the [Kapilavastu city] gates in the four directions. He cast aside the kingdom like spittle, and set off together with his mount Kanthaka and [his attendant] Chanda to begin austerities in the quest for total freedom, liberation, and enlightenment. The manner of renunciation is also referred to by Nāgārjuna in the Māṅgalagāthā:

He gladly emerged from the best of cities at midnight, and set off to the grove of austerities completely surrounded by an assembly of gods such as Brahma.

May the auspicious benefit which came from that bring peace to all living beings.

In the explanation within the prologue to the Jātakas which are among the thirteen minor Sūtras translated [into Tibetan] by the Śrī Lanka monk Ānandaśrī and the [Tibetan] interpreter Tharpa Nyima Gyaltsen, it is clear that the [Buddha's] son Rāhula had already been born before the renunciation. At the point of his departure, [the Buddha] thought to look in upon his son, but decided to see him after Buddhahood, because if Yaśodharā and the others awoke, it would obstruct the renunciation. He then left together with his mount Kanthaka and [his attendant] Chanda.

However, as was seen by everyone at that time, and according to the definitive meaning, during the six years in which [the Buddha] was practicing austerities, his son had not been born. Because the attainment of Buddhahood by the Blessed One at the Vajrāsana [in Bodhgayā], the release of the moon from Rāhula, and the birth of the son were simultaneous, his son was known as Rāhulagupta. As a result, the monks asked the Blessed One, "What karma made it necessary for your son Rāhula to remain in the womb for six years?" [The Buddha replied] that in the past there was a king named Candra who held a Seer for six days, and caused him discomfort. Rāhula was the rebirth of King Candra, and that karma made it necessary for him to remain in the womb for six years. Yaśodharā had taken birth in the past as a girl who sold milk with her mother. This [six-year pregnancy] was the maturation of having made her old mother carry a large container of milk for six leagues. This reason given in the Sūtras is found in Chapter Eighty-three of the Kalpalatā.

Furthermore, Yaśodharā was rebuked and so on by [the Buddha's] father Śuddhodana, which caused her to do such things as beat her own son against a boulder and caste him into the

water. But whatever was done, no harm came to him, and yet the anger of [the Buddha's] father still did not recede, and she experienced great suffering from these things. This maturation of her karma was explained [by the Buddha] in the story of Queen Padminī, the daughter of an antelope, which is clarified in Chapter Sixty-eight of the Kalpalatā Jātaka.

[The Buddha] offered up his hair at the Viśuddha Stūpa, ordained himself, and accepted a saffron robe offered by Indra. To reach the absolute limit of concentrated meditation, he practiced austerities on the bank of the Nirañjanā River, and cut off craving by eating two grains of rice a day for two years, one grain of rice a day for two years, and nothing at all for two years. As a result, his body became extremely emaciated and seared by the sun and wind, so that everyone was amazed. He kept silent regardless of anything the herdsmen said, and so they stuck a hot bronze needle into his ear. His mother Māyā saw this from the divine realm of Trāyāstrimsā, and the stream of her tears fell and formed a pond. The first words of the Buddha were directed to comfort his mother: "Do not worry, mother. Seven days from now I shall become Buddha, Guru of living beings in the three-fold universe."

Nāgārjuna stated:

On the bank of the river, completely surrounded by rows of kuśa grass, he performed the most wonderful act of removing craving, and the Nāga King { paid homage.

May the auspicious benefit which came from that bring peace to all living beings.

At the completion of his austerities, he accepted yoghurt offered by Sujātā, or by both

Nandā and Nandābālā, and his body became like polished gold. He also accepted grass from the hands of the grass seller Svastika. Nāgārjuna stated:

With a body like gold, blazing with light, he sat with crossed legs, immobile upon a cushion of grass which was blue like lapis lazuli.

May the supreme auspicious benefit which came from that bring peace to all living beings.

At Bodhgayā he prostrated to the thrones of the three Buddhas who had already appeared in the past, sat upon his own throne, rested his back against the bodhi tree, and absorbed in meditation, he subdued Māra in the evening. Nāgārjuna stated in the Maṅgalagāthā:

He went to the king of trees, and through the power of love, subdued the great hordes of Māra.

May the various auspicious benefits of the Blessed One, which came about on the surface of the earth and in the sky, bring peace to all living beings.

He was absorbed in meditation during the night, and at dawn, after destroying the most subtle [obscurations] to be rejected through the use of the greatest antidote, the vajra-like concentrated meditation, he actualized total Buddhahood, the peace of dharmakāya beyond conceptual elaboration. Concerning the ten deeds, Nāgārjuna stated in the Maṅgalagāthā:

He sat at the Vajrāsana [in Bodhgayā] to destroy all suffering, and totally subdued the four Māras at dawn.

May the auspicious benefit of the
Enlightened Teacher, the Tathāgata,
bring peace to all living beings.

With all faults extinguished and all
qualities perfected, he reached the ultimate
limit of form [sambhogakāya] and primordial
wisdom [dharmakāya], the highest citadel of
peace and total liberation. Yet when he
thought how excellent it would be if all
sentient beings could come to be like that, he
did not see them to also be recipients of
Dharma. He stated:

I have found a Dharma which is like
nectar; it is noncomposite clear light,
profound and peaceful, beyond
conceptual elaboration.

Were I to explain it, others would
not understand, and so I shall remain
in the forest without speaking.

He had resigned himself, and sat without
speaking any Dharma. At that time he was
beseeched by Brahma, who offered him a gold
cakra with a thousand spokes, and Indra, who
offered a white conch with a clockwise swirl.
Accordingly, at Rṣipattana, Sārnath, in the
area of Varanasi, he turned the Dharmacakra of
the Four Truths, his first teaching, for the
initial group of five disciples. Nāgārjuna
stated:

Sitting in the city of Varanasi, the
supreme Seer taught the supreme
Dharmacakra.

May the extremely marvelous
auspicious benefit which came from that
bring peace to all living beings.

The Buddha ceaselessly turned Dharmacakras,
such as the middle Dharmacakra [showing reality
to be] without defining characteristics, [which

was taught] at Gr̥dhrakūṭa, the final teaching of the Dharmacakra distinguishing interpretive and definitive meaning, [which was taught] in areas such as Vaiśālī, and the Dharmacakra of secret Mantra [taught in such places as] the god realms, Oḍḍiyāna, and Śrī Dhyānyakāṭaka. Nāgārjuna stated in the Maṅgalagāthā:

Whatever was spoken by the Blessed One, the Śākyamuni Lion, was praised by noble individuals as beneficial, holy, and purifying, meritorious and cleansing.

May the auspicious benefit which came from that bring peace to all living beings.

Six teachers of other religious systems urged and beseeched the kings for competition in miracles with the Blessed One. [The Buddha] knew the [best] place and time, and so agreed to do so in Śrāvastī, from the first until the fifteenth day of the first month, [thereafter] known as the month of miracles. The kings of gods and men served as patrons, and [the Buddha] displayed superior, amazing miracles. Nāgārjuna stated in the Maṅgalagāthā:

In order to destroy the pride of those practicing other systems and to produce happiness for living beings, he displayed excellent miracles.

May the auspicious benefit of the Victor which came from that bring peace to all living beings.

In response to prayers from his mother Mahāmāyā, the Blessed One observed the three summer months of the summer retreat in the Trāyāstrimśā heaven, and spoke the Dharma to his mother and others. During that time, the people of the Indian subcontinent became very sad because the Blessed One was not there. As

a result, Maudgalyāyana magically took an image maker to the god realm, met the Blessed One, had a sandalwood [image] of the Sage made, and erected it [on earth]. [The people of the world] prayed again and again through Maudgalyāyana for [the Buddha] to return. On the fifteenth day of the first Tibetan month, he agreed to descend from among the gods, and on the twenty-second day he descended at the city of Saṅkissa. He descended from the heaven of the higher realms on a jeweled ladder, together with an inconceivable retinue of gods. It is said that the sandalwood image walked on that occasion. Nāgārjuna stated in the Maṅgalagāthā:

He returned here from the higher realms to benefit living beings, completely surrounded by an assembly of gods such as Brahma, who held in their hands various fans and parasols.

May the auspicious benefit which came from that bring peace to all living beings.

In 483 B.C., when the Blessed One reached the age of eighty-one, he graced the wanderer Subhadra, and with a fashioned emanation body, he graced the gandharava Pramudita. They were the last of his sphere of trainees. At Kuśinagara he demonstrated the way of passing into Nirvāṇa. Nāgārjuna stated in the Maṅgalagāthā:

When the Tathāgata passed into sublime peace, the highest gods offered many mandārava flowers and gave praise.

May the auspicious benefit which came from that bring peace to all living beings.

[The Buddha] actualized the primordial wisdom of the dharmakāya through the taintless,

vajra-like concentrated meditation.
Candrakīrti stated in the Mādhyamakāvatāra:

Because all the dry firewood of the knowable was incinerated, there was peace-- the dharmakāya of the Victors.

At that point there is no birth and no cessation; because [defiled states of] mind have ceased, [dharma]kāya is actualized.

Without straying from the space of [dharmakāya], the sambhogakāya endowed with five-fold certainty is like the moon [shining] from the space of the sky. Candrakīrti stated in the Mādhyamakāvatāra:

From out of the dharmakāya [appears the sambhogakāya] which is bright like a heavenly tree, and nonconceptual just like a wish-fulfilling jewel.

This is a constant endowment to the world, for until the liberation of living beings, it will manifest to those who are beyond conceptual elaboration.

The sambhogakāya endowed with five-fold certainty manifests [only] to those who are beyond conceptual elaboration, the Great Beings on the tenth spiritual stage [bhūmi]. The nirmānakāya is activity which corresponds to that as its cause. The moon shining in the sky is [reflected] in a hundred thousand vessels of water, and is distinct in each individual vessel. Likewise, the mental state of living beings is looked after by the unceasing activities of the fashioned, born, and supreme nirmānakāya [which manifest for] those who are to be trained. The Buddha, the Blessed One, is the essence of the three kāyas, and is endowed with the nature of the ten powers. Nāgārjuna stated in the Maṅgalagāthā:

The Tathāgata endowed with the ten powers was paid homage by powerful gods, by powerful nāgas and men,

And offerings were made by powerful garuḍas, yakṣas, and gandharvas.

May the auspicious benefit which came from that bring peace to all living beings.

KAPILAVASTU AND DEVADAHA

Here are the stories of how the cities of Kapilavastu (in present day Tilaurakot) and Devadaha both got their names.

Kapilavastu is known as such because the name of the Master, the Sage Kapila, was applied to the place. This is told in "A Spectacle for the Mind," beginning with "There were many generations in the famous royal lineage of Mahāsammata," on page 18¹⁴, paragraph 2, and ending with "...so it became known as Kapilavastu," on page ~~18~~, paragraph 3.

The name of the city Devadaha can be understood in "A Spectacle for the Mind," beginning with "Kapila said, 'You are of a high royal line...'," on page ~~18~~, paragraph 1, and ending with "...a great city began," paragraph 2.

Although the royal lineage of Mahāsammata and Ikṣvāku became known as the Śākya royal lineage, it came from Kapilavastu. The origin of the name of the Śākya royal lineage from Kapilavastu is told in "A Spectacle for the Mind," beginning with "On one occasion [Ikṣvāku] Virūdhaka, the king of Potala, missed his banished sons..." on page ~~18~~, paragraph 3, and ending with "...the eldest was the daughter Śuddhā" on page ~~18~~, paragraph 3.

Devadaha

The city Devadaha is known to have been prophecied by the gods to the Master Kapila. He told the majority of the lesser Śākyas, such as Śākya Licchavi, to move there. Accordingly they moved, a large mass of people flourished, and a great city began. At the time of the Śākya King Simhahanu, Śuddhā, who was the elder

sister of Śuddhodana, went to become the queen of the king who ruled Devadaha. Suprabuddha was the son of the Devadaha king and Śuddhā. His queen was known as Lumbini -- "good woman of the city." [King Suprabuddha] made a new garden for her, which was given the name of the queen. As a result, this great holy place is honored by that name up to the present day.

Suprabuddha and Queen Lumbini had two daughters: Māyā who was endowed with the marks and signs of one who would give birth to a king who would control the world, and after her, Mahāmāyā, who had the marks of one who would give birth to a Universal Emperor. After discussion between Simhahanu and Suprabuddha, they were taken to become the queens of Śuddhodana. This is all told in "A Spectacle for the Mind," ending with "...he also took the older daughter Māyā..." on page ~~21~~₂₂, paragraph 1.

There is no doubt that it was known as a famous city where three great, exceptional queens appeared; it was the place where the mother of the Buddha was born, and where there occurred activities concerning Dharma, the fulfilling of aims, liberation, and prosperity.

This concludes the present account of Devadaha.

~ Kapilavastu

The city of Kapilavastu is referred to in the Maṅgalagāthā [by Ācārya Nāgārjuna] which concerns the ten deeds [of the Buddha].

In the great city known as Kapilavastu, he achieved inconceivable virtue, praiseworthy of the most famous gods.

May the auspicious benefit of the Tathāgata which came from that, bring peace here and now for you [sentient beings].

The main thing referred to here is the manner in which [the Buddha] first entered into the womb at this place of Kapilavastu. Our Enlightened Teacher took birth as Svetaketu in the heavenly realm of Tuṣita, and trained the gods with Dharma. When the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the ten directions urged him to appear in this world, he saw five sights, and when the constellations were in the auspicious position of Puṣyā, he entered through the right side of the excellent Queen Mahāmāyā, and took residence within an exquisite mansion of snake-heart sandalwood, together with special offerings. His mother also was aware of this.

He entered into the mother's womb on the 15th day of the 6th month of Pūrvā āsādhā in 564 B.C., and was born on the 7th day of the 4th month of Vaiśākha in 563 B.C. He had thus remained [in the womb] for nine months and twenty-one days, and for those ten months had brought three hundred and sixty million gods and humans to maturation through the three vehicles. This was perceived by the father and mother.

Following the birth of the Blessed One, Kapilavastu was also the place where his characteristics and marks were examined. Likewise, it was the place where he amused himself as a youth. From the writing master Sarvamitra* he learned writing and also mathematics. He humbled all the arrogant individuals through [his prowess in] archery, swimming, athletics, and through his might in all feats of strength. He went for a stroll with his father, and when he became tired, sat in the shadow of a tree. The shadow of the

jambu tree [rose-apple, ^ engenia] would not leave his body, and his father cast flowers in amazement. Deciding to destroy the sarcasm [directed at him] while living a celibate life, and to follow the example of previous Victors, he chose [as his wife] Yaśodharā, the qualified daughter of Śākya Gadapaṇi*, who was endowed with qualities. He broke the arrogance of everyone through entering into competition in the letters, calculation, archery, strength, and the martial arts. He then enjoyed a retinue of queens such as Yaśodharā, Gopā, and Mrgajā. He assumed the throne of a Dharmarāja in the Hamsāvati palace of the Śākya kings at Kapilavastu, and maintained the kingdom until age twenty-nine.

On the occasion of competition in the martial arts, iron pots were attached to the trunks of nine tāl trees, and he competed together with Śākya boys like Arjuna who were skilled archers. They were all unable to pierce more than one or two, but the Blessed One pierced all nine tree trunks and iron pans. His iron arrow finally stuck in the ground several miles away, and water sprung forth from [that place, which came to be known as Arrow Well. That iron arrow had belonged to his father Śuddhodana's father Siṃhahanu, who was famous throughout the Indian subcontinent for his archery. When the Blessed One was competing in the martial arts, he took that iron arrow of Siṃhahanu in his hand, joined bow and arrow together, and shot it. Since that arrow which caused Arrow Well to spring forth, amazing everyone, was held by the hand of the Blessed One, it has extremely great blessings. It was recovered from beneath the earth by the Department of Archeology, H.M.G., and is huge, barely liftable by one of our people. It can be visited in the exhibition hall in Taulihawa.

(Continued)

The meeting of the Blessed One with his father Suddhodana

The Śākya King Suddhodana missed his son the Blessed One very much, but the Blessed One, having become a renunciate and having actualized perfect Buddhahood, would not return home. The grieving king sent many messengers to Jetavana [in Śrāvastī], and pleaded over and over for him to quickly visit the Śākya nation. When the messengers met the Blessed One, the highest faith arose within them, and they took ordination and stayed. The king became depressed, saying that it was a lack of compassion by the Blessed One that he traveled everywhere to other cities and townships acting for the benefit of sentient beings, but did not come to his own palace in the city of the Śākyas. He entrusted Śākya Udayin [to go to his son], and told him not to take ordination and to return quickly. He promised to do so, and left. Together with telling the Blessed One the story of his father's depression in detail, Udayin pleaded with great insistence for him to come to the Śākya palace, and was delighted when he agreed to come within seven days. When Udayin returned, the king saw that he had taken ordination. He thought that this dress was the same as that of the Blessed One, and he would not be coming now. The [Buddha's] father, the king, lost consciousness and fainted. When cool water had been sprinkled upon him and he had regained consciousness, he asked, "Why is the Blessed One not coming?"

Udayin replied, "He will come seven days from now."

The [Buddha's] father, the king, was extremely delighted. He made the pleasure grove of Nyagrodha like Jetavana, built a road, and made vast arrangements for the arrival. In order to destroy the haughtiness and

overfamiliarity of his father, relatives, friends, followers, Śrāvakas, and countrymen, the Blessed One arrived at the temple of Nyagrodha from out of the open sky, together with a retinue of Śrāvakas, and clouds of offerings from gods and goddesses such as Brahma and Indra. Udayin identified this and that Arhat, [the Buddha] was seated upon a jeweled throne in the temple, and the father and son met.

They discussed saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, and the Buddha then taught the peaceful, refreshing nectar of the Dharma at great length. As a result, seventy thousand learned persons of the Śākya race and seven thousand followers became recipients of Dharma. Very great men such as the royal family members Śuklodana, Droṇodana, and Amṛtodana, who were the brothers of his father, together with many followers were established in the enlightenment of the three vehicles and the four results [of the Śrāvaka]. Although they saw the qualities of the Buddha, they had the attachment of being relatives, and from their overfamiliarity, they did not perceive him to be an incredible marvel.

Just as the Blessed One had the thought, "If the gods would come to listen to Dharma in order to reduce the pride of my relatives..." many gods such as Brahma and Indra, glowing with light rays, requested the Blessed One to sit upon a precious lion throne within the palace of the gods which was created from jewels. While they were listening to the Dharma, and filling the inside of the palace without any space left, the [Buddha's] father, the king, went to enter into the palace. The four great guardian protectors, Dhṛtarāj* at the East gate, Virūḍhaka at the South, Virūpakṣa at the West, and Kubera at the North, stopped him, saying "Today he is teaching Dharma to the gods, and it is not an occasion

for humans to enter." The face of the [Buddha's] father, the king, fell, his speech became confused, and his majestic dignity was lost, at which moment the Blessed One said, "Bring my father!" A place was found at the foot of the throne, he made prostrations at the feet of the Enlightened Teacher, and sat with a faithful and enthusiastic mind. When [the Buddha] taught Dharma such as the Four Truths, his father the king's twenty-peak mountain crag, [the twenty varieties of] the view of the destructible aggregates, was destroyed, and he saw the truth.

The [Buddha's] father, the king, then returned to the palace, and told Śuklodana to rule the kingdom, but he said "I am ordained, and don't want the kingdom." Likewise, Droṇodana and Amṛtodana were ordained, and said they didn't want the kingdom. The kingdom and all of the wealth of Śuddhodana fell upon Bhadrīka, and the pleasure grove of Nyagrodha was offered to the Buddha together with the most excellent honours.

Because all the Śākya youths took ordination, the Śākya King Bhadrīka also wished to become ordained. He asked [the Buddha], "Please ordain me."

[The Buddha] replied, "Ordain Bhadrīka," and he was turned over to [the Arhat] Upāli. When Bhadrīka became ordained, he gave all his jewelry to Upāli the barber. The Blessed One said, "It is inappropriate to make any distinction between monks due to caste, family, bearing, and so on. It is proper for the Śākya King Bhadrīka to prostrate at the feet of Upāli the barber [because he is an Arhat]." And so, as a worthy recipient of offering, he was given the highest honours. Because the Śākya King Bhadrīka became a monk, Mahānāman, who was the son of Droṇodana, acted as king.

This great Dharma feast of good fortune, the meeting of father and son, also took place just in Kapilav^{astu}, at the temple of Nyagrodha pleasure grove near Hamsāvati.

Here is the story of the war against Kapilavastu and the decimation of many thousands of Śākya by Virūdhaka, the son of the Kosala King Prasenajit, and his minister Duratacarya*

The servant woman of the Śākya King Mahānāman had a beautiful daughter named Māllika, who was learned in the scriptures and the martial arts, and was endowed with [excellent] qualities. When [Māllika] was in the garden grove carrying out the orders of her master, she saw the Blessed One coming, and the highest faith was born in her. She thought, "I want to make offerings to him, but it isn't proper because I am a servant woman's daughter."

The Blessed One knew her thoughts and said, "I need alms." She was delighted, offered him alms, and made the prayer that she not suffer as a servant woman.

Then a brahmin soothsayer who was a friend of her father's saw her and said, "Daughter of my friend, don't worry yourself. Your body is beautiful and pleasant, your hands are soft like the lotus of the gods and have the marks such as a rosary, wheel, and hook. Soon you will certainly become the queen of a king."

Prasenajit, king of Kosala, was then out in pursuit of wild antelope, and carried by his stallion, arrived in that country. When he saw Māllika, his mind was filled with passion, and he spoke to Śākya Mahānāman. Mahānāman offered her as though she were his own daughter,

together with jewelry and clothing. Māllika mounted an elephant together with King [Prasenajit], and departed.

The king had an earlier queen named Vivarsa*, who was more beautiful than the gods. When [this queen] held [the hand] of Māllika, she was amazed that Māllika's body was softer than a lotus. The two of them became close friends. Then the king's son was born to Māllika. He was named Virūdhaka, and was trained in the sciences and combat. A son of his [father's] minister was born attended by a difficult labor for his mother, and so was called by the name Duratacarya*. Because the two of them were the same age, they became close friends from early youth.

On one occasion Virūdhaka and Duratacarya* traveled to the Śākya city by horseback. The Śākyas ridiculed him, saying "This is the son of our servant woman," and would not let them enter. Both master and assistant were sickened to the heart, and with the wish to extract revenge, [Virūdhaka] hastened to seize rule of the kingdom.

Having faith in the Blessed One, King Prasenajit went to listen to Dharma. Minister Duratacarya* accompanied the king, and then quickly returned with the chariot. Virūdhaka usurped the throne and took control of the kingdom. When Prasenajit had received the Dharma, he had no minister, no chariot, and so forth, but he returned by foot across the plain. He came thinking to meet the two queens, and although he met the two of them, when he heard the story of his son stealing the kingdom, he rejected Māllika. He took Vivarsa* and started for Rājgir, the country of his friend Ajataśatru. He became hungry on the road, and when he ate a shrivelled daikon and

drank brackish water, he could not digest it, and died.

As a result of the previous enmity, Virūdhaka, together with the minister, raised an army and invaded the Śākya city. The Blessed One was then aware of it, and sat beside a dried up tree in the land of the Śākyas. Virūdhaka saw him, prostrated, and asked, "What is the Blessed One doing beside this dried up tree, and not sitting in the cool shadow of a good living tree?"

The Buddha replied, "These Śākyas are my relatives, and so with love for my relatives, I sit beside this dried up tree in the Śākya land." Virūdhaka became ashamed, lost his anger, and retreated.

The Blessed One, then knowing that the Śākyas would be destroyed by the enemy because of their previous deeds, urged everyone toward Dharma and virtue, and they achieved the results [of an Arhat] such as Stream-Winner, Once-Returning, and No-Return^m. The minister's son repeatedly urged Virūdhaka by saying, "There is no way you can drop it without taking revenge," and so Virūdhaka invaded with the army again. On that occasion the Blessed One had sent the great Maudgalyāyana as a temporary protector against war. The Śākyas held discussions, and made a law that there would be no fighting, even in the event of attack, and that no one should commit sins now because the Blessed One had said that even the present [events] were [the results] of previous acts.

Śākya Śambhaka had gone outside the city, was not there for the discussions, and did not know of them. He became angry and fought, killing many enemies. Virūdhaka was defeated and withdrew. Śambhaka returned, but because he had broken the law made by the Śākyas not to

commit sin, he was not allowed into the city. He became dejected, and listened to Dharma from the Blessed One who gave him hair and fingernails. He took these and fled to the area of Butawal. He settled there, and also built a stupa for the hair and nails.

Virūdhaka then invaded with his army again, and killed seventy-seven thousand Śākyas. He led away one thousand young girls in bondage, bound five hundred Śākyas in irons, destroyed [buildings] with elephants, and emptied the city. The Blessed One experienced compassion for their actions, and even he became melancholy.

When the monks asked what the karma of this was, he replied, "There were in the past fishermen who pulled out two huge fish from the water, continuously sliced away their flesh, and finally killed them. In another life, when they had become robbers, they stole the wealth of a householder, and killed him by burning him in a fire. The king and the minister are the rebirths of the fish and the householder, and the Śākyas are the rebirths of the fishermen and the robbers. As a result, the retribution for taking life has pursued them into the present."

Virūdhaka then returned to his own country, and when his son Jeta* said, "Why did you kill many Śākyas for no reason, when they had done nothing to harm the country?" he also killed his son in anger.

Haughty with pride and bloated with sin, he had no sympathy for the Śākya girls in bondage, and seeing them, he ordered, "Cut off their hands!" The pool of blood from all of their severed hands is even now known as "The Pool of Blood from the Hands."

Śākya Śambhaka had retaliated by fighting King Virūdhaka without permission, and then had not been allowed back in by the Śākyas because he had broken the law. When he was depressed and dejected, the Blessed One gave him fingernails and hair, which he took, and fled to the area of Butawal to the east of Kapilavastu. The stūpa which he built for the nails and hair, whether it was in Butawal or nearby Sannimaha, was a very holy stūpa.

The army of the Kosala King Virūdhaka scattered all the Śākyas, who fled at that time to Tansen. The oral tradition of the present day Śākya clan of Patan in the Kathmandu valley, is that they are the descendents of those who were dispersed and fled at that time. The [origins] of the clan, places such as Kapilavastu, Butawal, and Devadaha, as well as Bhairāwa, are at present included within the single Lumbini Zone [of the Kingdom of Nepal].

Kapilavastu was a vast city. It is known from the inscription on a stone pillar that the well of Krakucchanda, the first Buddha of the fortunate aeon, was in Taulihawa. There is no doubt that the pleasure grove of Nyagrodha was at either Gotihawa or Niglihawa. The Kapilavastu palace of Hamsāvati was the place where our Enlightened Teacher was inspired by events such as seeing birth, old age, sickness, and death in the four directions, causing him to cast aside a kingdom similar to that of a Universal Emperor as though it were spittle. It was the place where he experienced renunciation, and having requested the tolerance of his father, departed in the sky. The great city of Kapilavastu is a place worthy of worship, down to the particles of earth.

What has been written here is the unerring intended meaning of the Pitaputrasamāgama-

Sūtra, as found in Chapter Twenty-three of the Kalpalatā, and the intended meaning of the Sūtras concerning the destruction of the Śākyas by the army of the Kosala King Virūdhaka, as found in Chapter Twelve of the Kalpalatā.

III

SEVEN QUESTIONS CONCERNING LUMBINI

Here is the text of the seven questions, and for each one, the clear presentation of the page and paragraph number within "A Spectacle for the Mind," where the reply may be known.

Head Office of the Lumbini Development Committee
His Majesty's Government of Nepal
Kathmandu
Nepal

To the respected and beloved Lama, Trichen Rinpoche,

You already know about the activities being carried out by the Lumbini Development Committee in accordance with its responsibilities. Please respond to the questions below on the basis of reliable accounts, such as those connected with this (work), the authentic Word and doctrine of the Victor, and likewise from what you yourself know. Please clearly give your special opinions in regard to the several sections we have presented. We make this request with the belief that you will give your assistance with immediate effort to answer within fifteen days.

You should also understand that the opinions you have given concerning these topics will be examined, and that as soon as I meet with the Chairman, Mr. Loke Darshan, I plan to discuss them with him.

Questions

Question One: It is obviously clear that the birth of the Perfect Buddha, the Blessed One, the final direct attainment of complete

enlightenment, and the display of the manner of passing into Nirvāṇa all occurred under trees. But do you know under which kinds of trees these events occurred?

The reply is clear in "A Spectacle for the Mind," page ~~23~~²⁴, paragraph 3, through page ~~24~~²⁵, paragraph 6.

Question Two: Please give an explanation concerning how the pleasure grove was arranged at the time the Buddha, the Blessed One, first took birth in Lumbini Garden, how the various trees were grouped there on that occasion, and what wild animals there were, such as birds of prey.

The reply is clear in "A Spectacle for the Mind," page ~~20~~²⁰, paragraph 4, through page ~~20~~²¹, paragraph 2, concerning Lumbini being the name of the mother of [the Buddha's] mother Mahāmāyā, and concerning the kinds of trees, birds, and wild animals.

Question Three: At the time the Buddha, the Blessed One, first took birth in Lumbini Garden, were there towns in that pleasure grove or nearby? If there were, please clarify how they originated.

Question Four: As can be clearly understood from the ancient inscription placed on the upper portion of Dharmarāja Aśoka's stone pillar, it is evident there was a Lumbini town. But are there not explanations elsewhere about the town of Lumbini previous to or after that? If there are, please explain accordingly.

The replies to both of these are clarified on pages ~~41~~⁴² through ~~43~~⁴⁴.

Question Five: Please explain what special transformations occurred there just before the birth of the Buddha, the Blessed One, or on the occasion of his birth. Please explain what ceremony there was on the occasion of his departure from that place to return to the Kapilavastu estate of his father's family. Please give an explanation on the physical size of the Buddha, or Prince Siddhartha, when he was born, his beauty, which direction he faced on the occasion, whether or not clothing was offered, whether or not it was accepted, and so on, as well as an explanation on his mother's physical form.

The reply is clear in "A Spectacle for the Mind," page ~~25~~²⁶, paragraph 1, through page ~~41~~⁴², paragraph 4.

Question Six: Please explain what prophecy was made by the soothsayers following the birth of Siddhartha, the Gautama Prince.

The reply is clear from page ~~43~~⁴⁴, paragraph 2, through page ~~45~~⁴⁶, paragraph 1.

Question Seven: Much explanation has been given concerning the number seven in connection with the lifetime of the Buddha, the Blessed One. Please explain the real connection as well as the reasons for this.

The reply is clear in "A Spectacle for the Mind," pages ~~36~~³⁷ through ~~37~~³⁸.

Besides these above mentioned points, please very kindly explain whatever else you are able to about the history of Lumbini.

Thank you very much,

Pratap Khatri
Administrative Officer

Accordingly, it is unnecessary to answer the need for some explanation of the history of Lumbini here, because it is clear below where five questions are presented together with their replies. Likewise, it can definitely be understood well by following the page and paragraph numbers of "A Spectacle for the Mind," which were clearly presented with the seven questions.

IV

FIVE FURTHER QUESTIONS AND REPLIES

Here is a set of five further questions, presented by Mr. Pratap Khatri, the Administrative Officer of the Head Office of the Lumbini Development Committee of His Majesty Late King Mahendra's Government of Nepal. These will be presented in order, each question together with its reply.

Question One: What are the established symbols connected with the Buddha, the Blessed One, and the Buddhadharma, and in which areas were these initially adhered to?

Reply One: The deeds of the Blessed One were connected with his [previous] prayers. These were represented by the upholders of the Buddhadharma in the symbols of Buddhism such as the dharmacakra, and have been adhered to from the past up until the present. From among the perfect, inconceivable deeds of the blessed Buddha, the main one [is explained] according to this statement:

The Sages do not wash away sins
with water, nor remove the sufferings
of living beings with their hands.

They do not transfer their own
realization to others, but liberate
them by revealing the truth of reality.

Thus, the method for liberating all sentient beings from temporary and ultimate suffering together with their causes, and establishing them in perfect and lasting happiness, arose from the primary impetus of the unceasing turning of the dharmacakra [wheel of dharma], the authentic Word. Hence the dharmacakra is the main symbol of Buddhism. From the Vajrayāna [tradition of] Mantra has come the dharmacakra with deer. This is a cakra in the

center, with two male and female deer placed as though relaxed and gazing at the dharmacakra. It is found atop the balcony and balustrade above the four doors at the four directions of a celestial palace.

The manner in which symbols were established and are adhered to in [relation to] specific places is as follows:

While sitting at the site of the Vajrāsana [at Bodhgayā], [the Buddha] rested his back against the bodhi tree, and actualized Buddhahood. Because of this, an image [with a vajra marked on the base] is also known as Vajrāsana, and because in some instances Vajrāsanamuni also occurs as the name of Śākyamuni Buddha, it is appropriate to have the symbol of a bodhi tree, in front of which are a vajra and cakra.

Also, because he turned the Dharmacakra of the Four Truths, his first teaching, at the site of the Ṛṣipattana Deer Park in Sārnath, there is the symbol of a dharmacakra with deer.

Further, because he passed into Nirvāṇa between a pair of sāl trees at Kuśinagara in the country of the Mallas, the symbol of a dharmacakra placed between a pair of sāl trees is appropriate.

In the Wooded Grove of Lumbini, near the Haṃsāvati palace of Śuddhodana, king of the Śākyas in the land of Kapilavastu, the Buddha, the Blessed One, was born from the right side of his mother Mahāmāyādevi's ribcage while she stood holding with her hands a plakṣa (or an aśoka) tree with perfect branches, leaves, fruit, and flowers. He took seven steps on the earth in each of the four directions, and made fearless proclamations. Because seven lotus flowers grew from the earth where he took seven

steps with the soles of his feet marked by cakras, it is definitely appropriate for the symbol of Lumbini to be a tree endowed with limbs, leaves, and fruit, in front of which is a pile of twenty-eight lotus flowers adorned on top with a dharmacakra. If done elaborately, to the right and left of the cakra there can be placed whatever sentient beings are known, because it is stated that on the occasion of the Buddha's birth there were various wild animals and birds, such as ivory-bearing elephants, peacocks, and swans. Or else there may be placed elephants kneeling with joy, or two peacocks, since they are beautiful, and I think there can be no contradiction.

Question Two: Where did this custom of offering worship to an image of the Great Sage first spread, and what were the ways of offering worship to it?

Reply Two: If we are able to be diligent, it is fitting that we should reach the citadel of the Buddha, the Blessed One, with all faults extinguished and endowed with all qualities, for it is possible to achieve it. And the way to achieve it requires entering the door of the excellent dharma of Buddhism, an unerring path, and accumulating the assemblies of merit and primordial wisdom. In perfecting the assemblies, there is a great distinction in degree of strength [to be made in regard to] recipient, object, and intention. As a recipient for accumulation of merit through offering worship, there is nothing greater than the Triple Gem: the Buddha, the Blessed One, as the authentic Enlightened Teacher, the excellent Dharma which he provided as instruction, and the Sangha which upholds it.

[There are correct] ways for offering worship to such as an image of the Great Sage. The Enlightened Teacher Śākyamuni was

unrivalled in the section of this world which was India and Nepal, from the time of his birth, actualizing of Buddhahood, turning of the Dharmacakra, and so on. Beginning with the continual single-minded faithful offering of worship in India and Nepal by all the gods and human beings of this world, the custom of offering worship spread to whatever places the Buddhist doctrine has spread.

The way to offer worship according to Vinaya and Sūtra is that all followers of the Enlightened Teacher, all the Saṅgha, must in all situations such as the three basic ones [of observing vows for renewal and purification, the summer retreat, and release from those restrictions], speak and practice the "three continuities," which are continual prostration, continual Sūtra recitation, and continual dedication.

The first is ¹ actual prostrations, and in addition to that, ² actually present and mentally emanated offerings, ³ confession of sins, rejoicing without envy toward those who achieve the virtues of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, ⁴ urging the Buddhas of the ten directions as well as their Spiritual Sons to please turn the dharmacakra to benefit sentient beings, and ⁵ praying for them not to pass into nirvāṇa. The next is reading Sūtras and so on, and accomplishing such as the ten paths of virtuous action. Finally, whatever virtue has been accomplished is dedicated in order for oneself and all other sentient beings to attain the citadel of perfect Buddhahood.

With that as a basis, in the Mahāyāna there is a vast special motivation, the intention to benefit all sentient beings, and offerings are also offered on a vast scale, actually present and mentally emanated.

According to the Vajrayāna, the way of offering worship is to bless all a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand, or a hundred thousand offerings with mantra, mudrā, and samādhi, and then make the offerings.

Question Three: How well will this continuous practice by Buddhists, the custom of offering worship to an image of the Sage, conform with the opinions of scientists and others of the developed world?

Reply Three: I cannot say if this continuous practice by Buddhists of offering worship to such as an image of the Sage will conform with the opinions of scientists and others of the developed world, because they have various ways of thinking. Nevertheless, they are critical analysts, and they can produce images of body and voice which are not really present, through reliance on material technology such as television. If their minds can be convinced that the miracles of primordial wisdom are also possible to produce through accumulating the assemblies [of merit and primordial wisdom], I think they will not reject it outright as not good.

Question Four: The images of the Buddha which have spread in all countries certainly have different mudrās, postures, and so forth. In Nepal, for instance, most images are in the posture of meditative absorption. In China most images have a large belly and are bursting with laughter. In Thailand the posture of most images of the Sage is that of meditative absorption, with the hair swept up into a topknot on the crown of the head. Likewise, it is known that in India, Japan, Singapore, Burma, and so on, worship is offered to images according to whichever is most widespread in each individual country. In Spiti, and Lahore in Pakistan, there are even special images

which have moustaches. In addition to that, in Nepal there is also the custom of offering worship to [images of] the Prince Siddhartha with four fingers raised to the sky, the mudra which he displayed on the occasion of his birth. From among the various different widespread images mentioned above, if an image were to be made for distributing and so on by our Committee, what kind would be the most appropriate to make?

Reply Four: The various different mudras and postures of the Buddha [common] in many countries each have their own reason. For distribution by the [Lumbini] Development Committee, an image [of the Buddha] at birth would certainly be good. When the temple is built, I think it would be very auspicious if there were made within it a complete bas-relief image of the birth scene, with the mother and tree, and in the center, as large as can be, the famous depiction of the form of Buddha Śākyamuni on the occasion of actualizing Buddhahood, with the right hand pressing the earth in subjection of Māra, and the left in meditative absorption to symbolize the ultimate perfection of concentrated meditation.

Question Five: The present Master Plan for Lumbini Development includes within it an area of Sacred Garden. If there were to be constructed within, to captivate the faith of followers, a fitting Buddhist symbol, or image of the Enlightened Teacher, such as Prince Siddhartha with the hand gesture [displayed] on the occasion of birth, what should it be? If we should construct one, what kind of posture should be depicted according to general, universally accepted history and dharma, which would greatly increase the faith and aspirations of visiting people?

Reply Five: It would certainly be good to construct the Lumbini symbol I mentioned before above each gateway to the inner area of the Sacred Garden in the Development Plan, and to construct an appropriate bas-relief of the complete nativity scene with the mother and tree at the main gathering spot where crowds stop. If it were reasonable, I think that to erect one of the famous images of [the Buddha] on the occasion of birth in each of the spots in the four directions around the birth place where the seven footsteps of the great figure of Buddha fell, would be auspicious, and these would become objects of joy, enthusiasm and hope.

suggestion not followed

According to the Master Plan of the Development Committee, damaged images and so on which have been retrieved as a result of the long-term excavations and research of the Department of Archeology, and from which early history can be clearly known, will be placed within the Sacred Garden. These will elicit faith and enthusiasm, as well as prevent the total loss of past projects of virtue. This will definitely be most excellent.

It is necessary to have memorials for the inspiration of faith at the birthplace of the Enlightened Teacher, the Buddha, the Blessed One, which is a naturally extraordinary place. For this reason, and because the major deeds of the Enlightened Teacher were deeds of Dharma, it is definitely a very important necessity to have here within the holy site, monasteries and temples for the Saṅgha who uphold the excellent Dharma of scripture and realization. As may be known if one sees the other three great holy places, it is very good if most temples are within the holy site. For reasons of health and sanitation, it would not be appropriate for other [structures to be erected] within the site. However, if the three presently existing

temples were left as they are, this previously unknown great work which was carried out by the Development Committee of His Majesty Late King Mahendra in the Lumbini Garden, would from the present situation come to elicit sincere admiration in the future, in the opinion of all people, great and lowly. There would then be no necessity for lack of respect, and on that basis, all upholders of the Buddhadharma would certainly be pleased and find it worthy of praise.

Furthermore, I would like to give some brief additional explanation in reply to the following introductory request which preceded Question One when I was given the Set of Five Questions:

"When you have most kindly provided explanation about those points, if you would please give your considered opinion of the views and customs that have been widespread within Nepal, this would be beneficial."

[Reply:] In the past, the entire Dharma of Mahayana and Hinayāna was very widespread in India and Nepal. In Tibet as well, the majority of Mahāyāna and Hinayāna Dharma [scriptures] were translated from [the languages of] India and Nepal, and were the most influential. At present in India there are many Buddhists who go for refuge with the faith of conviction in the Enlightened Teacher and Triple Gem. Nevertheless, there are few who uphold the traditions of Mahāyāna and Hinayāna. Among those few, upholders of the Mahāyāna are more scarce than upholders of the Hinayāna. In Nepal, a great deal of the Mahāyāna [teachings] have spread back from Tibet into such places as the capital and border areas, and the Nepalese people have very great respect for pristine virtue.

In the past there were many Mahāyāna and Hinayāna [teachings] which spread from Nepal to Tibet. The Dharma cycle for fasting meditation of Bhikṣuṇī Śrī who beheld the face of Avalokiteśvara, the Dharma cycle of Vajrabhairava as practiced by the Nepalese Mahāsiddha Bharo, the Dharma cycle of Vajrayoginī as practiced by the Nepalese Pharping [brothers], as well as the Dharma cycle of Mahākāla [are some of the] precepts of profound import [transmitted to Tibet by] Vajrakirti who was the Translator from Ra, Matikirti who was the Translator from Mal, Ratnakirti who was the Translator from Bari, and so on. Gurus who have come from Tibet have these [precepts] in their entirety, with the current of blessing undiminished up to the present.

This land of Nepal was blessed by many Buddhas, as well as being the birthplace of the Enlightened Teacher Śākyamuni Buddha, and is a land unlike others, with great blessings. If the Dharma practitioners of Nepal are able to uphold the Dharma of their forefathers as their own, and if those profound Dharmas spread, I think that the doctrine would flourish, and the benefits of peace and happiness for people and country would increase.

THE LUMBINI MONASTERY

My own situation from 1959 through 1967 was made clear above in the Introduction. In 1968, in response to a series of appeals by the Mustang Dharmarāja, we received from His Majesty Late King Mahendra approval for a grant of ten kata of land within the holy site of Lumbini. In 1969 the Mustang Dharmaraja traveled to Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, and invited Mr. Ramesh Jung Thapa, the Director of the Department of Archeology, H.M.G. of Nepal, to the site of Lumbini. He and several important regional administrative officers identified the location for establishing the monastery, nearby and to the east of the Buddha's birthplace, and north of the Nepal Government Monastery. Permission was received to place a fence around the land and take possession. The excellent Mustang Dharmarāja made great efforts to get the official land documents and so on, from the regional offices.

As was mentioned above in the Introduction, I had genuine devotion toward the Buddha, the Blessed One, and his birthplace Lumbini, and was motivated by single-minded faith. Consequently, I could never forget the grant of land within the holy place by His Majesty Late King Mahendra. So in order to repay his kindness, and since the land was in His Majesty's domain and we are His Majesty's subjects, I felt that if we were able to erect a temple structure and its contents, it would be no different than His Majesty's doing it himself in the initial development, and it would definitely become a shrine for the accumulation of merit by members of the United Nations and all living beings throughout the world.

In 1969, on the 5th day of the 12th Tibetan month, we celebrated taking possession of the land. The land was examined, the lines for the serpent earth-deity [mahoraga] diagram made, and initial excavation and leveling was carried out. The sequence of offerings was correctly performed, and work began.

The hole for the foundation wall was dug about as deep as the height of a man, with dimensions of eighty feet in length from the sanctuary to the portico, and fifty feet in width. The assembly hall was fifty feet in length and thirty-three feet in width. Its height was seventeen and a half feet. To the right and left of the assembly hall were a temple for the protectors, and a chapel. To the right and left of the portico were two rooms. Above there were also eleven rooms, including a chapel for the Translated Word, a living room, and a slightly elevated chapel for worship. All the borders of the roof were ornamented with tamarisk roof-sashes, double loops and strands of decorative beads, and double star patterns of cement plastered above, below, and in between. The pillars and beams of the assembly hall portico were molded in relief as well.

The murals [in the assembly hall] are of the Twelve Deeds of the Enlightened Teacher, together with some additional ones: the Enlightened Teacher and retinue, the Sixteen Sthaviras, the Twenty-One Tārās, as well as Gurus, deities, dharmapālas, Their Majesties, father and son, and the patrons. In the portico are the four great guardian-kings, as well as the five-part Wheel of Life, beautifully arranged. These were successfully completed by our own expert artists Gyatso Chudrak, Guru Wangchuk, and Ge Lekdrup Gyatso who took great responsibility. They were assisted by four young monks of Lumbini, as

well as Jamzang and Tengya from the Rajpur Dharma Centre. These murals have been received with great enthusiasm. Outside, there are both an inner and outer kitchen, a chapel for offering butter lamps, and a toilet to the rear.

From 1970 on, the duration of the work took six years, and was prolonged as if we were [ants] building an ant hill or [bees] making honey. The cost of materials such as bricks, iron, and cement increased, and in the absence of motorized vehicle traffic, it was necessary to depend solely upon bull carts for such things as transportation of these supplies. Because the place to get them from was far away, the fees were increased. Even for things such as gravel and kerosene, it was necessary to give a rupee per tin, and for sand, to give a rupee for every two tins. Even though this was an incomprehensible thing, I gave up everything I had before, except for the requisite articles of a monk, including all that I had in the religious sense received as offerings of faith, and used it to pay the expenses for this undertaking which would accumulate the assemblies [of merit and primordial wisdom].

In 1969, because of the urgings of the outstanding Mustang Dharmarāja, this monastery received an excellent amount of special donations from the people and monasteries in the seven districts of Mustang. Donations were received from two of my own [former] attendants, Jangra Tubten Sampel and Rinchen Tsok, who are living in America, and likewise from [former] attendants such as the teacher Ge Chudar, Ngawang Tobgyal, Zhangtse, Kalchu, Dunor, and Lektan, as well as from my American disciples David and Janice Jackson. Donations were also received from Jimmy Gopar of Canada, the Tibetan Friendship Society of England, Trungpa Rinpoche in America, and others. There

were also donations from Tibetan people in such places as India, Nepal, Kalimpong, Darjeeling, upper and lower Mustang, and Gantok. Whatever donations were received from individuals or groups in countries with faith in Dharma, I kept in a notebook, and used even the minor ones so that they were not wasted, but were beneficial like eye medicine is for the eyes.

In 1970 the Mustang Dharmarāja Jigme Palbar, and his Queen Chimey Sidrol, had without reservation and with considerable hardship, taken responsibility for whatever assistance and expenses were required in relation to the construction. Furthermore, they were very kind to permanently place in this monastery, as objects of merit for the reverence of visitors who travel to Lumbini to see the holy place from all countries throughout the breadth of this vast world, a three foot blessed gilt image of the Great Abbot of Mustang, the peerless Sonam Lhundrup [1456-1532], which was made almost five hundred years ago, and also several one and a half foot gilt images similar to it, of the Gurus in the lineage of the Path and Fruit teachings. A large, fine Stupa of the Kadam tradition, and a gold-lettered Eight Thousand Verse Prajñāpāramitā, were offered by the Namgyal Monastery in Mustang, a two foot gilt image of the Sage was offered by Montang monastery in Mustang, and several [other] images [were offered] by monasteries in Mustang and Muktinath.

As mentioned above, with a single-minded special attitude of devotion, I planned to construct within the temple as the principle gilt image, a majestic statue of the precious Sage, as large as possible. This was in order to repay the kindness of our Enlightened Teacher, and was to be an object for the accumulation of merit through connection with

it, by others as well as myself, by all members of the United Nations, and by living beings of the world at large who visit this great holy place.

On that occasion, donations were received of twenty thousand Indian rupees from Tupten Sampel, ten thousand Indian rupees from Rinchen Tsoknyi, five hundred Nepalese rupees from the Monthang Monastery in Mustang, a gold coin each from the Mustang Rāja, the Queen, and my younger sister Tendron, a ring made from a gold coin from each of the two girls Jampel and Dechen from Chukha in Jangyap, Penpo valley, who live in the Mysore settlement, and a gold ring from a rich man of Trengkhar in Mustang. In addition to these donations, as well as other petty ones, a large amount of gold and materials was necessary, for which I used whatever I had without regret. The principle image was made by the great expert image maker of Tsedong, Mr. Pendor, to whom I provided the wages for making it, as well as the banquets and gifts at the beginning, middle, and end [of the work], in elaborate fashion according to the saying, "offer to the deity and artist as indivisible." I then filled it to the brim, arranging with my own hands a large quantity of exceptional and scarce relics of four kinds as the inner sanctified contents, making it marvelous and complete.

On March 2, 1975, in observance of the great celebration of the enthronement of His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev upon the golden throne, the doors of this temple were auspiciously first opened by the representative of H.M.G. of Nepal, the Zonal Commissioner of Lumbini Zone, [Kingdom of Nepal].

I invited H.H. Sakya Trizin Rinpoche, Ngawang Kunga Tegchen Palbar, to perform the ritual of consecration via Śrī Hevajra, to

stabilize the infusion of the blessings of primordial wisdom until the end of the aeon. He led the ritual assisted by the five of us Lamas and Tulkus, along with about fifty members of the Saṅgha. He graciously performed the consecration in fullest detail for three days. While messages of congratulations expressing pleasure fell like a rain of flowers from many higher Gurus and leaders of Nepal and Tibet, the celebration of good fortune continued for four days, with a gathering of more than a thousand people, including many regional officials and honored guests. The faith in the minds of all who were gathered increased in strength, recollecting the birth of the compassionate Enlightened Teacher, and in connection with this there was a splendor of happiness and well-being enjoyed to the fullest by everyone.

At the conclusion of the ceremonies, all the priests and patrons performed careful dedication and prayers so that whatever amount of pristine merit they had, as represented by this vast basis for virtue, would not be wasted, but become of great beneficial value for the doctrine of the Victor, and for all sentient beings of this world, and ultimately become the cause for ourselves and all sentient beings to gain the citadel of the Omniscient One, the Victor, the perfect Buddha. As a result, the present and future were beautified with perfect signs of virtue, and pervaded with the excellent splendor of auspicious benefit.

The patron, Mrs. Samdrup Dronma, mother of Mr. Dondrup Lhawang in Darjeeling, had taken responsibility for providing electrical supplies for the temple, upstairs and down, and her excellent daughter Yudron Lhamo sent a large quantity of light bulbs, such as six long white flourescent lights [including fixtures] from Calcutta. She also provided the wages for

the electricians, as well as necessary further purchases of supplies. As a result, the opening ceremonies were illuminated with light, which was both an auspicious sign, and of great benefit.

In addition to the fine representations of enlightened body, speech, and mind that were mentioned above, in 1975, H.H. the Dalai Lama bestowed a manuscript set of the Translated Word as the representation of enlightened speech, to be placed in this temple at the great holy place of Lumbini. This inconceivable kindness was granted because there had previously been no set of the [one hundred and six volumes of the] Translated Word of the Victor in this holy place, and because he wished to place here an object of faith for the accumulation of merit by all who pay a visit from all the breadth of this world, just as he had placed objects at the other great holy places.

Immediately thereafter, Wangdu Gyalpo, of the Takshar family from Ralung, together with his wife, offered cloth [for the book covers] and sponsored a complete recitation [of the Translated Word]. There were then several requests for the complete recitation of the Translated Word, from individuals and groups, such as Ogyan of Parkhang, and it brought great benefit.

In this fashion, the temple and its contents were successfully completed. Because my own genuine altruistic attitude was aimed at the greatest accumulation of virtue for others, as well as myself, I was not discouraged or indolent, in spite of the difficulties that occurred during the construction. In addition to the confidence of feeling that it was impossible for any such work that had been begun not to be successful, I actually saw the

most essential thing, which was the power of the Gurus' and Dharmapālas' blessings. [The successful construction] occurred in dependance upon these things, the bestowal of the land by His Majesty the King, together with the assistance and donations by patrons as mentioned above, primarily the Mustang Rāja and his queen.

From 1971 on, members of the Sangha were sent to be resident stewards in the temple, in turns by two, from Montang monastery, Namgyal monastery, Tsadrang monastery, and Gangmey monastery in Mustang. Management duties were performed by the artist Legdrup, the leader for group recitations was Zhang Rinchu, and four young monks of Namru became interpreters, so that it was unnecessary to seek others. Sherab Lektsok Duno has been the cook from the founding of the monastery until the present, [always showing] an attitude of pure altruism, and never shrinking from hardship.

From 1971 on, there have always been fifteen to twenty Lamas and monks in residence, reciting the Tārā ritual ceaselessly for the welfare of the doctrine and sentient beings. It has been necessary for me to personally pay their continuing and large yearly and monthly expenses, but however great the difficulty of this has been, I have done so with patient acceptance, and no regrets. Assistance which was beneficial for their support was granted in 1973 by the Tibet Friendship Society of Sweden, who gave seven thousand Nepalese rupees, the price of forty kata of land, and in 1975, five thousand Nepalese rupees for providing water there. The Tibet Friendship Society of South Africa gave one thousand, five hundred Nepalese rupees for the purchase of a cow.

Future plans included the construction of a center for teaching and study, and a retreat

center for four monks. I planned to carry this out after asking His Holiness and the Gurus and deities for signs as to whether it was suitable or not.

Here is a description of the sanctified contents within the temple structure and the main image

In order to relieve all harm such as disease, famine, and war throughout all countries of the world in general, as well as in the Kingdom of Nepal, and to cause the enjoyment of four-fold prosperity and happiness, there are within the surrounding foundations for the walls of the temple, which had been dug out to the depth of a man's height, eight treasure vases of the eight auspicious signs, which were placed in the four cardinal directions and the four intermediate directions. In the center and beneath the feet of the main image, there are two wealth vases.

The sanctified contents within the main image of the precious Sage [include] five or six bags of printed dhāraṇīs requested from the Sakya Centre in Rajpur, India. The dhāraṇīs were rolled up by fifteen of us monks. For three months, we wrapped them tightly by hand. The central column [within the image] is white sandalwood of fine quality from Mysore to the south, marked on the eastern side, completely dried out, and without any flaws such as insects or rot. It has no curves, and in length reaches from the crown of the head to the private parts, or support. As explained in the scriptures, it has a Vijaya stūpa carved at the tip, and a vajra at the base. Holes for dhāraṇīs were dug out in the upper, lower, and middle sections of the central column, and the individual dhāraṇīs placed in their proper

order. Outside, on top of those, is a primer coat of such things as saffron, upon which the appropriate, genuine characters were written at the head, foot, and middle.

Within the protrusion on the crown of the head, where the tip of the central column is, are thirty-five authentic bone relics of the Buddha. Within the head are the "name mantras" of the lineage Gurus of the three vows. There are many complete sets of these "head dhāraṇīs." There are also more than two hundred blessed substances, extremely difficult to obtain, both original and formed into pills, such as "body pills" which contain magnificent blessings, from the Buddha, Bodhisattvas, Arhats, and many great realized panditas and saints of India and Tibet.

In the throat are the "throat dhāraṇīs" such as the vowels and consonants, "voice pills" which produce the vocal tones of Brahma, the actual bell of the great [master] Jangdak Rikdzin, together with his vajra, several blessed pills of Sakya made from a thousand pills and attached to silk braids, and a large quantity of nectar pills.

In the heart is a conical figure [tsatsa] about the size of a pair of clasped hands, made from portions of the heart, eyes, and tongue, as well as the cremation ash and bones of Dampa Rinpoche [Zhanpen Nyingpo, 1876-1952, 65th Abbot of Ngor Monastery], a great saint who reached the [high] spiritual stages [bhūmis]. It came from Rinpoche's own residence. There are also many blessed images of the Sage and deities such as Hevajra, as well as such things as "mind pills" which cause the birth of primordial wisdom.

From the throat to the navel are [dhāraṇīs] of the four classes of Tantra in correct

sequence, Anuttara, Yoga, Caryā, and Kriyā, below which are five sets of the great dhāraṇīs. Below that are the sūtra dhāraṇīs. In the middle of the body [of the image] are several printed sheets with a thousand images of the Three Deities of Longevity, many printed sheets with a thousand images of the Buddha, printed sheets with a thousand images of Vajrapaṇi and others, and printed sheets with a thousand images of Tārā. Below that are the Dharmapālas, and below that, the Wealth Deities.

Within the lotus seat [beneath the image] is a Vaiśravaṇa treasury, in which there is an extremely special vessel filled with butter. For the purpose of relieving an aeon of famine there are fine silks and valuables such as gold and silver as well as a variety of grains and other foodstuffs. To relieve an aeon of disease, there are a variety of medicines, and to relieve an aeon of conflict, there are needles and such. To the right and left of [the treasury] there are about thirty vases, including many wealth vases of the White Protector and Vaiśravaṇa, vases which have many yakṣa-cakra [of Jambhala], and vases such as those of Bhūmigarbha and the Earth Goddess. There are also many complete sets of lotus dhāraṇīs, supplications, and auspicious prayers. Thus the entire image is filled to the brim with sanctified contents.

During the opening ceremonies, the consecration ritual involving the infusion of primordial wisdom was personally led by H.H. Sakya Trizin Rinpoche. I also performed consecration rituals many times. When H.H. the Dalai Lama visited this holy place in 1981, he personally bestowed blessings, and in 1978 H.H. Gyalwang Karmapa Rinpoche personally bestowed blessings. I request blessings and

consecration from all the great masters who visit this holy place.

This is a temple glowing with splendor and delightful to visit. It is a shrine for the accumulation of merit by all faithful people who come to visit from the United Nations and all over the world.

A List of the Murals in the Lumbini Monastery

1. In the realm of Tuṣita, Svetaketu trains the gods with Dharma, and having trained them, gives his crown to Maitreya, appointing him successor, and decides to depart for this world.
2. The Buddha enters the womb of his mother in the form of a white elephant.
3. The birth at Lumbini.
4. Examining the characteristics and marks of the Buddha's body.
5. The Buddha becoming learned in all topics of scientific knowledge.
6. Competition in archery and the martial arts.
7. Maintaining the kingdom and enjoying a retinue of queens.
8. Leaving home mounted on the riding horse Kanthaka, together with the servant Chanda, with the four hoofs of the horse held aloft by the four great guardian-kings. He travels through the sky, and then enacts renunciation.
9. Ordination in front of the Viśuddha stūpa.
10. Austerities for six years at the Nirañjanā River.
11. The girl Sujātā offers yoghurt.
12. The grass seller Svastika offers kuśa grass.

13. The subdual of Māra in the evening, and the witnessing by the Earth Goddess.
14. The actualizing of Buddhahood at dawn at the Vajrāsana [in Bodhgayā].
15. The two householders Japuṣa and Bhadra offer yoghurt, which he accepts from the stone alms bowl offered by the four great guardian-kings.
16. The first turning of the Dharmacakra at Varanasi.
17. The second turning of the Dharmacakra at Gr̥dhrakūṭa.
18. The subdual of the hateful Aṅgulimāla.
19. The subdual of the ignorant gandharva Pramudita.
20. The subdual of [the Buddha's] younger brother, the passionate Nanda.
21. The meeting of father and son.
22. Spending the three summer months of the summer retreat in the god realm for the benefit of his mother, and then descending from heaven at Saṅkissa on the twenty-second day of the ninth Tibetan month.
23. Displaying miracles in the great city of Śrāvastī.
24. The monkeys offer honey.
25. The subdual of the elephant Dhanapāla.
26. Passing into nirvāṇa at Kuśīnagara.

27. The gathering of the Word by the assembly of the seven successors.
28. The compassionate Enlightened Teacher surrounded by a retinue of the Sixteen Āryā Sthaviras.
29. Ārya Tārā surrounded by the Twenty-One Tārās.
30. a.) Great Gurus of India and Tibet.
b.) The deities of the four classes of Tantra, and some protectors.
c.) Their Majesties, father and son.
d.) The patron, the Mustang Dharmarāja and retinue.
e.) The twenty-sixth Chogye Trichen.

VI

THE THREE-YEAR RETREAT AT LUMBINI

As mentioned at the end of Chapter V, I planned to request the Gurus and deities for a prediction as to which would be best, a center for teaching and learning, or one for meditation. Accordingly, I informed H.H. the Dalai Lama that the temple at Lumbini, the structure and its contents, had been successfully completed, the doors opened by a representative of H.M.G. of Nepal, and the consecration performed by H.H. Sakya Trizin Rinpoche. The doctrine of scripture and realization of the Buddha, the Blessed One, must be upheld through explication and practice. The requirements for something such as a center of explication would pose difficulties, so I requested [the Dalai Lama] to examine whether or not it would be suitable if I started a center for practice, a place for four monks.

He replied that it would be very suitable to begin a three-year practice center, and that as soon as I was able to establish it, he would give some minor support for the first three years. Both H.H. Sakya Trizin Rinpoche and H.H. Gyalwang Karmapa Rinpoche also agreed, were pleased, and said I should try to begin immediately. We then energetically made the top floor of the Lumbini temple into a practice hall, and obtained what furniture was necessary.

It was necessary that the practitioners come from the three traditions of Sakya, Ngor, and Tshar. It was decided that six people would do a three-year retreat, staying in the practice hall. Five monks would practice Hevajra. From the Sakya tradition there was Dragpa Gyaltsen, who was an elder lama of Tsedong, and Wangdu,

who was a monk of Montang monastery in Mustang. From the Tsharpa tradition there were the Lumbini monks Lekdrup Gyatso, who was an artist, and Tupten Chudrak. From the Ngor tradition there was Jamyang Gyaltsen, who was a monk of Derge Khar monastery. In a separate room there was the nun Jetsun Kunzang Tendron, who would practice the great propitiation of Vajrayogini. To remove obstacles, they each stayed in a one-month retreat on Vajrapani Bhutadhamara.

At this time, the five monks who were receiving the Path and Result teachings, practiced the extraordinary preliminaries of prostrations, taking refuge, reciting the one hundred-syllable mantra, and offering maṇḍalas. They practiced not just with the awareness of keeping the practice sessions of the detailed experiential instructions of the Triple Vision within the Path and Result teachings, but without parting from renunciation, holding up as an example the degree to which it was born in the minds of great practitioners of the past. In this fashion they accumulated the four hundred thousands, with the sources of refuge during taking of refuge, and so on, in accordance with the Hevajra Time of the Path [sadhāna]. When these were finished, the instructions on experiential vision were given, which are for awakening an altruistic state of mind. Through practice sessions on loving kindness, compassion, and bodhicitta, doubts were reduced, severed, and finally resolved. Then the vow of awakening bodhicitta was given.

At that point I, the Lama, in conjunction with a brief retreat for enhancement [of the blessing], bestowed the Great Consecration of Hevajra, with the preliminaries and main sections completed during two days. After that were the instructions on the view of the indivisibility of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, and

then, without straying from that very view, the instructions on the external stages of creation [as the deity]. When that was finished, there was the Path Consecration of the body mandala, and then the instructions on the internal stages of creation.

After perfecting the visualizations, attainments, and results of the internal and external stages of creation, which are the path of the vase consecration, if the theory of the indivisibility of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa is mastered, one arrives by stages at the final realization. If it does not occur exactly because of indolent distraction, there are the instructions for passing away, which are for the purpose of holding to the path so that the point of death will not occur as ordinary. Since even that is not beneficial when there is death from such as sudden circumstances, there are the instructions on intermediate state [bardo], dream, illusory body, and clear light.

At that point the blessing of Nairātma was given. Then one must meditate upon the seven breath practices of the secret consecration, the eighteen practice sessions of the caṇḍālī fire, and the perfection stage endowed with four cakras. One meditates to awaken the view of the four spontaneities, and to achieve a final realization which is luminous, buoyant, and nonconceptual. At that point the blessing of Clear Symbolic Meaning was given. The path of the third consecration is the maṇḍala-cakra, the view is the four joys, and the final realization is integrated joy and emptiness of lesser vastness. At that point the blessing of the Explication of the Hidden Path was given. [Through the practice of] the path of the fourth consecration, a certainty is summoned forth of experiencing the view of the metaphorical, primordial wisdom, which is representative, and whatever arises [in the

mind] is determined to be the space of dharmakāya. The path is the [vajra] waves, the view is the ascending four joys, and the final realization is integrated joy and emptiness of greater vastness. As in the vase consecration, the meaning of the instructions for passing away, and those following it, are explained, listened to, and meditated upon according to the unerring specific significance of each of the four consecrations.

These were meditated upon for two years and nine months, at which time a lavish Hevajra homa ritual was performed for four days, led by myself as the master. Then, following the blessing of Khecari [Vajrayoginī], as well as the instructions, the basic propitiation of Khecari was practiced. When that was finished, each one practiced according to their inclination, Hayagrīva, Vajrakīla, Bhūtadhamara, and so on. Then each one concluded with a homa ritual, as well as a ritual of fulfillment and healing in gratitude.

The purpose of how the retreat was composed lay in the necessity for correctness, so that Dharma did not become a pleasant-looking sham. This was taken as the basis, and in the beginning, middle, and end, together with the concluding offering ritual for realization of the maṇḍala, it was looked after so that it would not be violated, and this was achieved. The retreat was successfully concluded in the first Tibetan month of 1981.

VII

THE THREE-YEAR RETREAT AT BOUDHNATH

In 1981 it was impossible to begin the second three-year retreat in Lumbini because of the summer heat. H.H. Sakya Trizin Rinpoche gave land and a building at the Boudhnāth Stūpa as a place for the establishment of the retreat which would have been in Lumbini. This had been offered to him through the common priest-patron relationship, by Gomadevi, the niece of the Gya Lama. We prepared the retreat building, and purchased such things as furniture to establish the three-year retreat from 1982 through 1984.

It was necessary that the monks in retreat come from the three traditions of Sakya, Ngor, and Tshar. From the Tshar tradition were the elder Lama Kelzang Chöpel who is a monk from Nalenda, and Guru Rinchen Chudar who is a monk from Lumbini. From the Sakya tradition there was Jangchup Jamlek who is a monk from Montang monastery, and from the Ngor tradition there was the elder monk Ngawang Tsultrim from Gan̄tok.

The four monks began the retreat in an auspicious manner on the celebration of the 15th day of the 4th Tibetan month in 1982, by performing such ceremonies as the burning of juniper boughs and a ritual of fulfillment and healing. After first completing the propitiation of Bhūtadhamara, there was opportunity for whatever consecrations and blessings they needed. These four had already received both the Path and Result teachings for groups and for disciples from H.H. Sakya Trizin Rinpoche as well as from myself. As a result, I gave the experiential instructions without the necessity to repeat the instructions four times as in the previous [retreat]. The complete preliminaries of the Triple Vision,

and the complete main practice of the Triple Tantra were maintained strenuously during practice sessions, and meditated upon during the performance of the great propitiation of Hevajra. The retreat was successfully completed on the 15th day of the 4th Tibetan month of 1984.

At that point, everything was effectively completed, with a Hevajra peaceful homa ritual led by [myself as] the master on the veranda of the retreat building, and a Hevajra homa ritual of the four activities, performed above the assembly hall of the newly constructed Great Maitreya Temple, together with a ritual of fulfillment and healing in gratitude.

On the occasions of [both] three-year retreats, I provided all the consecrations, instructions, and guidance. H.H. the Dalai Lama was extremely kind to bestow one hundred Indian rupees per month to each of the six persons in the first three-year retreat. Such things as rice and wheat for the Sangha in general, and for guests, came from our field, [which had been purchased] as mentioned above, by the Tibet Friendship Society of Sweden, and myself. Butter lamps, food, and so on in addition to that, came from the one hundred rupees [for each person] bestowed by His Holiness. I arranged and paid for whatever was further necessary.

In the second three-year retreat, we did not receive the rice from Lumbini here, and the shopping expenses for necessities were very great for many kinds of goods, down to all the firewood and kerosene. Every single month the expenses were more than one thousand rupees, and including the extras during new year and so on, I spent over thirty-six thousand Nepalese rupees during three years.

In addition, the expenses paid out during that time for the structure and contents of the Great Maitreya Temple, as well as food for many monks, was beyond reason. But out of my own faith and devotion, it was endured, and just barely arranged.

I never appealed to anyone for assistance during the two previous three-year retreats. Nor is there any point in doing so now, because my two monasteries are built, and the two three-year retreats have been carried out. I have no plan to appeal for assistance, for as the saying goes, "not in order to accumulate, nor out of pride," I have no desire at all to accumulate such things as possessions for myself, nor do I have any pride in my reputation.

There is already a crowd of monks who wish to do the third three-year retreat. After that, it would be best if [three-year] retreats were established for as long as possible, which I hope would greatly benefit the continual virtue of practice, for both the doctrine and members of the Saṅgha. If those who have great knowledge and experience would give their advice, and in addition to that, their guidance, I would be very grateful.

VIII

THE GREAT MAITREYA TEMPLE

In 1978 I established a regular three-year Hevajra retreat on the top floor of the Lumbini monastery. The first three-year retreat was successfully completed by six practitioners. The second three-year retreat was not begun in Lumbini because of the summer heat. The land and building which was the residence of Gomadevi, the niece of Gya Lama, at the Boudhnāth Stūpa in the Kathmandu Valley, had been offered to the Patriarch of Sakya, and with patron and priest in agreement, it was given so that the heat of a retreat in Lumbini could be avoided. Because the front side is near the precious Stūpa, I made up my mind to build a temple there, and to construct a building for meditation to the rear.

The reason for constructing a great Maitreya as the main object of worship in the temple is that with the power of his great love, he vanquishes without difficulty all the hordes of Māra who afflict all the living beings in this world with hatred, and bestows the splendor of the virtue and goodness of a contented mind in all countries near and far. There are unimaginable benefits from just seeing an image of holy Maitreyanātha whose compassion and ability is even greater than that of other Buddhas, and from just hearing the dhāraṇī of his vow. The Buddha Maitreya has promised that when he appears in the world in the future, he will touch his golden hand to the heads of those who make prostrations, offerings, and prayers to his image in the present, and give to them encouragement and praise. In order for all such benefits to occur for as many sentient beings as possible, I awakened the altruistic thought to construct a marvelous fashioned image thirty feet high.

Because the location was extremely close to the precious Stūpa, the construction of the Great Maitreya Temple structure and its contents was begun on the front side, at the 1983 celebration of [the Buddha's] Descent from Heaven, and successfully completed after a period of two years, at the 1985 celebration of the Descent from Heaven.

There is a separate detailed catalogue of the sanctified contents. This is merely a brief account of the way it was constructed.

Thus, at the completion of the temple and the main image, a great number of Lamas, Tulkus, and members of the Sangha without sectarian distinction, led by H.H. Sakya Trizin Rinpoche, performed repeated consecrations beginning from the 15th day of the 9th Tibetan month in 1985, up until the 22nd day, which was the celebration of the Descent from Heaven.

At the conclusion of the consecrations, on 26/11/042, or March 10, 1986, the 29th day of the 1st Tibetan month, the temple was graced by a visit from Their Majesties, King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, and Queen Aishwarva Rajya Laxmi Devi Shah. Their Majesties performed the first offerings, felicitations, and tossing of flowers to the precious Great Maitreya. From that moment up to the present day, it has been an occasion for accumulation of merit, with the people constantly offering worship.

CONCLUSION

An Explanation of the Book Title

A complete and detailed explanation of the story of how the great Lamp of Existence in this World, our Enlightened Teacher the Buddha, the Blessed One Śākyamuni, was born in the great holy place of auspicious Lumbini Garden, has been presented above. This, together with a benediction concerning the ten deeds of the Buddha, which was composed by Ācārya Nāgārjuna, and in which newly composed accounts are interspersed between each verse, will bring a rejuvenation of faith to those Buddhists who know the qualities of the Blessed One. In many countries the Translated Word of the Buddha, and the Translated Commentaries on its intended meaning, do not exist, or even if they do, they are in a foreign language. As a result, if those who have not seen the life story of the Buddha before, see this, faith will be born, and because the blessings of the Buddha will enter their minds, whoever sees this book will be "fortunate to behold" it.

On the occasion of the Buddha's impending birth, the living beings who were gathered there [in Lumbini], all the gods and humans, actually beheld the magnificent qualities of the Buddha, and when the birth drew near, actually beheld the miraculous presentation of past, present, and future, projected from the body and hair follicles of the mother Mahāmāyā, like the showing of a motion picture (cinema). This is stated in Chapter One hundred and Six of the Buddhāvataṃsaka-Sūtra, and is thus a truly believable account. Because such accounts enable one to gain experience of them through the power of mental cognition, they are "a marvelous spectacle for the mind." This book contains eight chapters of discourse, including the Table of Contents and Introduction at the beginning, and additional

explanation about Lumbini, such as an historical account of both the cities of Kapilavastu and Devadaha, and the questions and replies. All of it was written with a single-minded altruistic attitude, intending to benefit everyone.

Concluding Prayers

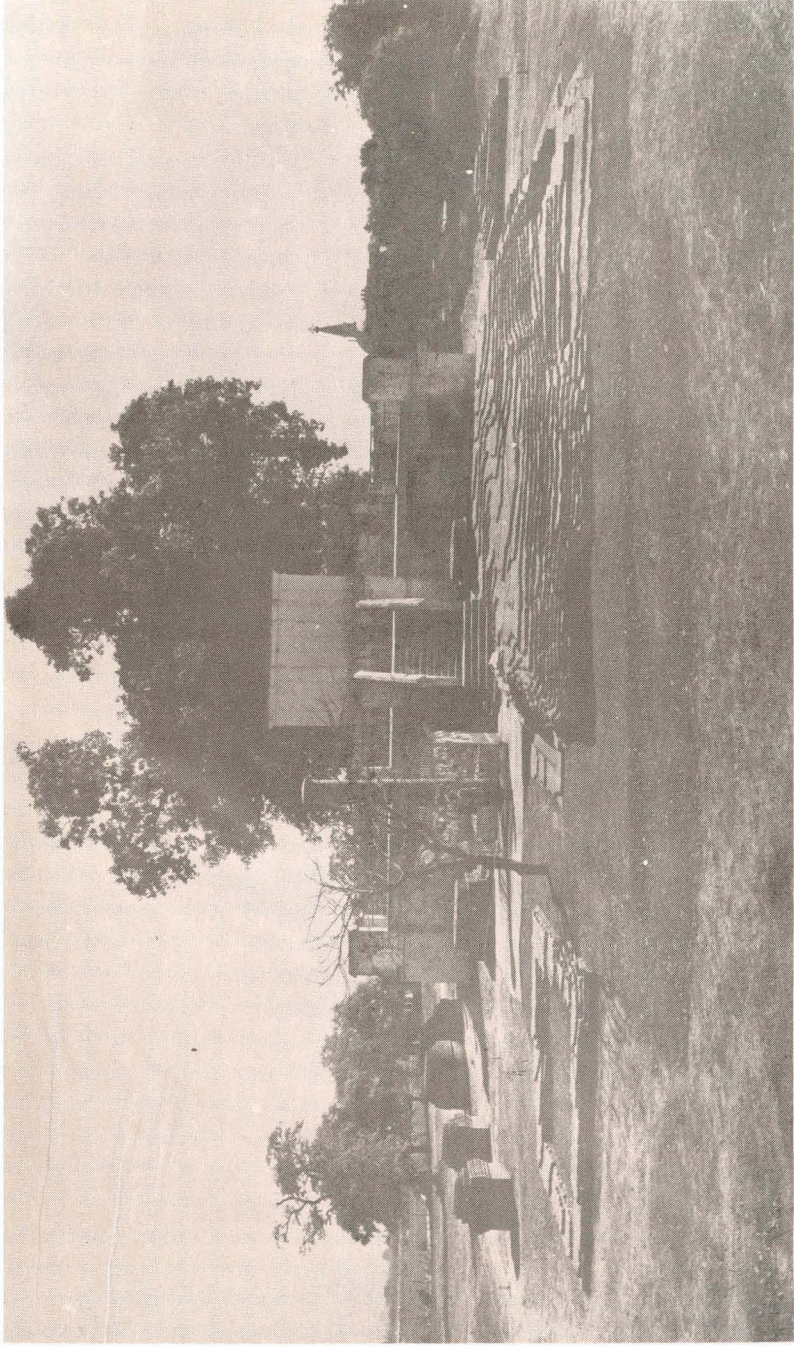
May the power of the virtue to come from this cause the expansion of the doctrine of the Buddha, which is a unique entryway to peace and happiness through non-violence. May it cause the removal of each and every cause and result of suffering and injury to all sentient beings throughout the breadth of this world, and may they live in perfect peace and happiness, the new-found glory of complete contentment. May it become a cause for every single sentient being to reach the citadel of Buddhahood endowed with the two excellent kāyas, based on the causes of the two assemblies of merit and primordial wisdom.

By this merit, may omniscience be reached, the faults, which are the enemy, be defeated,

Living beings gain release from the turbulent waves of birth, old age, sickness, and death in the sea of existence,

And the auspicious signs of peace and happiness increase everywhere.

SARVA SIDDHI RASTU



The Māyādevi Temple at Lumbini Garden.



The Aśoka pillar at Lumbini Garden.



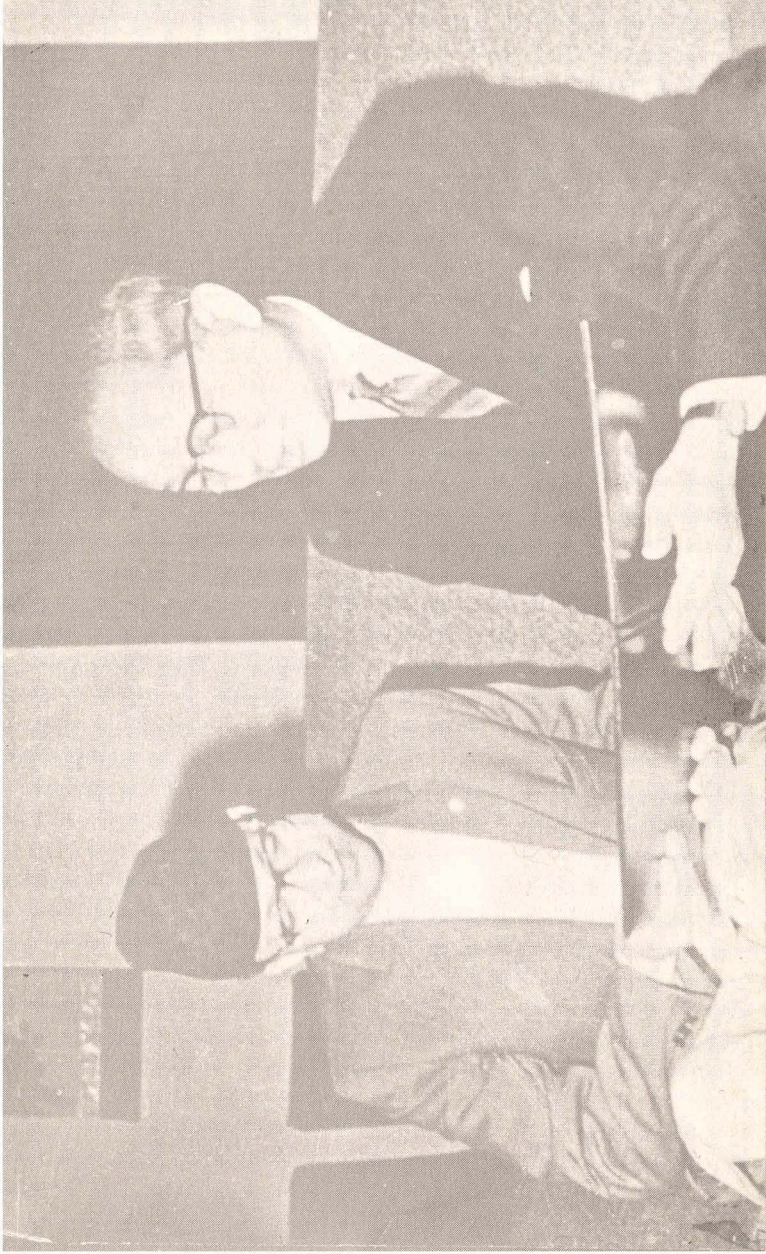
The nativity of Śākyamuni Buddha, Māyādevī Temple, Lumbini Garden.



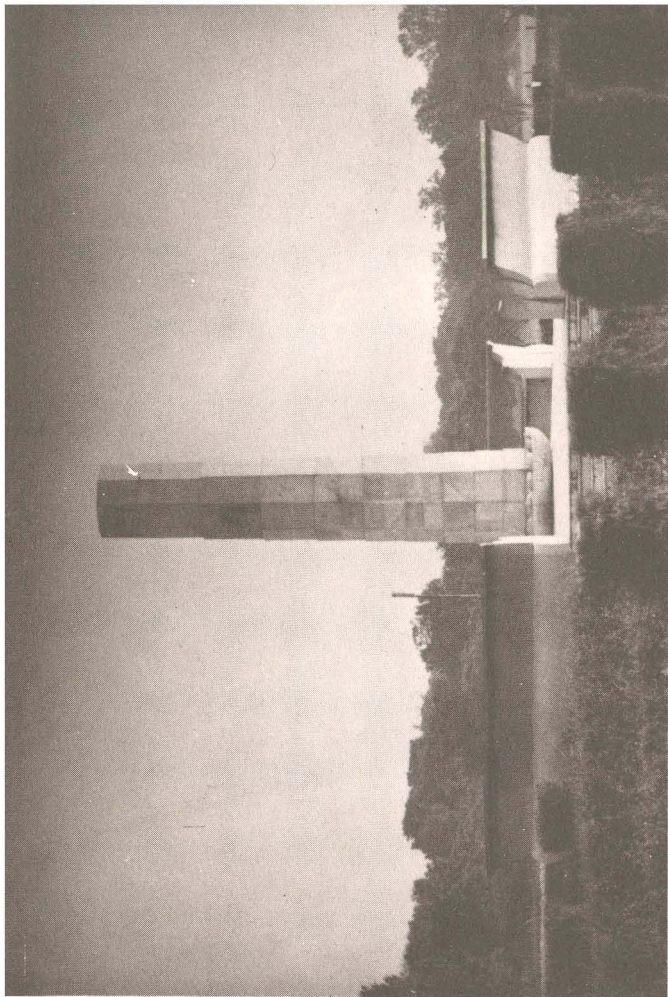
The Aśoka pillar at Niglihawa.



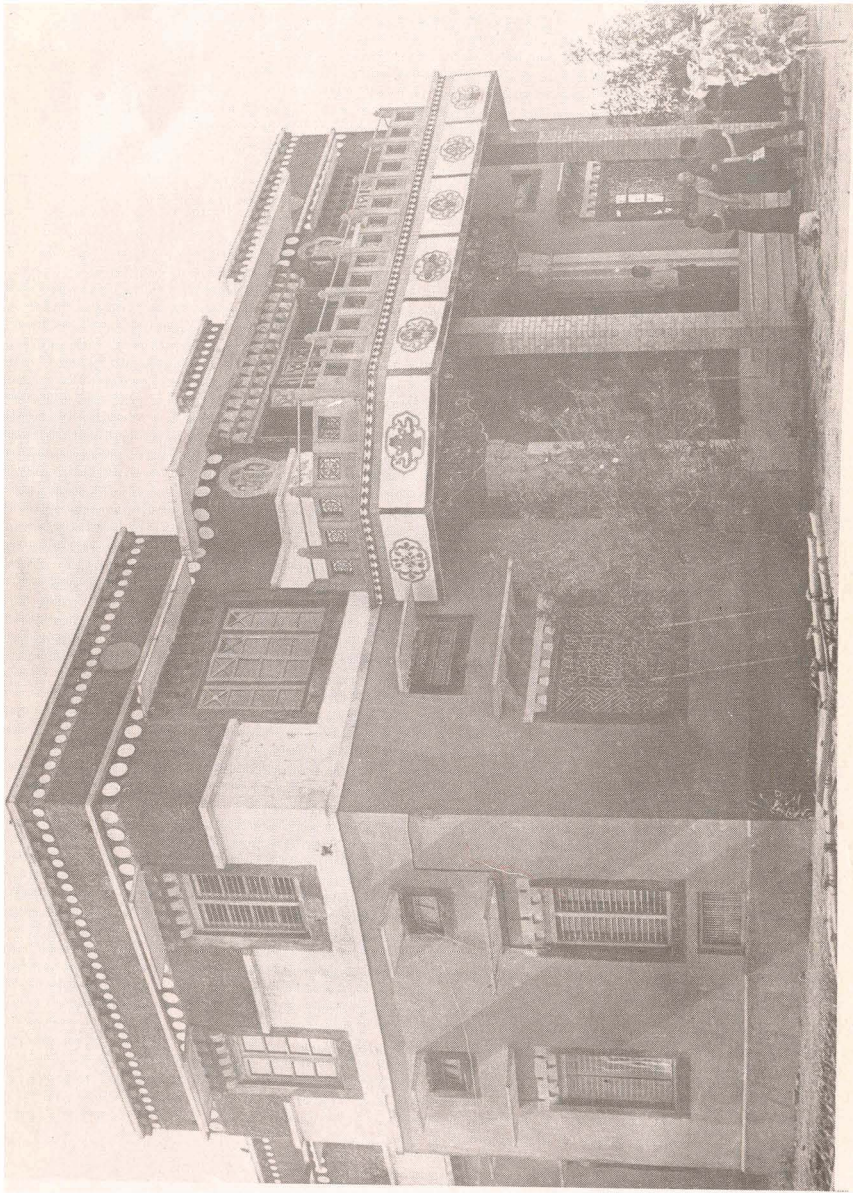
The Aśoka pillar at Gotihawa.



His Majesty Late King Mahendra with late U.N. Secretary General Mr. U Thant at the Royal Palace on April 13, 1967, when they discussed Lumbini.



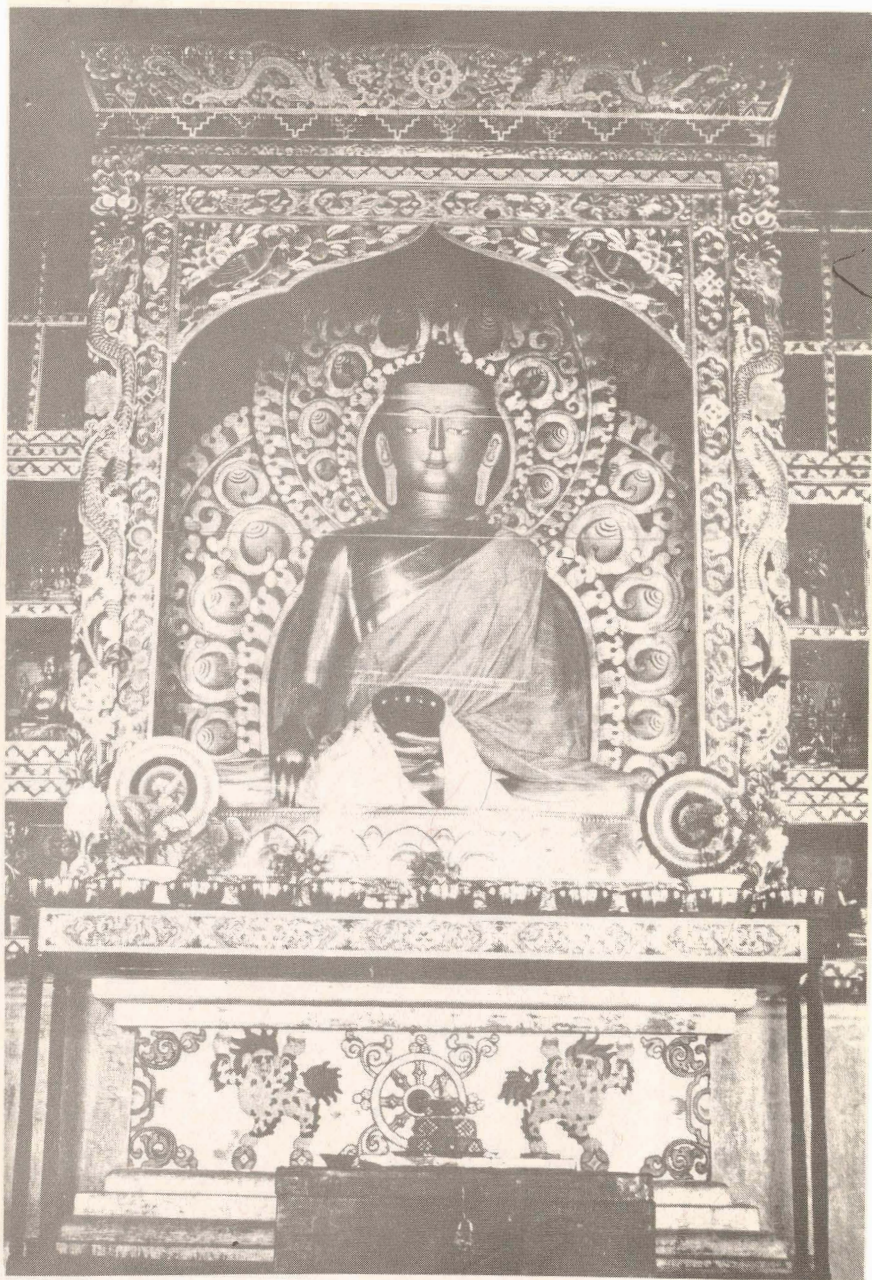
The pillar erected by His Majesty Late King Mahendra at Lumbini Garden.



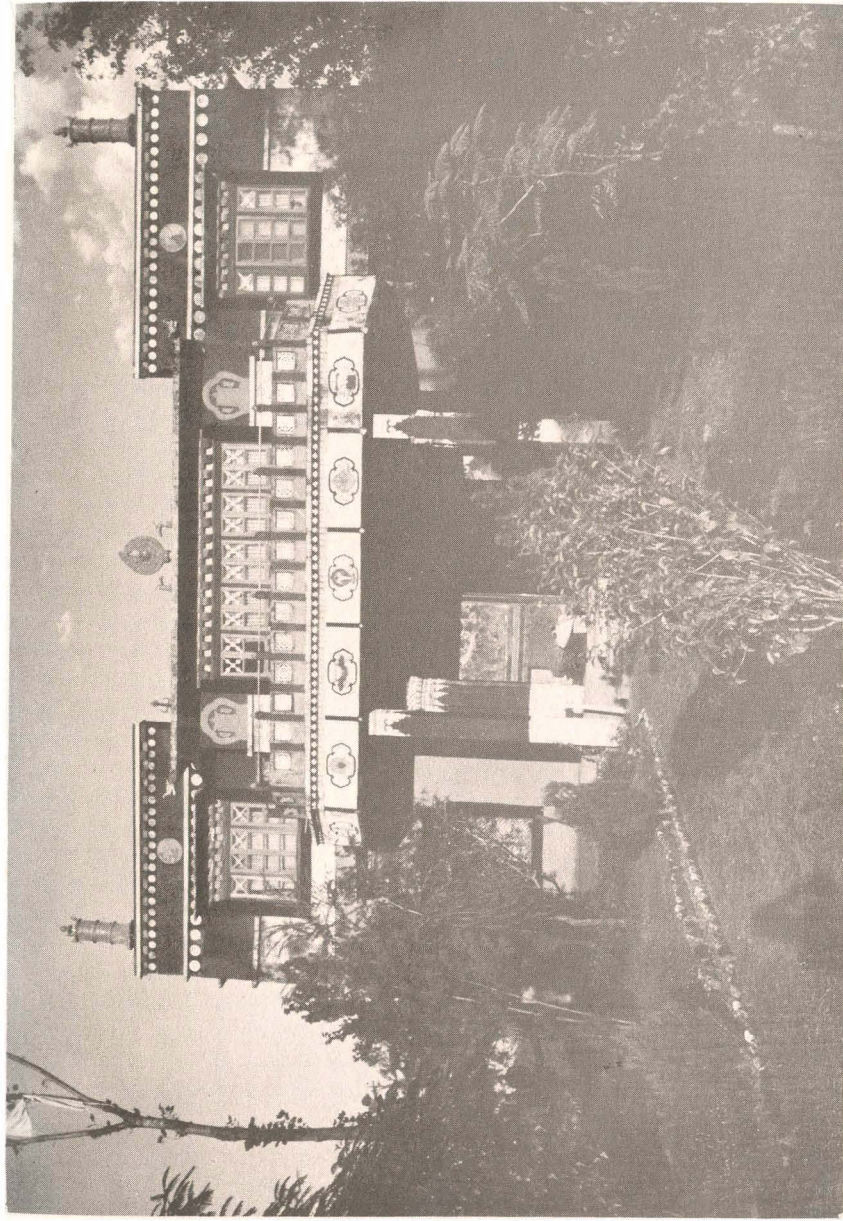
Dharma Swami Mahārāja Buddha Vihāra, the
monastery at Lumbini Garden. 1977



The main assembly hall in the Lumbini Monastery of Dharm Swami Mahārāja Buddha Vihāra.



The main image of Śākyamuni Buddha in the Lumbini Monastery.



Dharma Swami Mahārāja Buddha Vihāra, the
monastery at Lumbini Garden, 1986.



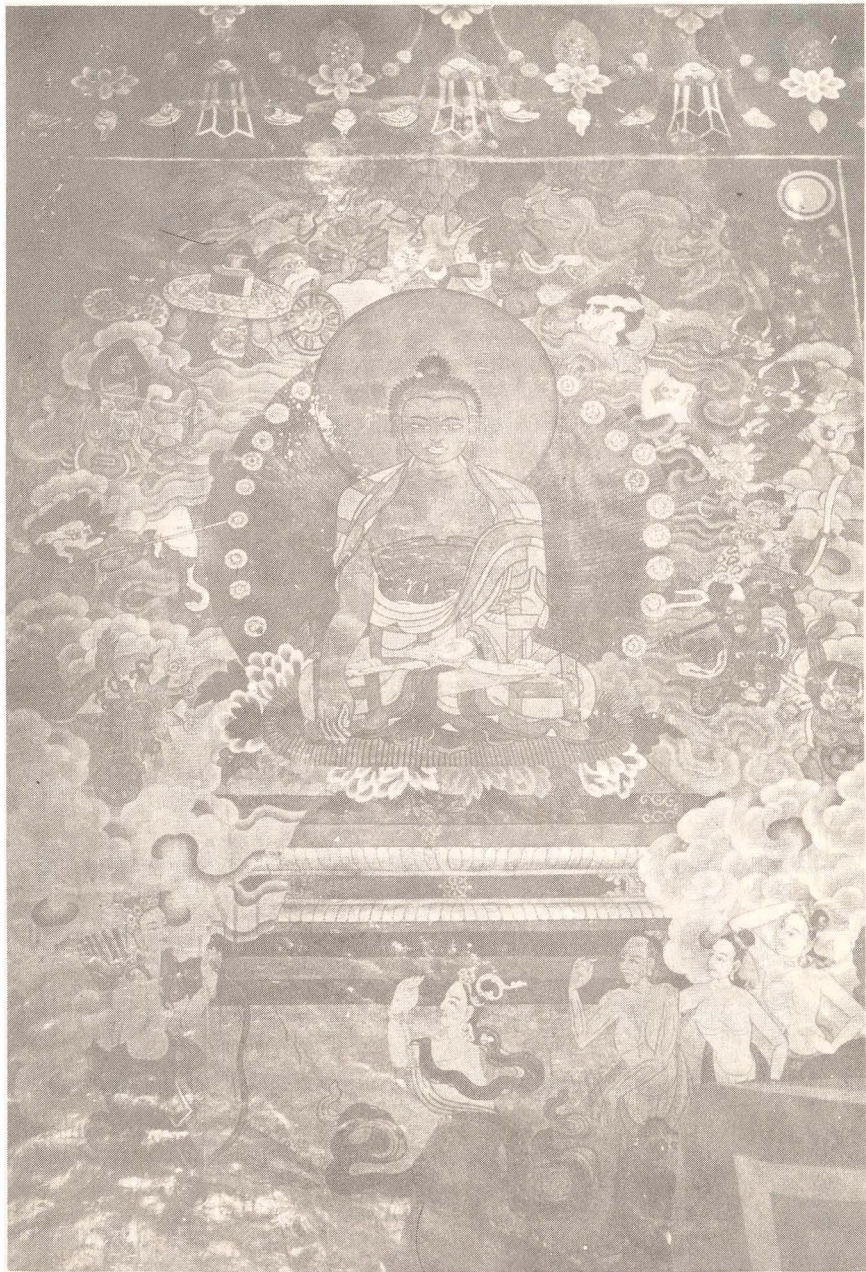
The nativity of Śākyamuni Buddha at Lumbini Garden [a mural in the Lumbini Monastery].



Prince Siddhartha in the Kapilavastu palace [a mural in the Lumbini Monastery].



Their Majesties the King and Queen in a discussion of the story of Maitreya Buddha, during their visit to the Great Maitreya Temple, Boudhnāth, March 10, 1986.



Buddha Śākyamuni attains complete enlightenment at the Vajrāsana in Bodhgayā [a mural in the Lumbini Monastery].



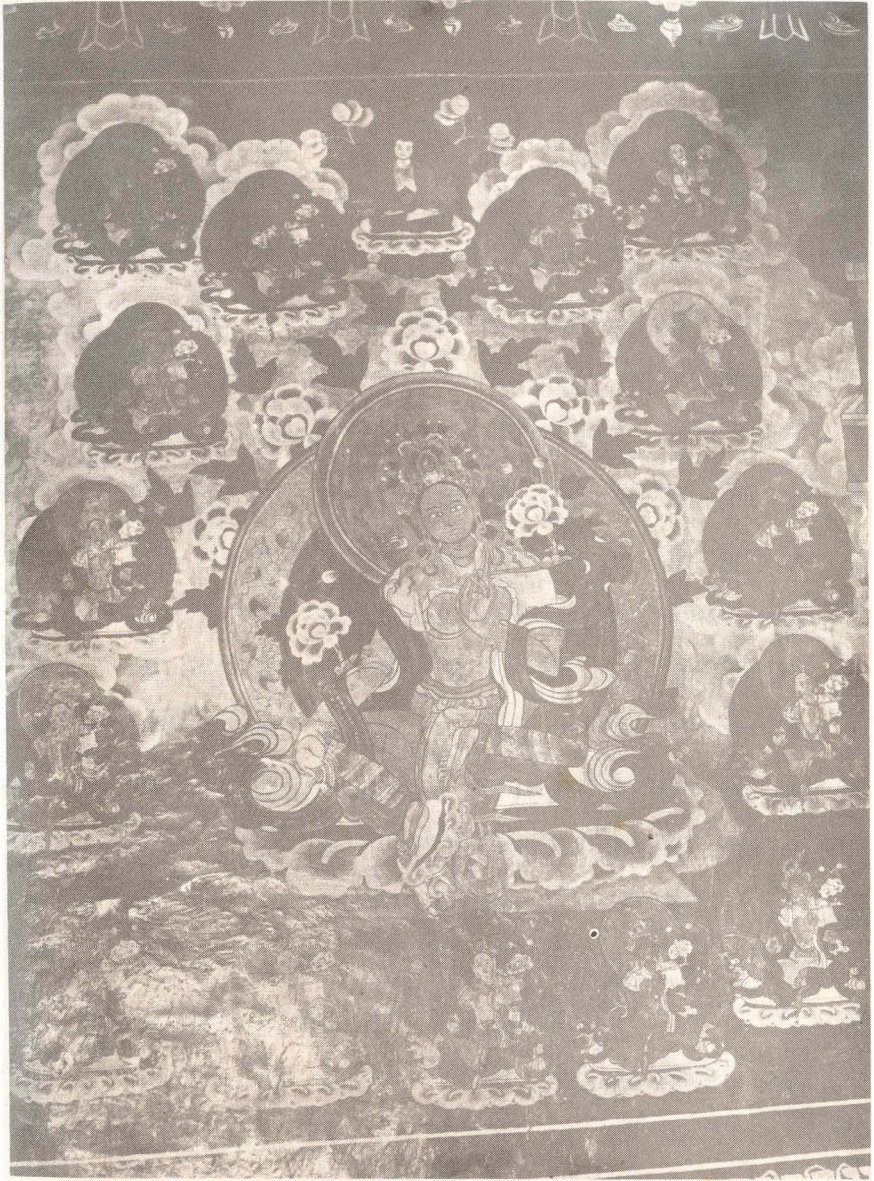
The first turning of the Dharmacakra by Śākyamuni Buddha at Sārnath [a mural in the Lumbini Monastery].



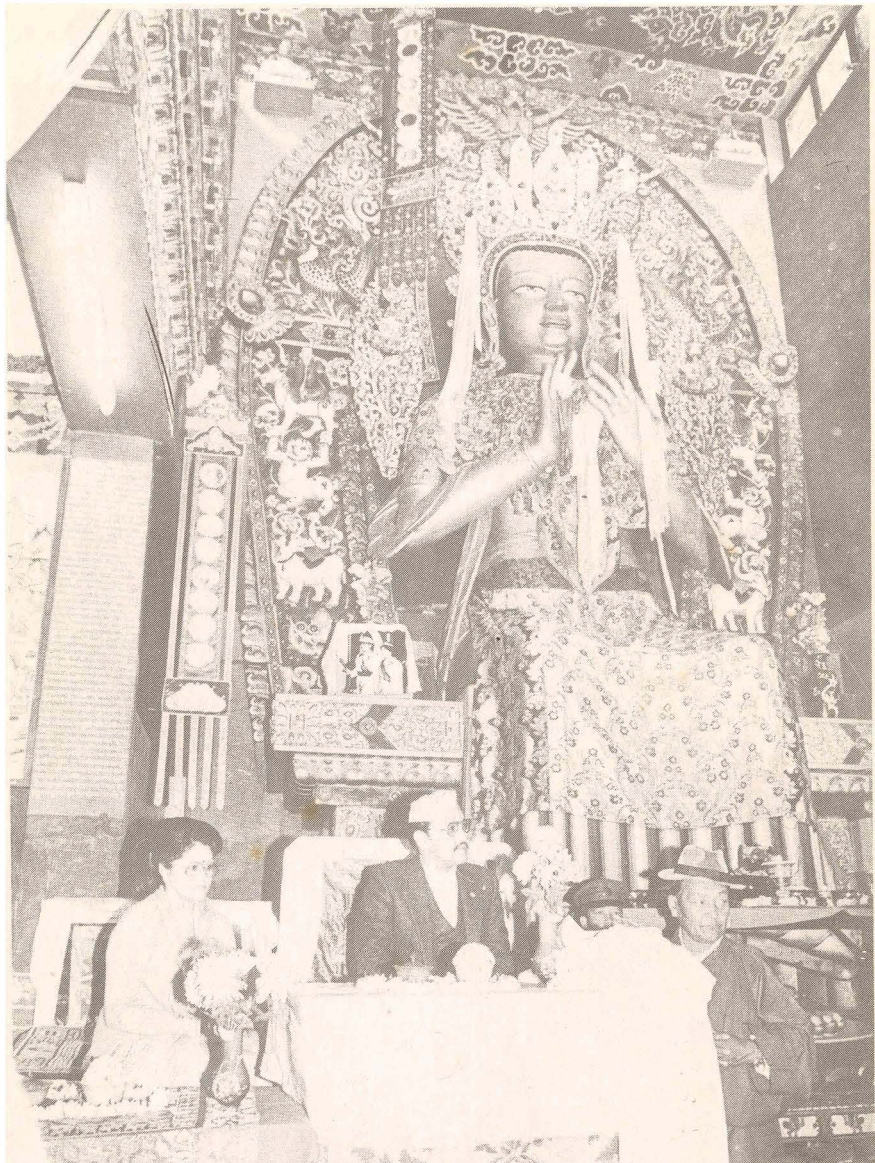
The second turning of the Dharmacakra at
Gṛdhrakūṭa [a mural in the Lumbini Monastery].



**Sākyamuni Buddha passing into Nirvāṇa at
Kuśīnagara [a mural in the Lumbini Monastery].**



Tārā and her various manifestations [a mural in the Lumbini Monastery].



Their Majesties the King and Queen during their visit to the Great Maitreya Temple, Boudhnāth, on March 10, 1986.

