BUDDHIST AVADÁNAS
(SOCIO-POLITICAL ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL STUDY)

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TO

THE MEMORY OF MY
MOTHER
SMT. RAMASRINGARI PANDEY

AND FATHER
SHRI BALRAM PANDEY
PREFACE

The word 'avadāna' has been used in various senses—both in non-Buddhist and Buddhist traditions. Mostly it denotes illustrious action. With the Buddhists it is the name of a particular type of literature which narrates the stories pertaining to the illustrious actions of either the Buddha or any of his followers. Most of these stories were drawn from folklore and legends. This type of literature does not belong to the higher religious literature of Buddhism as it does not contain some deep philosophical views. Its main purpose seems to be the depiction of moral principles through interesting stories. It aimed at preaching the good law of Buddhism to the common people by presenting before them the main facets of Buddhism through the medium of interesting and edifying stories. This type of literature was important for its excellent propaganda material. Different motifs and symbols have been employed to achieve this end.

Although many scholars have written about these Buddhist Avadānas, their writings do not embrace all the aspects of the Avadānas. Scholars like M. Winternitz, B.C. Law, A.C. Banerjee have primarily discussed about its literary and historical aspects. Others like Cowell and Neil, J. S. Speyer, Feer and P.L. Vaidya are mainly concerned with the textual aspects of the Avadānas. Attempts have also been made to construct the image of social, political, economic and cultural life as depicted in the Avadānas. In this category of writers the name of Professor K.A. Nilakantha Shastri is note-worthy. But a systematic and complete treatment of all the aspects, connected with the Avadānas, has not yet been placed before the scholarly world. Since all the studies of the Avadānas made so far, are fragmentary, a synoptic approach is called for. Here an attempt has been made to view the Avadānas in
the broader perspective. Care has been taken to preserve the Buddhistic flavour in it.

The arrangement of the work has been made under a comprehensive scheme of four parts. The first part deals with a general introduction of the Avadānas. The second part presents an elaborate treatment of social, political, economic and cultural life along with history as depicted in the Avadānas. The third part reveals the facts about the philosophical ideas and religious life, the fourth and the last part give a brief comparative study of some of the Avadānas. An exhaustive Bibliography and Index have been added at the close.

Some Printer's devils have crept in at a few unguarded and unmindful points. I feel apologetic for the same.

I am under a special debt of Professor R.C. Pandey, Department of Philosophy, Delhi University, whose blessings I always seek. Grateful acknowledgement is made to him. I am thankful to Dr. B. Jinaanand, formerly, Head, Department of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, who always helped me in all possible ways. I feel indebted to my brother Dr. Kamlesh Dutt Pandey, who has always taken interest in my work. I desire to acknowledge my obligation to Shri Shamlal Malhotra, Proprietor, Eastern Book Linkers, Delhi-7 for printing and publishing this book. Lastly, and above all, I must thank my husband Professor Rajnish Prakash, Delhi College of Engineering, Delhi, for his encouragement and help.

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PART I
AVADĀNA LITERATURE—
A GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Meaning of the word Avadāna :—

The word Avadāna is much used in the Sanskrit literature. Right from the Vedic literature it has been used at different places with different shades of meanings. In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa it is used in the sense of a sacrificial thing. It is further mentioned that the gods get pleased when ‘Avadāna’ is presented to them. In Kātyāyana’s Śrauta-Sūtra this word is applied for the portions of the havis offered to the deities. In the Śrauta-Kośa it is used in the sense of an act which makes one free from all the four debts i.e. Deva-R̥ṣa, R̥ṣi-R̥ṣa, pitṛ-R̥ṣa and Manuṣya-R̥ṣa.

In the Rāmāyaṇa the word ‘Apadāna’ occurs so many times for illustrious or heroic deeds.

In the Raghuvaṁśa of Kālidāsa the word ‘avadāna’ occurs thus :—

1. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. 1.7.2.6. ग्रथ यद्यनि जुद्दहि तदेनास्तदवदयते तत्सात् यत् कि चास्यनि जुद्दहि तदवदानं नाम।
2. Kātyāyana Śrauta-Sūtra, 1.9. ‘पुरोदासवचविदिंध्यप्रेष्येषादेवक् मन्थुण्डपवमां तिरस्चैनयवदानमवदातै’।
3. Śrauta-Kośa. p. 762. ब्रस्वतोत्तवदानकल्य। चतुरस्वतं चतुरवतं भवतीति।
4. Amarakośa. प्रपदानमत्वपि पाठ।
5. Rāmāyaṇa—Ayodhyā Kāṇḍa.

At both these places ग्रपदान means heroism. cf. Dic. Apte.
Buddhist Avadānas

In the Kirātārjunīyam of Bhāravi, the following stanza occurs:

Vīśvāmitra, pleased with the heroic deed of Rāma, presented to him a supernatural weapon.

In the Kirātārjunīyam of Bhāravi, the following stanza occurs:

Vīśvāmitra, pleased with the heroic deed of Rāma, presented to him a supernatural weapon.

Here the thing to be noted is the use of the word ‘avadāna’ for heroic deed. Mallinātha, comments upon the meaning of this word:

In the Naiṣadhiya carita of Śrī Harṣa this word ‘Avadāna’ occurs thus:

(Pleased Vivasvān says to Nala, ‘Because of your noble deeds (व्रद्धदानेन:) my tongue is eager to bless you with a boon’.

Here it is used for noble deed.

Thus this word, though, is very much used, yet, I think, is one of the most ambiguous words. Much ink is split on the subject as to what the exact meaning of the word avadāna is, but no definite conclusion has been arrived at so far. Different scholars have given different meanings of the word. Before arriving at any particular conclusion let us have brief substances of the ideas expressed by different scholars about the meaning of the word ‘avadāna’.

1. पराक्रमोववदान स्वादुः इति भाषितः
Max Muller, an authority on Vedic literature, observes in his translation of the Dhammapada that the word ‘avādāna’ is derived from *ava + dai*, a legend. Originally a pure and virtuous act, afterwards a sacred story, and possibly a story, the hearing of which purifies the mind.

Winternitz has explained that the meaning of the word ‘avādāna’ is a note-worthy deed. Sometimes in a bad sense, but generally in the good sense of ‘a heroic deed’ ‘a feat’; with the Buddhists a religious moral feat and then also the ‘story of a note-worthy deed or feat’.

Feer, in his French translation of the Avadāna-Śatakā, writes that ‘avādāna’ is an instruction which shows by facts the link which exists between an act and its inevitable consequences.

In the preface to the Avadāna-Śatakā, edited by J.S. Speyer, it is mentioned that outside the Buddhist world the Sanskrit word avādāna is used for illustrious actions or feats. The editor further observes: ‘An Avadāna (Apadāna) is in proper sense something cut off; something selected’. The editor further quotes Hodgson, who gave a definition of the word Avadāna that it treats ‘of the fruit of actions or moral law of Mundane existence’.

J.J. Jones held, “An avādāna is a tale in which the heroism or other virtue of a living character is explained by the Buddha as the result of a good deed performed in a previous existence.”

The etymology of the word अवदान is अव + दान. The prefix अव creates so many linguistic nuances. To give some illustrations अव as a prefix to verbs expresses determination (अवविद्या), purification (अवदारा), support (अवलम्ब), well-known (अवगोचर), lustre (अवभास) and virtuous or glorious (अवदान). Thus we see that अव as a prefix generally means good, noble, illustrious or glorious. ‘Dāna’ is derived from the root ‘Dā’ meaning thereby the act of donating or giving. The act of donating is considered an act quite virtuous. Thus the compound ‘avādāna’ means

good, noble, illustrious or heroic act.¹

A Section of Buddhist literature is called ‘Avadāna’² because it deals with the tales pertaining to the noble deeds either of the Buddha or any of his disciples.³ These tales do

1. cf. K. Takahata (Ed.) Ratnamālāvadāna P. XXIV—“The central idea of the avadāna literature is Cittaprasāda or spiritual cleansing and what is inseparable from this is practice of dāna or charity. Meeting Buddha, one performs various kinds of alms-giving and offerings, and thus obtaining purification and joy of mind avoids falling into evil destinies and attains final enlightenment. Avadāna is the explanation of this Karma in reference to previous and later existences and the practice of dāna is dealt with in most of the stories. The avadānas dealing with Mātsarya (avarice) merely stress the wickedness of it as opposed to the virtue of alms-giving. As the concluding words to many of the tales in Avadāna-Sataka we find the following words of the Buddha: Ayam asya deyadharma yo mamāntike cittaprasāda iti (Such is one’s gift which expresses the purity of his mind towards me), (Avadāna-Sataka np. 7,12 27,29,35,40 46,53,62, 128,135,143,147,152,157,162 etc.). Since alms-giving is thus associated with the purity of mind, this gives rise to a thought that there was probably a period when the original meaning of avadāna was taken as being ‘alms-giving’.”

2. Encyclopaedia Britannica p. 791. “Avadāna, the name given to collections of Buddhist tales purporting to be told by the Buddha in order to show the results of Karma”.

3. Dutt, N.-Aspects of Mahāvīra Buddhism and its relation to Hinayāna Buddhism p.10. “The sense of the term Avadāna is clear and needs no comment. It includes all stories of previous births whether of Buddha or of any of his disciples or of any prominent figure professing the Buddhist faith, and a huge literature has grown under this heading”.
not contain deep philosophical views. They simply intended to propagate the good law to the masses and bring them home to accept the law and support the Saṅgha. It was through the active support of the laity that the Saṅgha could get the indispensable requisites of daily life. The list of these indispensable goods is very often found in the Avadāna literature in the following way:

चीवरपिण्डयात्सवनात्सवनात्सवमैथिय (i.e. cloth, food, bed, seat and medicines etc.)

Thus the object of these tales was to popularise Buddhism and get active support of the masses.

**Origin**

In order to make the people interested in Buddhism the Theravādins incorporated in their doctrines the concept of the Bodhisattva and the practice of the Pāramitās. The result was that the new literature, the Jātakas and the Avadānas, came into being. With the introduction of this type of literature they intended to show how the devotees sacrificed everything for the performance of some pāramitā or some virtuous deed.

The question arises—what stimulated the monks to produce this new literature? To have an apt answer let us peep through Dr. N. Dutt's remark which holds Aśoka's preference for the life of an ideal upāsaka responsible for the production of this new literature. He observes, "Aśoka's preference for the life of an ideal upāsaka as against that of a monk may have stimulated the Buddhist monks to devise

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1. Dutt. N. Op. cit. p. II. "It consisted more of anecdotes, stories, parables and so forth than of the actual doctrines of Buddhism".

2. Ibid. "...the chief object was to popularise Buddhism and to show that they were meant as much for the benefit of the masses as for the selected few who could retire from the world".

3. Ibid. p. 36.
ways and means to popularise their religion, and as the result of the efforts of the monks in this direction, we have the large number of the Jātakas and avadānas.\textsuperscript{1}

It is an accepted fact that any doctrine of morality when taught in a straightforward manner, does not carry much weight. It becomes more acceptable when it is presented in an interesting way. Likewise it seems that the Law of Karma was emphasised by the Buddhist scholars through the medium of tales.\textsuperscript{2} These tales dealt with the endless theme of the fruits of human actions. It showed how a man, who performed noble deed, got appropriate reward and one, who did not, did not get any of the kind. Thus indirectly it emphasised that the people, too, should perform noble deeds in order to get rewards and should not indulge in wrong deeds which certainly lead to undesirable result. Thus through the medium of these tales the Buddhist scholars tried to preach the people the Law of Karma by presenting before them the examples of these tales. This very fact is admitted by J.S. Speyer in the Preface to the Avadāna-Śataka, edited by him. After quoting the definition of ‘Avadāna’, given by Hodgson, he observes, ‘This is substantially right, and it is not without importance that the conclusion of half of the hundred texts out of which the Avadāna-Śataka is made up and of several parts of the Divyāvadāna is the standing phrase that black actions bear black fruits and mixed ones mixed fruits, with the exhortation to strive only after white actions, shunning or letting alone the other two’.\textsuperscript{3}

Benfey holds the view that the Indian folktales originated from the Buddhists. The main reason for this view was his faith that as the Pañcatantra reveals Buddhistic ideas so it is a

\begin{enumerate}
\item Dutt. N. op. cit. p. 20.
\item Uppal. S.S \textit{Punjabi Short Stories—its Origin and development}—“Man continues recreating and educating himself with the help of stories”: p. 21.
\item Speyer, J.S. op. cit. p. I.
\end{enumerate}
Buddhistic work. But this view of his is refuted at the hands of Dr. Hertel while he says that the Pañcatantra is purely a Brahmanical work and possesses no Buddhist features.¹

As regards the origin² of Indian story literature we can find traces of the stories in Samhitas which have been developed in Brahmanas and Upanishads. In the Rigveda, which is hailed to be the earliest literary composition of India, so many such Suktas are found in which a dialogue between two or more than two characters is depicted. These are called the Samvada-Suktas and from the historical point of view these can rightly be claimed as the main sources of later story literature. In the Puranas these stories are changed to a considerable extent. In the Ramayana and the Mahabharata too the themes of the stories, drawn from the above-mentioned ancient literature, are somewhat changed. The Suka-Saptati, the Pañcatantra fables etc. form a precious treasure of stories from which story-tellers of other countries sought inspiration. These stories have been told and retold with a twist here and there. The Buddhist literature, too, carries the same tradition further with some changes in the form of the Jatakas and the Avadanas.

Avadana and Jataka

The Buddhist Jataka tales or Birth stories of the Buddha also have been a source of inspiration for later story-tellers. The Jatakas can rightly be acclaimed as the forerunners of


2. Uppal, S.S. op. cit.—“The story, in its crude form, existed much before man learnt speaking under philological system. When man was in the stage of dactylogy or graphiology, he was, in a way, relating some story with the help of his physical gestures or pictures.” He has supported this view by giving references from H.E. Bates (The Modern Short Story) and G.H. Mair (Modern English Literature). p. 19.
the Avadānas. The Jātakas and the Avadānas are closely related to each-other,¹ and this close relation between the two is well set up by J.S. Speyer in his Preface to the Avadāna Jātaka, edited by Śīlīm. There he writes, "The Avadāna type is nearly related to the Jātakas. Both concern edifying tales told with: the purpose of inculcating moral precepts as taught by the Saddharma revealed by the Buddhas"² J.J. Jones also held the view that the avadānas were "not unlike in their nature to Jātakas which were first fashioned by Thera-vādins."³

The difference between the two consists in this, that in a Jātaka the Bodhisattva is always either the hero or one of the characters occurring in the story, while any saint may play a part in an Avadāna."⁴ But there are many Avadānas in which the Bodhisattva is the hero. These are called the Bodhisattvā-vadānamālas and may as well be called Jātakas.

Avadāna and Apadāna

The thirteenth section of the Khuddaka Nikāya is called Apadāna. Like the Avadāna literature the Apadānas also deal with the stories of the previous lives of Buddha, Solitary Buddha, the chief Disciples or some Arhats stress upon the theory of Karma. A noble deed never goes unrewarded. Sooner or later it is bound to be rewarded. This very fact is revealed in almost all the Apadānas. That is why some scholars have assigned those Apadānas as the Pāli counterpart of the Avadānas.⁵ A close relation between the two is established by N. Dutt while he observes thus: "Apadāna is more closely allied to the Sanskrit Avadānas than to the remaining works of the Pāli Canon."⁶ T.W. Rhys observes: "The word of

1. Vide Jones, J.J. (Tr.) Mahāvastu Vol. I. p XIV—"They (The Avadānas) are not unlike the Jātakas".
2. Speyrcr, J.S. op. cit. p. IV.
4. cf. Speyer, J.S —op. cit p. III.
Apādāna means ‘pure action,’ ‘heroic action’; the book is a Buddhist *Vita Sanctorum*. When the Buddhists, in the first century of our era, began to write in Sanskrit, these stories lost none of their popularity. The name was Sanskritized into *Avadāna*.

Composed in metrical style, the text of the Apādānas has two sections—one dealing with the life-stories of the male saints (Thera-Apadāna) and the other dealing with that of the female saints (Therī-Apadāna). The first section includes 56 Vaggas, each consisting of 10 Apādānas except the 56th which consists of 11 Apādānas. The second section includes four Vaggas, each consisting of 10 Apādānas. Here it should be made clear that the Pāli Apādānas are certainly different from the Sanskrit *Avadānas*: Firstly because the Apadāna literature is in Pāli while the *Avadāna* literature is in Sanskrit. Secondly the Apādāna literature is in metrical composition while the legends of the *Avadāna* literature are told in prose interspersed here and there with frequent verses. (No doubt the *Avadāna Kalpalatā* of Kṣemendra is written in metrical style but the major part of the *Avadāna* literature i.e. *Avadāna Sataka*, Divyāvadāna etc. is not metrical. Thirdly most of the *Apādāna* stories are very short and simple while those of the *Avadāna* literature are relatively longer and more complex. The fact remains that Apādāna literature belongs to the 5th section (*Khuddaka-Nikāya*) of the *Sutta-Piṭaka* while the

4. The fifteen books of the *Khuddaka Nikāya* are:—
   1. Khuddakapāṭha, 2. Dhammapada, 3. Udāna,
Buddhist Avadānas

literature belongs to the twelve sections of Sanskrit Buddhist Texts viz:

सूत्रः ग्रन्तं भवाकरणं गाधोदानवादानकम् ।
इतिवृत्तकं निदानं बौधुस्यं च सजातकम् ।
उपदेशाद्वृत्ती थर्मा हाद्वालंमिवं वचः ॥
(हरिमठ—भ्रालोक, ब्रह्मवा संस्करण)

According to Cowell, Neil and Levi the Avadāna literature forms part of the Vinaya texts of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins. A vast section of it has been derived from the Vinaya texts. Of course some part of it can also be traced in the Sūtra-literature. In the Māndhātṛ Sūtra, found in the Vinaya-Vastu of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins in original, it is stated—

विस्तरेण मान्यचां जूत्रं मध्यमामें राजसंयुक्त्यानिपाते


Thus we find that the Avadānas and the Apadānas are mainly different though in name they seem to be identical.  


2. “All this (Avadāna) literature is very different from what we know of the Pāli Apadāna. ‘Avadāna’ says Speyer, ‘is interchangeable with Apadāna.’ This is doubtless true of the etymology of the words, whatever the root of the word is, there is little doubt that ava- is the Prākrit form of apa-, and that the two words coincide in sense insofar as they mean ‘glorious achievement’ or ‘heroic story’. But this does not make them the same type of literature, any more than a novel is an epic.”—Thomas, Edward J. Avadāna and Apadāna—The Indian Historical Quarterly. Vol. IX No. I March, 1933 P. 35.
Central theme, morals and motifs of the Avadānas

Central Theme:—

"The mention of the șaṭ-pāramitā, the fulfilment of which is compulsory for the Bodhisattvas, is frequently found in the works of both the Saravāstivādins and the Mahāsāṅghikas, and both are responsible for the growth of the large mass of Avadāna literature, the central theme of which is the fulfilment of the pāramitās".¹

Like other Buddhist Sanskrit works, the Avadāna literature also has attached "the greatest importance to the pāramitās, which distinguish the bodhisattvas from the inferior arhats and pratyeka buddhas. These latter are regarded as representatives of merely negative ethical ideals, while the pāramitās are put forward as a scheme of positive moral development".² In this formula of pāramitās the latter Buddhists had combined "the social virtues of a righteous layman householder with the ascetic ideals of meditative monks."³ Thus they provided a bridge in the form of these pāramitās between the two i.e. popular and monastic Buddhism. It was "not only to inspire faith, but also to encourage people in the performance of dāna, śīla, kṣānti, virya, dhyāna and prajñā that they invented story after story and associated them not only with the life of Buddha but also with the lives of persons who attained prominence in the history of the Buddhist faith".⁴ A number of instances can be quoted from the pages of the Avadāna literature which, directly or indirectly, reveal their stress upon the performance of the six pāramitās. A few of them are mentioned below:—

Dāna:—

The word 'Dāna' means 'the act of giving'. The Avadāna literature abounds in stories where the heroes and heroines

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1. Dutt, N. op. cit. p. 25.
3. Ibid.
4. Dutt, N. op. cit. p 25
“give away wealth, limbs, life, wives and children in a spirit of exaggerated and fantastic philanthropy” 1. The Avadāna Śataka records a story of some king Śibi of Śibighoṣa, who used to excessively indulge in the acts of giving food, cloth etc. to those in need. So much so that he, in order to satisfy the small insects, inflicted many wounds on his body and willingly gave his flesh and even eyes to Śakra, who, in the guise of a vulture and Brāhmaṇa respectively, had appeared twice before him to test the genuineness of his virtue of giving. 2

The Avadāna-Kalpalatā also states a somewhat similar story of king Śibi who, in order to listen to the recitation of a few good verses from a Rākṣasa, did feed him with his own flesh and blood. 3 The Divyāvadāna mentions a story of some girl Rūpavatī who, in order to save the lives of a starving woman and her young ones, did cut off her breasts and feed that famished woman. 4 A similar reference of a Bodhisattva, who offered his body to feed a hungry tigress and thus save the lives of her young ones, whom she would have devoured if the Bodhisattva had not given his body, is found in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā also. 5 One hare threw himself into the fire and offered his own roasted meat to a sage, who, for want of edible, was to leave the forest where they both lived, to eat and to continue living in the same forest. 6

Śīla:—

Śīla as a pāramitā has been identified with virtue. 7 A good many references, stressing the importance of Śīla pāramitā, are found in the Avadāna literature. The Divyāvadāna refers to a story relating how prince Kuṇāla’s eyes were plucked out as a punishment for his act of inflicting similar injury on some

1. Hardayal, op. cit. p. 181
4. Divyāvadāna xxxii p, 308.
6. Avadāna-Śataka xvii pp. 93-95.
animals in one of his previous births. Thus by this story the abstemion from killing living beings is stressed. Use of harsh words, too, is decried in the Avadāna literature. The Divyāvadāna also records the story of Pūraṇa, who, as a consequence of using harsh language in one of his previous existences, was reborn as a slave girl's son. Not indulging in sensual pleasures also comes in the domain of Śīla. The Divyāvadāna mentions the incident of Upagupta's rejecting the advances of the courtesan Vāsavadattā. The story of Prince Kuṇāla, who did not accept the amorous invitations of his step-mother Tiṣyā, who had fallen in love with him, is also found in the Divyāvadāna.

Kṣānti :

Freedom from anger and excitement come in the domain of Kṣānti. We find really wonderful characters, sketched in the Avadāna literature, who were ready to endure and did readily endure so many insults which would have arisen anger and excitement in an ordinary layman and thus proved their being free from anger and excitement. First of all let us illustrate the character of Pūraṇa who was ready to go in the realm of Śroṇa-parāntakas, which was notorious for its barbarous inhabitants, for propagating the good law of the Lord. He was ready to bear any insult, done by them. He promised to the Lord that he would not mind even if the fierce, violent and cruel inhabitants of Śroṇapurāṇastraśas abused him and troubled him by using harsh and false words; strike him with their hand clods, or some weapon and even kill him. Pleased with this type of freedom from anger and excitement the Lord said to him, "Pūraṇa, you are endowed with the greatest gentleness and forbearance. You are the fittest man to go to the Śroṇa-
parāntakas and live among them. You go and free those who want to be freed.”

Another character, which presents a very apt example for illustrating the Kṣānti Pāramitā, is Kuṇāla, the beutiful-eyed, son of King Aśoka. His beautiful eyes, following a royal intrigue, were forced to be plucked, but he did not bear any ill will against the person (queen Tiṣya) who played the main role in that intrigue. Instead he said to king Aśoka, “Oh king, I don’t have any feeling of anger against anyone. My heart is full of love for my mother queen Tiṣyā who played the main role in the intrigue of getting my beautiful eyes being plucked out.”

In the Avadāna-kalpalatā we find the mention of a saint Kṣāntivādin, whose virtue of forbearance was so excellent that he, on being reviled and abused by the king, did not feel the least angry. Not only this but through his forbearance and serenity, he remained unshaken then also when the king, just out of amissunderstanding, cut off his hands, arms, ears, nose and feet.

Virya:—

The word Virya literally means “the state of a strong man, vigour, strength, power, heroism, prowess, valour, fortitude, courage, firmness, virility”. This virtue is given special importance in the Buddhist world. They hold that “Enlightenment depends entirely on Virya; where there is Virya, there is bodhi. Virya is the chief and paramount cause of all the auspicious principles that are conducive to Enlighten-

ment.”1 A few instances, which illustrate this virtue, can be quoted from the Avadāna literature. The Divyāvadāna records the mention of some Prince Sudhana who bravely faced many dangers which he encountered during his adventure of undertaking a difficult journey in order to meet his wife. And through his virtue of Vīrya he was successful in his mission of meeting with his wife.

Dhyāna:—

“It has been rendered as “meditation”, “trance”, “ecstasy”, “contemplation”, “rapture”......... ....... .... ..etc.”2 Samādhi also is considered// synonymous with dhyāna.3 Pūrṇa flew in the air and saved certain travellers from shipwreck by means of Samādhi.4

Prajñā:—

The word Prajñā has been translated as wisdom, insight, spiritual enlightenment etc. Dr. TH. Stoherbatsky5 has translated it as ‘perfect wisdom’. He further states, “The word ‘pāram-ītā’ i.e. ‘gone beyond’ suggests that it would be better to translate prajñā-pāramitā as ‘transcendent insight’ or ‘transcendent wisdom’.”6 Dr. N. Dutt has rendered it as “the knowledge which helps a person to realise the dharma-Śūnyatā”7. Avadāna literature abounds in with such characters as became प्रज्ञाविस्मृत्त.8 Dvīkāya theory of the Prajñā-pāramitā is also found in the Avadāna literature. In the Divyāvadāna some passages referring to the rūpakāya and dharmakāya of the Buddha are found. In the Koṭiκarṇāva-

2. Ibid. p. 221.
6. Ibid.
7. Dutt, N. op. cit. p 108
8. Divyāvadāna II. p. 27. etc.
dāna we find the mention of Koṭikarna's desire to see the dharmakāya of Buddha for the fulfilment of which he had to go to the place where Buddha was living at the time. In the Pāṃśuradānāvadāna Upagupta's request to Māra for showing the rūpakāya of Buddha is stated. In the Rudrāyaṇāvadāna king Rudrāyaṇa, in an answer to king Bimbisāra, said, 'न राजनू कृपयो लोके धमकायेन संस्पर्शेत्' (O King! Let no irreligious person attain or touch the dharmakāya).

Original Sources of the Avadānas

When we go back to the original sources of the Avadānas, we are reminded of the Puṇyakathā and the Puṇyavipākakathā which according to Kanga Takahata, may be taken as the sources to the Avadāna stories. Referring to the development of the Avadānas from these early Buddhist types of stories, he holds, "there exist instances of Avadāna being called alternatively 'Kathā' and, since they are normally stories developed stage by stage describing acts of worship, such as alms-giving or offering to the Buddha and the fruit borne by the merit thus acquired throughout past and subsequent existences, I think it not unappropriate to fit them in here. Looked at in this light, the Avadāna literature is a development from the early Buddhist types of stories concerning such matters as alms-giving, the moral precepts and the heavens into which human beings may be reborn..."

The question arises if there already existed a vast section of literature to inculcate morals among the laity, what use there was in introducing a new type of literature called the Avadānas and that, too, with the same purpose of inculcating the morals of love, charity, compassion, piety etc.? The question, no doubt, is very challenging. In answer we can say that those stories generally related to the glorious deeds of the Bodhisattvas "who offered their body as food to a famished tigress, their eyes, their flesh and blood, their head to those who pretended to be in need of these, who gave away wife

1. Divyāvadāna I. p. 11
2. Ibid. XXVI P. 225
3. Ibid. XXXVII p. 474. Śloka No 21
4. Takaha'ra, Kanga (Ed.) Ratnāmālāvadāna p. XIII
and children to a begging brähmaṇa etc."1 But the common people could not be made familiar with the glorious deeds of the world-famed heroes (Bodhisattvas); They could not understand what the great hero had done they too could do. So there was a need for something humbler i.e. the glorious deeds of some ordinary humans with whom the common folk could make identity. The Avadāna literature served this purpose because in these stories the Bodhisattva was not compulsarily a hero. Any saint could play the part of a hero in these Avadānas. Besides the glorious deeds such as offering gifts to the Sangha, paying homage to the Lord and his ardent followers by offering incense, flowers, silver, jewels, honouring of stūpas and caityas, the performance of which brought glorious results, some wicked deeds such as non-practice of charity, abusing and disrespecting the Lord and his disciples etc., which certainly brought wicked results, were also given expression in the Avadānas. Theoretical and idealistic descriptions of all good and no evil generally become incredible and hence without desired impact. So in order to fulfil the purpose of inculcating religious precepts and laying down moral and life-regulating ideals under the guise of tale-telling the Avadāna type of literature was introduced.

Almost all the Avadānas are marked by a happy ending i.e. that of attaining Arhathood, taking birth into Tuṣita heaven etc. It is because of the fact that the Buddhists wanted to stress the idea that virtue is always rewarded. Thus they intended to inspire the listeners to perform virtuous deeds.

Supernatural element is found in almost all the Avadānas. The main purpose of these Avadānas was to edify the reader or listener by presenting before him the story of some noble being. So in order to make the nobility of the hero more and more effective, they did attribute some supernatural power to the hero who, in most of the cases, was the Lord himself in any of his former births. The laughter of the Lord and its effect,

1. Speyer, J.S. op. cit. p, VIII.
taking birth into heaven as a consequence of some noble act, the Buddha's omniscient personality are some such references in addition to those miraculous powers shown at Śrāvastī or elsewhere by the Lord.

These legends are told in prose interspersed with frequent verses. Most of the portions are in prose. Repetitions of some stereotyped phrases occur frequently in the Avadāna literature and they mar the literary beauty of the work. This we find not only in the Avadāna literature but in almost all the Buddhist literary compositions—be it in Pāli or in Sanskrit.

Since the Avadānas try to inculcate among the masses the moral qualities of love, charity, compassion, piety etc., so they are important for their moral values. In addition to moral values these Avadānas have historical importance also as they reflect the contemporary culture. The Avadānas have contributed to the themes of sculptures and paintings. Reading, writing, painting and carving the events narrated in the Avadānas was considered of great religious merit, which resulted in many sculptures, only some of which are presented to us at Sānchi and Bharhut. Many popular stories which originated in non-Buddhist context were incorporated and given Buddhistic appearance in the Avadānas, In this way they can also be said to possess value for the history of Indian Literature.

*Elements of Mahāyāna Buddhism in the Avadāna literature*

To J.J. Jones the Avadāna type of Literature seemed to be the special creation of the Sarvāstivādins. So many Avadānas i.e. Nāgakumārīvadāna, Saṅgharāṣṭīvadāra, koṭṭikarnāvadāna, Sudhānakumārīvadāna, Māndhātāvadāna, Maitreyāvadāna, Indrabrāhmaṇāvadāna, Nagarivalāmbikāvadāna, Menḍhaka-grhāpati, vibhūti pariccheda, Menḍhakāvadāna, Pāṃśupradānāvadāna, compiled in the Divyāvadāna, occur in the Vinayavastu of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins. Yet we can find some elements of Mahāyāna Buddhism also appearing in the Avadāna literature. That is why Dr. N. Dutt has put the Avadānas, along with

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1. Jones, J.J. *Mahāvastu* p. XIV.
the Jātakas, under the heading ‘Śemi-mahāyāna’. The book Divyāvadāna opens with the phrase—ॐ नमः श्रीं सर्वविविधस्वरूपः i.e. Om ! Homage to the glorious mighty Buddha, and to all Buddha, and to all Buddhas, past, present and future. The concept of Bodhisattva is certainly associated with the Mahāyāna Buddhism. One of the Avadānas, in the Divyāvadāna, bears the title दानाधिकरणमहायानसूत्रम् and ends thus—इति श्रीदिव्यावदाने दानाधिकरणमहायानसूत्रं समाप्तम्. Here the word महायान occurs in the title as well as at the end.

At so many places in the Avadāna literature (for instance Rudrāyaṇāvadāna) it is mentioned that when the Buddha smiled, multi-coloured rays of light emerged from his mouth and irradiated the beings of heaven and hell. The type of description definitely bears the Mahāyānic tint.

Theravāda school concentrates upon the interest of the individuals while Mahāyāna school professes, through its concept of the Bodhisattva, the welfare of all. According to this school the Bodhisattva not only tries to liberate his own self, but also strives for the liberation of his fellow beings. He is not satisfied with his own lot but tries to help others also to improve their lots. In the Avadāna-Śataka there is a story of Anāthapiṇḍada who gave away his Jetvana and a hundred crores of donation to the Saṅgha. Later on he decided to collect gifts from the people in order to let them also acquire merit. A very poor woman donated her only loin cloth and as a result acquired Trayastriṃśa heaven.

1. cf. Dutt, N. op. cit p. 36
2. “The Mahāyānists introduced a belief in the Bodhisattvas, beings who were in the process of obtaining, but had not obtained Buddhahood.”
   —Vide Majumdar, R.C. Ancient India p. 175
3. cf. Majumdar, R.C. Ancient India p. 175.
   अनाथपिण्डदेन गृहस्तिना बुद्धप्रसिद्धिकर्मिकं विभक्तसंघाः जेतवनं निर्मातितम्, करं ए (च) कौटिशाः भगवच्छासने दत्तम्।
The concept of Buddha-worship, found in the Avadāna literature, belongs to the school of Mahāyāna Buddhism which placed more and more reliance on faith in and devotion to the various Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. In the Divyāvadāna it is mentioned that Pūrna, sitting on his both knees, worshipped the Lord by offering flowers and scents to him.

Sanskrit, the language in which the Avadāna literature is written, was certainly adopted as a language of their literature by the Mahāyānists.

All these proofs bear testimony to the fact that the Avadāna literature contains many elements of Mahāyāna Buddhism which shows that either the Sarvāstivādins, who composed these books, were not very much conservatives or these books are a composite work of both i.e. Sarvāstivādins and Mahāyānists. The second probability offers some clue about its date. It seems that these books were composed and compiled at the time when it was a transition period from Theravāda to Mahāyāna. The reference to the existence of a class of monks called Bodhisattva at the time of Kaniṣka’s court is also significant, for we read in the Divyāvadāna of the existence of monks called Bodhisattva jātika along with a hint that they were not looked upon with favour by the Hinayānists. This shows that some class of monks (Mahāyānists) other than the existing ones (Hinayānists) was cropping forth.

1. Vaidya, P.L., Divyāvadāna p. 26. तत्र आयुम्मानू पूर्णः शरण-पृष्ठमंडिरः खेतवनामिभिषुषित्वा उभे जानुमण्डलेपीविभ्रां प्रतिष्ठाप्य पुष्पाणि किप्रेत्वा चूँवं संचायं ग्राहामित्रेन च सीवाण्यं गारं ग्राह्यित्वा आयुम्मानू प्रवृत्तं।

2. Divyāvadāna. p. 161. तत्र च विभारे बोधिसत्वजातियो भिषु: प्रतिवसति।
Not unlike the Pāli Jātakas a typical Avadāna story comprises of the following five sections:

1. A framework of the story stating when, where and why the story is related.
2. The story of the present.
3. The story of the past.
4. Identification of the characters of the story of the past with those of the story of the present.
5. Moral.

The first section generally starts with the standing phrase—बुद्धो भगवान् सत्कृतो गुरुकृतो मानित: पूजितो राजभी राजमात्रे—वनिति: पौरी: श्रेणिभ: सार्थवाहिन्यमध्येक्ष्यमुखस्तिः: किन्नरेश्वोरिति देवनायकामुरुपुष्किन्नरमहोरणाभविथितो बुद्धो भगवान् जातो महापुण्यो लगभी चीबरविष्णुपालायननमनगतानत्यमैथवयपरिपकारयां सम्भवकसंगो राजगृहपुष्पिनिधियम विहृति बेणुवने कलन्दक-निवापे। Many of the Avadānas in the Avadāna-Sātaka start with this very phrase. Some of the Avadānas start with a question to the Lord—विक्षर: संस्काराता: सर्वं संस्कारे हेतार्य बुद्धं भगवन्तं पुण्यनिति। Sometimes it also starts like thus:—बुद्धो भगवान् भावस्त्यं विहृति स्म जेतवनेन-नाविष्णुद्वारामे (or बेणुवने कलन्दकनिवापे)। Some of the Avadānas, such as Kunālāvadāna, Vītāsolavādāna, Asokāvadāna, Sudhanakumarāvadāna, Maitrakanyakāvadāna etc. have their own peculiar way of beginning the text. All the Avadānas, compiled in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā, start with some stanza praising the virtues of the Lord.

2. As regards the story of the present some story is told by either the Lord or any other person (in most of the cases it is the Lord who tells). In this section some special significant attribution of a person is mentioned.

3. Then the monks enquire the Lord what good deed that fellow had done in his previous life that he was gifted with that attribution? Then the Lord related the story of the previous life of that character and explained the deed by which he got such an attribution. In some of the Avadānas
there is no story of the past. Instead of it a prediction is given.¹

4. Then follows the identification of the characters.
5. And finally comes the moral of the story i.e.

The fruit of quite black deed is quite black, that of quite white is quite white and of mixed is mixed. Hence one should perform the white deeds only shunning out the black or mixed ones.

Some of the Avadānas betray the above-mentioned standard of the Avadānas. There we find so many episodes interwoven within the framework of one Avadāna. As in the Pāṃśupradānāvadāna the episode of Upagupta, Vāsavadattā, Māra, king Aśoka’s childhood, his cruelty in youth, the episode of Canḍa-Girīka and then Aśoka’s conversion into Dharmāśoka—all these incidents are stated in one Avadāna.

Linguistic peculiarities :

The Avadāna literature belongs to the Mūla-Sarvāstivāda school, the canons of which are found in Sanskrit. Generally this Sanskrit, adopted by this school, did not always conform to the rules of the Sanskrit Grammar and hence it is called Mixed Sanskrit or Hybrid Sanskrit. The Avadāna literature (only prose-portion)³ is said to be written in pure Sanskrit.⁴ But it is found that the Sanskrit grammar is not strictly followed by the authors of the Avadāna literature. Their

1. Speyer, J.S. Avadāna-Śataka p. VII.
2. Banerjee, A.C. Sarvāstivāda Literature P. 17. “The verse-portions are in Gāthā dialects—the Gāthā being cited by way of authority. The Same thing may be said of the other Mahāyāna works such as the Saddharmapuṇḍarīka, Suvarṇaprabhāsa and the like—the prose in correct Sanskrit and the Gāthā in mixed Sanskrit.”
3. ibid, p. 17. “The later texts now available of the Sarvāstivāda School such as the Divyāvadāna, Avadāna-Śataka, Abhidharmakośa-Vyākhyā and the like, are all written in pure Sanskrit.”
language "sins sometimes against the rules of classical Sanskrit"\textsuperscript{1} It is because of the fact that they bothered much for the meaning conveyed than for the formation of the language. This very fact is stressed by Dr. N. Dutt when he observes:—"It regards as well as disregards the elementary cannons of grammar, metre, and even vocabulary. A sweet melody seems to be its chief aim, and for this it is ready to sacrifice every other essential condition of a language,"\textsuperscript{2} The following are some instances of the linguistic peculiarities found in the Avadāna literature:—

\begin{enumerate}
\item Speyer, J.S. op. cit. p. XIII.
\item \textit{Gilgit Manuscripts} Vol. II p. VIII
\end{enumerate}
SAÑDHI

At places we find either of the two originally adjoining vowels to be lost in Sañdhi with or without compensatory lengthening of the remaining vowel. After a final vowel, an initial vowel is commonly dropped, but mostly in verses, where it could be called a matter of metre.

Loss of initial vowels in Sañdhi

Initial a dropped after final ā
देवगणा पि (Divyāvadāna p. 198.30)
पर्वता पि (Avadāna-Śatakā p. 235.1)

Initial ā dropped
रक्षेयर्षो for रक्षे यायर्ष (Divyāvadāna p. 256. 7)
O results from as (aḥ) plus u :—
परतोपर्ययः Divyāvadāna p. 479.27, 31)
अन्यतमोपासकः (Divyāvadāna p. 34. 11)

Final vowels which, in Sanskrit would be uncombinable (pragṛhya) may undergo combination with a following vowel

जायापतति (Divyāvadāna p. 159.32)
जायापती, (dual plus इति)

There are also some occurrences of sa, eṣa in which the final a is fused in Sañdhi with a following vowel :—
सोपुष्पः for स उपुष्पः: (Divyāvadāna p. 254,22)
एषोष्पः for एष अष्प: (Divyāvadāna p. 27.30)

Synthatic agreement between different case-forms :
Instrumental and Genitive (after comparatives)
स बुद्ध इत्यशुष्पतूवः शब्दं शूल्या सवं रोमकूप्वानि ब्राह्मणानि।
(Divyāvadāna p. 21/12)
Instrumental—accusative adverbial phrases:—
It has a very common adverbial phrase
which means from time to time. In Divyāvadāna also occurs a curious use of adverbial ablative plus accusative forms, apparently with intensive meaning i.e.

Genitive in predicate with forms of bhū.

Verbs of asking may take the genitive of the person questioned as well as of the thing asked about:—

Locative Singular:—

Special form of oblique case—

Personal Pronouns

Mama accusative singular:—

no as nominative plural:—

(Divyāvadāna p. 11/2)

(Divyāvadāna pp. 37/33; 6/28; 7/28)

(Divyāvadāna p. 113/17)

(Divyāvadāna p. 8/8)

(Divyāvadāna p. 41/5)

(Divyāvadāna p. 11/16)

(Divyāvadāna p. 260/24).

(Divyāvadāna p. 137/23).

(Divyāvadāna p. 240/5/)

(Divyāvadāna p. 11. 124/13)
Nominative singular masculine:—

स for स: (Divyāvadāna p. 17/4; 16/29, 25)
एषो for एष (Divyāvadāna p. 27/19).

Noun suffixes:
kā svārthe suffix is used in various shades of diminutive meanings:

भद्र का (Divyāvadāna p. 31/15, 23, 30),
स्त्रीलक्षणके: (Divyāvadāna p. 23/15) and
स्तनेत्वका (Divyāvadāna p. 23/21, 26, 32)

are affectionate diminutives in tone meaning thereby by 'good' kindly, affectionate, gentle.'

The pitying diminutive, associated with affection, but full of pitying force:—

दृष्टिसम (Divyāvadāna p. 53/3; 54/37)
स्युतिकृत (Divyāvadāna p. 55/21)
मुख्तिकृतम् (Divyāvadāna p. 109/6)
याबनक: (Divyāvadāna p. 200/3)
उत्प्रभूताण्डुक: कृś याबनको दुस्तिको स्तानक:
(Divyāvadāna p. 206. 26-27).

Compound:—

Dual dvandvas are often declined as plurals. Neuter singular dvandvas are sometimes used though composed of masculine and feminine nouns, and not necessarily meant collectively; plural adjectives may agree with them but a singular dvandva may also have the gender and inflection of the last component:—

चतुतस्कृत्तक: प्रादुर्मूल: (Divyāvadāna p. 14/1)
चतुतस्कृतिकार्यन प्रादुर्मूतानि (Divyāvadāna p. 14/7)
उच्चारणस्वयः (Divyāvadāna p. 120/14)

Person and Number

There is widespread confusion of person and number, usually Third person singular forms are used for any person and either number:—

अहम्स्य स्थानु (Divyāvadāna p. 69/6)
अहम्स्य भवेत (Divyāvadāna p. 154/16)
At some places feminine nouns are preceded by masculine modifiers, such as:

- तपस्यानवरीत (Divyāvadāna p. 137.16).
- तपस्यात्र भक्तिशिष्य (Divyāvadāna p. 138.13).
- वासवदत्त्या लोभाक्षणेन (Divyāvadāna p. 219.8)

**Tense:**

In the Divyāvadāna Dhvam is used in the second plural present, for dhve:

- लक्षजरत्र (Divyāvadāna p. 443/22)
- गृहपिथवर्त्र (Divyāvadāna p. 59.2f; 112.2; 26.14)

**Singular imperative itu:**

- प्रावरीतु (Divyāvadāna p. 133/24)

**The future is made by adding ḫya to thematic present stems:**

- कृतिपिथ (Divyāvadāna p. 131.25)
- मुखिष्यम: (Divyāvadāna p. 59.21, 28, 69)
- मोघिष्यति (Divyāvadāna p. 174.3)
- विरिष्यिष्यति (Divyāvadāna p. 170.26).

**The strong reduplicated stem dadhā:**

- अविध्वधालखरसति (Divyāvadāna p. 5/3, 21; 8/11)
- अविध्वधालखरे (Divyāvadāna p. 5/4, 22)
- अद्धार (Divyāvadāna p. 43/21)

**Present participle suffixes affixed to past participles:**

- प्रववन (Divyāvadāna p. 442/23)

- अना with thematic stems:—
  - ब्रजानो (Divyāvadāna p. 250.27)
  - एयान: (Divyāvadāna p. 473.27).

- Ṛta added to thematic present stems:—
  - विनिष्म (Divyāvadāna p. 0 10/4)
  - शुभिष्मित्त (Divyāvadāna p. 171/7)
  - व्याहिरिता (Divyāvadāna p. 254/30)
Spread of ta outside its Sanskrit bounds:

Despite the prevailing trend towards ita, we find a few cases of forms in ta which are not found in standard Sanskrit:

अभियथायतम् (Divyāvadāna p. 10/5)

Some participles show a strong form of the root before the suffix, where normal Sanskrit uses the weak form.

यष्ट for Sanskrit इष्ट (Divyāvadāna p. 260/22)

Gerunds

Gerunds in ‘am’

निरीक्षय (Divyāvadāna p. 267/3)

Gerunds in tvā and ya—

In Sanskrit tvā is used with simple roots while ya with compound roots. However, this distinction is less sharp in the Avadānas.

Examples of compound Gerunds in tvā:

प्रतिप्रेयसिलय (Divyāvadāna p. 147/31)
प्रवेशप्रियसिलय (Divyāvadāna p. 240/7)

Example of simple Gerunds in ya:

स्थाय (Divyāvadāna p. 490.14)

A special type of Gerund यष्ट which is perhaps a sanskritization of Pāli gahāya, is also found frequently in the Divyāvadāna pp. 103/2; 232/27; 240/11, 250/10; 251/19; 258/13 281/21).

The Infinitive suffix itum:

संस्कारिततम् (Divyāvadāna p. 129/5)
परागितिततम् (Divyāvadāna p. 176/25)
ब्रजतिततम् (Divyāvadāna p. 433/16)
मृतिततम् (Divyāvadāna p. 60/5)
म्लातिततम् (Divyāvadāna p. 483/8)
वृषभिततम् (Divyāvadāna p. 213/18)
सम्बाहिततम् (Divyāvadāna p. 222/27)

atum for itum:

विघितुम (Divyāvadāna p. 35.24)

Miscellaneous non-Sanskrit forms in tum:

उद्धितुम् (Divyāvadāna p. 488.17)


Voice:

Some miscellaneous irregularities regarding the Voice:

अर्द्धविश्राम (Divyavadāna p. 23.30)
अभ्यर्थीय (Divyavadāna p. 154.13)

Causatives in ayati:

The suffix aya, as a productive causative forming suffix, is added to the thematic present stem (minus final a):

निर्लेढ़र्वति (cause to sit) (Divyavadāna p. 183.2)

(Causative with long ā for ā in root-syllable):

विप्रादु (Divyavadāna p. 173.16)
उष्ण,पित: (Divyavadāna pp. 58.21; 304.4)

infix aya:

आयम (Divyavadāna p. 303.13; 47.30)
आयमत (Divyavadāna p. 458.27)
बिप्राहितत्वा (Divyavadāna p. 71.32)
प्रणमय (Divyavadāna p. 302.14)
(AvadānaŚataka P. 176.10)
वस्माधिम (Divyavadāna p. 131.16,18)
शास्यित्व (Divyavadāna p. 150.26)

Causatives with the non-causative meaning:

प्रतिनिधित्वस्म (to hear, give ear to) Divyavadāna p. 128.23

Causatives in āpayā:

इज्जतित: (Divyavadāna p. 158.6)
विवापिति (Divyavadāna p. 466.13)
प्रतिनिधित्वाधिनय (Divyavadāna p. 214.12)
विवापितः (Divyavadāna p. 123.2)
विवापिता (Divyavadāna p. 232.41)
विवापिति (Divyavadāna p. 249.28)
प्रतिनिधित (Divyavadāna p. 427.10)
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अत्तांबंपत्तेः (cause to be summoned) Divyāvadāna p. 200.7
निप्पासपपिपुलम् (Divyāvadāna p. 209. 23, 27, 30)
निरपासपिपुलिति (Divyāvadāda p. 209.32)

Formal causation in (ā) paya without causative meaning: —
परिनिर्बायेम् (May I enter complete nirvāṇa)
(Divyāvadāna p. 56.30)

Special use of bhū: —
यदा ब्रह्म—I have entered into the bathroom) Divyāvadāna p. 272.
(when I am entered into the bathroom) Divyāvadāna p. 272.
भविष्यतु कलू देवस्यात्यात् पश्चिमा जनपदा: परिपुष्टवत्तः
(After your majesty’s death, later people are going to ask)
(Divyāvadāna. p. 138. 16-17.
कथ्येतानि प्रवेशकानि भविष्यति।
(How will they get to enter). Divyāvadāna p. 153.29
The use of ma (which differs both formally and semantically from that of standard Sanskrit) in different senses: —

Prohibition: —

मा दात्यासि (Don’t give) Divyāvadāna p. 8.3.
मा प्रवेश्यासि (Don’t enter) Divyāvadāna p. 51.29.
मा महासमुद्रमचरित्यात्यतिति
Avadāna-Śataka p. 90.10
(don’t embark on the high sea)

Lest, in order that not clauses: —

मा अधिमेण राज्यं कार्यं, मा नरकपरायणों भविष्यसि
(don’t rule unjustly, lest you should become headed for hell)

Divyāvadāna p. 36.3

मैं कटिच्छद इष्टवा शासनेन्ध्रसां प्रवेशचतुर्यात्यतिति।
(lest someone, seeing him, should say unseemly things about the doctrine). Divyāvadāna p. 117.28

Fears for the future: —

देव, मा मया हुष्ट्यथ्?
(sir, hope I have not danced badly). Divyāvadāna p. 470.80
Questions
स्वागत श्रीणा, मासि तृणितो बुधुकितो वा?
(Welcome, Śroṇa., aren't you thirsty or hungry?)
Divyāvadāna p. 6.1; 7.1;

Similarly मा तृणितोजि, मा बुधुकितोजि?
Divyāvadāna p. 207.19

भया स्तुषामिहिता-
ब्रह्म, मा त्वं प्रगीतानि प्रहेणाकानि
महायत्वास्माकं लूभानि उपनामयि?
(I said to my daughter-in-law: Daughter-in-law, aren’t you eating the fine presents of food and giving me poor ones?)
Divyāvadāna p. 8.29-30.

राजा ग्राह—मा तावममापीच्छि घातपितुम्?
(don’t you mean to say you want to kill me too?)
Divyāvadāna p. 240.5.

मा तावत् तवैकम्कम्मय मरणभयात्तव राजंधिंग्राप्य ह्वस्य नोत्पन्नः?
(You don’t mean to say that through fear of death for you in one single life you, having obtained royal majesty, felt no joy?
Divyāvadāna p. 273.29-30.

Similarly Divyāvadāna p. 274.4

Some forms of verbs which are not known to exist in Standard Sanskrit:

| अम्भियजि | Divyāvadāna p. 154.13 |
| अर्द्धमाण | Divyāvadāna p. 23.30 |
| आरागवति | Divyāvadāna p. 107.21 |
| आरोपिवत्वा | Divyāvadāna p. 160.5 |
| आरोपिवाय | Divyāvadāna p. 79.31 |
| समस्मृयन्तु | Divyāvadāna p. 256.4 |
| इतिपितुन्तु | Divyāvadāna p. 114.27 |
| इतिच्याचित: | Divyāvadāna p. 158.6 |
| एवापि | Divyāvadāna p. 573.27 |
| अवृष्टियसि | Divyāvadāna p. 204.2, 6 |
| उपर्रीक्षिति | Divyāvadāna p. 136.10, 13 |
| प्रारम्भे | Divyāvadāna p. 90.26 |
(will succeed) Divyāvadāna p. 64.15
(to cause to be expelled)
Divyāvadāna p. 209.27, 30
Avadāna-Śataka p. 101.22
Divyāvadāna p. 132.4
Divyāvadāna p. 129.3
Divyāvadāna p. 310.25
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Divyāvadāna p. 290.4
Divyāvadāna p. 58.18

(being baked) Divyāvadāna p. 44.23
(tearing out) Divyāvadāna p. 270.10
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MORALS AND MOTIFS OF THE AVADĀNAS

The main moral of almost all the Avadānas is constituted in the following phrase:—

इति भिक्षव एकान्तकृष्णानामेकान्तकृष्णो विपाकः, एकान्तशुक्लानां कर्माणामेकान्तशुक्लो विपाकः, भ्यतिमिथ्वार्थ्यं व्यतिमिथ्य:। तस्माताहि भिक्षव एकान्तकृष्णानि कर्माण्यपाप्य भ्यतिमिथ्वार्थि च, एकान्तशुक्लेष्वेव कर्मस्वाभोगः। कर्मयः।

i.e. 'So, O monks, the fruit of quite black deed is quite black, that of quite white is quite white and that of mixed is mixed. Therefore, O monks, give up the black and the mixed deeds and take pleasure only in the quite white deeds.'

Thus in the Avadāna literature white deed i.e. good deed is recommended while black or mixed deed is disapproved. Not only in the Avadāna literature, but in the Brāhmaṇical sources also, the emphasis is laid on the importance of virtuous deeds. Manu¹ has established good conduct as the bestower of all the fruits which one aspires for. The Āpastamba opines that one can attain the highest bliss through the performance of some virtuous deed.²

The question arises as to what is this white, good or virtuous deed? A peep through the Avadāna literature puts one at the threshold of various incidents of good deeds.

1. Manuṣmṛti IV. 156, 158.
   ग्रामाराज्यते ह्यायुराचारावदीप्यता: ग्रज्ज:।
   ग्रामारघमक्ष्यमाचारो हत्यलक्षएम्।१५६॥
   सर्वक्षेत्रागाहो द्विय: सदाचारावदनः।
   अद्वद्याबोधामस्य ग्रहण वर्षायं जीवितः।१५७॥

2. Vide Ram Gopal. India of Vedic Kalpa-Sūtras, p. 451
Dāna—

In most of the cases it is Dāna, the act of giving, which is considered to be a good deed. The act of giving is emphasized in almost all the Avadānas. In the Nagarāvalambikāavādāna it is mentioned that a beggar woman was sent to heaven only because she had once donated food to Mahākaśyapa.¹ In the Supriyāvadāna, prince Supriya had to travel a long way in reaching Badāradvīpa where he could get precious stones and money which could satisfy all the needy ones.² On his way to Badāradvīpa he met some thieves. He went to the extent of donating all that he had to those thieves also.³

It should be made clear that it is only the willing donation that is always desired. The Lord would gladly accept a handful of Saktu (powdered cereals) from an ordinary Brāhmaṇa girl, but only after he knew the depth of her willingness to offer the same to him.⁴ He would not mind even if a rotten finger of the donor, suffering from leprosy, dropped in the food donated.⁵

Compassion—

Compassion for all creatures also falls in the category of good deeds and hence comprises one of the morals taught in the Avadāna literature. Maitrakanyaka is freed from the iron-wheel revolving round his head, when the feeling of compassion entered into his heart and when he started thinking in terms of the welfare of other creatures.⁶ Rūpāvatī, out of compassion, cuts out her breasts and feeds the hungry tigress.⁷

Respect for Motherhood:—

Respect for motherhood is also stressed upon in the

¹ *Divyāvadāna* VII. p. 52
² *Ibid.* VIII. p. 76
³ *Ibid.* VIII p. 61
⁴ *Ibid.* VII
⁶ *Ibid.* XXXVIII.
⁷ *Ibid.* XXXII
Avadāna Literature. Maitrakanyaka goes to hell as a punishment for having offended his mother. A glowing iron-wheel, which was cursed to revolve continuously for 66000 years, started spinning around his head. He would be spared only if another person, who had committed a similar sin, met him. Similarly Yāsodharā, when she was born as an Ābhīra girl, had cheated and gave her mother the heavier load to carry. As a result, she was punished to carry the pregnancy for full six years.

Equality of mankind:—The Avadāna literature reflects the view that there is no difference between one man and another. Their hair, ears, nose, hands, eyes, head, mouth, neck, nails, legs, stomach, back etc. are all alike. Animals, birds, insects, trees, cereals, flowers, fruits, stones etc. vary in quality but men do not. Hence they all are equal.

Refutation of false Pride:—The Avadāna literature stresses the futility of false pride. Aśoka taught Yāsas, who disliked the royal homage to the monks of low origin, by creating a situation in which he made him realise the uselessness of false pride.

Man—the maker of his own destiny:—The Avadāna literature regards man as the maker of his destiny. It does not put man on the mercy of some unknown hidden spirit, who shapes the destiny for man. Man himself is held responsible for his good or bad luck. The life which a man experiences at present is nothing but the result of some good or bad deed done by him in his previous life. Similarly, his future would be the fruit of his present actions. Thus he himself is responsible for the past, present and future. If he wishes for a joyous future he has to perform noble acts in the living present. He cannot.

1. Divyāvadāna XXXVIII
2. Avadāna Kalpalatā Pallava. 83 p. 484
3. Divyāvadāna XXXII
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. XXVII p. 242
expect any bright future if his present is steeped in the blackness of evil-deeds.

Ill-will discarded:—It is only the good-will which is recommended in the Avadāna literature. Any will, which intends to harm someone, is considered ill and hence discarded at the hands of the Avadāna literature. Māndhātā, the generous king was lucky to have all his wishes fulfilled. So much so that, ultimately he was offered half of the kingdom of heavens. One day the evil intention to be the sole king of undivided kingdom of heavens, by usurping the other half occurred in his mind and for this ill-will, he was dethroned from heaven.¹

**MOTIFS**

**Fruit of Past Deeds and Rebirth as a motif:**

In the Avadāna literature, as also in the collections of the Hindu tales, the psychic motif and literary device most frequently employed is the fruit of Past Deeds and Rebirth. The Avadāna stories deal with the theme of the fruits of human actions. They show how a man who did noble deed got rewarded and one who did not, got nothing of the kind.

As regards the importance and effectiveness of the Buddhist doctrine of The Fruit of Past Deeds and Rebirth as a Psychic motif and literary device, one finds that it proved to be a tool in the hands of the story-teller. An extensive use of this motif is made in the realm of Buddhist fiction, as well as in that of the Hindu fiction. It illustrated the fact that, just as good deeds lead to happiness, both here and hereafter, evil deeds lead to sorrow, pain and adversity in this life and after death to rebirth in one of the hells, in the animal kingdom, in the world of the ghosts, or in the world of the fallen deities. There is no forgiveness of sins; every evil deed must be wiped out with the blood and tears of the evil-doer. In the Nagarāvalambikāvadāna a beggar woman obtained rebirth in the

¹. *Divyāvadāna* XVII p. 138
Tuṣita heaven because of her noble act of offering food to the Lord.¹ Likewise Aśoka, by the performance of his previous births, obtained kingship in that life.² As a consequence of indulging in a noble wish of bearing pains for others, Maitrakanyaka got freed from the curse of carrying the revolving hot iron wheel around his head.³ Rūpāvatī was transformed into prince Rūpavān, because she cut off her breasts to satisfy the hungry tigress and thus saved the life of her cubs.⁴ Uttara’s mother became a Pretī because of her ignoble act of not offering food etc. to the honourable Lord and others.⁵

All these and so many such other instances suggest to the reader to perform good deeds and follow the path of righteousness.

The Act of Truth

The Pāli word for ‘Act of Truth’ is ‘Saccakiriya’.⁶ Its Sanskrit equivalent is ‘Satyakiriya’. In the Avadāna literature it is termed as Satyavacana.⁷ While introducing this motif, Mr. Burlingame states thus:—“An act of Truth is a formal declaration of fact, accompanied by a command or resolution or prayer that the purpose of the agent shall be accomplished.”⁸ Quoting anāgārika Dharmapāla the author further says, “Prayer to a god is not possible for a Buddhist; but he can make what is called a Saccakiriya, an appeal to Truth.” ‘If the work that I am doing is good, then let help come to me; and if the work is good, help will surely come.’⁹

1. Divyāavadāna VII
2. Ibid. XXVI
3. Ibid. XXXVIII
4. Ibid. XXXII
5. Ibid. XXXXVI
6. Law, B.C. India as described in Early texts of Buddhism and Jainism, p. 208. Saccakiriya means “the effective expression of the wish by an open declaration of the truth.
7. Divyāavadāna, p. 95
9. Ibid., p. 467.
The Jātakas, Mahāvastu, Tantrākhyāyikā, Hema-Canḍra's Parīṣṭaparvan, Mahābhārata, Rāmāyaṇa, Kathāsaritsāgara, Majjhima Nikāya, Divyāvadāna, Avadāna-Śataka and other Myths of the Buddhists alike, abound in with a lot of instances bearing this motif. Leaving other works aside, many such instances from the Avadāna literature, which bear this motif, can be recollected.

Prince Kuṇāla possessed very beautiful eyes. His stepmother Tiṣyarakāṣitā fell in love with him and extended her message of love which was rejected by Kuṇāla. Furious at his rejection, she revenged upon him by commanding an order in the name of king Aśoka that his eyes be plucked out. The order was carried out. But later on, when the king became aware of prince's blindness and intrigue of Tiṣyarakṣitā, which preceded his blindness, he threatened her of severe punishment. At this Kuṇāla requested the king not to punish the queen as the act of blinding has not displeased him. He concluded his request with the following Act of Truth "If it be true that I have ever been kindly disposed to my mother, if it be true that I myself plucked my eyes out, then may my eyes straightway be restored." Immediately his eyes, more beautiful than before, were restored.

King Prasenajit got furious over a false report that his brother Kāla had violated his ladies-chamber and as a punishment got his hands and feet cut off. Kāla, in the state of utter helplessness, called for the Lord's help. The Lord sent Ānanda to restore his hands and feet. He went to Kāla and placed his hands and feet in place, then he performed the following Act of Truth: "Of all living beings, whether without feet, or with two feet, or with many feet; whether incorporeal or corporeal; whether conscious or unconscious, or neither

1. Divyāvadāna, p. 270.

मनः प्रसन्न यदि मे जनन्यां
वेनोऽवते मे नयने स्वयं हि।
ततले सत्येन ममास्तु पति-
नेतृत्व य याक्तनेन सबः॥
conscious nor unconscious; of all these living beings the Tathāgata, the Holy One, the Supreme Buddha, is called the Chief of all the laws, unelaborated or elaborated, the law of Detachment is called the chief of all the orders or classes or companies or societies, the order of Disciples of the Tathāgata is called the Chief. By this Truth, by this utterance of Truth, may your body be made whole.”¹ Immediately Kāla’s body turned into a whole.

Rūpāvati (one of the previous existence of the future Buddha)² once saw a woman who, out of starvation, was ready to eat her new-born child. Seeing it, she pleaded the woman not to eat the child and let her buy something for her to eat and thus satisfy her hunger, but as the woman was intensely hungry and could not wait for even the shortest of while, so she cut off her own breasts and gave them to her for eating. When her husband came to know of that, he performed the following Act of Truth: ‘If it be true that so wonderful and marvellous a thing has never been seen or heard before, then may your breasts be restored.’³

When Rūpāvati cut her breasts off to feed a hungry woman, who was ready to eat her new-born baby, Indra, in

1. Divyāvadāna p. 95. “येकेरितु सत्यव भपवदा बांड्रा वा वंगूपदा वा गर्तिष्ठो वा रूपिष्ठो वा संखिष्ठो वा श्रंघिष्ठो वा नेवसंखिष्ठो वा नावसंखिष्ठो सम्बुधस्तेषां ब्रजवनामग्राह्यायिते। येकेरितु धर्म ग्रंथक्ता वा संक्त्ता वा, विरागो धर्मस्तेष्यमग्र ग्राह्यायिते। येकेरितु संघा वा गणां वा पुणां वा परस्दो वा साधवस्तेष्यमग्र ग्राह्यायिते। प्रत्येक सत्यव सत्यवचने तव शरीरस्य यथा-पौराणर्य श्याल्।”

2. Ibid. p. 312/25 श्रां सैन कालेन सैन सत्यव रुपावती नाम स्त्री ब्रजूकू। It is a peculiar information given in the Avadāna Literature as we rarely find such an instance in the Buddhist Scriptures where the Buddha is shown taking birth as a woman.

3. Ibid. p. 308. “पेनायणं दित्त: सत्यव सत्यवचने भ्रमेवरुप आस्थायद्वृत्तो धर्मो न कवचित्त्र छट्टो वा क्रृतो वा, तेन सत्यव सत्यवचने उनो तव स्तनो यथा पौराण्य प्रातुरंवतामु॥
order to test the genuineness of her willingness for that sacrifice, 
went to her in disguise of a Brähmana and asked her, "Is it 
true that you cut your breasts for the sake of saving 
the life of a child?" "Yes it is true", she replied. He again 
asked whether she felt sorry for that sacrifice, which she 
committed to save the child, "No, never". "But who will 
believe you?", was the eager question of Indra. She then 
proved the genuineness of her willingness for sacrifice by 
making an Act of Truth. She pronounced the Truth thus:— 
"If it be true that neither before nor after the act did I feel 
sorry for; if it be true that I made this sacrifice not for the 
sake of receiving some worldly enjoyments, not for the sake of 
attaining Buddhahood; so that I may subdue those who are 
not subdued, emancipate those who are not emancipated, 
console those who remain unconsolcd, to help those who have 
not attained Nirvāṇa in their attainment of Nirvāṇa; if all these 
be true, May I cease to be woman and become a man." So 
saying, by her Act of Truth, she immediately got transformed 
into a man, named Rūpavān.

Once Candraprabha (in one of the existences of the Future 
Buddha) happened to see a tigress who, out of starvation, was 
ready to eat her own cub. He called upon various deities and 
made an Act of Truth by pronouncing thus:—

"I am performing this sacrifice, this great sacrifice by my 
own self, not for the sake of some dominion, not for the sake

1. Divyāvadāna p. 309.

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<th>1. Divyavadana p. 309.</th>
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<tr>
<td>येन सत्येन ब्रह्मानु सत्यवचनेनोभि सत्नी परित्यागमीति परित्यजन्त्याः</td>
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<td>परित्याय वा नामूललोकवाण्डायत्वम्, नामूललोकवाण्डयि विप्रतिसारः, ग्रन्धि</td>
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<td>च ब्रह्मानु येन सत्येन भया दाराक्ष्यायमित्वे सत्नी परित्यक्ती, न</td>
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<td>राज्यार्थि न भोमार्थि न स्वार्थि न शक्तार्थि न राजां चक्रवर्तिनाः</td>
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<td>विधायक नान्यान्त्रानु तत्त्वम् समयक्षमभूतिमसभास्य ब्रह्मदातान दर्षमयम्,</td>
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<td>श्रमुक्तानु मोचयेयम्, भ्रातास्ताताः श्रास्तरस्येयम् अस्यानिवृत्तानु तानु नरिवर्षियेयम्,</td>
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<td>तेन सत्येन सत्यवचनेन मम श्रीनिधिभाष्याय पुरुषेन्द्रियं प्रात्जुम्भेतु ।</td>
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<td>तस्यादेशस्मिन्नेव क्षेषे श्रीनिधिभाष्यात्महिंतमू, पुरुषेन्द्रियं प्रात्जुम्भेतु ।</td>
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of worldly enjoyments, not for the sake of heaven, not for the sake of becoming Indra or a Universal Monarch, but only that I might attain Supreme Enlightenment, Buddhahood; thereby to subdue the unsubdued, to emancipate the unemancipated, to console the unconsolcd, to enable them that have not attained Nirvāṇa to attain Nirvāṇa; If all this be true, then let not my act of sacrifice be futile."¹ So saying he cut off his throat and gave his body to the hungry tigress By this Act of Truth he attained the Supreme state of Buddhahood.

Prakṛti, a Mātaṅga girl, fell deeply in love with Ānanda and declared her love for him to her mother. Her mother, a powerful witch, called Ānanda through her charm and made arrangement for his marriage with her daughter. Spelled Ānand cried aloud, "Oh, I am in a great trouble and still the Lord is not paying attention to me". The Lord, then, freed Ānanda by performing an Act of Truth pronouncing thus:— 'Let all the living beings be well-established, freed from troubles and live happily. There is a lake—clear, pure and untroubled, where all the troubles get calmed and all the gods and hosts of Siddha Yogins bow to that. If these my words be true, Let Ānanda be free from all troubles.'² By this Act of

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1. Divyāvadāna p. 312

2. Ibid. p. 315.
Truth of the Lord, he got freed and immediately returned to his Vihāra.

King Druma, in order to test Sudhana's love for his daughter Manoharā, placed before Prince Sudhana a thousand kinnaris and asked him to identify her. Sudhana then performed the following Act of Truth: "If it be true that you, who stand here, are Manoharā, my beloved and daughter of king Druma, then please O Manoharā, step forward within no time." Manoharā immediately stepped forward.

Once a dispute arose between a sectarian and a follower of Buddha about the superiority of their leaders i.e. Pūrṇa etc. and the Buddha. This dispute was decided by performing an Act of Truth. First the sectarian performed the Act of Truth by saying: If it be true that these six teachers including Pūrṇa are superior to all others in the world, then let these flowers, this incense and this water go to them." Within no time the flowers fell on the earth, the fire in the incense went off, and the water disappeared in the ground. The Sectarian had to cut a sorry figure. Then the follower of Buddha performed the Act of Truth by pronouncing thus: "If it be true that the Buddha is supreme of all living beings, then let these flowers, this incense, and this water go to him." Immediately the flowers, arranged in a line like swans, started moving towards

1. Divyāvadāna. p. 299.
2. Avadāna-Śataka p. 23
3. Ibid.
Jetavana, the incense took the shape of clouds and water took the form of a stick of Vaiḍūrya (Spangles of Lapis lazuli). All these by themselves went to the Lord. Seeing this all the spectators bowed to the Lord.

A hare, who had developed filial affection for a sage and hence did not like the idea of his leaving that forest for want of food, threw itself into the fire and asked him to eat flesh and thus save his life in the famine due to no rainfall. The sage was ready to live there but he did not like the idea of saving his own life by eating the flesh of that affectionate hare. He took resort to the Act of Truth by pronouncing thus:—“Since I came to the forest, my heart has taken delight in solitude. By the power of this truth, may Indra now send down rain.” No sooner had he uttered these words, the rain began to fall and good crops of fruits, roots and herbs flourished. As a consequence to this, the sage dropped his idea of leaving that forest.

The Act of Truth has not only been used in positive direction but at places it has also been misused to deceive. The wicked ministers of king Śikhandin, in order to defame the Arhatas Tīṣya and Puṣya, whose relics were preserved in neighbouring stupas, as imposters, brought two kittens, dug holes under both of the two Stūpas for them to live in and taught them to perform a trick when pronounced a mock Act of Truth. Before Śikhandin the ministers pronounced thus:—“Tīṣya and Puṣya! If it be true that throughout your life you had been playing tricks and as a punishment for your false tricks, you are reborn in inferior state of existence as kittens, then let each of you take his share of meat and go around his own stūpa and into his own hole.”

1. *Avadāna-Sataka* p. 95

2. *Divyāvadāna*, p. 483

1. अवादन-सताका p. 95

2. दिव्यावादन, p. 483
The kittens acted according to their training and thus the king was deceived.

The Avadāna-Śataka :

Of all the available Avadānas Avadāna-Śataka is stated to be the oldest. According to Wessillief, this book belongs to the first preaching period of Śākyamuni, indicating a high antiquity of the work.¹ It cannot be dated after the 3rd century A.D. because it was translated into Chinese in the first half of the third century A.D., nor can it be dated before the 1st century A.D. because in one of the Avadānas there is the mention of Dīnāra as a coin.² History tells us that ‘Dīnāra’ as a gold-coin was introduced in India in the 1st century A.D.³ Therefore it can be said that the Avadāna-Śataka, in which the word Dīnāra is mentioned for a gold-coin, has been composed somewhere either in later half of the 1st century A.D., or in the first half of the 2nd century A.D. Dr. Haradayal⁴ and Dr. M.A. Mahendale⁵ have placed it in the second century A.D.

“The character of the narratives, and the fact that the stories of the present contain passages from a Parinirvāṇa-Śūtra and other Śūtras of the Sanskrit Canon of the Sarvāstivādins, are sufficient evidence that this work belongs to the Hīnayāna. Though Buddha-worship plays a prominent part in the legends, there is no trace of the Bodhisattva cult

1. Speyer, J S. op. cit. p. X
2. Avadāna-Śataka LXXXII—“पाणिद्वये चास्य लक्षणाहलं कर्म-विपक्षं दीनाराद्वयम्”
3. S: vell : / f r i t i r f r 1 : Society, London-1904 p. 616 “The use of the Roman word denarius, in its form of dinār, in early inscriptions is well known...introduced into India as early as the 1st century A.D. it remained as a word in common use for several years.”
5. Vide, Majumdar, R C. History and Culture of Indian people II p 268.
and of Mahāyānistic mythology.”

Dr. Haradayal holds that the first stories are Mahāyānic in spirit; the rest belong to the Hinayāna.

The stories in the Avadāna-Śataka are divided into ten sections (Daśaka), each consisting of ten stories. Unfortunately the 5th story is not found in the original Sanskrit, hence the whole book comprises of 99 stories instead of 100 which the very word ‘Śataka’ in the title denotes.

The first section, which consists of nine Avadānas in all because the fifth one is missing, deals with the prophecies of the future Buddhas :-viz. Pūrṇabhadra, Yaśomatī, Nanda entitled Kusīda), Sārthavāha, Soma—which is missing, Vaḍika, a gardener (entitled Padma), Pañcāla (entitled Pañcāla), an Upāsaka (entitled Dhūpa) and a Śreṣṭhī (entitled Rājā).

The above mentioned did serve the Lord in one way or the other. Hence the Lord prophesied about their attainment of future Buddhahood. The 3rd section, comprising of the Avadānas from number 21 to 30, also deals with the attainment of Pratyeka Buddhahood. The names of the Avadānas of this group are Candana, Padma, Cakra, Daśasirā, Sukṣmatvak, Śilaprabha, Nāvika, Gandhamādana, Nirmala and Valgusvarā.

The 2nd section deals with the Avadānas of the former existences of the Buddha. No doubt, the tale of the present is the main theme, yet the story dealing with the former existence is also not absent. The names of the Avadānas of this group are Nāvikā, Stambha, Snātra, Īti, Prātiḥārya, Pañcabārṣika, Stuti, Varada, Kāśikavastra and Divyabhojana.

The fourth section also deals with the Avadānas concerning the former existences of the Buddha. But here the tale, dealing with the former existence predominates over the tale of the present. It resembles more to a Jātaka than an Avadāna.


because it is in the Jātakas that Bodhisattva is always either the hero or one of the characters occurring in the story. The names of the Avadānas of this section are Padmaka, Kavaḍa, Dharmapāla, Śibi, Surūpa, Maitrakanyaka, Śaśa, Dharmagāveśi, Amāthapinḍada, and Subhadra.

The 5th section (from 41st to 50th) deals with the stories of the Pretas. These Pretas are shown to be severely suffering because they did not follow the path of charity with sincerity. The names of the Avadānas, under this section, are Guḍaśālā, Bhakta, Pāṇīya, Varcaghata, Maudgalyāyana, Uttara, Jātyandhā, Śreṣṭhī, Putrā and Jāmbāla.

The 6th section deals with the stories of the beings who obtained heaven for their pious acts: The stories relate to a black serpent who came in contact with the Lord; a child named Candra, who used to go to the Lord in the Jetagrove and listened to the discourses of the Lord; a girl who donated flowers to the Lord; a parrot who invited the Lord to stay with him in the Jungle for one night and served him hospitably; a messenger who offered a chariot to the Lord; a naughty buffalow whom the Lord made to bow at his feet, a Devaputra, named Upoṣadhā, who listened to the religious discourses of the Lord, and the 500 swans, who were presented by the king of Paṅcāla to Prasenajit, obtained heaven because they had lived with the Lord and listened to his discourses. The titles of the Avadānas, comprised in this section, are as follows: - Kṛṣṇasarpa, Candra, Sāla, Śrīmatī, Vstra, Suka, Dāta, Mahiṣa, Upoṣadh, and Haṁsā.

The 7th section comprises of the stories of the Śākya heroes, who, due to the merit of some pious acts, became Arhats. The heroes in the stories are Suvarṇābha, Sugandhi, Vapuśmān, Balavān, Priya, Padmākṣa. Dundubhisvara, a child with swollen veins (entitled Putrā), Śūrya and Viditayaśā (entitled Mallapatākā).

The eighth section deals with the stories in which the women characters attained Arhathood: The characters involved are those of Suprabhā, Supriyā, Śuklā, Somā, Kuvalayā, Kāśikasundarī, Muktā Kacāṅgalā, Kṣemā, and Virūpā.
The 9th section also deals with the stories of the attainment of Arhathood. But the stories relate to men. The characters involved are Samudra, Sumana, Hiraṇyapāni, Tripiṭa, Yaśomitra, Aupapāduka, Šobhita, Kapphiṇa, Bhadrika and Rāṣṭrapāla. The last one corresponds partly to the Raṭṭhapāla-Sutta of the Majjhima-nikāya, and partly to the Raṭṭhapāla Apadāna.¹

The tenth and the last section deals with the stories that show the black fruits of black deeds, done in previous lives. In these stories Subhūti, Sthavira, Hastaka, Lekuṇḍika, Saṃśāra, Guptika, Virūpa, Gaṅgika, Dirghanakha and Sundara (Avadāna entitled Saṅgīti); are stated to have become Arhats.

Some of the Avadānas are historical in character. They bear the mention of some historical characters and episodes. Reference is made of Śrīmaṭi, the queen of Bimbisāra, who refused to abide by the prohibitory injunction of Ajātaśatru to pay homage to the relics of the Buddha. She attained heaven after she was killed by the order of king as a punishment for disobedience.² The conflict between the kings of Uttarapaścāla and Daksinapaścāla is also mentioned.³ The devotion of Bimbisāra towards the Lord, the Saṅgha and the Dharma is reflected in the 56th story.⁴ The name of king Prasenajit occurs at so many places. There is the mention of a messenger, sent by Prasenajit to the Lord, inviting him to visit Śravasti.⁵ Once a Brāhmaṇa stopped the Lord on the way for not paying 500 gold coins (पुराण). Prasenajit offered to make the payment but the Lord said ‘Not you, but someone else has to pay the same, and did not accept the same. Then Anāthapindada made the payment and thus the Lord got rid of that Brāhmaṇa.⁶ It is also

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2. Avadāna-Śataka p. 20
3. Ibid. p. 20
4. Ibid. p. 142
5. Ibid. p. 145
6. Ibid. p. 100
mentioned that before the birth of the Lord, king Prasenajit used to worship other gods. But when the Lord came into existence, Prasenajit started worshipping the Lord. The conflict of Prasenajit and Ajātaśatru is also referred to in the 10th story Ajātaśatru, instigated by Devadatta, killed his father Bimbisāra and throned himself as the king. This historical fact is also referred to in the Prātiḥārya Avadāna. Ajātaśatru’s non-devotion to the Lord is reflected in the 16th Avadāna, where it is said that, Ajātaśatru, with the suggestion of Devadatta, proclaimed the prohibitory order that no one in Rājagṛha should go to the Lord nor any one should serve the Lord with food etc.

These stories are, no doubt historical in character. But they cannot be accepted as true historical facts because when historical events enter the domain of literature, they become legendary.

The Divyāvadāna

The origin of the Divyāvadāna is not known, and various authorities hold different opinions about the same. M. Huber held the view that 18 Avadānas of the Divyāvadāna were found in Chinese (Mūla) Sarvāstivāda Vinaya. A.C. Banerjee held that out of the 38 Avadānas, included in the Divyāvadāna, the following twenty had their counterparts in the Dulva (Tibetan Vinaya):—

1. Koṭikarna
2. Pārṇa
3. Maitreya
4. Brāhmaṇadārikā
5. Stutibrāhmaṇa
6. Indrabrāhmaṇa

1. Avadāna-Śataka p. 18
2. Ibid. p. 26
3. Ibid. p. 38
4. Ibid. p. 40
5. Speyer, J.S. op. cit. p. IX
7. Nagarāvalambikā 
8. Menḍhaka (1) 
9. Menḍhaka (2) 
10. Prātiḥāryasūtra 
11. Svāgata 
12. Māndhātā 
13. Sahasodgata 
14. Saṅgharaksīta 
15. Nāgakumāra 
16. Sudhanakumāra 
17. Toyikāmaha 
18. Rūpāvatī 
19. Guḍapakṣa 
20. Rudrayaṇa.

Sylvain Levi argued that 29 out of 38 Avadānas of the Divyāvadāna were borrowed from Sanskrit Vinayas, the originals of which are lost.¹

The following twelve Avadānas of the Divyāvadāna are also found in the Vinaya texts of Gilgit Mss., edited by N. Dutt:—

1. Koṭikarṇāvadāna 
2. Maitreyāvadāna 
3. Indrabrāhmaṇāvadāna 
4. Nagarāvalambikāvadāna 
5. Mendhakagṛhpativibhūtipariccheda 
6. Menḍhakāvadāna 
7. Māndhātāvadāna (partly found in the Madhyama-māgama) 
8. Saṅgharaksītāvadāna 
9. Saṅgharaksītāvadānasya ṣeṣa 
10. Pāṃśupradānāvadāna 
11. Sudhanakumārāvadāna 
12. Toyikāmahāvadāna

Winternitz holds that the four Avadānas dealing with the person of the great king Aṣoka i.e. Pāṃśupradāna, Kuṇālāva-

¹. Speyer, J.S. op. cit. p. IX
dāna and Viśokāvadāna, are based upon an ancient “Book of king Asoka”. This book probably originated in Mathurā between 150 and 50 B.C., but is no longer extant in its original form. The stories of Māra and Upagupta, Yasas and the Gift of the half Āmalaka are borrowed from the Śutrālakāra of Āsvaghoṣa.

It seems that the stories originated from different sources at different times and have been compiled into the Divyāvadāna.

Though the author of the Divyāvadāna is not known, yet there is little doubt that the stories, compiled under the heading of the Divyāvadāna, were not written by one author. The stories were written by various authors.

Many stereotype phrases occurring in the Avadāna-Sataka, are also found in the Divyāvadāna almost verbatim. And, since the Avadāna Śataka is hailed to be the oldest of all the Avadānas, therefore, it may be concluded that the Divyāvadāna is a later work. The date of the Avadāna-Śataka is fixed as the 1st century A.D., so the date of the Divyāvadāna cannot be before that. Thus the 1st century A.D. becomes one limit. Also, since one of its important legends viz., the Śārdūla-kārnāvadāna, was translated into Chinese in 265 A.D. Therefore work must be in existence before that date. The work may approximately be dated in the later of the 2nd century A.D. or in the beginning of the 3rd century A.D. Dr. Hardayal opines that “the oldest portions date from the second century B.C., the final redaction may be assigned to the sixth century

4. Majumdar, R.C. *History and Culture of Indian people* II M.A. Mahendale states thus, “The Divyāvadāna too, may have belonged to the same period as that of the Avadāna-Śataka.”
A.D.” M. Winternitz has placed it in the third century A.D.\(^2\) Thus the Divyāvadāna may be taken as a compilation work beginning from the late 2nd century A.D. or early 3rd Century A.D.

“Though it begins with the Mahāyānistic benediction ‘Om, honour to all the exalted Buddhas and Bodhisattvas’, and contains just a few obviously later additions in the spirit of the Mahāyāna, as a whole it decidedly belongs to the Hinayāna school.”\(^3\)

There are 38 chapters in the Divyāvadāna. Two of these do not refer to any legend. The Prātiñhāryaśāstra deals with the miracles shown by the lord at Śrāvasti whereas Dānādhikara-ṇamahāyānaśāstra deals with 37 ways of donation. As the word ‘Sūtra’ occurs in the titles of both of these, so it can be gathered that these two are extracts from some old Sūtras, belonging to the Mahāyāna cult. The rest of the work may be regarded as Avadānas. These Avadānas refer to the aspirations for the attainment of Buddhahood by relating the past, present and future lives of the individuals.

As regards the Literary qualities of the Avadānas, compiled in the Divyāvadāna, P.L Vaidya observes, “The literary qualities of these Avadānas vary considerably, and contain elements of old tales in Purāṇa style, tales from the sacred literature, tales modelled on classical style with considerable dramatic element as in No. 26, tales in semi-classical style as in No 22, and tales in purely classical style as in No 38.”\(^4\)

The composition of the work, no doubt, is not clear. Avadānas collected here are disconnected. No particular principle of arrangement seems to have been followed. The story of Saṅgharaksita is given in two parts without any justi-

2. Ibid.
4. Divyāvadāna 1. X
planation and that too, is not arranged in continuation. First part is contained in No. 23 and second in No. 25. In between No. 24 comes as a break between the two which very oddly disrupts the continuity of the sequence, so essentially desired in story-literature. The Avadāna relating to Mendhaka also is given in two parts without any justification. The Dānādhi-karaṇamahāyāna Sūtra is styled as Mahāyāna Sūtra. It does not relate any story. It simply mentions 37 kinds of gifts which one should take recourse to for attaining various prizes. It seems quite out of place in this compilation of the Avadānas.

The style of language employed is not uniform. Most of the portion is written in simple Sanskrit prose style, interspersed here and there by Gāthās. Of course, there are also certain pieces which are ornated with long compounds and can very aptly be stated as the representatives of genuine literary style. Examples of each one of the two above-mentioned styles are given below:

I. Simple Sanskrit prose:
हस्तिन: क्रोशति, प्रश्ना हृदयते, क्रयमा गर्जिति etc. (Divyāvadāna p. 229)

II. Ornated with long compounds:
ग्राम मैत्रकन्यको बोविनियत्वो विबिसिहिरायतनप्रबृतोपवनगुरसरित-डागारामरमणीयतराननकनगणणगणमणकर्त्तात्रायादीनुविचरसू कमेसा समुद्रतीरं सम्राभ्य सज्जीकूटयानपत्रो मुजगपतिवदनविसृवतवसनचतुरबलविल्लितविपुल-विमलवलिमक्षेत्रयाकिर्यानिकरस्विरस्वायांचराय्युज्ज भारायर्जितोमिनालाजलमुरसप्तसमसुपरसुरसेवकरोदस्तुरित्युतवहिविशालीक्रारलकाभतनम-वनिलीनिरापीध रशिकरपराहुलजलोझ्युज्जतरकझ्झूरीछ मुददबत्तार।
(Divyāvadāna p. 499).

Some of the prose-passages abound in poetical-beauty. Their reading gives the same type of joy as we gather from reading some poem. One such prose-piece is given below:

ग्राम मैत्रकन्यको बोविनियत्वातासमप्त्सरसं हितमपी वाक्यमहितमिवाववासा तिरस्कृत्य तेनौ दक्षिणेन पश्च गण्यात् ददल्यां महानलप्रचंदित्वक्रजुष्टतुन्तुहरि-
M. Winternitz considers all the four Avadānas, centering around the person of king Aśoka, as very valuable from the literary standpoint. The dramatic sequence of Upagupta and Māra followed by the conversion of Māra is in language, style and metre, one of the best productions of ornate poetry.

The element of sentiments too is not left untouched at the hands of Avadāna-writers. The touching story of Kuṇāla bubbles with the element of pathos. The wailings of separated Sudhana for Manoharā present a very intense situation of separation in love. His wailings remind us of those of Pururavas for his beloved Urvāśī in the Vikramorvaśīya of Kālidāsa.

Some of the characters, mentioned in the Divyāvadāna, leave unforgettable impressions on the minds of the readers. Can any one ever forget the householder Subhadrā who killed his pregnant wife by employing forced pressings upon her womb? The manliness of Supriya, reflected in the reference of his successful voyage to Badaradvāpa, can be compared with that of any hero, in the world-literature. Nevertheless, who can forget the Cāṇḍāla-girl Prakṛiti, who was so much obsessed by the magnetic spell of Ānanda’s personality that she started following him from door to door. Her blind love for him was so intense that she easily chose to become a nun for him. Reference of such a blindly devoted heroine is not very common in the literary world.

Though nothing definite can be said about any appreciable interest of the composers of Avadānas in the study of poetic figures and meters, yet a few of them do appear in the Divyāvadāna. Some examples of such poetic figures and meters are cited below:

2. Sudhanakumāravadāna.
Poetic figures:

परिक्षय पर्यावरण गता: Divyavadana p. 429
निदानं निदाय

उपमा—

रिर्द्ध समुपाश्च स तन्मुहुः
लोकान्तरस्य: सतिलाग्राग्न:।
निरीक्ष्मार्कस्य जनस्य मधे

नमस्तवं हंस इत्वोपपत्ति ॥२७॥ (Divyavadana p. 238)
हरिलूलं इव नये
पर्वततोरसन्निभः (Divyavadana p. 4)
सूक्ष्मश्रवमपुः (Divyavadana p. 4)
हस्तविधम पञ्चमम् (Divyavadana p. 193)
मूलनिवृतं इव द्रुम: (Divyavadana p. 193)

मालोपमा:—

ग्रथ चतुर्ब्राम्भ देवकन्या विणिविव लवलाभ:। सत्यसम्पन्न: इव कर्षक:।
शूर इव विजतसप्रामाण:। सर्वे रोगपरिमुक्तं इवावतुर:।..................।

(Divyavadana p. 471)

रूपक:—

दानोदकमहतीयं शीलशीलचुमिमले।
क्षमागृहिष्किताच्छे वीर्यागाधप्रावहं। ||४५॥

(Divyavadana p. 412)

ध्यानस्तिमित्वमम्मोऽरे प्रज्ञाप्रवेश: बोध:।
तस्मिन् बोधिमहातीविष्टवा बोधिपुरोत्तुकः। ||४५॥

(Divyavadana p. 512)

विशतितिशिक्षरसमुदंत सत्कायदृष्टिदैः स्मारवज्जेः
भिवा स्तोतापसिफलं साक्षात्कृतम्॥

(Divyavadana p. 467)

उल्लेखा—

लवणजलनिवासिनी ततो वा
नगरनिगममणिवा सशीला।
मुच्छरएनिपीहिता च भूमी
पवनवलाभिलेव यानपावम् ॥५६॥

(Divyavadana p. 229)
प्रपन्हूति:—

न लं नरे नापि च नारिका लं
शमशृणि च ते नानित न च स्तनी तव ।
भन्न्वरोपिसि न च चक्रवाकः
एवं भवानु वाताहो निरूप्यते ॥९५॥

(Divyavadāna p. 102)

स्वभाविकित:—

एषा खलु शीता पुष्करिणी
नलिनी च विराजित तोयधारा ।
शमशृणि च हीनास्तपुष्प
तवस्मां ननु पश्यसि पुष्करिणीम् ॥९४॥

(Divyavadāna p. 102)

एते पयोदा बिनदन्त्यतोय
जलार्ध्या: शोकमधः ब्रजनित।
भ्रोरिवाम्भसि च बालसमीरागस्ता
वाता: प्रवात्ति च खरा रजसा बिनिश्चाय: ॥९४॥

(Divyavadāna p. 199)

एते दाड़िमपुष्क्रलोहितस्वाभा: प्रोमुखकोलाहला
हसादशितस्तथापितविरसा: शालामुगा निर्माया:।
सप्ताने भीमविषानस्फुरुष्वच्याकारालस्पुतनान्
हराय पारितोले: प्रयात्ति विवशा: फूलकरभी: पुन: ॥९५॥

(Divyavadāna p. 502)

रम्भे कुकुमशाविनामविरल्लच्चाकुष्माण्डे
मूले कोमलनीलाशाण्डवित प्रवक्षकुषपोषकरे ।
वंशीतलर: संगीतमधुर: प्रक्षेदसम्पादिविषः
संगीताहितंततस: प्रमुदिता गायन्यनी किंतरा: ॥९५॥

(Divyavadāna p. 502)

Meters

इलोक—

न प्रथमन्विति कर्माणि कक्ष्णकोटिशतैरपि
सामप्री प्राप्य कालं च फलित खलु देहिनाम् ॥७०॥

(Divyavadāna p. 491)
Morals and Motifs of the Avadānas

(Rivyāvadāna p. 494)

Deva:—

भूतानां दुस्सृष्टिनां विनिपातानि न भूते॥२॥

(Rivyāvadāna p. 493)

(Divyāvadāna p. 493)

(Divyāvadāna p. 43)

(Divyāvadāna p. 493)
मन्दाकान्ता:—
यस्मिन्न यस्मिन्तनयसरसि स्वच्छंत्यूषामिनुयुण्यं
बने (जाते) वृद्धं: समुदितमहाविसलक्षणमुजस्य ।
तत्तत्त्वम प्रवलविरं स्वाति तीक्ष्यांशुमालः
शोऽप्य मथे रविरिव जलं भागवेयाक्षिबिहम् ॥५॥

(Divyāvadāna p. 493)

मालिनी—
विकारपरमां ते बोधयामि प्रसिद्धैं
स्वमपि च कुरु तावदि सम्प्रसिद्धैं कदाचित् ।
यदि भवति नुसरते कन्याकामान तस्य
सकलजनपदेशरस्तु व्यापयस्व प्रसिद्धै ॥५॥

(Divyāvadāna p. 494)

प्रहर्षिणी—
तत्त्रां स्तुमधिगम्य धीर बुद्धवाय
श्रोतुः अभि जितेन्त्र कालसितानाम ।
धीराभिमुनिनः श्रवाभिभृत्तमानि-
स्तपनं व्यपयं संशयं शुभामि: ॥५॥

(Divyāvadāna p. 42)

बंशस्य—
प्राप्येव हि स्वादृतामिधायिनी
ममेह जित्यांशच सत्तवाविता ।
तदेवमेत्तन्त्व यथा हि ब्रह्मणसान
तथागतोस्मीत्तवगतिमंहसिः ॥५॥

(Divyāvadāna p. 44)
PART II
HISTORY AS DEPICTED IN THE AVADĀNAS

Some of the Avadānas deal with historical personages. Though they do not supply us with real biographies or history, yet they do contain some valuable historical facts in the form of anecdotes. A deeper and closer study of this literature yields many informations of historical significance. A brief account of the same is given below.

Prasenajit, king of Kośala, an ardent follower of the Buddha, loved and admired the Lord and his Śākya clan so much that he asked for a daughter of a Śākya chief to take as his wife. The Śākyas did not want to give their daughter to Prasenajit as they were very proud of their higher lineage. But at the same time they were not powerful enough to turn down his request openly. Hence they played a trick and gave one of their slave-woman's daughter as a Śākyan princess to Prasenajit for marriage. A son named Virūḍhaka, was born of this marriage. Once when Virūḍhaka, went to his maternal grand-father, he came to know the fact of his mother's actual identity Virūḍhaka, out of disgust for their trick, took a revenge upon the Śākyas by invading the Śākyan country and massacred the people of the Śākya clan ruthlessly. He also usurped the throne of his father Prasenjīt and became the king. King Prasenjīt had to take shelter in Rājagṛha. He could not approach Ajātaśatru because he died outside the gates of the city.¹

The Divyāvadāna presents Aśoka as a cruel king. This fact of his being cruel during his young age is admitted by him also in one of his rock edicts (Rock Edict xiii, found in Kalāi District Dehradun, U.P.) There it is stated: ‘The country of Kaliṅga was conquered when king Priyadarśin, the Beloved of the gods, had been anointed eight years: One hundred and fifty thousand were captured from there. One hundred

¹. Divyāvadāna XIX
thousand were killed and many times as many died as the consequence of burning and sacking. Even one hundredth or one thousandth part of those who were slain or captured in Kaliṅga is today considered regrettable by the Beloved of gods. Nay, if any one does him wrong, the Beloved of the gods must bear all that can be borne. It is further stated in the Avadānas that it was after undertaking a fratricidal war that he could attain the throne. He did punish his five hundred ministers for disobedience by beheading them all. He burnt alive his five hundred queens for the simple reason of their act of burning a tree bearing the name of Aśoka.

These anecdotes cannot be taken word for word as historically true because these anecdotes form part of a story and a story must be read as a story and not as history. We are prone to smell some exaggeration in these descriptions which depict his cruelty because we should never forget the fact that these stories are coloured with religious propaganda. They wanted to show to their audience that even the most cruel man in the world can be changed into a great compassionate one by the influence of Buddhism. With this idea in mind, some orthodox missionary might have composed the story.

Radha Kumud Mookerjee reflects upon the anecdotes describing his cruelty as follows—“Although we may not accept the legend of the horrible murder perpetrated by Aśoka, there may be some truth in the Buddhist tradition that there was a contest for the throne and Aśoka succeeded against his step-brother Susīma with the help of Rādhagupta whom he appointed his chief minister. But whatever there may be in it, it is interesting to note that in his Rock Edict IV and V Aśoka condemns unseemly behaviour to relatives according to one interpretation, to their households according to another.

1. Divyāvadāna XXVI p. 235
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
If the first interpretation be correct it gives the lie direct to the tradition that he murdered all his brothers.”

History tells us that “Aśoka was converted to Buddhism by the Venerable monk Upagupta shortly after the Kaliṅga war. This is, to a large extent, corroborated by his edicts. In the Rock Edict XIII, Aśoka expresses genuine remorse for the sufferings caused by the war in the most touching language, reflecting such a deep sincerity and conviction that it has been generally held that the record was drafted by the emperor himself.” But the Divyāvadāna gives an interesting episode which led the incident of his conversion to Buddhism. It states that once Rādhāgupta said to Aśoka, “Sir, it does not behove your royal grandeur to kill the culprits by your own hands. Why don’t you engage a servant for it?” Aśoka said, “It is better if you find me one.” The search for such a servant who could serve in the capacity of an executioner started. A boy, named Caṇḍa Girika, so named because of his cruel acts of killing ants, flies, birds, mice and the like at a tender age, was found. The officer asked him of his consent for acting as an executioner under the king. He gladly gave his consent but his parents did not like his acceptance of that job. At this he silenced them by the use of his dagger and accompanied the officer. According to his wishes Aśoka constructed a very beautiful building in which the horrible acts of torturing the innocent persons went on. He was allowed by the king to kill every one who entered that building. Once a Śramaṇa, named Samudra, attracted by the beauty of that building, entered and was caught by Caṇḍa-Girika. Samudra began to weep. He said, “I am weeping not that I fear death but because of the fact that after my death I would not be able to feel the bliss of the blessed existence of the Enlightened one.” He begged for a month’s time, but was granted a week’s time. Meanwhile he happened to witness the murder of a prince.

1. Majumdar, R.C. The History and Culture of Indian People. II p. 73.
2. Cf. Majumdar, R.C. The History and Culture of Indian People II, p. 74.
and a queen, who were sentenced for their illicit relations. Having seen that scene his mind got detached from the physical world. Reflecting on that incident the whole night, he got free from all the worldly ties. On the seventh day Caṇḍa-Girika caught hold of Samudra and put him into a big iron pan, full of blood, bones, marrow and water and tried to boil that by putting fire in the oven. But in spite of his persistent efforts, when the fire did not burn he looked inside the pan and saw, to his utmost astonishment, Samudra seated cross-legged in the middle of that pan Aśoka was invited to see that miracle. The king, seeing that extraordinary scene, was spell-bound. He folded his hands in reverence to that monk and asked for some proper service which he could do for him. The monk said,

तस्मान्तरं ब्रम्हवः ब्रह्मचर्यः
सत्वे भु काश्यपुरोजवेशु।
नान्यं सम्पूणंमनोरं च
विस्तारिकान् धर्मयथरानं कुर्वतां ॥¹

i.e. Therefore, O king! give an assurance of safety to all sentient beings. Let those strong arms of yours shield the world.

Aśoka, then, assured him obedience in the following words:

दशबलमुत शान्तिमेहःसीमम्
कुर्वतामिदं च तबाम् देसयामि।
शारणामूलमिमित्तं च बुद्धं
ममवर्मायथिनिविवेंरं च धर्मं ॥²

Receiving this assurance from the king Samudra departed. When the king was about to come out from that torture-house Caṇḍa-Girika stopped him and wanted to kill him reminding him of his permission to kill who-soever entered that house. The king said, ‘Then let me know who entered first here. You or I?’ He said, ‘I’. ‘Then who is to be punished first. You or I?’ enquiring thus the king beheaded him and demolished.

¹ Divyāvadāna XXVI, p. 239.
² Ibid.
that torture-house also. After this incident he got ordained in Buddhism and built many Stūpas.¹

After his conversion to Buddhism "he abolished all public pastimes and popular sports of the country which were tainted with blood and which included the slaughter of animals and eating of meat .... ....... He abolished the time honoured royal sport of hunting which his grandfather used to indulge with so much pomp and magnificence (R.E. VIII). He replaced royal pleasure-trips (Vihāra-yātrās) by Dharma-yātrās, i.e. by pilgrimages to holy places like Bodh-Gayā or Lumbinī ...."² Reference about Aśoka’s visit to Lumbinī, Kapilavastu, and many other stūpas are found in the Divyāvodāna also.³

"Tradition credits Aśoka with the building of 84,000 stūpas or vihāras."⁴ His act of donating to and honouring the stūpas is mentioned in the Divyāvodāna also.⁵

As regards the successors of Aśoka, divergent details are found through different sources. The Avadāna literature, together with the Purāṇas and the Jain writers Hemachandra and Jinaprabhasūri, holds Kuṇāla as his successor. "Vāyu-Purāṇa gives Kuṇāla a reign of eight years and names five of his successors, the last of whom was Bṛhadhrata. The Matsya-Purāṇa, however, gives the following list of Aśoka’s successors: Daśaratha, Samprati, Śatadhanvā and Bṛhadhratha,

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1. Divyāvodāna XXVI, p. 240. ततो राजा भगवन्त्यीरेश्वरान्तु विस्तरी-ष्यामीति चतुरंगोन वलकवेन गतवा भगवतवुप्रतिष्ठापितं द्रोह-स्तूपमुद्यध शरीरेश्वरान्तु गृहीतवान्। यत्रोद्धरणं च विस्तरेण गतवा धातुप्रस्त्वं द्वत स्तूप प्रतिष्ठाय एवं द्वितीयं स्तूपं विस्तरेण भक्तिमो यावस्त्रं द्वीपधियं स्तूपांच प्रतिष्ठाय रामग्राम्य गताः।
2. Majumdar, R. C. The History and Culture of Indian People II p. 85.
4. Majumdar, R.C. The History and Culture of Indian People II p. 86.
although it puts the total number of kings as ten. The Viṣṇu-
Purāṇa has its own list of seven kings after Aśoka including Daśaratha, Sālasūka, and the last king Bṛhadratha."¹¹ The Jain source Pariśiṣṭhaparvan (IX Canto) of Hemachandra states Kuṇāla as the actual successor of Aśoka who, due to his blinded eyes, could not get enthroned and hence his son Samprati was given the throne. After him came Bṛhaspati, after Bṛhaspati Bṛhasena, after him Puṣyadharma. This fact is revealed in the Divyāvadāna also.² There are also good grounds to believe that the Maurya Court was divided into two factors, one headed by Puṣyamitra, the commander-in-chief, and the other by the minister, who managed to make their sons respectively governors of Vidiśā and Vidarbha. The immediate causes that brought about the end of the Maurya dynasty were, no doubt, the invasions of the Bactrian Greeks, to which a detailed reference will be made later, and the assassination of King Bṛhadratha by Puṣyamitra."³ "According to the Purāṇas, Puṣyamitra belonged to the Śuṅga family. Pāṇini (IV, I, 117) traces the Śuṅgas to the Brāhmaṇa clan of Bhāradvāja. There are many references to Śuṅga teachers in Vedic texts. The Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad also mentions Śaunāgiputra as a teacher. A Bhārhut inscription refers to two gateways being erected in the reign of the Śuṅgas. Kālidāsa, however, in his drama Mālavikāgnimitra, describes Agnimitra, son of Puṣyamitra, as a scion of the Baimbika family of the Kaśyapa lineage. But the Śuṅga origin of Puṣyamitra is generally accepted."⁴ The Divyāvadāna describes Puṣyamitra as a cruel persecutor of Buddhists. It is stated that he destroyed mona-

¹¹ Majumdar, R C. The History and Culture of Indian People Vol. II, p. 89.
² Divyāvadāna XXIX, p. 282/4-5.
³ Majumdar, R.C. The Histoty and Culture of Indian People II, p. 92.
⁴ Ibid. p. 95.
stories and killed monks. In course of his march to Sākala (or Sāgala Pāli, Sialkot in the Punjab) he declared a prize of hundred Dināras for one who brought the head of some Buddhist monk. Contrary to these descriptions Radha Kumud Mookerji observes thus—"Though the Śuṅgas were strong adherents of Brāhmaṇical religion, there is no independent evidence to show that they were intolerant of Buddhism. It is interesting to note in this connection that the great Buddhist Stūpa at Bharhut was erected during the reign of the Śuṅgas." The Divyāvadāna further puts forth the name of some Yakṣa Kṛmīśa who destroyed Puṣyamitra. "Dr. P.C, Bagchi equates Demetrius with Kṛmīśa."
DYNASTIES AND KINGS

Ikṣvāku Dynasty

Māndhātā—

Māndhātā, born from the head of king Upoṣadha,¹ became king after the death of his father. He was called ‘Caturdvīpeśvara’ because he, with the help of his thousand brave sons and millions of warriors, won the kingdom of Pūrvavideha, Aparagodānīya, Uttara-kuru and seven golden mountains.² The Purāṇas place him in the Ikṣvāku dynasty (20 degrees below Manu Vaivasvata and 63 degrees above Rāma Dāśarathi).³ His father's name is given ‘Yuwanāśva’ in the Purāṇas,⁴ and he is stated to be the fifth Avatāra of Viṣṇu.⁵

Śiśunāga Dynasty

Bimbisāra:

Bimbisāra, the popular king of Magadha, was also called Śreṇya⁶ (because he possessed a good number of soldiers), and Vastrādhipati⁷ (perhaps because he wore unique dresses). Dr. Bhandarkar has inferred from this epithet that he was originally a Senāpati, probably of the Vajjis who held sway over Magadha,

1. Divyāvadāna, p. 130.
2. Ibid., pp. 135-137
   (Article—Chronolgical Position of Māndhātā by Shri D.R. Mankad)
4. Ibid. Also cf. Age of Lord Buddha (Kota Venkatachalaḥ) p. 6.
5. Ibid.
and ultimately made himself king. He is also known as the religious king. He had firm faith in Buddhism. He used to worship the Stūpa in his palace. He donated his veṇuvana to the Buddhist order. He also sent a portrait of the Buddha to Rudrāyaṇa, the king of Roruka. He respected the Lord very much and obeyed him blindly. A story, how when Subhadra, a householder, was not ready to accept his newborn baby (as he believed in the false prediction that the child would prove unlucky for him), Bimbisāra adopted the same when ordered by the Lord, occurs in the Divyāvadāna which shows his obedience to the Buddha. It is also learnt from the Avadānas that whenever Bimbisāra went to the Lord, he went on foot. He used to leave his royal signs i.e. turban, umbrella, sword, fan and shoes on the entrance and bowed to his feet.

It is further mentioned in the Avadānas that he was imprisoned and slaughtered by his own son Ajātaśatru, who was instigated by Devadatta. This fact is revealed in the Jātaka literature also. Ajātaśatru, in the earlier part of his life was very hostile to the Buddha but later on became a loyal adherent to the Buddha’s faith. A long line of Bimbisāra’s successors is given in the Divyāvadāna. The chronology runs like this:

1. Majumdar, R.C. The History and Culture of Indian People II. p. 9.
2. Divyāvadāna, p. 173. 22.
3. Avadāna-śataka, p. 308
4. Ibid., p. 129.
5. Divyāvadāna, p. 466.
7. Ibid. p. 91
8. Ibid. Jyotiśkāvadāna.
Bimbisāra
Ajātaśatru
Udāyi bhadrā
Munḍa
Kākavarṇī
Sahatī
Tulakuchi
Mahāmaṇḍala
Prasenjīt
Nanda
Bindusāra
Aśoka
Suśima

On the other hand the Purāṇas supply the following list¹:
Śiśunāga
Kākavarṇī
Kṣemadharman
Kṣatraṅjas (which most probably seems to be used for Prasenjīt).
Bimbisāra
Darśaka
Udāyin
Nandivardhana
Mahānandin

¹ Majumdar, R. C. History and Culture of Indian People Vol. II, p. 19.
Bindusāra:

In the Avadāna literature Bindusāra is stated to be the son of Nanda and Nanda is said to be the son of Prasenjit. This is all quite non-sense and carries no weight from the historical point of view. He married a brāhmaṇa-girl from Campā. She bore two sons for him—Aśoka and Vigataśoka. He had sons from other wives also and the eldest of them was Suśima. Bindusāra wanted to make Suśima his heir. He did not like Aśoka, who was prophesied to be his heir. But when he was breathing his last and Suśima was not present there, the ministers coronated Aśoka. Bimbisāra could not tolerate the coronation of Aśoka and as a result hot blood came out of his mouth and he died there and then.

Aśoka

Aśoka is stated to be existent 100 years after the Lord Buddha but history tells us that coronation took place in 270 B.C. He had to struggle for the crown. He very skilfully defeated his rival Suśima. He persecuted 50 ministers who opposed his coronation. He got 500 women burnt for the simple reason that they did not pay respect to the Aśoka-tree, the name-sake of the emperor. He used to be so cruel that he got built a torture-house and arranged one servant Girika for

3. Ibid., p. 22/27 to 233/6.
4. Ibid, p. 233/9, 10.
5. Ibid., p. 235.
6. Ibid., p. 232. 6-7

वर्षशेतपरिनिब्बतस्य तथागतस्य पाठलिपिः नगरे अशोको नाम्मा राजा
भविष्यति।

7. Ibid. p. 235.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
the act of torturing. Later on he got ordained in Buddhism by some Buddhist monk of Kukkutārāma and travelled all the Buddhist religious places.

Once he allowed his queen Tiṣya to rule for seven days. During this time queen played an intrigue. She took revenge of Kuṇāla’s rejection to her amorous invitation by sending a message to Taxila (where he had gone to deal with the rebels) that both of his eyes be plucked out without any delay. Later on when Aśoka came to know the fact, he ordered the queen Tiṣya to be burnt to death. Aśoka’s last days were not very happy. His grandson Sampadi stopped him from offering denotions to the monks and he was forced to live within his very limited resources. After his death Sampadi became the king. Thereafter followed Bṛhaspati, Vṛṣasena, Puṣyadharma and Puṣyamitra respectively.

Śuṅga Dynasty

The name of some king Puṣyamitra is mentioned in one of the Avadānas and a king, bearing this name, happens to be in the Śuṅga Dynasty. In the Avadānas he figures as a great persecutor of the Buddhists. He, in order to exterminate the Buddhist community, had made an announcement in the public that whosoever brought the head of some Buddhist monk would be priced with hundred Dināras. A list of kings, mentioned in the Avadānas, but not known in the history is given below:

1. Agnidatta—He donated a dṛṇamukha (a group of 400 villages) named Utkūta to a brāhmaṇa named Puṣkarśārin. (Divyāvadāna p. 319.11).

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1. Divyāvadāna, p. 235
2. Ibid. pp. 236-239.
3. Ibid. pp. 149-252.
4. Ibid. pp. 261-270
5. Ibid. p. 279.24-30
6. Ibid. 281.1-4.
7. Ibid. p. 282.4-5
8. Ibid. p. 282.15
3. Elāpatra—Gāndhāra king (Divyāvadāna p. 37.7).
   A fierce famine for 12 years broke out in his Kingdom.
6. Kṛṣṇa Gautama—Nāg King used to live in the sea near Sūrpāraka (Divyāvadāna p. 31/1).
7. Candraprabha—King of Bhadraśilā (Taxila) (Divyāvadāna p. 195/13) identified with Candragupta Maurya.
8. Triśāṅku—Son Śārdūla got married to a brāhmaṇa girl (Divyāvadāna p. 318/27/28).
10. Druma—King of Kinnara country situated near Vetravati. His daughter Manohara was married to Sudhana (Divyāvadāna p. 281/87).
11. Mahādhana—father of Sudhana—King of Uttara Panchāla, capital Hastinapur, ruled religiously; hence people were happy and people from Daccan Pañcāl migrated to his kingdom (Divyāvadāna p. 283/27).
12. Piṅgalaka—Kaliṅga King (Divyāvadāna p. 37/6).
14. Brahmadatta—King of Vārāṇasi (Divyāvadāna pp. 46/8; 62/8; 81/12; 422/2, 26, 422/8).
15. Mahendraka—King of Śūrasena—capital Kānyakubja (Divyāvadāna p. 469/11–12, 14; 470/5, 13; 471/19, 20, 23).
16. Rudrāyaṇa—King of Roruka—contemporary of Bimbiśāra. (Divyāvadāna p. 465/6).
17. Vāsva—King of Madhyadeśa (Divyāvadāna p. 37/29).
18. Śaūkha—King of Vārāṇasi (Divyāvadāna p. 36/38).
26. Śibi—Divyavadana 84/18.
SOCIAL LIFE

Caste system

Avadāna literature reveals a good many facts about caste system. In the Lalita Vistara¹ it is mentioned that Bodhisattva takes birth only either in a Brāhmaṇa-family or in a Kṣatriya-family, whichever is considered higher at that time. These two castes were considered the most learned and the most intelligent. As they considered themselves superior to others so they seldom tried to mix with others. They were very particular about the dignity of their higher castes. In the Kuṇālavadāna² there is a mention of an episode of Yaśas, a minister in the court of king Aśoka, who disliked the royal homage to the monks of low origin. He said to the king, “My Lord, it does not behove your royal grace to bow to every monk unmindful of their castes.” Aśoka did not reply at that time. After sometimes he ordered collection of fresh heads of different animals and then ordered to sell them. He gave Yaśas a human head to sell. All the animal-heads were sold. Only human-head could not be sold. King, then, ordered to present that as a gift to someone. But Yaśas found that no body was ready to take that as a gift. Aśoka asked, “Why is it that nobody is ready to take it”. Yaśas replied, “Because it is repulsive”. “Is mine head, too, repulsive?” enquired the king. Yaśas hesitated a bit in answering but after being granted ‘Abhaya’ he said; “Yes, My Lord, your too is so”. Then the king advised Yaśas that one should acquire merit with such a repulsive thing and should honour virtue and the virtuous born in any caste. There occurs a stanza thus:—

² तत्र यदा ब्राह्मणगुरुः लोको भवति तदा ब्राह्मणाकुले उपपद्यते। यदर्भ्राष्ट्रियगुरुः लोको भवति तदा क्षत्रियाकुले उपपद्यते।
i.e. Caste may be considered when it is a question of marriage or an invitation. It should never come in the way of religion, because religion is concerned with virtue, and virtues have nothing to do with caste.

Thus Aśoka taught him that worth, not birth, should rule mankind and this is the idea what Buddhists teach.

Vaiśyas mostly were interested either in agriculture or in trade. Foreign trade too was done by many Vaiśyas. Many of them run their private business in big cities. Foreign trade was done through ships. Mostly their sons also adopted the profession of fathers.

The fourth caste prevalent at that time was Śūdra. Cāṇḍāla, Mātaṅga, Niśāda etc. came under this category. These people mostly served the other three castes. They neither learnt nor took part in any religious performance. But the preachings of the Buddha were against this prevailing order of castes. In the Divyāvadāna there is a mention of a Cāṇḍāla-girl Prakṛti who was ordained as a nun. So many persons, including king Prasenajit, objected to it (as she was of low origin so she should not have entered the monastic Order.). Again, in the same story there is the mention of Śārdūlakarṣa who was Cāṇḍāla by caste but was very much learned and who got married to a Brāhmaṇa girl Māṇavikā. In the Avadāna-Śataka one finds the reference to a teacher who tells his student Subhūti that he should not feel himself superior only because he is a Brāhmaṇa by birth. ‘Brahmā’ created men with the help

2. Avadāna-Śataka, p. 281. यूद्रोड्योपि शीतलस्मपन्नो गुणवान् ब्राह्मणोऽसेतु।
of ‘Pañcatattva’ (water, earth, air, fire and sky). As all men are created by ‘Brahmā’, so no particular race or community should be called Brāhmaṇa (i.e. created by ‘Brahmā’). Thus the teacher demonstrated the futility of a Brāhmaṇa’s pride on account of his caste. Men get joy by noble deeds, sorrow by evil deeds and mixed feelings of joy and sorrow by mixed deeds. This is what men of every caste should remember. No one is Brāhmaṇa merely because he is born in a Brāhmaṇa family. One is called Brāhmaṇa only when he is civilized. Even a dog if he is religious and civilized, can be called a Brāhmaṇa, Vyāsa, son of Kaivartṛ, Vasīṣṭha son of Urvāśi, Rṣyaśṛṅga, son of a Cāndāla, Nārada, son of a Taṇḍuli etc. became Brāhmaṇas only by dint of their noble deeds. It is not necessary that one should be called a Brāhmaṇa only when he is born through the womb of a Brāhmaṇa woman. All human beings are created by one and the same person ‘Brahmā’, hence of one and the same quality or caste. It is only through their different deeds that they are divided into four castes. Even a man, born in the Śūdra family, can become a Brāhmaṇa through his noble deeds and learnings. Difference is only in talent and deeds and not in flesh and blood. Just as children, while playing, name different lots of dust as milk, curd, butter, meat etc. but that dust does not become really any of them. In the same way all men are made of one and the same lot. All beings possess legs, nails, flesh etc. Hence all are equal. There is no such difference between Brāhmaṇa and other castes as there is the difference between fire and gold, light and shade. Brāhmaṇas are not born from heaven and others from the wretched earth Brāhmaṇas too, like Cāndālas, are born through women’s wombs. Then why should there be any difference between the Brāhmaṇas and the Cāndālas or any other caste. Brāhmaṇas too, like the persons belonging to

1. Avadāna-Śataka, p. 271.
any other caste, become repulsive after death. Animals, birds, insects, trees, cereals, flowers, fruits, stones etc. vary in quality but men do not.¹

The Buddhists did not apprize of the aristocratic pride of the Brāhmaṇas and preached the equality of mankind. They held the view that there is no difference between man and man. Hair, ears, nose, head, eyes, mouth, neck, hands, legs, nails, stomach, back etc. are all alike. It is only through their deeds done that the difference in names occurs.² Persons who are sober, truthful, religious, pious, detached, courageous and laborious are called Brāhmaṇas. They abide by the rules of four Āśramas i.e. Brahmacarya, Gṛhastha, Vānaprastha and Sannyāsa.³ Those, who, after leaving all worldly pleasure reside in forests and are fully devoted to Brahmā, are called Vānaprasthas. Those who perform six acts; live with their families and perform Yajñas, are called Upādhyāya. Those, who care little for their physical pleasures and live on boggings are called Bhikṣus. Those who have full control over their carnal desires, who are detached, bold and who perform holy acts at religious places, are called Tapasvis. Those, who are detached and truthful, are called Rṣis. Those religious and truthful persons, who do not preach to the public are called Munis. Those who possess full control over themselves and are free, detached and prideless, are called Yatis. Those bold persons, who perform their duties by the help of Sthambhila, are called Sthāṇḍilas. Those, who apply ashes on their body, wear various ornaments and live in the cremation grounds, are called Kāpālikas. Those, who perform Yajñas and are efficient in performing religious performances, are called Hotāras. Those who, with the help of their weapons, are always ready to protect the destitutes, are called Kṣatriyas.⁴ Kings mostly belong to this caste.⁵ They aspire for Dharma and

1. Avadāna-Śataka, p. 274 Śloka Nos. 139-150
2. Ibid., p. 274. Śloka Nos. 155-158
3. Ibid. p. 275. Śloka No. 163
5. Ibid. 276. Śloka, p. No. 174.
Artha. They are the makers of the public law and give protection to all who need the same. Those, who follow different professions for earning wealth and are devoted to the cause of welfare of the people, are called Vaiśyas.¹ Those, who seldom obey the Laws of Vrata and Ācāra and who believe in serving the people, are called Śūdras.²

Some other subcastes, based upon the profession and beliefs are also mentioned in the Avadāna literature.³ Those, who plough the land, sow the seeds and grow crops, are called Kṛṣakas (formers). Those industrious persons, who earn their livelihood by selling this with profits, are called Vāniks. Those, who earn money by organising Sārtha and trade abroad, are called Sārthavāhas. Persons, who trade in gold etc., are called Svarṇakāras. etc. Persons, who know the science of Astrology and the happenings of the future and the past, are called Gaṇakas. Those, who, after diagnosing diseases, give medicines, are called Bhiṣajas or Vaidyas. Those, who possess knowledge about evil spirits and ghosts etc., their deeds and their remedies are called Bhautikas. Those, who are cruel, imōctuous, harsh and who enjoy killing creatures, are called cāndālas. Those who are devoted to Lord Śiva, are called Śaivas. Those, who are devoted to Lord Viṣṇu, are called Vaiśṇavas. Those who are devoted to Lord Bhairava, are called Bhairavas. Those, who are devoted to the goddess named Māheśvarī, are called Kālikās. Those who follow the path, paved by Jina, are called Jainas. Those, who follow the path of the Buddha, are called Baudhhās.

In the Divyāvadāna Trīśaṅku, a prominent character appearing in the Sārdūlakaṛṇāvadāna, explained to a Brāhmaṇa named Puṣkaraśarīrin the ways how different sub-castes emerged in the society.⁴ He argues that the persons, who were very much

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¹ Avadāna-Śatakā, Śloka No. 176
² Ibid, Śloka No. 177
³ Ibid, p. 276-277. Śloka Nos. 178-192
⁴ Divyāvadāna XXXIII, pp. 328-329
⁵ Divyāvadāna, p. 329. शुचपुर्वः ब्राह्मणः ब्राह्मणः सत्योऽधिपतः बुधोऽवधिपतः राष्ट्राधिकाः तथा तस्मातन्मातर्ज्ञम् (सा लघ गमः) इति संब्र उद्यादिः
detached from their domestic life and remained outside the villages or cities, were called ‘वहिमेनस्क’. At times they used to visit the villages and teach the country-fold. They were, then, called ग्रामायणका. Some people were very much particular about economic matters. These people were named as Vaišyas. Some people earned their living by evil means. They were called Śūdras. Once upon a time a Brāhmaṇa and his bride went in a chariot. On the way his chariot was broken and they could not proceed (मा त्र गम:) further,7 Hence he was named as Mātaṅgama. Persons, who plough, were called farmers (कर्षका):1 Persons, who with their good speech, impressed on the platform, were called kings (राजा):2 Persons, who after winning their own selves, won over others also, were called प्रव्रजिता:3 Those, who earned their living through commerce, were called Vanij:4

In the Divyāvadāna we find reference of a Brāhmaṇa Puṣkarasārin holding the view that Brāhmaṇas were divided among the following seven sections, called ‘gotras’.5:

1. Gautama
2. Vātsyāya
3. Kautsa
4. Kauśika
5. Kāśyapa
6. Vāsiṣṭha
7. Māṇḍavya

1. Divyāvadāna. क्षेत्रं कर्षकम् ये तेषां कर्षकश इति संजा प्रवृत्ता ।
2. Ibid. भार्येण च परβदे रणजयति धर्मेण शीलन्तंसमाचारेण सम्प्र्,
tस्य राजा संज्ञासूच ।
3. Ibid. ततश्चाये सत्वा: प्रव्रजिति सम । प्रव्रजित्वा परानु जयति
कलेशानु जयतीति तेषां प्रव्रजिता इति लोकं संज्ञा उद्भादि ।
4. Ibid. ततोऽये सत्वा विषेजय्या जीविकां कल्याणित, तेषां विषेज इति
संज्ञा उद्भादि ।
5. Ibid. XXXIII, p. 331
Each one of these seven is further divided into seven subsections.

1. Gautama
   Kauthuma
   Garga
   Bhāradvāja
   Ārṣṭiśeṇa
   Vaikhānasā
   Vajrapāda

2. Vātsyya
   Ātreya
   Maitreya
   Bhārgava
   Sāvarṇya
   Salīla
   Bahujāta

3. Kautsa
   Maudgalyāyana
   Gauṇāyana
   Lāṅgalā
   Lagnā
   Daṇḍa-Lagnā
   Somabhuvā

4. Kauśika
   Kātyāyana
   Dharbha-Kātyāyana
   Valkalina
   Pakṣiṇa
   Laṅkākṣa
   Lohitāyana

5. Kāśyapa
   Maṇḍana
   Īṣṭa
   Śauṇḍāyana
   Rocaneya
   Anapekṣa
   Agnivesya
6. Vasiṣṭha
   Jātukarṇya
   Dhānyāyana
   Pārāśara
   Vyāghranakha
   Āṇḍāyana
   Aupamanyava
7. Māṇḍavya
   Bhāṇḍāyana
   Dhomrajāna
   Kātyāyana
   Khalvavāhana
   Sugandharāyana
   Kāpiṣṭhalāyana

Thus according to the Divyāvadāna there were 49 subsections within the Brāhmaṇa community. One Ātreya Gotra is also mentioned in the Śārdūlakarṇavadāna which was further divided into the following three sections:


As regards the origination of this system Patañjali has aptly observed in his Bhāṣya that there were 88000 sages with Agastya as the eighth who took to the way of procreating. Their descendants were known as Gotra. It is said that “Brahmā had four sons, namely Bṛgu, Aṅgiras, Marici and Atri. In Bṛgu’s line was born Jamadagni who became a Gotrakāra Rṣi. In the line of Aṅgiras there were two Gotrakāra Rṣis namely Gautama and Bharadvāja. In the family of Marīca there were three Gotrakāra ancestors, viz.

1. Divyāvadāna XXXIII p. 333
2. प्रणालीतः सहस्राणांसूर्वर्तकामृतीश्च ब्रह्मवर्तागत्वासमाधिरः कृतिमिच्छ: प्रजनोभूय्यके । तदस्यवं यदपत्यं तान्ति गौतमः ।
   माथ्व ४.२१४६ ।
3. “The sons and grandsons and previous and succeeding generations of a Rṣi form a Gotra. A Rṣi (for this purpose) is one who is a ‘Mantradraṣṭā’. Thus the families of certain great Rṣis came to be known by their names and these Rṣis became Gotrakārin.”
   Proceedings and Transactions of the Third Oriental Conference 1924 Madras, p. 635.
Kāšyapa, Vasiṣṭha and Agastya. The fourth son Atri himself became a Gotra-progenitor."^{11}

Pāṇini, in his Aṣṭādhyāyī,\(^2\) has also confirmed this fact by mentioning the following eight original Gotras:—

1. Bhṛgu
2. Kauśika
3.Āṅgirasa
4. Bharadvāja
5. Atri
6. Kaśyapa
7. Vasiṣṭha
8. Agastya

Thus we find both sources giving identical names except one i.e. Gautama.

In the Sūtra literature\(^3\) one finds the names of the following seven Rāis as the original ancestors of gotra:—

1. Viśvāmitra
2. Jamadagni
3. Bharadvāja
4. Gautama
5. Atri
6. Vasiṣṭha
7. Kaśyapa

Here the name of Viśvāmitra is a new addition.

Thus after going through above-mentioned facts we find that out of the seven names, mentioned in the Divyāvadāna Kauśika, Kaśyapa, and Vasiṣṭha bear similarity to those furnished in the other sources. Mention of the remaining three i.e Vātsya, Kautsyā and Māṇḍavya is absent in other sources.

1. Agrawala, V.S. India as known to Pāṇini, p. 525
2. Ibid.
INSTITUTION OF SLAVERY

The study of the Avadāna literature reveals that the institution of slavery was existent in the contemporary society. Besides men, women too, were engaged as slaves. They used to be very faithful to their masters. They never wished ill of them. In the story of Pūrṇāvadāna it is mentioned that a slave-woman was very much worried when she saw her master's health going down. She at once went to the doctors and brought suitable medicine for him. Through her sincere efforts he regained his health.¹ These slave-women sometimes willfully offered themselves to become as concubines of their masters. But the children, born of this union, were not considered heirs to the property of their fathers. They could claim no right to property. As they themselves (children of slave-woman) were taken as a part of their father’s property, so they themselves were divided among the sons, born of the legal wives. In the story, mentioned above, Pūrṇa, the son² born of the slave-woman’s union with her master, is given no property at the time of the distribution of the parental property. Rather he himself is given away and fell in the share of third son.³ Manu, however, has given different code. He states that the sons, born of slave-women, should be given equal share of father’s property.⁴

In Sahasodgatāvadāna there is the mention of such markets where from slaves were available. Such markets were called the Bhṛtaka-vīthiś.⁵

Position of women

“Woman-female of the human species, part of the phenomena called life, a cog in the machine which is nature,

¹. Divyāvadāna II, p. 15
². Ibid, II, p. 18
³. Ibid, II, p. 18
⁴. Manusmrī Ch. 9
⁵. Divyāvadāna XXI, p. 188
as necessary for procreation as the male of the species, and, no better, nor worse than her mate,...as man's mother and sister, wife and daughter, lover and beloved, friend and companion on the journey of life; the light and grace and the joy of existence'—These words aptly translate the importance of woman. Yet how very sad it is that in Indian society the place of woman has always been considered inferior to that of man. In the Rgveda we can find so many instances where the male-child is cherished by the parents; but none in which some female-child is wanted.\(^1\) In the Atharvaveda so many ways of acquiring a son are planned. In the Aitareya Brähmana son is called 'the light-divine' while the daughter 'a poor creature'.\(^2\) In the Rāmāyaṇa\(^a\) and the Mahābhārata\(^4\) the definition of the son is given thus: पुत्राः पितृवं भावते i.e. one who delivers parents out from the Hell. Therefore the Brähmanas took son as a necessity. It was impossible to attain Svarga without a son. But the Buddhists did not possess any such idea. According to the Buddhists the door of Nirvāṇa was open to all. So a son was not given so much importance in the Buddhist tradition. In the Avadāna literature son and daughter are given the same importance. Though every householder wished to see the face of a son yet no undue preference was shown to him. The householder Bodho was not the least unhappy at the birth of a daughter,\(^5\) nor was Parivrājaka Mākandika sad at the birth of his daughter.\(^6\)

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1. Rgveda 1.91.20, 3.1.23, 10, 15, 25
2. Aitareya Brähmana 35\(^a\)
3. Rāmāyaṇa. पुनः पितृवं भावते सुतः I
   तत्स्मात:- इति प्रोक्तः पितृवं पाति सर्वं: ||
4. Mahābhārata
   पुनः पितृवं भावते सुतः: I
   तत्स्मात:- इति प्रोक्तः स्वयमेव स्वयम्भुवः ||
5. Divyāvadāna XIII, p. 104
6. Ibid. XXXVI, p. 446.
As a daughter the woman of the time was a very much favoured and protected member of the society. We do not find any reference concerning the age of marriage but it seems that the system of early marriage was not prevalent because it is mentioned in so many Avadānas that the girls, just after marriage, conceived children.¹ It reflects the fact that the marriageable girls must have attained the age of puberty without which the conception would have been quite impossible. "In the Jātaka literature also we find many instances when girls attaining proper age, which generally ranged from twenty to thirty, went of their own accord in search of husbands."² Prakṛti, a Cāṇḍāla girl, seeing Ānanda, fell deeply in love with him. So much so that she declared to her mother that she would surely die if she could not get him as her husband. She followed Ānanda daily when he went on his begging round.³ Such a state of affair cannot be associated with a girl who has not attained adulthood. Bimbisāra, after the death of his previous wife, performed ‘Gandharva Vivāha’ with Āmrāpāli.⁴ This type of marriage is mentioned in so many Jātaka tales also. No one can doubt the maturity of these lovers. A girl, who selects her sex-mate all by herself, cannot be below sixteen or so. Though the prevalent system of marriage seems to be that of arranged marriage, yet some instances of Gandharva Vivāha in which the bride and bridegroom make their own choice without the knowledge of their guardians and marry without any rite or ceremony are also found. It seems that Svayaṁvara system, in which a girl chooses her husband in public from among a number of suitors, was also in vogue. The word ‘Svayaṁvara’ occurs many times in the Avadāna literature.⁵ Some girls and boys did not marry at all.

¹ Divyāvadāna II, p. 15
² De, Gokul Das. The Significance and Importance of Jātaka, p. 11
³ Divyāvadāna XXXIII
⁴ Avadāna-Kalpalatā, p. 148
⁵ Avadāna-Śataka, pp. 175, 176, 188
Generally the parents of the boy demanded the girl, whom they considered suitable, from her parents. Then the parents of girl, if considered the boy suitable, succeeded to their proposal and marriages were arranged. Anāthapiṇḍada demanded the daughter of Bodho for his son.\(^1\) Triśāṇku demanded the daughter of Puṣkarsārin for his son.\(^2\) Many persons came demanding Suprabhā from her parents.\(^3\) If the parents were not alive then some elder member of the family acted as parents. In the Pūrṇāvadāna Pūrṇa’s brother Bhavila asks him, “which of the merchant’s daughter should be demanded for you to marry with? Let me know the name of that merchant.”\(^4\) Some instances of Asura-marriage, in which money is given to the girl’s guardians from the boy’s side, are also found. In Śārdūlakarṇāvadāna Triśāṇku asked of Puṣkarsārin, “Tell me what money would you like to have for your daughter.”\(^5\) This fact is admitted by Gokuladas De also who observes—“A wife was for the most part obtained for money paid to her father’s family by the husband in whose house, however, she exercised full control over internal management”.\(^6\)

The girl, before marriage, acquired knowledge in so many fields. At many places in the Avadāna literature the adjective for marriageable girls is Guṇvati i.e. a girl abounding in talents. Prakṣṭi, daughter of Puṣkarsārin, is one of such references.\(^7\) There are instances where girls used to help their mothers in their domestic work and thus acquired training in the same. There is a reference of Cāṇḍāla girl, named Prakṣṭi, fetching water from the well.\(^8\) Some of the women were well-versed in Music and dance. The queen of Roruka

1. Divyāvadāna XIII, p. 104
2. Ibid. XXXIII, p.320
3. Avadāna-Śataka, p. 175
4. Divyāvadāna II. p. 21
5. Ibid XXXIII p. 320
6. De, Gokul Das. The Significance and Importance of Jātaka, p. 109
7. Divyāvadāna XXXIII p. 319
8. Ibid, p. 314
was a very good dancer.\(^1\) There is a mention of her dancing to the tunes set by her husband. In the Avadāna-Śataka one teacher of dramatics is mentioned His daughter Kuvalayā was well-versed in music. So much so that when she entered the stage all the spectators were spell-bound. In Vītāsokāvadāna also there is a mention of so many girls dancing before Vītāsoka.\(^2\) The mention of musical instruments such as वसुघोषक, वीणा, वेणु, पसा, भेरी, पटझ, मूदझ, बल्लरी, ताल, शहझ etc. is also made.\(^3\)

It seems that education in the field of medicine was also given to the women. In the Kuṇālāvadāna\(^4\) it is mentioned that when all the doctors failed to cure the king's ailments, queen Tiṣyā tried and succeeded in curing the king. She ripped open the stomach of an Ābhīra-boy, suffering from the same ailment, examined the germs, experimented with different medicines and when reached at some successful conclusion, gave the medicine to the king. And thus the king was cured. Can any one deny the fact that Tiṣyā was educated in the field of medicine? She, as a token of gratitude, was offered to rule the kingdom for seven days. This incident shows how much developed her personality was. Is this type of personality a product of mere chance? Of course not. A full course of training peeps through this fully developed personality. So we can safely conclude that formal training in different fields of fine arts, medicine etc. was given to the women as well.

Religious training was also open for women. So many instances can be quoted where women got religious instructions. The queen of Roruka was eager to listen to the religious discourses, so much so, that a special arrangement for her was made by engaging a nun Śailā who came to her palace to preach her and her friends in religious lessons. Prakṛti, a Cāṇḍāla girl, was also ordained as a nun in the Buddhist

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1. *Divyāvadāna*, XXXVII p. 470
2. Ibid, XXVIII p. 273
3. Ibid, XXII, p. 196
4. Ibid, XXVII p. 263
order. One girl, named Somā, mentioned in the Avadāna-Śataka, is said to be so much learned that the scholars from far and wide came to listen to her intellectual discourses. She had learnt all the Śāstras.

Though the institution of marriage was in vogue, yet there seems to he a special section of the society where marriage was not necessary for sex relations and free-mixing of sexes was allowed. In the Avadāna-Kalpalatā (Āmrāpālya-vadāna) there occurs the following stanza:

कथा गर्गोपमोग्येव न कस्मेचित्तदीयते।
इति वैशालिकी: पूर्व स्वदेशे नियम: कृत:॥

Money, too, was given for such relations. There, in the above-quoted story, Āmrāpāli says:—“पराय: कार्यपुष्पार्थं पञ्चाङ्ग: प्रत्येकं मम” such relations can be easily named as the prostitution. The institution of prostitution is also mentioned in the Pāṃsudrānāvadāna. There the courtesan, Vāsavadattā, is said to have served people for five hundred old coins (वासवदत्त्वा पञ्चाङ्ग: पुराणशालें परिबारयते).

For marriage purposes girl’s merits were the main considerations. Besides talent, physical charm too was sought after. No body was ready to accept Virūpā because she bore 18 signs of ugliness.\(^3\) Family, beauty, talent, health, money, etiquette etc. and many other virtues were expected of a girl\(^4\) Though nothing in particular regarding the merits of the girls is written in the Avadāna-literature, yet in the Divyāvadāna there occurs a story entitled Śārdulakārvāvanā\(^5\) in which Triśāṇku told Puṣkarsārin something about the virtues of the

1. Avadāna-Śataka, p. 183
2. “It was a custom among the Vajjis, as noted before, to make courtesans (gaṇikās) from girls of perfect beauty.”
   Law, B. B. India as described in Early Texts of Buddhism and Jainism, p. 167
3. Avadāna-Śataka, p. 197
4. Divyāvadāna XXXIII, p. 319
5. Ibid XXXIII, p. 410-413
girls. He said that in an auspicious time one should, with other intelligent persons, go and examine the girl's virtues. They should examine her hands, feet, nails, fingers, palm-lines, tummy, lips, tongue, teeth, nose, eyes, eye-brows, fore-head, ears, hair, cheeks, voice, complexion, intelligence etc. Then he suggests that right-handed girls should be given preference in marriages. He further tells about different kinds of girls. If the girl is of dark complexion and her voice is like that of a swan, then she is bound to produce eight sons and would be always surrounded by many men and maid-servants. Girls, possessing the voice of Swan (हंसवर्ल्लु),¹ are preferred by Varāha-Mihira also. If different parts of her body are quite proportionate then too she is expected to be the mother of eight sons. The Gṛhya-Sūtras also lay down that a girl, whose limbs are proportionate, should be chosen as bride.² If her tummy is like that of a tortoise then she is foretold to be very rich and be a proud mother of many sons. If on her palm there are some lines making the figure of a tortoise, a Svastik sign (+), a flag, an ear-ring or a garland then it can be safely prophesied that she will produce only one son and that son will become the king. If she possesses twenty-teeth and all as white as cow-milk, then she is foretold to be the king's mother. If her lips and tongue are red and eyes are like those of a she-deer then she is to sit by the side of king. If her fingers are close and her nails and feet are red like a flower then she is foretold to lead a very easy and luxurious life. The man, who marries a girl, who is financially rich, and who possesses youth, fame and beauty, flourishes. If there are hair on the upper lip of a girl then widowhood is foretold. If the smallest finger of the feet does not touch the earth then she is foretold to divorce her husband and follow her own will. This fact is revealed by Varāha-Mihira also (कनिष्ठिका वा तदनल्ला वा महीं न यस्यः स्मृश्चति स्मित्वा: स्वातः । गताथ्ववायूम्भमभित्य यस्यः प्रदेश्चिनी सा कुलदास्तिपापा ॥)³ Somewhat similar views are

1. Bṛhat-Śaṁhitā, p. 449
2. Vide Ram Gopal—India of Vedic Kalpa-Sūtras, p. 213
3. Bṛhat-Śaṁhitā, p. 451
expressed in सावकुशलम् also. If a girl possesses dimpled cheeks then too it is said that she is not virtuous. A man should wed only that girl who possesses sweet tongue and red lips. Red lips (सूक्ष्णकुम्पथ्युत्) are considered auspicious by Varāha-Mihira also.²

Marriage between the real brother and sister was not sanctioned. This fact is revealed in the following stanza of the Avadāna-Śataka³:

न युक्ता भगिनी भायঃ तथा धर्मं कथं भवेतु।
श्रम्परममाच्छेदवर्धमं एव सम्भवेतु।।२४॥

Generally the marriages were organised between the persons belonging to the same caste (सद्यात् कुलात् कल्पमानीतम्). No one wanted to give his daughter to a person of lower caste. Even king Prasenajit could not marry the princess of the Śākyas only because the Śākyas considered themselves superior.

But the inter-caste-marriages were sanctioned with certain reservations. A girl belonging to lower caste could be married to a man of higher caste, but the girl of higher caste could not be married to a man of lower caste. A Brāhmaṇa could marry a girl who is either of Brāhmaṇa or Kṣatriya or Vaiśya or Śūdra caste i.e. a Brāhmaṇa could be married to a girl of any caste. A Kṣatriya could marry a girl belonging to any of the following castes — Kṣatriya, Vaiśya or Śūdra. A Vaiśya could marry a girl who is either Vaiśya or Śūdra, while a Śūdra could marry only a Śūdra girl. Kings, however, so many times, selected beautiful girls of lower castes and made them their queens. King Prasenajit selected a slave's daughter for marriage and made her his second queen.⁴

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1. कनिष्ठिका स्यूद्धेद गूढ़ि चलन्त्या योवितास्तव।
   सा दूत स्वपथित हुत्ता जारेषा रमते पुनः। सावकुशलम्, p. ५४
2. Brhat Samhita, p. 448
3. Avadāna-Śataka, p. 281
4. Divyāvadāna XIX, p. 323
Purdah-system is one of the most important phenomena concerning women. In the Avadāna literature we do not find such instances in abundance where this system is observed. Generally women were free to do whatever they liked. So many ladies dedicated their lives at the altar of religion. Can any one say that these nuns observed queen Tisyā ruled for seven days. Naturally when she ruled she had to discuss problems with people of different walks of life including her ministers, and face many problems. In the Avadāna-Śataka¹ it is mentioned that at a social gathering all the members were invited to attend a function with their wives failing which they had to pay penalty of 500 Purāṇas. At another place it is mentioned that the wife of a trader went with her husband on a business tour.² In Jātaka stories also we find the mention of so many Parivrājikās. Therigāthā, a section of Buddhist literature, abounds in with tales of such nuns, some of whom had attained considerable height in the field of knowledge. They were quite intelligent, and alert. They were not dependent upon any of the male members of their families. Thus we find that in general women did not observe Purdah. Of course, a few instances can be quoted which reveal that some of the women did observe the same. The queen of Roruka observed Purdah. She did not go to the monks for religious lessons. One nun named Šailā, was called for to preach her religious lessons.

Though the bed-rock of social organisation, as inherited from the Vedic Aryans, was, no doubt, the patriarchal family; and the father was its head; yet the place of mother was not the least lower. The princes of the royal blood and sons of the Brāhmaṇas were distinguished by the names of their mothers, e.g., Ajatasattu Veddhiputta, Sāri-putta, Mogga-liputta etc. She was considered the mistress of the family. She

¹. Avadāna-Śataka, LXXX p. 197  
². Divyāvadāna, XXVI p. 237
was held as one of the most respectables of the beings. Any insult, done to her, caused great havoc.\(^1\) Maitrakanyakaka went to hell as a punishment for having offended his mother, and a glowing iron-wheel started revolving around his head.\(^2\) Still more, Yaśodharā had to bear her pregnancy for full six years because once she, when born as an Ābhīra girl, had cheated her mother by giving her the heavier load to carry and she herself carried the lighter load. As her mother had to walk six ‘Krōṣa’ (12 miles) with that heavier load on, she had to carry a child in her womb for full six years. This was the punishment granted to her for deceiving her mother.\(^3\)

Though the Buddhists called women Mātugāma (Sanskrit-Mātṛgrāma) i.e. the mother-folk; they respected them as mothers and held them in high esteem. Yet they tried to avoid their company because they feared that their physical charm might tempt them and thus spoil their morality. In Pāṁśupradānāvadāna Upagupta avoids the company of the courtesan Vāsavaddattā by refusing her invitation of love. In Śārdūlakārnāvadāna\(^4\) Ānanda, with the Lord’s help, succeeded in getting rid of the charming grip of Prakṛti. In Sundarinarandāvadāna\(^5\) Nanda is forced to leave his beloved wife Sundarī.

The woman was considered as property of her husband. The husband had every right to sell her, to donate her and even to kill her. In the Avadāna-Kalpalatā we find many instances where the husbands donated their wives. King Śrīśena gave his queen to an ordinary student, who wanted to give her to his teacher as gift.\(^6\) King Hemacāda donated his queen to a demon.\(^7\) Subhadra killed his wife because it was foretold that

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2. Ibid.
3. *Avadāna-Kalpalatā* p. 484
4. *Divyāvadāna* XXXIII p. 317
5. *Avadāna-Kalpalatā* pp. 85-95
6. Ibid., Pallava 2, p. 20
7. Ibid. Pallava 3, p. 26
she would give birth to an ill-omened child.¹ Viśākha’s brothers killed their wives as they took them as burdens on them.²

The character of some women, as reflected in the Avadāna literature, is steeped in black colour. Some women are shown as very much jealous, sensuous and treacherous. The queen Tiṣyā, out of jealousy, attempted to destroy the Bodhi tree by charms because she had mistaken Bodhi for a woman. She is shown very much sensuous. When she met Kuṇāla in seclusion she offered herself for sexual pleasures and at his refusal she became so much furious that she decided to inflict vengeance and got it done by procuring royal order for his banishment.³ It is mentioned in the Avadāna literature that in order to please her sensual cravings, a woman can go to any extent. So much so that she can kill her husband; make sexual relations with her son even.⁴ In the Avadāna Kalpalatā there is a mention of the wife of Viśākha who killed her husband, who had done so much good to her. So much so, that he went to have rocks melted to cure her headache. Yet she played treachery by leaving the rope upon which her husband Viśākha was hanged.⁵ In the Divyāvadāna also there is the mention of a mother, who in the absence of her husband, gets sexual pleasures by getting herself sexually attached to her own son. She pleads that the women are like paths and holy places. As a path or a holy place, trodden by father, is not restricted for his son likewise, a woman sexually attached to a father, can be attached to his son also. There is nothing wrong in it.⁶ And in order to hide

¹ Divyāvadāna XIX p. 163
² Avadāna-Kalpalatā Pallava 32, p. 220
³ Divyāvadāna XXVII
⁴ Ibid XVIII p. 142
⁵ Avadāna-Kalpalatā p. 221
⁶ A similar description is found in the Jātakas also

यथा नदीं च पन्चवेण च पालाम च सम्भा यथा ।
एवं लोकलिङ्गिणि नाम, नास कुलमन्ति पण्डिता ॥

i. e. As rivers, paths, wine-places, inns, and water places are meant for the use of all without any distinction so also are the women. Anabhirata Jātaka.
this sin, she brings her son round to kill her husband on his arrival and also a monk who knew their illicit relation.\(^1\)

It seems that this blackening of some of the women characters was not without purpose. By showing such black side they wanted to warn the lustful monks to keep aloof from feminine charms, which might overpower their reason.

As polygamy was not uncommon among the kings\(^2\) so jealousies and rivalries among the co-wives prevailed in the Royal harems. Śyāmāvatī the beloved queen of king Udayana was burnt to death by her co-wife for procuring the lost love of King Udayana.\(^3\) Very often the queens remained unsatisfied with their husbands and hence extended their love invitations to others. Tisyā, queen of Aśoka, tried to get the company of Kuṇāla, the son of her co-wife.\(^4\) That is why mostly the Kings were very suscectible about the chastity of their wives. Prasenajit, cut the hands and legs of his brother Kāla, who was alleged to be the violator of his harem.\(^5\)

It seems that the women of the time did not enjoy any type of economic freedom because in the Cūḍāpakṣāvadāna a householder, before leaving his home and starting on a sea-voyage, thinks ‘If I give to my wife surplus (प्रमूहलान्) gold coins (कार्योपणान्) then she will enjoy the company of other men.’\(^6\) Thinking thus he gets his money deposited with one of his friends with the instruction that he should give her money at times when she needed food or clothing.

1. Divyāvadāna XVIII p. 142
2. “With the royalties polygamy was the rule (Even a righteous king like Aśoka had queens more than one) and monogamy the exception.”—Law, B.C. India as described in Early Texts of Buddhism and Jainism p. 168
3. Divyāvadāna XXXVI p. 458
4. Ibid. XXVII p. 262
5. Ibid. XII p. 95
6. Ibid., XXXV P. 436

स: गृहपति: संस्क्रायति यद्यहमस्मै प्रमूहलान् कार्योपणान् दास्यामि।
परसुरामः सार्व विहृतिरिभ्यति। तेन तत्स्य कार्योपणं न दत्तः।
Festivities

The Avadāna literature reflects a very cultured society. The people, who constituted this society, rejoiced themselves by celebrating several festivities. Detailed descriptions about many sources, through which they sought entertainment, are found in the Avadāna literature. Story-telling, hunting, sporting in water, strolling in gardens, recitation, Music and dancing were some of them.

The Avadāna-Śataka mentions a very popular festival called Sālabhaṣaṇī. There it is stated that once the Lord dwelt at Śrāvastī in the Jetagrove. At that very time this festival was celebrated in which several hundred thousands of people gathered there, collected Sāla blossoms, played, made merry and roamed about there. Stating a similar reference from the Nidānakathā Rhys Davids describes—“Now between the two towns (Kapilavatthu and Devadaha) there is an auspicious grove of Sāla trees belonging to the people of both cities, and called Lumbini grove. At that time from the roots to the topmost branches it was one mass of full-blown flowers; and amidst the branches swarms of five-coloured bees, and flocks of birds of different kinds, roamed, warbling sweetly. The whole of Lumbini grove was like a wood of variegated

1. Divyāvadāna VIII p. (Supriya amused Magha with this device.)
2. Ibid XXVIII p. 278, XXX p. 288
3. Ibid XXX p. 287.
5. Ibid VIII p. 68 (Supriya amused Magha by the recitation of some fanciful poems)
6. Ibid XXVII p. 267
7. Ibid XXXVII p. 470
8. Avadāna-Śataka LIII p. 134
creepers, or the well-decorated banqueting hall of some mighty king. The queen beholding it was filled with the desire of disporting herself in the Sāla grove (Sālanakīlām kılītuka-mātā); and the attendants entered the wood with the Queen. When she came to the root of an auspicious Sāla tree, she wanted to take hold of a branch of it. The branch, bending down, like a reed heated by steam, approached within reach of her hand. Stretching out her hand she took hold of the branch, and then the pains came upon her.”

Another festival, named Girivalgusamāgama, is also mentioned in the Avadāna-Śataka. In this festival dramatists from the South came and displayed their performances before the huge gathering, assembled from different parts of the country to attend the festival.

Food and Drink

Food grains, which mostly included rice, barley, wheat, gruel, til, Mudga, Masūra (pulses) etc. vegetables, meat, milk and milk-products such as ghee and curd, butter etc. constituted the main diet of the people. Sugar and mollases also not absent.

After going through the whole set of the Avadāna literature we find that rice-dish was very popular with the

1. Avadāna-Śataka LXXV p. 185

१० तन खलु समवेन राजगृहे नगरे गिरिवल्गुसमागमो नाम पवः प्रत्युपस्थितम्।

2-16. स्त्रोदर्ने सक्तुः कुलमागः मल्यमांसमूः। मुलखानीयं स्कन्धावाक्षानीयम्, पुष्पाक्षानीयम् पुष्पाक्षानीयं फलाधानीयं तिलखानीयं खण्डः।

(Divyāvadāna XI. P. 85)

तिलतप्लुता मुद्रगमाव तवम् गोज्धुर्मयं मसुराः। शालयं सर्पी कपास।

(Ibid p. 2)

श्रीरेण दचनी नवनीतेन सर्पास। सर्पमण्डलाध्वचोकावलो-तप्ताविशीः।

(Ibid., p. 2)
people of the time. Not only was this dish very much popular but was also held in high esteem. At so many places in the Divyāvadāna the words such as (वज्र भक्षण)¹ ‘rice dish is ready’ occurs. Any invitation for dinner or Luncheon was extended to Lord in the following words:

बधिवासवत्तु मे भगवान् द्वेष्टत्तसन्नि भक्तेन सार्थं भिक्षुसंघेन इति ।²

When all the preparations for the luncheon were completed then a messenger was sent to the Lord with the following words:

भदर्त, सज्जन भक्त, यस्येदानार भगवान् कालं मन्यत् इति ।

First of all the Lord was served with rice dish and then after him other monks were also served with the same. It must have been accompanied with either curd or sesame (Til) etc. because words such as दध्योदन³ and तिलोदन also occur at some places. In the Divyāvadāna an edible called Alavāṇikā Kulmāṣapiṇḍikā³ is also mentioned. King Prasenajit once served this dish to the Lord. Perhaps it was some round-shaped thing prepared by barley powder. Kulmāṣa means barley (स्पाद्यावकस्तु कुल्माष Amarakośa). It used to be eaten both salted and plain. It was named as Alavāṇikā when it was plain and Lāvāṇikā when salted. Sometimes it was buttered and sometimes not. When it was not buttered then it was called Rukṣikā.⁵ Pāṇini also mentioned Kulmāṣa as a food which was ceremoniously eaten on a particular day in the year.⁶ Pūpāhāra, modern Pūvā, was also a favourite sweet dish. It was prepared of wheat flour and ghṛtā, and this dainty confectionary was not unknown to Rgveda even.⁷ Pūpalikā⁸ is another name for some confectionary mentioned

1. Divyāvadāna VI pp. 40, 51 etc.
2. Ibid. VI p. 51
3. Ibid. XXVI p. 233/22, p. 234/4, XXXV p. 435/4
4. Ibid. VII p. 55
5. Ibid. p. 54
6. Vide Agrawala, V. S. India as known to Pāṇini p. 108
7. Ibid. 109
8. Avadāna-Śataka p. 226/7, 21
in the Avadāna-Śataka. P.L. Vaidya has translated it as 'Pan-cake', while at places, it is referred as 'a sort of sweet cake'. Perhaps it was some triangular shaped sweet cake prepared of flour and ghṛta. Sweets were given more importance. Molasses and sugar were wellknown. Sweet-balls (शकङ्करामोक्त्क) are also mentioned in the Avadāna literature. One dish called Maṇḍilaka, prepared of sugar and flour is also mentioned. It seems that at the Buddhacandrikā day nonvegetarian food was also eaten. Such reference is found in the Divyāvadāna.

The study of the Avadāna literature also reflects the fact that meat-dish used to be very much popular in those days. In the Asokāvadāna it is mentioned that a huge crowd followed a cow-slaughterer (सोवधातक), who had an ox with him for killing and having flesh of the beast as soon as possible. They were constantly persisting, 'Slaughter this beast as soon as possible, we want its flesh (शीत्रामें चूर्ण घातय, वयं मांसेनाथिन इति). This demand of the public shows how popular the meat dishes were. The mention of the very word 'cow-slaughterer' suggests that cows were slaughtered and consequently beef was eaten by the people. Meat of sheep, tortoise and fish was also eaten by the people.

Days were fixed for slaughtering the animals. The licchavīs had fixed 3 days within a fortnight for slaughtering

1. Divyāvadāna XXXIII p. 368/27,31
2. Ibid. II. p. 18/4
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. XVIII p. 159/15, 16
5. Ibid. VIII p. 58
   (श्रामिष्टमभोगा—बुधचन्द्रिका)
6. Ibid. XI p. 85
7. Ibid. I. 6
8. Ibid. XXXIII p. 380
9. Ibid. p. 370
the animals. The dates of these days were 8th, 14th and 15th, in each fortnight. Thus six days in a month were allowed in which animals could be slaughtered. The animals, whose flesh was used for eating, were very costly. 3000 Kārṣāpaṇas for instance was the price for an ox.

The mention of a dish Soḍaṣagunītamadhupāyasa (सोडसगुनितमधुपायसः), which was served to the Lord by a country-woman, is found in the Avadāna literature. Fried grams and powdered grams (सब्ज) were also some of the foodstuffs prevalent among the poor people of the time. Some people lived on grass only. An intoxicating fruit, eating of which caused slumber for full seven days, is also mentioned in the Dharmarucyāvadāna. At so many places the word पानगुरू occurs which indicates that drinking was also indulged in by the people. ताडि and सुरा words are used for wine. Drinks like sugarcane-juice and sweet syrup were also in vogue. Drinking, though common, yet was not sanctioned as useful in the society.

Clothing

The Avadāna literature gives the sketch of a society which was not unfamiliar either with cotton clothes or with silken clothes. The word used for cotton clothes is Kārpāsa

1. Divyāvadāna p. 85
2. Ibid XI p. 85
3. Ibid XXVII p. 250
4. Ibid XXXIV p. 436
5. Ibid I 4
6. Avadāna-Śataka XII p. 90
7. Divyāvadāna XXXIII p. 387
8. Ibid
9. Ibid XXX p. 284
10. Ibid XXXIII p. 387
11. Ibid XXXII p. 322, Avadāna-Śataka p. 32
12. Ibid XXII p. 474
while that for silken is kauṣeya.\(^1\) The word kṣauma\(^2\) occurs for linen cloth made from the yarn of flax and hemp plants. Urṇā\(^3\) word refers to woollen garments. Other words referring to the clothing, prevalent in the contemporary society, are kāśika\(^4\) (cloth made in kāşi), kauṭumba\(^5\) Śaṇa-Śāṭika,\(^6\) Phuṭṭaka,\(^7\) Amśuka,\(^8\) Paṭṭa,\(^9\) Urṇāduṅkula,\(^10\) Cīna-vastra\(^11\) (cloth made in China), Kambala\(^12\) (blanket), Praśvaraka\(^13\) (uppar scarf), Yamali,\(^14\) Snāna-Śāṭika\(^15\) (to be borne at the time of bathing), Kalyadūṣya,\(^16\) Tuṇḍicela,\(^17\) Potrī\(^18\) and Tasarikā.\(^19\)

Clothes, studded with jewels,\(^20\) were also used in higher strata of society. The cloth, used by royal dignitaries was called Rājārha.\(^21\) Dyeing of Valuable cloths was also not unkown. Mention of king Bimbisāra’s cloths being dyed with the help of smoke, which irritated the women folk of the

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1. Divyāvadāna XXII p. 196, p. 474
2. Ibid XXII p. 196, p. 474
5. Ibid XXVII p. 474
6. Ibid VII p. 52
7. Ibid II p. 17
8. Ibid XVII p. 196, XXX p. 288
9. Ibid XXII p. 196
10. Ibid XII p. 196
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid XIX p. 171
15. Ibid XIX p. 172
16. Ibid XVII p. 133 p. 137
17. Ibid XVII p. 137
18. Ibid XVIII p. 158
19. Ibid XIX p. 170-171
20. Ibid XXII p. 196
21. Ibid XXII p. 196
22. Ibid XXXVII p. 465
family of Jyotiṣka, is also made in the Jyotisṭāvadāna. Colours, in which the cloths were dyed, were mostly blue, yellow and red.

Ornaments

Two words Alamkāra and Abharaṇa are used for the ornaments in the Avadāna literature. The references of ornaments such as Cūḍāmaṇi for crest jewel, Muktāhāra of pearl-necklace, Hāra, Ardahāra for ordinary golden necklace, Kuṇḍala and Kānṇikā for earrings, Āṅgada, Keyūra, Kaṭaka, Valaya etc. for bangles, Āṅguli-mudrīkā, Aṅgulikā-mudrā etc. for finger-rings, Kānci and Mekhalā for women’s girdles, Nūpura for anklets etc. reveal the fact that these and so many other ornaments were commonly used. These ornaments were made of gold. Sometimes these were studded with precious jewels also. Maṇi, Muktā, Vaidürīya, Śaṅkha, Pravāla, Rajata, Jātarūpa, Āsmāgarbha, Musāragalva, Lohitika, Dakṣiṇāvarta etc. are some of the names of

1. Divyāvadāna XIX p. 172
2. Ibid XXX p. 288, XXXV p. 428
3. Ibid II p. 17, XIX p. 163, XXXV p. 428
4. Ibid II p. 17, XIX p. 163, XXX p. 288
5. Ibid XXII p. 196
6. Ibid XXII p. 196
8. Ibid XXVII p. 245
9. Ibid XXII p. 196, XXXVII p. 470
10. Ibid
12. Ibid I p. 16
13. Ibid I p. 5, 7
15. Ibid p. 196, XXXVIII p. 511
16. Ibid XXVI p. 288
17. Ibid XXX p. 296, 298
18. Ibid XIX p. 176, XXX p. 292, 298
20. Ibid XXXVII p. 504,
22. Ibid. XVIII p. 142
precious stones which were used to be studded in the ornaments. Mention of wooden-earrings (Dārūkarnikā),\(^1\) perhaps flower earring (Stavakarnikā),\(^2\) and earrings made of tin (Trapukarnikā)\(^3\) is also found which shows that the ornaments, other than the golden ones, were also prevalent in the society.

Ornaments were used by both male and female alike.\(^4\) Even the animals, at times, were adorned with golden ornaments. Decorating the horns of cows etc. with gold was a common practice in the society\(^5\) as in the days of the the Upaniṣads.\(^6\) Mention of a chariot being decorated with gold and precious stones is also found in the Avadāna literature.\(^7\)

**Cosmetics**

Candana, Kumkum,\(^9\) Karpūra,\(^10\) Agaru-gandha,\(^11\) Cūrṇagandha,\(^12\) Kusumagandha,\(^13\) Dhūpa,\(^14\) Vilepana,\(^15\) etc. are some of the cosmetics which were used as after bath-decorations. Snānodvartana\(^16\) was also a very popular cosmetic,

\(^1\) *Divyāvadāna* II p. 16
\(^2\) Ibid II p. 16
\(^3\) Ibid II p. 16
\(^4\) Ibid I p. 7, XXXVII p. 470, XXII p. 196
\(^5\) Ibid XXII p. 196 (सुवर्णश्रुत्रांस्त्र गावः कामदौहिन्यः)
\(^6\) वृद्धार्ययक्षोपनिष्टूः Ch 3.1.1 स ह गवां सहस्रमवस्रोध दस दस 
\(^7\) Ibid XXII p. 196
\(^8\) Ibid XXII p. 195, XXVII p. 259
\(^9\) Ibid XXVII p. 259
\(^10\) Ibid XXVI p. 259
\(^11\) Ibid XXVI p. 105
\(^12\) Ibid XXII p. 195
\(^13\) Ibid.
\(^14\) Ibid XXXVII p. 491
\(^15\) Ibid XXII p. 196, XXXVII p. 472
\(^16\) Ibid XXX p. 287
used at the time of bathing. Perfumed water was used for bathing.¹ Flowers were also used for decorating the body. Sudhana Kumāra used to wear a garland of blue roses.²

Rights and Duties of Kings:

The Indian political theory is governed by Dharma. धार्मिकः³ and घरमराजः⁴ are the epithets mostly used for the kings in the Avadāna literature. घर्मराजः⁵ is stated to be the ideal of good rule. In this dharmarājya the people flourish and prosper. It is well-populated, free from quarrels, milking-cows and buffaloes are found in abundance in such a kingdom.⁶ In striking contrast to this above-mentioned ideal-rule stands the description of a bad ruler (अघर्मारूपियः) who, by his punishments, killings, arrests etc., always scares the people. The people start leaving his kingdom and settling down somewhere else. It never rains in time in his kingdom. Consequently acute famines break out.⁷ The acuteness of famines can well be imagined by the description which reveals the nature of various types of famines. In the Menḍḥakāvadāna⁸ it is mentioned that there are the following three types of famines:

(1) Caṇcu⁹—When no food-grain is left for eating, then

1. Divyāvadāna XXXVII p. 472
2. Ibid XXX p. 294-295
3. Ibid XXX p. 283 धार्मिकः घर्मराजः घर्म्मेण राज्यः कारयति।
4. Ibid
5. Ibid
6. Ibid, राज्यः कारयति ब्रह्मेण च स्थितं च केम्म च सुभिं च ब्राक्षेष्ट्रः-ब्रह्मवजनमुन्न्यः च शायलक्षिकलहुम्बरावतस्यनुमिन्तरोषेरवत शाली-क्षुण्योमहिसिस्म्पणम्।
7. Ibid XXX p. 283 राजः अघर्मेमूच्छवः चण्डो रमसः कर्क्षोवध्यमेण राजस्तिवासिनां त्वास्यति। अघर्मेमूच्छवः च चास्य देवो न कालेन काले सम्यवारिचारारमुन्तः।
8. Ibid. X p. 82
9. Prof, K. A. Nilakantha Sastrī, holds a different view about it. He has stated in "Gleanings on Social life from
the people start eating the seeds, stored for seeding, and thus save themselves from death by starvation.

(2) Śvetāsthi—When the situation of famine is so severe that nothing remains for eating, not even seeds, then the people start melting the bones to such an extent that those bones become white and then they drink mixture. This type of famine is called Śvetāsthi i.e. white bones.

(3) Śalākā-Virūti—When the starving people derive pieces of rice, sugar etc. from the holes with the help of Śalākā (stick) and eat them. This situation is called Śalākā-Virūti,

The kings were duty-bound for providing food for everyone during the time of famine. King Kanakavarna provided the same for full twelve years. ¹ King Rudrayana of Roruka was such an ideal king, as was very much devoted to his subjects.² In the like manner his subjects also were very much sincere towards him. When he retired from his royal responsibilities, he entrusted his kingdom to prince Śikhaṇḍi and advised him to rule with dharma.³ As the social and economic happiness of the people was dependent upon the king’s being virtuous, they were advised to be so. These virtuous kings used to treat their subjects with the father-like affection.⁴

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*the Avadāna Literature* (P. 24-25) thus: “Caṇcu is employed for casket; men put grain in a casket and leave it as provision for the dead with the idea that they will live upon it in after-life; being connected with the casket this famine is called ‘Casket’........People are supposed to rummage the graves of the dead and eat the grain found in casket there as burial offerings.”

1. *Divyāvadāna* XX p. 180
2. Ibid XXXVII p. 472/8 ‘श्रुतिकोरजनपदोस्ता राजा’
3. Ibid p. 472/16-17 पुत्र, मया थरं में कार्यमणीयम्, वेन में इयन्तिप्रात्विश्राणां पृष्ठोजयावद्यानि। तत्तयापि थरं राज्यं कार्यमित्रेः।
4. Ibid X 82/14 एकप्रचारस्वत्व राज्यं पालयति।
Virtue-less kings had to undergo the sufferings of hell. Hence Mahāprāṇāda was advised by Śakra to rule virtuously and avoid hellish sufferings.¹ The virtuous kings respected the reasonable suggestions of their ministers while those virtue-less-ones condemned every suggestion—right or wrong—of their ministers and did what they liked. King Śiṅghada, after getting enthroned, started reigning with injustice. Ministers Hiru and Bhiru suggested him to reign with justice. He laughed at their suggestion. Thrice they suggested to change his way of injustice and to follow the path that is noble and just. King Śiṅghada, at this, got angry with them, drove them out of ministership and engaged such new ministers as would follow him—unjust and cruel.² Such kings were very cruel and did not listen to any suggestion which went against their wishes. King Vīruḍhaka killed his son because the later suggested him to kill the Śākyas as they were originally his relatives.³

The princes were enthroned after the death of their fathers, the reigning kings. Prince Māndhātā was coronated at the death of his father king Upoṣadha.⁴ If the king died issueless then the people selected some worthy person and made him king. When the king of Uṭpālavatī died issueless, the ministers selected Rūpāvata and enthroned him.⁵ "The princes of the royal blood were generally eager, at the instigation of others, to secure the throne at the expense of their fathers, the reigning king."⁶ Ajātaśatru conspired with Deva-

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1. *Divyāvadāna* III 36/6-7
   मा श्रवणेन राज्यं कारय, मा नरकपरायणो भविष्यसीति।
2. Ibid XXXVII p. 477
3. *Avadāna-Kalpalatā* p. 104
5. Ibid XXXII p. 309
6. *India as described in Early texts of Buddhism and Jainism* B.C. Law p. 169
datta against his father Bimbisāra and without caring for other loyal ministers arrested and killed him. References are not wanting of such princes as were very much indifferent about coronation. Prince Māndhātā, when called for coronation by the ministers after the death of his father Upoṣadha, did not rush to them saying, "If this coronation is legal, let it come to me by itself."

The ceremony of coronation was celebrated by making the person being coronated sit on a jewelled-chair. At the coronation ceremony of Prince Māndhātā a Yakṣa, named Devaukasa, was ordered to bring one रत्नशिला and श्रीपाण्ड. A coronated king was called पञ्चककुद and he bore the following five signs of kingship:—Turban, Umbrella sword, small fan and shoes. King Bimbisāra used to leave these five marks of royalty outside the entrance when he visited the place of the Lord. Every Caitragartī king possessed seven treasures: The wheel, the elephant, the horse, the previous time, the woman, the house-hold, and the leadership. The kings were very much helpful to their subjects particularly in connection with some religious act. King Kṣema not only sanctioned the erection of a Stūpa but sent protectors also to defend them from the disturbances caused by the Brāhmaṇas.

1. Divyāvadāna XIX p. 170
2. Ibid XVII p. 130
3. Ibid XVII p. 130
4. Ibid XII p. 91
5. Ibid उपपीत, छत्र, सदगापादि, बालव्यजन, उपात्तः
6. Ibid
7. Ibid III p. 36 see also Ibid XI p. 87 & XVII p. 1
   "चकरलं हस्तिर्लथवर्तनं मणिरत्नं स्वरीरत्नं गृहपतिरत्नं परिपावकरत्तमेव सप्तभा"
8. Ibid XVIII p. 150
As regards the sex-life of these kings, polygamy was the fashion of the day. King Udayana married two chief queens—Śyāmāvatī and Anupāmā. Besides these two, he possessed other 500 queens also in harem. King Kanakavarna is said to be in the possession of 20,000 queens. These kings are said to be ruled over by the queens. Their harems were divided into three categories—senior, Middle and Junior.

Generally, their relations to other kings were quite friendly. Rudrāyaṇa, king of Roruka sent a gift as a token of friendship to king Bimbisāra. Bimbisāra reciprocated the same.

Ministers and Officials

The Minister held very important place in the administrative machinery. It was he who guided the king in his moments of utter confusion. When king Aśoka was checked by his grandson Sampadi for his act of excessive donation to the Saṅgha, he, in a state of utter confusion, asked his minister Rādhagupta, "Say, who is the ruler at present?". Rādhagupta fell on his feet quite devotedly and with folded hands replied, "Your majesty is the ruler." It was he who could not stand any calamity either upon king or upon kingdom. The minister named Mahā-Candra of king Candraprabha, in order to save the king from the feared consequences of evil dreams, got a jewelled head built for giving any one who might come to ask for the head of king Candraprabha.

1. Divyāvadāna XXXVI p. 465-456
2. Ibid XX p. 180
3. Ibid XXXVI p. 457 (स्थिरवशग राजानः)
4. Ibid XXXVI p. 452 (घृष्ठक, मध्यम, कनीयस)
5. Ibid XX p. 180
6. Ibid XXIX p. 211 ततो राजा अशोको राधगुप्तमुवाच कथय राधगुप्त, कः सामप्रति पृथिवियामिश्रवः? अश्र राधगुप्तोशकस्य पादयो-निपत्य क्षतान्यालिसवाच—देव: पृथिवियामिश्रवः।
7. Ibid. XXII p. 201
Social Life

guided the kings whenever they found them going at wrong paths. Ministers, named Hiru and Bhiru, suggested king Śikhanḍi, who ruled with injustice, to rule with justice.¹ Minister Yaśas of king Aśoka suggested him not to pay royal homage to the monks belonging to low castes.²

Some instances, referring to the cruel acts of wicked ministers, are also found in the Avadāna literature. At Taxila the citizens said to Kuṇāla "we are against neither Kuṇāla, nor king Aśoka, but these wicked ministers who insult us."³ Aśoka also was informed in a like manner, when he was sent by his father Bimbisāra to Taxila.⁴

Exact number of ministers, which a king had is not known. King Candraprabha is stated to have a cabinet of 6500 ministers⁵ while king Kanakavarṇa, it is stated, had 18000 ministers.⁶ These two references simply suggest a good number of ministers. The Prime-minister was called Agrāmātya⁷ In addition to ministers, the following were other officials who helped in the proper functioning of administrative machinery—

| अद्याभासात्मक | Prime Minister |
| राजमत्य | Minister |
| भाषागारिक | Store-keeper |
| कोष्ठागारिक | Treasurer |

1. Divyāvadāna XXXVII p. 484
2. Ibid. XXVII p. 242
3. Ibid. XXVII p. 263. 'न वयं कुमारस्य विश्वदा न राज्जोक्तस्य, ब्रजि तु कुष्टातमानोस्मात्माय आराग्यास्माकमपमान कुव्रित।'
4. Ibid. XXVI p. 234. 'न वयं कुमारस्य विश्वदा नाति राज्जो बिन्दु-सारस्य, अर्पि तु कुष्टात्मात्मा अयस्माकं परिभवं कुव्रित।'
5. Ibid. XXII p. 197
6. Ibid. XX p. 197
7. Ibid. XXII p. 180
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid. XXIX p. 279
11. Ibid X P. 82, XXVI p. 462
The Royal seal was given very much importance. Any order, bearing that mark, was not to be disobeyed at any cost. It was the wrong use of this very seal which made queen Tiṣya successful in her intrigue.15

1. Divyāvadāna XX p. 181
2. Ibid. XXXVI p. 457
3. Ibid. XX P. 181, XXXV P. 430.
4. Ibid. XXVI p. 245
5. Ibid XIX p. 170
6. Ibid XXXVI P. 461
7. Ibid VII p. 56
8. Ibid p. 479
9. Ibid. XXXVII p. 479
10. Ibid. XXXIII p. 347/26
11. Avadāna-Śataka XXXVIII p. 97
12. Dihyāvadāna XXXIII P. 347
13. Ibid. XXXIII p. 359
14. Ibid XXVI P. 235
15. Ibid XXVI P. 264
Administrative Organization

Several forms of constitutional governments have been in operation at different periods of Indian history in different parts of the country. But monarchy seems to be the most prevalent form according to which the monarchs held the supreme authority. Generally these monarchs succeeded according to heredity, but at times these were elected also. King Māndhātā\(^1\) succeeded through heredity while king Rūpāvata\(^2\) was elected by the ministers. The ministers helped these monarchs in administration. Many officials also were engaged to assist them. The king was the pivot around whom the whole machinery of administration revolved. Administration and Judiciary were directly under the supervision of the king. The king's word was the last word in executive and judicial matters.

Mention of Gaṇa-rule, as opposed to monarchy, is also found in the Avadāna-Śataka. It is stated there that when the king of the Deccan asked the merchants from the middle country of northern India, who had gone to the Deccan in the time of the Buddha, as to who was the king in northern India, they replied:—“देव केचिद्रेशा गणाधीना: केचिद्राजाधीना:”\(^3\) i.e., Lord, some countries are under Gaṇas and some under kings. Thus it is evident from the above reference that the states were divided into two classes viz. having gaṇa-rule and being ruled over by a king. The order in which these states are mentioned suggests the superiority of the former over the latter. About the election of head-man of the Gaṇa Prof. Rhys Davids states, "A single chief how and for what period chosen we do not know, was elected as office-holder, presiding over the state."\(^4\) Anyhow, it should be made clear that sovereignty did not rest in one hand in these Gaṇas as in monarchy.

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1. Divyāvadāna XVII p. 36
2. Ibid. XIX p. 170
3. Avadāna-Śataka LXXXVII p. 220
4. 1911. 911! 1st India p 19
Intelligence service was given great importance. It was through Cārapuruṣa that the king gathered all the informations related to their business. King Prasenājit, after being defeated by Ajātaśatru, appointed Cārapuruṣa in the public to know their opinion about him.¹

Grāma, Nagar, Nigama, Karvaṭa and Rājadhānī etc. were some of the civic-divisions formed for the proper functioning of the administrative organization. Pallīs and Pattanas also were the two other divisions, prevalent at that time. Small settlements were called Pallīs. “The distinction between these and the places called kharvaṭas and Pattanas is not clear, though the grāma seems to be smaller than the kharvaṭa, which in turn is smaller than the Nagar. Perhaps village, town, city would represent the series”.² Grāmaṇipī was in charge of a village.³ Kārvatic was the officer-in-charge of a karvaṭa.⁴ In charge of Nigama was called Nigama.⁵ Rājadhānī was the biggest and best of all the divisions. Rājadhānī of Kanakāvati of king Kanakavarna was 12 yojanas in length and 7 yojanas in width. In addition to it his kingdom consisted of 80,000 Nagaras, 18 kulakoṭis, 57 villages and 60,000 Karvaṭas. This description is of course somewhat ridiculous and hence should be taken with a grain of salt. When the king left his Rājadhānī for some reason or the other, then he did establish one of his ablest ministers in his place. King Udayana established Mākandika in his place.⁶ Each of these civic-divisions⁷ was, though autono-

1. Avadāna-Śataka X p. 27 राज राजा प्रसेनजीतकौशल्येन स्वविषये चारुमृष्या समस्तत उत्सुप्पदा: द्विपुत जनप्रवादानिनि।
3. Divyāvadāna XX p. 131.
4. Ibid. XXXI p. 46
5. Ibid. XXXVI p. 454
6. Ibid XX p. 180
7. Ibid. XXVI p. 457 राज राजा माकंडिक: स्थापित:।
mous, was yet "under the overlord of the king who administered justice and laid taxes." The in-charges of these divisions, at times, rebelled against kings. When such occasions arose, the kings either directly or through forces, suppressed these rebelling in-charges. A Kārvāṭika agitated against king Udayāna. He did send his force thrice but all in vain. Then the king was advised by his ministers to go personally and suppress that Kārvāṭika as soon as possible lest he should grow stronger in his opposition to king. Then the king, accompanied by all the warriors, went there and suppressed that agitation. King Dhana also had to send his force seven times for suppressing a Kārvāṭika who had become a traitor to the king. At last king Dhana did send Prince Sudhana to do the same.

In matters of disputes it was the king who acted as Judge. Both the parties, involved in the dispute, were called forth, and after listening to the contentions of both, the king used to give his judicial verdict. In the dispute, which arose between Pūrṇa and other merchants, both were called forth. First of all the merchants were asked to explain the reason as to why they had imposed a fine upon Pūrṇa. They deposed by saying that since Pūrṇa had acted in contravention to the resolution of the committee of merchants, a fine was being imposed upon him. Then Pūrṇa was asked to explain why he did violated that resolution. He said, "As neither I nor any of my brothers was invited into that meeting of the merchants, in which the resolution was passed, so neither I nor any of my brothers is bound to act according to the resolution, passed in that meeting." Then the king, after listening to the views of both the contending parties gave his verdict in favour of Pūrṇa.

As regards the administration and judicial business of Gana—or republic. Prof. Rhys Davids states that it was carried out in public assembly, at which young and old were

1. Divyāvadāna XXXVI p. 456 यदि देवः स्वयमेव न गच्छति, स्थान- मेततत्त्वते यतू सर्वभासो दुर्देश्यो भविष्यति।
2. Divyāvadāna XXX p. 289
3. Ibid. II p. 20
alike present in their common Mote Hall (Santhāgāra) "1 These Gaṇas had their own laws." The Laws of the Gaṇas are called by the Law books Samaya, which literally means a decision or a resolution arrived at in an assembly (from सम्+ —हि = "to come together"). that is, the Laws of the Gaṇas were passed in their meetings."2

Revenues constituted the main source of income to the royal treasury. Land-revenue was collected from the farmers and the kings were very much particular about this main source of state-income. King Mahāpranāśa, when found agriculture suffering and thus land-revenue decreasing, did destroy the yūpa which had become the main distracting factor for the farmers from their work of agriculture.3 Industrial products were also subject to taxation.4 The officer-in-charge who collected taxes, was called Śulka-Śalika and his office was called Śulka-sālā.5 The merchants, trading over seas also had to pay the shipping-duty, called Tarpanya-Śulka.6 For the proper functioning of the system of tax-collection, the whole kingdom was divided into four parts, and every part had to maintain its independent accounts. King Kṛtika donated the the whole tax, collected from eastern part of his kingdom, for the construction and repairing of four-jewelled Caitya.7 Some of the kings exempted a section of public from taxation. King Kanakāvarṇa of Kanakāvatī exempted all the traders from taxation.8

War was not unknown to the royal-highness of the day. King Dhana Sammata could not bear the description of flourishing, prosperous, well-populated and perfectly peaceful

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1. Davids, Rhys. *Buddhist India* p. 19
2. Jayaswal, K. P. *Hindu Polity* Part I and II p. 16
3. Divyāvadāna III p. 36
4. Ibid. XIX p. 170
5. Ibid. XIX p. 170
6. Ibid. I p. 2, II p. 20
7. Ibid. I p. 13
8. Ibid. XX p. 181
kingdom of king Väsava and, out of jealousy, waged a war against him.\(^1\) His army, called Balakāya,\(^2\) consisted of the following four types of forces;—\(^3\)

1. हस्तिकाय : the elephant corps
2. गंगोकाय : the Cavalry
3. रथकाय : the chariots
4. पत्तिकाय : Infantry.

All the above-mentioned four types of forces were counted under the single name Caturāṅgabalakāya चतुरंगबलकाय

The following is the list of some of the arms and ammunitions used during these wars:—

खड्ग\(^5\) or ब्रसिः\(^6\) : sword
मुशाल\(^7\) : club
तोमरः\(^8\) : iron-club
पाशः\(^9\) : fetter
चकः\(^10\) : a sharp circular missile weapon
शरः\(^11\) : arrow
घनुषः\(^12\) : bow
ग्रंकुशः\(^13\) : hook

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1. Divyāvadāna III p. 38
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid XXXVI p. 454
5. Ibid. XXX p. 290
6. Ibid. XXVI p. 235
7. Ibid. XXX p. 290
8. Ibid. XXX p. 290
9. Ibid. XXX p. 290
10. Ibid XXX p. 290
11. Ibid, XXXVII p. 490
12. Ibid. XXXVII p. 460
13. Ibid. III P. 35, XXVII p. 249
Defensive measures were also taken for protection. A protective coat, called Mañivarma, was used, which had the following five peculiarities, mentioned in the Rudrāyaṇāvadāna:

1. It became hot in winter and cold in summer.
2. It could not be pierced through.
3. It could not be broken.
4. It was poison-proof.
5. It glittered with splendour.

Common Offences and punishments

Mentioned below are some of the offences, common in the society and the prevention of which was imposed upon every true Brāhmaṇa:

i. Theft of gold
ii. Drinking
iii. Violation of the teacher’s wife
iv. Killing a Brāhmaṇa

Anyone, who committed any of the above-mentioned four offences, was ostracised by the society. None, in the society offered him any seat to sit down and water to drink. He was forced to remain an outcaste until he, by following a set pattern of regulations, put forth for the purpose, again became a Brāhmaṇa. For full twelve years he had to wear

1. Divyāvadāna III p. 35
2. Ibid. XXX p. 290
3. Ibid XXVII p. 270
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid XXXVII p. 465
animal’s skin, lunch in the scalp of a dead person and stand head-long.¹

Dishonouring the personalities, held in high esteem, was also taken as an offence, punishment for which was only death. King Aśoka ordered to slaughter all the Ājīvikas and as a consequence 1800 Ājīvikas were slaughtered within one day just for the reason that they did show disrespect to a Buddha image. Further, it is also mentioned that he burnt the whole family of a Nirgrantha alive because he had dishonoured the image of Lord Buddha by throwing the same at the feet of a Nirgrantha.² He also burnt his 500 queens because they had destroyed the tree Aśoka which was very dear to him.

Adultery was also one of the common offences the punishment of which was death. There is the mention, of an adulterer who was sentenced to death by the king. The description of his punishment furnishes a somewhat pictorial details which brings to light so many facts regarding the process of death-sentence. First of all he, surrounded by blue-dressed armed men, was made to visit all the streets, roads and squares accompanied with the announcement of his offence. Then he was made to enter the city by the southern gate and then he was punished to death.⁴ This description of the criminal, led to the execution ground for being executed, has its parallel in the Sanskrit drama entitled Mṛćchakaṭīka.⁵ The criminal’s bearing the garland of kārvīra and his being led through the streets and squares to the execution ground is mentioned at both the places. Manu states that the king should punish the

¹ Divyāvadāna XXXII pp. 322-323.
² Ibid, XXVIII p. 277
³ Ibid. XXVII p. 279.
⁴ Avadāna-Śataka XVIII स राजपुरुष्यंनामबरवस्मेक्ष्टतस्मैः
कारवीरामालकबद्धकेगुणोऽर्थयाबीष्टवर्शुरघातैःवन्तःवायमाणो
दक्षिणेन नगर-हरिर्या ग्रामनीयते।
⁵ Mṛćchakaṭīkam X śloka 2
दत्तकस्वीरदामकृत्यान्निहत्याभावामि।
दीप इव नन्दलेठः स्तोत्रं स्तोत्र क्षयं याति॥
adulterer by cutting his nose, lips etc. and banishing him out of his kingdom. For a girl, who commits similar offence Manu suggests that she should be left at the mercy of hungry dogs.

If a person committed some anti-social act, he was ostracised by the society. Slogans against that person were raised in the streets and court-case too was filed against him in the royal-court. Jyotiṣka's maternal uncles threatened his father, who had murdered his wife, that if he would not keep his son Jyotiṣka, whom he had left for the fear of his anticipated ill-luck, with him in his own home, he would be ostracised by the society. Then no one would speak to him.

Punishments were very severe in those days. Mutilation was one of the commonest punishments. Prasenajit ordered the mutilation of his brother Kāla, who was held the violater of Prasenajit’s ladies chamber. Having his legs and hands cut down, he was thrown in the middle of the street. We also learn from the Avadāna literature that Vāsavadattā, the celebrated courtesan, was mutilated and thrown outside the city-gates for murdering one of her paramours.

Other modes of punishment, recorded in the Avadāna literature, are cutting of head with the help of an axe, plucking of eyes with the help of sharp nails, mutilation of nose with the help of a weapon called Krakacha, cutting of tongue with the help of a sharp knife and making one lifeless by poisoning.

1. *Manu Smṛti* VII Śloka 352

2. Ibid VIII Śloka-371

3. *Divyāvadāna* XIX p. 168

4. Ibid. XII P. 95

5. Ibid. XXVII p. 219

6. Ibid XXVII p. 219
Breaking of bones with the help of a pestle after putting the body in a mortar, was also one way of punishing.¹

In the context of these references we must not forget the Jatugṛha, the place of torture. Asoka ordered that queen Tiśyā, who had cruelly and treacherously taken off the beautiful eyes of prince Kuṇāla, be burnt alive in the Jatugṛha.² In the Pāṃśupradānāvadāna the mention of a Yantramayahasti (यन्त्रमयहस्ती), who was engaged on the eastern front by Asoka for protection, is made.³ It seems this Jatu word also stands for यन्त्र and complete word becomes Yantragraḥa (यन्त्रग्रह) which means some house in which the instruments of torture were kept.

Professions

Trade and agriculture seem to be the main sources of income of the people as reflected in the descriptions found in the Avadāna literature. There are good many references to show that commerce used to be one of the most popular means of livelihood adopted by the people. A vast section of society depended for its requirements upon agriculture. This section of society was called कर्मका: They used to earn their livelihood by toiling very hard. Balasena is said to be always busy with his agricultural responsibilities.⁴ Animal-husbandary was also a source of income. The use of words such as पशुपालक and गोपालक reflects this very fact.⁵ The incident of king Candraprabha’s donation of golden horned cows reveals the fact that the cow used to be one of the most popular animal with these animal-husbands.⁶ The potters built clay-pots and thus

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1. Divyāvadāna XXVI P. 237
2. Ibid XXVII P. 270
3. Ibid XXVI P. 235.
4. Ibid I P. 2
5. Ibid XXXVII P. 485
6. Ibid XXII P. 196
earned their livelihood.\textsuperscript{1} The weavers,\textsuperscript{2} spinners,\textsuperscript{3} sailors,\textsuperscript{4} astrologers,\textsuperscript{5} medical practitioners,\textsuperscript{6} painters,\textsuperscript{7} hunters,\textsuperscript{8} cowslaughterers,\textsuperscript{9} meat-sellers,\textsuperscript{10} scent-sellers,\textsuperscript{11} soldiers,\textsuperscript{12} hairdressers\textsuperscript{13} gardeners,\textsuperscript{14} bird-hunters,\textsuperscript{15} architects,\textsuperscript{16} etc. were some other prominent professionals who pursued their vocations and earned their livelihood.

Most of these professions, were based upon heredity. The son of a farmer became a farmer and the son of a trader, a trader. By this hereditary practice of the professions some of the professions became localised. Localities were named according to the professions. People of the same profession lived in the same locality.\textsuperscript{17} Hence such names of the localities as मूलकवीरसी\textsuperscript{18} etc. came into being.

\begin{enumerate}
\item Divyāvadāna XXXV p. 434, 442
\item Ibid XIX p. 171 (कुक्कुलः)
\item Ibid XXVI p. 235 (तत्त्रवायः)
\item Ibid XVIII p. 152 (कर्णघारः)
\item Ibid XXXVII p. 485
\item Ibid II p. 15 (वेष्ठः)
\item Ibid XXXVII p. 466 (विश्वकारः)
\item Ibid XXXVII p. 490 (कुष्ठः), XXX p. 284
\item Ibid XI p. 85 (गोवतः)
\item Ibid XXXV p. 439 (सौकरिकः) I P. G (सौरञ्जकः)
\item Ibid XXVI p. 218 (गान्धिकः)
\item Ibid XXXVI p. 457 (शस्त्रोपजीबी)
\item Ibid XXVI p. 233 (नापिती)
\item Ibid XVIII p. 153 (मालाकारः)
\item Ibid XXXVI p. 456 (:शाकुरिकः)
\item Ibid XIX L. 178. (स्थपतिः)
\item Law, B.C. India as described in the Early Texts of Buddhism and Jainism. P: 180. “Those, who followed a common profession, were led by a gregarious instinct to settle down or live in one and the same locality, from which circumstance the localities came to be distinguished as Vaḍḍhakigāma. Kammāragāma, Kumbhakāragāma, and the like.”
\item Ibid XXI p. 188
\end{enumerate}
Within the country there were āpanas or shops where produce, both agricultural and industrial, was brought to and displayed for sale. "The commodities in these āpanas were textile fabrics, groceries and oil, green groceries, grains, perfumes and flowers, articles of gold and jewellery, carriage arrows etc. The howkers carried their wares for sale in portable trays."1

We cannot say anything definite about the nature of the articles of export and import. The word समुद्रगमनीयम्, पवयम् occurs for the articles to be exported. The Śroṇakoṭikarnāvadāna states that the sea-merchants went to some Ratnadvipa wherefrom they loaded their ship with precious pearls after examining each-one.2 Some of the names of these precious stones which were imported in the country:—Maṇi, Muktā, Vaidūrya, Śāṅkhā, Pravāla, Aśmagarba, Musāragalva, Lohitika and Dakṣināvarta (मिश्र, मुक्ता, वैदुर्य, शंख, प्रवाल, शास्मगर्भ, मुसारगल्व, लोहितिक and दक्षिणावर्त).3 The mention of some scented wood, called गोशीर्षचन्दन also occurs as an article for import.4

The overseas and foreign trades flourished along with the inland-trade. The traders of the time organised themselves into units, called सार्थ. The number, constituting a Sārtha is stated to be of 500 traders. The leader of the सार्थ was called सार्थवाह. He was responsible for the security of his whole सार्थ. Supriya, the सार्थवाह when asked by a group of thieves to leave the members of his सार्थ at their mercy and to save his own life, did not leave them.5 Whenever some सार्थवाह intended to start for a sea-voyage, he used to make a public announcement that who-so-ever wanted to accompany should

1. Law, B.C. India as described in Early Texts of Buddhism and Jainism p. 189
2. Divyāvadāna I p. 3
3. Ibid. II p. 25-26
4. Ibid II p. 25-26
5. Divyāvadāna VIII p. 63
come with his goods. No fare was to be charged. The bells were rung to make the announcement more effective. These traders carried their goods through land-routes and water-routes. Three types of vehicles for carrying goods along land-routes are mentioned in the Avadāna literature. The first-one is that which is drawn by elephants, the second-one is that which is drawn by horses and the third-one is that which is drawn by asses. Balasena selected the third-one for his son Koṭīkarnā because he found asses to be the most sensible and the most delicate of the three. At another place it is mentioned that goods were packed into loads, bundles, and baskets and were loaded on the backs of camels, oxen and asses. Carts too were used for transportation to the seaport.

The ships of the time seem to be very big, because no small ship can have a capacity of boarding 500 merchants. These ships, it seems, were guided by wind. That is why so many times these ships did not turn into the desired directions. As we can observe in Pūrṇāvadāna that Dārukarṇī’s ship was deviated by the unfavourable wind to Gośīrśavāna.

The path to the sea-port was not devoid of all dangers. It is stated that robbers often troubled these merchants constituted in a Sārtha. Balasena, fearing these dangers, advised his son Koṭīkarnā to be in the middle of the sārang because the front and back side of the sārang are attacked by strong and weak robbers respectively.

The sea-routes also had their own dangers. Some monstrous fish often caused ship-wrecks. Sometimes pirates (naval thieves) also appeared in blue-dresses and committed piracy. Thus the life of the mariners was never safe. That

1. Divyāvadāna II P. 20
2. Ibid P. 2-3—बलसेनो नाम गृहपति: संलक्षयति—की देशन यानेन श्रोण: कोटिकर्ण यास्यति ? स संलक्षयति—स चेद दृश्यति:, हर्त्तन: सुकुमारा दुर्मेलास्वच्छ, प्रश्व ग्राम्भ सुकुमारा दुर्मेलास्वच्छ, गदेभा: स्मृतिमन्त: सुकुमारास्वच्छ गदेभयानेन गच्छलिति।
3. Ibid II P. 25
4. Ibid I P. 3
5. Ibid XVIII P. 143
is why parents discouraged their sons to take up this career. Kṣīrakarna's mother did not want him to start for a sea-voyage so she started weeping when she learnt that he was going for the same. \(^1\) Auspicious rites were performed while starting on such journeys. Maitrakanyaka's mother too never wanted her son to adopt the profession of her husband and hence, kept a secret of his paternal profession. Later on when he came to know of the fact he asked for her permission for a sea-voyage. At this she burst into tears, "Who has told you of this truth? Who wants to play havoc with your life? I have not yet recovered from my previous misery. Now who are those sinful enemies who want to hurl misery upon me for the second time?" \(^2\) The son, unmindful of her tears, went on his voyage.\(^3\)

In spite of all the dangers, so many courageous merchants undertook these voyages many a times. Pūrṇa and Supriya very successfully completed their sea-voyages for seven times.\(^4\) Some merchants were accompanied by their wives also. One woman is stated to have given birth to a son, named Samudra in the sea.\(^5\)

These traders had their own guilds and they, at times, held conferences in order to recommend or condemn some rule or regulation. In the Pūrṇāvadāna we find that the traders held a conference in which they passed a resolution that 'no single trader should be given a chance to buy all the goods of a whole ship but every trader should be given a chance to buy, so that the articles of the whole ship should not be monopolised by one man but should reach different traders. All the traders should go collectively and buy according to their requirements.' \(^6\) This rule was passed in order that the whole

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1. Divyāvadāna I p. 3
2. Ibid XXXVIII p. 497
3. Ibid XXXVIII p. 497
4. Ibid II p. 21
5. Ibid VIII p. 64
6. Ibid. XXVI p. 237
7. Ibid II p. 19
should not concentrate in one hand or a few hands. In these conferences only the eminent traders were invited. In the above mentioned conference neither Pūrṇa nor any of his brothers was invited as they were not considered eminent. Those, who did not attend the conference, were not bound to abide by the rules and regulations passed by such conferences. Pūrṇa, when fined of 60 Kārṣāpaṇas by the trader's union for his violation of its rule, argued before the king, who was on the seat of Judge, "As neither I nor any of my brothers was invited in that conference, so none of us is bound to act according to the rules passed by them."

The age of the spread of Buddhism is said to be the age of religious excitement. Different religious sects came into being, and all those sects depended upon monarchs, merchants, householders and country-folk for their indispensable needs of daily-life such as clothing, food, shelter and medical aid in sickness. These monarchs, merchants, householders and country-folk distributed a good part of their wealth among these heretics belonging to different religious sects. This fact is revealed by a talk, which took place among the leaders of six then-prevalent religious sects viz. Pūrṇa Kaśyapa, Maskari Gosāliputra, Saņjayee Vairatīputra, Ajita Kesakambala, Kakuda Kātyāyana and Nirgrantha Jñātiputra. They became worried about the growing popularity of the Buddha and pondered over the situation caused by this growing popularity of the Buddha:

यदा श्रमणो नैतिमो लोकेष्वराद्यन, तद्व वय सत्यात्मां भूमिताेवरुकुरु गुर्गुर्गृहवीराजा अपत्ताक्षरं भूमिताः रज्ज्जात्राक्षरं भूमिताः रज्ज्जात्राक्षरं भूमिताः रज्ज्जात्राक्षरं भूमिताः रज्ज्जात्राक्षरं भूमिताः रज्ज्जात्राक्षरं भूमिताः

i.e. Before the advent of the Buddha, we all rejoiced in the honour and maintenance supplied by the kings, ministers,

1. Divyāvadāna II p. 19
2. Ibid II p. 20
3. Ibid. XII p. 89
Brāhmaṇas, householders, guilds, country-folk, śresṭhis and merchants. At that time we received our daily wants of clothing, food, shelter, bed, seat, medical aid etc. from these people.

Some of the kings were interested in the performance of Yajñas. In these Yajñas various valuable gifts were distributed among the religious persons. King Vāsava got a Yajña performed for full twelve years and gave the following five gifts to a student at the completion of that Yajña:—

1. a golden stick and a water-pot (सौवर्णक दण्डकमण्डलु)
2. a golden pot (सौवर्णा सपात्री)
3. a cot, decorated with four types of jewels (चतुरतमयी श्रावण)
4. 500 kārṣāpañās (पंचकार्षिकाशतानि)
5. A girl, adorned with jewels (कल्या सर्वाधिकारिनीशक्ति)

Some kings distributed food, clothing, animals, ornaments etc. among the needies. Golden-drums were beaten for the announcement which called forth the needies. King Candraprabha distributed food, garlands, creams, clothing, beds, seats, umbrellas, chariots, ornaments, golden-horned cows, boys and girls decorated with ornaments etc. among the needies. A merchant, named Mitra, also used to distribute his wealth among beggars.

Spending a part of money on building the stūpas, Caityas, Yūpas etc. was also the fashion of the day. King Candraprabha built four Mahāyajñavāta with umbrella, flag, Yūpa, banner etc. on all the four gates of the city.

The Buddhist Sanghas also, not unlike other sects, depended for their daily needs of clothing, food, bed, seat, medical aid etc. upon these very donations from both the monarchs and the commoners. King Aśoka indulged into excessive donation to the Buddhist Saṅgha, so much so that he

1. *Divyāvadāna* XVIII P. 152.
2. Ibid XXII P. 196
3. Ibid XXXVII P. 493
4. Ibid XXII P. 196
reduced to the state of possessor of half Āmalaka fruit (प्रायोगिकादकेश)."

India has been a land of agriculture. A large number of its population depends upon it. The importance of agriculture is well reflected in the Avadāna literature. It is stated to be the chief occupation of the inhabitants of the Jambudvīpa. These people, called Karṣaka worked very honestly. Balsena very honestly toiled on his Land. The mention of words such as Karṣanakarma, Karṣaka, Kāṣṭaka, Kṣetra, Kedār, Hala, Langal, Pratodayaśi, Halaśira, Sīra karṣakam, karṣaka, karṣaka, kṣetra, kēdāra, hula, laṅga, pratodayakēdāra, hulaśiro, or sīra reveals the fact that the society of the time was well aware of the science of agriculture. Yava, Vṛihī, Til, Tandula, Śāli, Śvāmaka, Godhooa, Mudga, Māṣaka, Maśora, Ikṣu yva, vṛihī, til, tandal, śāli, śvāmaka, godhooa, mudga, māṣaka, maśora, ikṣu etc. are some of the very popular agricultural produces, very frequently mentioned in the Avadāna literature. Two crops were produced in a year one in summer and the other in winter. The crop of summer was sown in the month of Kārtika or Mārga-sīrśa while that of winter in the month of Asadhā.

1. Dhāvavāna XXIX P. 281
2. Ibid VIII. P. 36
3. Ibid I P. 2
4. Ibid XVII P. 131
5. Ibid XXXIII P. 329
6. Ibid XXXI P. 302, 303
7. Ibid VII P. 59
8. Ibid IV P. 43
9. Ibid XXXI P. 301
10. Ibid V, XXXI P. 47, 302, 303
11. Ibid XXXI P. 48, 302
12. Ibid IX P. 77
13. Ibid
14. Ibid XX P. 184, XXXIII P. 415
15. Ibid XXXIII P. 414, 415
The plants of flowers and fruits were also planted in those days. Three types of seasonal flowers, according to three seasons, are mentioned in the Avadāna literature. Blue-rose, white-rose, and sweat-scented-rose are some of the varieties of rose planted in those days. The following are the names of some of the fruit trees, recorded in the Avadāna literature:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>श्राम्भक</td>
<td>Jambo, kharoo, panas, gala, suthi, bahithu, vijju, kapith, kshira, narkhel, tinsha, karaj, shrama, hri, vitriti, faras, sumna, vanik, dhunakarika, udurbh, plaksha, prashtta, vyrogh, valgu, saar, tamal, nakatmaal, karinekar, saptaparn, viri, kowidar, labd, chadna, vaisap, arand, khand</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Agriculture of the day mainly depended upon rainfall. A good account of forecasts about rainfall in the light of astronomy and auspicious omens for sowing seeds are given in the Śārdulakarṇavādāna. Whenever the rains failed, famine broke out. Breaking out of famines due to failure of rains is mentioned in many Avadānas. There is also a mention of artificial rain in the Sudhanakumāravādāna. There, it is mentioned that in Uttarakāncaala there lived a Nāgpotaka who supplied rains whenever the need for the same arose.

Agriculture was not neglected at any cost. Mahāpragāda ordered to destroy and throw away a Yūpa in the Gangā for the simple reason that the people, while busy in witnessing the splendour of that golden Yūpa, neglected their job of agriculture. He preferred the survival of agriculture to that of the Yūpa.

**Monetary System:**

The Avadāna literature depicts a society having the full use of coinage. The coins prevalent in use in those days

<table>
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<th>Reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Divyāvadāna I P. 2, XXX P. 287</td>
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<td>2. Ibid II P. 25</td>
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<td>3. Ibid XXXII P. 325</td>
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<td>4. Ibid XXXIII</td>
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<td>5. Divyāvadāna XXX P. 284</td>
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<td>6. Divyāvadāna III P. 35, Avadāna-Kalpālata P. 128</td>
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</table>
were the Kārṣāpaṇas,¹ Māṣakas,² Purāṇas,³ Suvarṇa,⁴ Dīnāras⁵ and Niśka.⁶

The Kārṣāpaṇa coin is referred to in the Avadāna literature at many places. The mention is made of an artisan’s daily wages as 500 Kārṣāpaṇas.⁷ Kārṣāpaṇa seems to be a small coin of daily use because we find Pūrna asking for Kārṣāpaṇas for even buying a small amount of edibles.⁸ This coin is stated to be “a square punch-marked copper coin, as the unit of exchange.”⁹ It is said to be “closely associated with the economic life of the masses.”¹⁰

Māṣaka seems to be a smaller coin than Kārṣāpaṇa. Bhavil’s wife gives a Māṣaka to Purṇa for buying some edibles.¹¹

Purṇa was a coin which held more value than a Kārṣāpaṇa. Vāsavadattā, the well-known courtesan of Mathurā, demanded 500 Purṇa as her fee for serving a man.¹²

The very name of Suvarṇa coin suggests that it was made of gold hence it must have been more valuable than copper coins like Kārṣāpana and silver coins like Purṇa. The word (सुवर्णलक्ष) Suvarṇalakṣa occurs at many places in the Avadāna literature.¹³

1. Divyāvadāna II P. 26
2. Ibid II P. 18
3. Ibid XXVI P. 219
4. Ibid II P. 19, 20, XXXVI P. 459
5. Ibid XXVIII P. 277, XXIX P. 282
6. Ibid VI P. 49
7. Ibid II P. 26
8. Ibid II P. 18
9. Gokhale, B C. Ancient India P. 129
10. Singh, M.M. Life in Northern India in Pre-Mauryan Times P. 2
11. Divyāvadāna II P. 18
12. Ibid XXVI P. 218-219
13. Ibid II P. 19, P. 19, 20, XXXVI P. 459
Mention of Dināra coin is also found in the Avadāna literature. According to Sir M. Williams this coin also was made of gold.

Niśka coin, whenever mentioned, is mostly preceded by the word Suvarṇa. Hence this also seems to be made of gold and other metals.

Education-system

For an outstanding modification of natural development of the child, proper education was granted to all without any distinction regarding the caste or creed. Not only the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas but the Śūdras also (even the Cāṇḍālas) were enunciated in the study of different courses. Triśaṅku, a Cāṇḍāla by birth, is stated to have studied all the four Vedas, Ayurveda, Kalpaḍhyāya and the knowledge pertaining to the spirits, planets, formation of dates, different kinds of birds, cloths, beasts, philosophy of atheists, Nyāya and characteristics of Rāhu and Śukra etc. His son Śārdūlakarna is also stated to have studied all the Vedas and Śāstras. Every child, when grown up, was sent to school for study. He was given a bath and decorated with ornaments and then sent to the schools called Lipiśāla (लिपिशाला) or (लेखशाला) Lekhaśāla. Candraprabha was sent to the school in a like manner. During the period of his studentship he was to lead a life of complete celibacy. A student, named Sumati, accepted all the gifts given by king Vāsava but did not accept the decorated princess because he, as a student, had to remain a celibate all through. At the completion of

1. Divyāvadāna XXVIII P. 277, XXIX P. 282
2. Williams, M. A Sanskrit English Dictionary P. 481
3. Divyāvadāna VI 49, XXI P. 304, 305
4. Ibid XXXIII P. 328
5. Ibid P. 319
6. Ibid XXXII P. 310
7. Ibid XIII P. 106
8. Ibid XXXII P. 310
9. Ibid XVIII P. 152
education, every student was required to pay as fee whatever his teacher desired. Sumati and Mati, the two students, went to king Vāsava for having fee, to be given to the teacher. The methods of teaching varied according to different subjects, but generally it was the drill method which was prevalent at that time. The student was required to repeat whatever the teacher pronounced. His follow-up was subject to correction by the teacher. Panthaka was taught in a like manner. On holidays the students went out to visit the city, to bathe in some nearby riverlet or to fetch woods for Yajña.

Subjects taught:

Diverse courses of study, which covered various fields of learning, formed subjects to be taught in the society as revealed in the Avadāna literature. The course, concerned with the purely intellectual studies, consisted of the knowledge about reading, writing, calculation, numeration, craft of sognmanuals (मुद्रा), depositing, investment, investigation of matter, wood, pearls, elephants, horses, boys and girls. The curriculum for higher learning also constituted the study of four Vedas, Ayurveda, Kalpadhyāya, knowledge of the formation of dates, knowledge pertaining to different kinds of birds, clothes, beasts, philosophy of atheists and Nyāya, and the characteristics of Rāhu and Sukra.

1. Dīvyaavādāna XVIII P. 152
2. Ibid. XXXIV P. 428
3. Ibid. — आचार्यविषयकतां यदा भयाता भवन्ति ते कदाचित् नाश्वास्वलोकनाथं गच्छति, कदाचित् तीर्थपर्याप्तका गच्छति कदाचित् सामाःहार्ष्याय गच्छति।
4. Ibid II. p. 35—विप्रामुलयात्सत्, साक्षात्, गणायात्, मुद्रायामुद्रारि, न्याये, निशंकं, वसुपरीक्ष्याय, दार्शनिकायाय, रस्तापरीक्ष्यायों द्वातिस्तरीकायां ग्रहवरीकायां, कुमारपरीक्ष्याय, कुमारी-प्रीतिसामायाम,
5. Ibid XXXIII P. 338. हृदयं, यजुर्वेदं, सामवेदं, समवेदं, प्रायुवेदं, कलाद्याय, प्रायवातम, मुक्तचक्रमु, ज्ञानमु, नान्तरसु, तिथिविन्यासं, कर्मयो, ग्रहु-विद्या, वस्त्रविद्या, लिखितविद्या, साक्षात्विद्या, राहुचरितमु, णुचरितमु, ग्रहचरितमु, लोकायतमु, भाष्यमर्क्षनमु, पृष्ठ-ङ्गायो, न्यायो।
Reference of such courses as dealt with the knowledge of
the spirits, planets, formation of dates, different kinds of birds,
cloths, beasts, implication of unusual natural phenomena,
different physical signs of men and women, interpretation of
dreams, forecasts about rain, eclipses, earthquake etc. reveal
the fact that there was ample scope of learning in this field
also. Triśaṅku is stated to be a scholar in this very field.¹

Not only the mind was taken into consideration, but
physique also was not neglected by the educationists of the
time. Physical education, connected with military science, was
also imparted to the students interested in it. Mostly the
Kṣatriya-born princes and the sons of noble-men constituted
the category of such interested students.² These students
received training in the art of riding on elephants, horses and
chariots, the use of bow and arrow and effective handling of
different ordnances such as Pāsa, Tomar etc.³ Thus their’s was
a purely martial type of education.

The Avadāna literature also records references about
some magical learnings. A magical learning, called Saḍakṣari
Vidyā, is mentioned in the Śārdūlakarpāvatāna.⁴ The knowl-
dge of this branch of learning is said to be very useful for
monks, nuns, Upāsakas and Upāsikās. The organisers of this
learning are said to be six enlightened ones and four kings,
viz. Śakra, Indra, Brahmā and Sahapati. It is⁵ :—

1. Divyāvadāna XXXIII PP. 314-325.
2. Ibid III. P. 35—स साधक्षरी व त्यनि राजा वामिवायाम दृष्टिविशिष्टायोऽयोऽयोइ जनपदस्वयमुपाध्यायां महान वृद्धिविवेकमण्डलमिनितव्या महायानं विद्यासर्वस्य भवति शिल्पस्यानं कर्मस्यानानिः।
3. Ibid III P. 35—हस्तिविशेषायाः वस्त्रपूर्वः रथं तरं तनुषभ रघुवानो निमित्ते कुशासनः पाशास्त्रः तीर्थक्रमः पदवव्यवः शिलासं दुर्योधनः मर्मवेश्वरार्केः रक्षकप्रहरितायं पंचसू वधानेः दृढः संबन्धः।
4. Ibid. XXXIII P. 315
5. Ibid.
It is said about it that who-so-ever preserves and hails it, gets rid of all the evil results. There is no one in any of the worlds (Devaloka, Māraloka, Brahmāloka, Śramaṇa-loka, Brāhmaṇaloka, Manuṣyaloka and Asuraloka) who, after taking its resort, has not been pardoned for the past black-deeds.\(^2\)

Another magical Vidyā, referred in the Avadāna literature, is:—

Prakṛti's mother charmed Ānanda with this very learning. The Vinayavastu also records a similar learning, called Mahāmāyūrī Vidyā, which was used by Ānanda for curing monk Śvāti from ill health.\(^4\)

The names of some other magical learnings\(^5\) are also mentioned in the Avadāna literature. A few of them are these:—Maitrei, Śikhi, Saṅkrāmapi, Prakṛamaṇi, Stambhnani, Kāmārupiṇi, Manojavā, Gāndhārī, Cori, Vaṃsakarī, Kākavāṇi, Indrajāla and Bhanjaṇi (सैणी, विची, संक्रामणी, प्रक्रामणी, स्तभन्ती, कामाचपिणी, मनोजवा, गान्धारी, चोरी, वंशकरी, काकवाणी, इंद्रजाल और मंजनी).\(^6\)

Medicine also must have been a field of learning because some references about the medical treatment and medical practitioners (वैद्यः) also occur in the Avadāna literature.\(^7\)

Study courses in music and dramatics also seem to be prevalent. The words denoting musical instruments, dancers,
musicians and dramatics occur at so many places in the Avadāna literature. The reference to some artists, who portrayed the Buddha, reflects the fact that the training in this art was also not absent in the educational curriculum.

Mentions of mansions, studded with various jewels and precious stones found in the Avadāna literature, show the development of the art of architecture, which suggests that men were qualified in this area also.

*Organisation of Educational Institutions* :

The very mention of words such as Lipiśālā and Lekhaśālā suggests that education was imparted in organised institutions. Different teachers were engaged for teaching different subjects. The teacher, who taught reading and writing was called Ṭipyakṣaraśārya; while that, who taught military science was called Īśvastraśārya. The student was sent in the institutions to the teacher concerned. These institutions were responsible for educating the students in different fields of learning and they possessed many sections such as Vyāyamaśālā etc.

*Qualification of Teachers* :

The teachers were called the Ācārya, Upādhāya and Adhyāpaka. They seem to be well-versed in the knowledge pertaining to the Vedas, Śāstras, history etc. because they imparted learning in these very fields. Some of the wandering

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1. *Divyāvadāna* XXXVII
2. Ibid. XXXVII
3. Ibid. XIX
4. Ibid XXXII P. 310
5. Ibid XIII P. 106
6. Ibid P. 105
7. Ibid XXXVI P. 454
8. Ibid XXVII P. 249
9. Ibid XXXV P. 428, XVIII P. 152
10. Ibid XVIII P. 152, XXXIII P. 432, XXXV P. 429
11. Ibid XXXV P. 428, XXXIII P. 318
mendicants, monks and nuns also acted as teachers but their teachings mostly constituted religious precepts.

The teachers were held in high esteem in the society. They had every right to accept some student or to reject him. Bonthaka, an idiotic student, who could not retain two letters together in his mind (the moment he came upon the learning of second letter, he forgot the first one), was expelled from the institution by his teacher, who declared him uneducable.

Education and Common Man:

The Avadānas literature reflects a society, the common man of which was very much interested in education—be it intellectual, theoretical, practical or religious. They sent their children at proper age to the learned teachers in the educational institutions. If they found some child not faring well in the studies, they became very much worried about that. Not only were they careful about their children’s studies, but they themselves also were very much eager to learn. They went to various religious preachers for guidance and seriously listened to the religious preachings delivered by the leaders of various sects.

Women also were not devoid of education. Tisyarakṣita wrote a forged document to Kupāla for his eyes to be plucked. Was it possible without her being educated?

1. Divyāvadāna II P. 24
2. Ibid XXXVII P. 469
3. Ibid P. 470
4. Ibid XXXV P. 428
5. Ibid P. 264
Part III
RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL IDEAS

Karma and Rebirth:—

The doctrine of Karma and Rebirth holds an important position in Buddhist thought. The Ayávadána literature, being a section of Buddhist literature, also manifests this important Buddhist doctrine. The inexorability of the fruit of Karma is expressed in the following verse:—

न प्राप्यायुनि कर्मांग्रे धृष्टि कर्मशङ्करपिनः
सामगीया प्राप्य कार्यं कलन्ती खलु देहनामः

None can ever escape the fruit of Karma. Sooner or later one must have to bear the fruit (favourable or unfavourable) of his deed. This fruition of Karma happens only at some proper conjecture. Śyāmāvatī states this very fact in the following words:—

भगिन्यः प्रामाणिवेतात्ति कर्माणि कूटाक्षुपचितानि लघसंभाराति
परिष्कृतन्तयायोचित्रपुत्रस्थितिव्यवस्था भावीति। प्रामाणिवेत्र् कूटाक्षुप-
चितानि कोण्य: प्रत्यनुभवित्यति? उक्तच भगवता—

नेवान्तरिये न समुद्रले
न पर्वतनां विवरं प्रविधयृ
न विवििे स पृथिवीप्रदेशो
अति स्थितं न प्रसहि् कर्

This world is said to be based upon this doctrine of Karma (कर्मात्मकः लोकयतेः). This present of ours is nothing but the fruit of our past and our future is going to be no other than the fruit of our present-deeds. What we have sown in the previous birth, is reaped in the present birth and whatever we

1. Divyāvadāna XI P. 88
2. Ibid XXXVI P. 457
3. Ibid XXVII P. 267
sow in this life, we will have to reap that in next life. Then why people blame others when they find themselves dragged in some undesired situation?

‘स्वयंकृतानामिह कर्माणां फलं।
कर्मं तु वश्यामि पररहिदं कुलम्॥।

Even the Buddhas cannot escape the fruit of their Karma,² what to talk of petty creatures?

If we want our future bright we should strive for it in existing present. And who would not like his future to be very bright? Hence the Lord suggested his audience at the conclusion of almost every Avadāna story to strive only after white deeds and shun out the black and mixed ones,

— ‘इति हि भिक्षव एकान्तकृष्णानं कर्मणामेकान्तकृष्णां विपाकः,
एकान्तदुक्कनामेकान्तदुयः, व्यतिमिश्राः व्यतिमिश्रः। तस्मात् हि भिक्षव
एकान्तकृष्णानि कर्मणायप्रथ्य व्यतिमिश्रार्षिं च, एकान्तदुक्कनेषु एकान्तस्वाभोगः,
करणीयः।

Different Realms of Existence

According to Buddhism each individual, who indulges in any of the worldly deeds—whether noble or ignoble; has to take birth and live in any of the following six realms:—

1. The Narakas.
2. The Preta Realm
3. The Animal Realm
4. The Asura Realm
6. The Heavens.

The Avadāna literature, not unlike other mythical and legendary literatures, speaks of many types of Narakas.⁴

1. Sañjiva
2. Kālasūtra

- Divyāvadāna P. 269

- Ibid P. 269
- Ibid XXI P. 194
- Avadāna-Śataka P. 45, Divyāvadāna P. 41
3. Saṅghāta
4. Raurava
5. Mahāraurava
6. Tapanā
7. Pratapana
8. Avici
9. Arbuda
10. Nirarbuda
11. Aṭṭa
12. Hahava
13. Huhuva
14. Utpala
15. Padma
16. Mahāpadma

The first eight i.e. from Saṅjīva to Avici are called hot hells (Narakas) while the remaining eight i.e. from Arbuda to Mahā padma are called cold hells. All these hells are the places of temporary torment.¹

In Śārdūlakarṇāyadāna the Asura realm is also mentioned as one of the seven lokas. Birds realm, Hell, Preta realm, Gods realm, and Human realm are also stated to be at times, visited by Mahāmaudgalyāyana.²

The Preta Realm is mentioned in the Śrṇakotikārṇāyadāna in which Koṭikarṇa was led astray and reached the realm of the Pretas. He saw people undergoing different types of pleasures or pains. The city of Pretas (Preta-nagar) was

1. In the Purāṇa literature the names of following 21 Narakas are stated:—
   1. Raurava, 2. Mahā-Raurava, 3. Tāmisra, 4. Andha-
   Lohapiṇḍa, 15. Kārambah-Sikatā, 16. Kṣāra-nadi,
   17. Kṛiṇi-bhojana, 18. Vaitaraṇī, 19. Śoṇitāpya-
   Agrawal, V.S. Vāmanapurāṇa study, P. 23

2. Dīnāvadāna XXI P. 185

3. Ibid. I PP. 5-10
made of iron. A cruel red-eyed man, with an iron-stick in his hand, sat at the gate. When thirsty Kotikarna asked for water, five thousand Pretas with burnt faces, bone-like hairs (प्रभाशयतवधुचिह्वते: स्वेकरोपमप्रतिच्छल्लकः), mountain-like bellies and needle-eyed mouths (सूचिृत्रोपमसुल्लकः) surrounded him and demanded water from him. Kotikarna said, “I am myself feeling very thirsty. Wherefrom can I supply water to you?” Then they said, “It is a city of the Pretas and it is after twelve years that we have heard the word water from your mouth. (What to speak of seeing, touching, and drinking of same). On being asked who they were and how they were there, they replied, “We are the people who always indulged in various types of bad deeds. That is why we have come here.” When Kotikarna entered the city of the Preta realm, with similar structure and gate-keeper, then also he is told by the Pretas, “We are the people who blindly enjoyed the pleasures of wealth and health and never donated anything. That is why we have come here to suffer for our black deeds.” At sunset he saw a handsome man being served by four Apasaras. Kotikarna was given a bath and rich food by that man. But when the day dawned, he saw, to his great surprise, that all the Apasaras, serving that man, had disappeared and instead of them four black-spotted (कुषपदवल्ल) dogs came and started eating his flesh from his back. They kept on eating until the sunset. At sunset again, the plane with four Apasaras appeared and his enjoyment started. On being asked the cause of that nightly enjoyment and day’s suffering he said, “I used to be a shepherd in Vasavagraham. There I used to kill the sheep and sell the meat. Kātyāyana, the Lord, prevented me so many times from doing that bad deed, but I did not stop. Then at last, he suggested to me that at least in the night I should perform some religious acts. I started to do the same. As in the day time I used to kill sheep, so I suffer here during day-time. Dogs eat my flesh because I had cut and sold their (sheep’s) flesh. During night I enjoy because in the night I performed religious deeds.”
requested Koṭikarna to give a message to his shephard son that he should desist from doing further evil deeds and should lead his remaining life peacefully with the money put by him in a golden pitcher and should donate in his name to Lord Kātyāyana. At day-dawn he saw another plane with a man and a beautiful Apsarā enjoying in. He was served with bath and food by them too. At sunset the plane with that beautiful Apsarā disappeared and a centipede appeared and taking him in its seven-fold-grip; started to eat his brain and went on eating the same till the day dawned. At day-dawn again that plane with the same Apsarā in it appeared and again they started to enjoy each-other’s company. On being asked the reason for this transfer of joy and sorrow he related, “I, a Brāhmaṇa at Vāsasvārgam, used to be an adulterer. Lord Kātyāyana used to warn me against black deed of adultery time and again; but I did not pay heed to his warning. At last he advised me to perform the religious acts at least during day-time if I could not spare my nights. I acted accordingly and it is for that very good deed done during day-time that I enjoy during day-time and suffer during night-time now.” Then he sent a message to his son to abstain from adultery and to serve the Lord with food and gift. For that may diminish his suffering. Last of all he saw a woman, sitting in a plane with four pretas carrying the four sides of her bed. She served him with food and prevented him not to give any morsal of food to anyone of the four pretas. Out of pity he gave each one a little to eat. But that, too, turned into different edibles which was not liked by them. On being asked the reason she said; “These four Pretas were my husband, son, daughter-in-law and maid-servant. Once I prepared food for the Lord. Then each one of these scolded me for serving the Lord. For that very reason (the use of harsh word against the Lord) they are now suffering. She sent a message to her daughter that she should serve food to the Lord.

Thus we find that each sufferer in the Preta realm requested him to convey his message to his or her sons and daughters asking them to feed the Lord and donate for the
Saṅgha. It was believed that just as rain water flows down from a high level, in the same way that which is given from this human world rolls down to the Pretas. "Neither weeping, nor sorrow, nor other forms of lamentation will be of any advantage to them, should the kinsmen who are alive be doing for all these. But the gift which is made to the Holy Order is well established in it and turns out to be of benefit to them for a long time to come and reaches them. By this act, as social service is done to the living kinsmen, a great honour is also done to the departed spirits, the strength, too, is given to the bhikkhus, and as for yourselves: no mean joy of merit you gain."²

Buddha, the Lord

Buddha, the Lord, is always held in high esteem in the whole set of the Avadāna literature. "Homage to the Buddha" pronouncement of this phrase, was enough to get anyone rid of any trouble. Even a monstrous fish, eager to swallow up all the mariners who came in its grip, could be controlled by just the pronouncement of the above-mentioned phrase.² A death, which took place at the time of such pronouncement, was supposed to be a good one. Once, when some of the mariners were caught in the grip of death, they were advised by an Upāsaka to pronounce this very phrase.³

The Buddha is stated to be the supreme divinity. Even Śakra, Brahmā etc. went to see him and paid their homage by bowing down at his feet.⁴ He is described in the Avadāna literature⁵ in the following way:

1. Law, B.C. The Buddhist Conception of Spirits P. 27
2. Divyāvadāna XVIII P. 144
3. Ibid XVIII P. 143—भवत्, नास्माकसम्मानसमृयमोक्षः
कश्चित्। सवेंवस्मामिस्मतः
कि तु सर्वं एवेकरूपं नमः
वुद्यायति वदामः। सति मरणे वुद्यावलम्बनया स्मृत्या कार्याचिं
सुगतिगमनं भविष्यति।
4. Ibid III P. 38
5. Ibid. XII p. 89
Buddha, the Lord, honoured, highly esteemed, held in honour and praised by kings, ministers, rich people, citizens, masters of guilds, leaders of caravans, gods, Nāgas, Yakṣas, Asuras, Garuḍas, Kinnaras and great snakes. Buddha, the Lord, the famous, highly meritorious one, accompanied by a community of disciples and receiving as alms all necessary clothing, food, bed and shelter, refreshments and medicaments.

As regards the physical characteristics of the Lord, it is said that he possessed thirty-two major signs and eighty minor signs of a great man.¹ He used to shine like thousands of suns and bore the appearance of a mountain of pearls.² When he laughed multicoloured rays emerged from his mouth. Some of them went upward and some went downward. Those, which went upward, reached Sañjīva, Kālasūtra, Sanghāta, Raurava, Mahāraurava, Tapanā, Pratapana, Ayīci etc. These rays, when went into hot-hells, became cold (in order to relieve the inhabitants of the hot-hells suffering from heat) and those, which went into the cold-hells, became hot (in order to relieve the inhabitants of the cold-hell, suffering from cold).³ These rays, after visiting different place, returned to the Lord. If the Lord was to explain something about the past then they submerged into his foot, if he wanted to talk about the beasts then they entered his back, if he had to talk about Pretas then they entered into his toes, if he had to talk about men then they entered his ankles, if he had to talk about some kingdom then they went into the palm of his right hand, if he had to talk about some god then they entered his navel, if he had to talk about the enlightenment of some Śrāvaka then they went into his mouth, if he had to talk about the enlightenment of some Pratyeka Buddha then they went in between the eyebrows of the Lord. These rays, after, circumambulating from left to

¹. Divyāvadāna XIX p. 165
². Ibid.
³. Ibid XXVI p. 230
right (as a sign for respect) entered the left palm of the Lord.²

The Lord, in the Avadāna literature, is shown as a forerunner. Though Buddha, the Lord, has never claimed himself to be a prophet, yet how very strange it is, that in the Avadāna literature he is said to be the man foretelling correct things. It is said that even sea could cross its limits but the prophecy of the Lord would never go wrong.³ The sky, with all its stars and moon, could fall down; the earth, with all the mountains and forests, could go up in the sky; the water of the seas could get dried, but the words of the Lord could never prove incorrect.

Whichever direction the Lord desired to visit for propagating his religion, he did not tell anyone about that. The monks could know that through his actions, such as the Buddha would sit facing the desired destination or he would speak in the local language of the place where he had intended to go.⁴ Even the devotees, who had to make arrangements for the food and utensils all through the way,⁵ could not ask the Lord

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1. Diśvānadāna XXVI p. 231
2. Ibid. XIX p. 163
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. VIII p. 58 वा दिय भवान गन्तुकामस्ततों निम्बेदन निपिद्वति, एवं निमित्ते। कबं परिक्षया? तेषां जनपदानां वर्णार्थं एवं परिक्षया।
5. Ibid VIII p. 58 धर्मता चैव वण्महानगरिविनास्यं वर्णार्थं दिशि बुध्दा भगवन्तो गन्तुकामा भवन्ति, तद्वारिकान्तं समुदायं सक्ति।
about the desired direction and could know only through his words and deeds and made arrangements accordingly. Buddha was not only unintelligible but also easily excitable. None could dare ask him anything—not even Ānanda, the most ardent and beloved disciple of Lord.1 But the Lord occasionally would announce through Ānanda that after seven days, he would start for Magadhā (or any other place.) Who-so-ever among the monks wanted to accompany should get ready², wash and mend his Cīvāras, mend them if torn and colour them if faded.³

Whenever the Lord had to deliver his discourse, the audience sat before him in a semi-circular fashion. In the Divyāvadāna there is a mention of a table car, where the Buddha is depicted as sitting with his disciples. It is stated that on the right hand side of the Lord sat Śāradvatīpūtra, on the left hand side of him Mahā-Maudgalyāyana, on the back Ānanda with the begging bowl and before him, 650 monks in the form of a half-moon.⁴ Upagupta’s meeting of monks was also arranged in the same semi-circular fashion.⁵

Generally the Buddhist devotees saluted the Lord by kneeling on the ground with folded hands. They bared their right shoulder and adjusted their upper garments on the left shoulder. This mode of salutation was adopted by both men and women alike.⁶

The royal dignitaries, at the time of visiting the Lord, left their five signs of royalty i.e. turban, umbrella, sword, fan

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1. Divyāvadāna VIII p. 58
2. Ibid VIII p. 59 इन: सप्तमे दिबसे तथागतो मन्त्रेशु चारिकां चरित्यति। यो युष्माकमुत्सहते तथागतेन सार्थ जनपदचारिकां चरितम्; स चीवरकर्म करोतु।
3. Ibid XII p. 91 यो युष्माकमुत्सहते तथागतेन सार्थ कोशलेशु जनपदेशु चारिकां चरितम्; स चीवरराणि धार्यु सीव्यतु रंजयतु हि।
4. Ibid XXVI p. 226
5. Ibid p. 222
6. Avadāna-Śataka LXXI p. 175
and shoes aside at a distance and then went to the Lord, bowed to him and sat down.\(^1\) The popular mode of salutation i.e. kneeling on the ground with folded hands, was adopted by the kings also. Aśoka’s salutation to the Lord is mentioned in the Divyāvadāna as—

अथ राजा सर्वशरीरे तत्र पाद्योतिपत्य उत्ताय कःतांजलि: प्रह-दन्तुवाच।

Besides taking into account the divinity and supremacy of the Lord, the Avadāna literature also records the mention of some of the Brahmanical gods and deities. People of the time believed in the existence of various gods and deities. The act of offering prayer to these deities became a part and parcel of their religious life. For the fulfilment of some wish they enchanted the name and glory of these deities. There can be quoted a number of such references from the Avadāna literature which state the issue-less people worshiping various deities for the birth of a child.\(^2\) They believed that the sons and daughters are born of prayers.\(^3\) Every issueless person, desirous of getting some issue, was advised by his well-wishers to worship various deities for getting a son.\(^4\) Śiva, Varuṇa, Kubera, Vāsava and other deities such as Ārāmdēvatā, Vana-devatā, Catvāra-devatā, Śrīgātaka-devatā and Balipratigrāhika-devatā are some of the deities worshipped for the purpose.\(^5\) The householder Mitra offered his prayers to Dhanada, Varuṇa, Kubera, Śaṅkara, Janārđana, Pitāmaha etc. for having a son.\(^6\)

1. *Divyāvadāna* XII p. 91
2. Ibid I p. 1 सोश्च: पुत्राधिनद्दी विवर्धकुबेरसक्राक्तानायाचते ग्रामदेवतां वनदेवतां श्रुतारकेदेवतां बलप्रतिग्राहिकदेवताः।
3. Ibid p. 1 प्रतिती चैष लोके प्रवादो यदायाचनहेतो: पुत्रा: जायन्ते दुहितन्नेति।
4. Ibid XXX p. 286 देवताराष्ट्यं कुरु: पुत्रस्ते भविष्यतीति।
5. *Divyāvadāna* XXX p. 286
6. Ibid XXXVII p. 493 धनवर्धकुबेरसक्राक्तिनाधिनपितामहादीनू नेविकिनिनायनं पुत्राधे याचित्यमार्जने॥
He also sought help from Rudra, Cakrāyvda, Vajrin, Sraṣṭā, Makaradhvaja, Girisutaputra, Mayūrāsana and Gaṅgā.¹

Not only for acquiring issues did they worship these deities, but they did worship these deities for getting rid of the difficulties also. When the ship of some mariners was attacked by a monstrous fish, they all, finding themselves in the Jaws of death, sought the help from Śiva, Varuṇa, Kubera, mahendra, Upendra etc. for the safety of their lives.² The mariners, accompanying Dārukarṇi also, endangered by the storm prayed to Śiva, Varuṇa, Kubera. Śakra, Brahmā, Sura, Manuja, Uraga, Yakṣa, Dānavendra, Śacīpati, Hari, Śaūkara, Vṛkṣa, Vāta, Piśāca etc. for help.³

The Vedic god Indra or Śakra has also appeared in the pages of the Avadāna literature in its typical Pauranika character. He not only helps the seekers of his help but also examines the genuinenes of noble acts. He came to examine the genuineness of Rūpavati’s act of offering her breasts to a hungry tigress.⁴ He also came to test the genuineness of king Śibi’s acts of donations.⁵ Though he has acquired very many fruits of virtuous acts, yet he is stated to be willing to acquire still more by performing virtuous acts. And for this, he himself

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1. Divyāvadāna XXXVII p. 494
2. Ibid XVIII p. 143
3. Ibid II p. 25
4. Ibid XXXIII p. 309
5. Avadāna-Śataka XXXIV p. 83
took the guise of Kuvinda with his wife Śacī and lived as a commoner on this earth. He performed the act of filling the Lord Kaśyapa’s begging-bowl with heavenly nectar.¹

**Modes of worship, Temples, Sacrifices**:

The mention of Stūpas, Caityas etc. in the Avadāna literature suggests that the worship of relics had become an integral part of the religious life. There is a story in the Avadāna-Śataka in which a character, named Śrīmatī, very boldly claims that the act of worshipping relics was sanctioned by the Buddha himself. One day when king Bimbisāra was recreating with his queens in the pleasure-garden, his queens requested him to build a stūpa, enshrining the hair and nails of the Buddha, in the inner apartments of the palace. Thus they could offer their worship with flowers, garlands, unguents, umbrellas, flags, festoons etc. there only. Accordingly the king requested the Lord for some of his hair and nails. The Lord did give his hair and nails for the purpose² and thus sanctioned the worship of relics.

Modes of worship, prevalent at that time, were paying visit to and offering earthen-pots, flowers, garlands, lamps, incense, umbrella, flags and festoons at Stūpas or Caityas.³ Pradakṣiṇā was also a very common mode of worship prevalent at that time.⁴ Stūpa, Caitya, Maṭha etc., were some of the Buddhist places of worship built by religious persons. Kinga Kṣema of Kṣemāvatī built a Caitya, which was further expanded by a Śreṣṭhī.⁵ The description of his act of expanding that Caitya occurs as⁶—


dsātma khyātvā dharmā tattvād nirviśeṣ bhavāni tathā sāntānānvartānā tvā bhavāni tattvān vikhyātvā tattvaḥ sā bhūyām tā nātām satyā ambanāv saṁyogātā pratiṣṭhād uciṣṭhāri sāpā-

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1. *Divyāvadāna* VII p. 52-53
2. *Avadāna-Śataka* LIV p. 136-138
3. *Divyāvadāna* VI pp. 49-50
4. Ibid VI p. 48 यागान्तर्मे उपासकः स प्रदेशः प्रदक्षिणां पुरुषस्य स श्रीमतीः ।
5. Ibid XVIII p. 150
6. Ibid.
Religious and Philosophical Ideas

The mention about a Matha built by Anāthapiṇḍada is also found in the Divyāvadāna.

Sacrifice, as a mode of worship for pleasing some angry deity, was also prevalent. King Dhana’s ministers advised him to make the sacrifice of a kinnar-girl Manoharā for feared ill-luck.

Conversion

Buddhism was spreading rapidly in India. Within a few centuries after its foundation, it had established itself firmly in the lives of many. It was because of the fact that whatever the Lord said, he said in a quite convincing manner. It was also due to the fact that the Buddhists regarded the conversion of non-Buddhists to Buddhism as a part of their duty. Every monk, at the highest stage of spiritual development, tried (as he was expected to do) to convert others to Buddhism. The Ashātes had to make others realise the importance of Nirvāṇa and the value of noble deeds. It is mentioned in the Divyāvadāna that Pūrṇa, even at the risk of his life, went with his

1. Divyāvadāna VI p. 50
2. Ibid XXX p. 291
missionary zeal to the ruffians of Śrōṇaparāntaka. Buddha admired him in the following way, 'Pūrṇa, you are endowed with patience (Kṣāntisaurabhena) and a fit and proper person to live among the Śrōṇaparāntakas. Go Pūrṇa, free those who wish to be freed, rescue those to be rescued, console those to be consoled and emancipate those to be emancipated.' The story of the conversion of Nanda to Buddhism is also mentioned in the Avadāna literature. The conversion of a Matang girl named Prakṛti, is stated in the Divyāvadāna. Upagupta, the religious preceptor to Aśoka, converted Māra, the evil incarnate to Buddhism. One day, when Upagupta began to address an audience, Māra showered pearl-necklaces on the audience, to disconcert them. The audience, tempted by the shower of pearl-necklaces, did not pay heed to Upagupta. Next day also he disturbed the audience by showers of gold and on the third day when Upagupta settled himself on the seat for delivering a religious discourse, Māra, not far from his place, started to stage a drama with music in it. Many nymphs took part in that drama. The assemblage, which formed Upagupta’s audience, was attracted by the scenes, enacted by Māra. Upagupta, puzzled at the audience’s distraction of mind, thoughs of converting Māra first. To do this he approached Māra with a garland and three corpses and placed the three corpses on head, neck and ear of Māra. Māra tried his best to remove those corpses from his body but could not get success. Then he went to different gods including Brahmā and others. But all directed him to Upagupta for that. At last he went to Upagupta. Upagupta reminded him of his wrong acts and preached him that a very little devotion towards religious beings can bring about the highest bliss. Māra repented and fell at the feet of Upagupta and wanted to be made free from all his sinful acts. Upagupta then removed

1. Divyāvadāna II p. 24
2. Avadāna-Kalpalata X p. 85
the three corpses from the person of Māra. In return Māra tableaued the image of Buddha for him. After satisfying Upagupta, Māra removed his costume and proclaimed to be converted to Buddhism by Upagupta. ¹

Conversion of persons to Buddhism was done in various ways. Sometimes Buddha himself converted the persons by creating such conditions as were conducive to their understanding. He put reason in the place of authority. In the Śundarī-Nandāvadāna,² Nanda is forced to obey the rules of Buddhism. When Nanda found himself not the least detached from his beloved wife Śundarī and so unable to follow the path of Buddhism, he tried to escape secretly. But unfortunately he was not successful in this trial of escaping and was caught hold of by the Lord. The Lord then presented before him many apes and asked whether his beloved was more beautiful than those apes. Nanda laughed at the comparison and said, ‘She (my beloved) surpasses these in every respect.’ Then the Lord presented before him many beautiful nymphs and asked whether his beloved surpassed them also in beauty. Nanda said, ‘No, she is not so beautiful as these nymphs are’. The Lord then tempted him by saying, ‘If you follow the path of religion and attain Arhatship, I will present these nymphs to you’. Tempted by this, Nanda put himself heart and soul in pursuing the cause of religion. And ultimately when he attained the ultimate goal of spiritual height, he came to know the uselessness of those nymphs and said to the Lord, ‘I do not want those nymphs any more. Now I am completely detached from my beloved Śundarī also.’ Now I have come to realise the impermanence of, physical beauty and the permanence of spiritual beauty, which can be attained only by pursuing the path of Buddhism’. In the Śārdūlakarṇāvadāna³ it is stated that Prakṛti, a Cāndāla-girl, wanted to marry Ānanda.

1. Divyāvadāna XXVI p.
2. Avadāna-Kalpalatā X p. 85
3. Divyāvadāna XXXIII pp. 314-425
Ānanda went to the Lord for help. The Lord presented before her a proposal that if she attained a fixed level of height in the field of spiritual attainment then he would allow Ānanda to marry her. She agreed to that proposal and started following the path of Buddhism. Just after attaining that height she came to know the futility of marriage and told the Lord, 'I do not want to marry any longer. I want to remain in this very life of religious being'.

It used to be the way of the Lord, that at the end of his discourse he enquired of his audience whether there was some suspicion left in the mind of someone, or whether there was some new comer with a problem. Then he would try to remove that suspicion or solve that problem. He did it generally with the help of some story concerning his past life or so. He used the popular dialect as a medium of his discourse. He used to preach in local languages¹ in order to be more effective.

Women too played important roles in the spread of Buddhism. They were ordained as nuns and contributed their lot in helping others follow the path of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. In Rudrāyaṇāvadāna² a nun Śailā was sent to the city of Roruka for visiting the queen's chamber. As the queen observed Purdah, so she could not come out in the public for listening to the religious discourses, delivered by the reverend Kātyāyana. Nor could Kātyāyana enter her chamber. So Śailā was called for the purpose. She delivered religious discourses to her and got her ordained as a nun.

King Bimbisāra, a warm supporter of Buddhism helped a lot in the spread of Buddhism. He, besides persuading his own subjects to become the lay-devotees of Buddha, paved the way for the conversion of king Rudrāyana, king of Roruka.

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1. Divyāvadāna VIII p. 58
2. Ibid XXXVII p. 469
3. Ibid XXXVII p. 468
He was the person who presented the Veṇuvana to the Buddhist Saṅgha for the construction of a Vihāra. He had full faith in the Lord and was very much confident about him. His confidence in him was so deep that he did not allow a competition of miraculous powers between the Lord and some of the other non-Buddhist teachers, who requested him to arrange for it. Afterwards Prasenajit, king of Kośala, at their request, arranged this competition in which those non-Buddhist teachers were defeated by the Lord.¹

The Life of Religious man—Monk and Upāsaka

The Buddhists negated the Āśrama of Grhastha. They considered this Āśrama as an obstacle in the way of attaining Nirvāṇa. So they advocated that if any one intended to do something concrete in the domain of religion, he must, first of all, leave his home and become a monk. Buddha, the Lord, himself renounced his home, wife, child, father, mother, money and what not. Many people left their domestic lives for becoming monks. Koṭikarnā left his home for getting ordained as a monk in the Buddhist Saṅgha.² Nanda, was forced to leave his young wife Sundarī and his palace.³ Ānanda avoided marrying Prakṛti.⁴

The Lord did organise the family of monks in such a manner that it always remained as a torch-bearer to the public. The monks had to observe many rules and regulations. The Buddha was a stern disciplinarian and he wanted that all the monks should be disciplined to the highest order. They were allowed to lead only a very simple life. The possession of only some indispensable goods such as cloth, food, bed, medicine etc. was allowed for the monks. Storing was not allowed. Shoes having only one layer and that too, of leaves,

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1. Divyāvadāna XII p. 93
2. Ibid I pp. 1-14
3. Avadāna-Kalpalatā X pp. 85-95
4. Divyāvadāna XXXIII pp. 314-425
were allowed for them. Frequent bath was allowed to the monks of border countries only. By the border countries they meant the area bounded by Puṇḍravardhana forest in the east, river Sarāvatī in the south, village of Sthūṇa and Upasthūṇa in the west and Uṣīragiri in the north. These monks had to wash their Cīvaras by themselves. If the Cīvaras were torn, they had to mend them themselves and if the colour was faded, they had to dye them too.

Hair and beard were also not allowed for them. They, out of humility and contempt for all worldly things, did not allow hair or beard to grow. When Jyotīśka went to the Lord for getting ordained as a monk, the Lord, after preaching him the law of celibacy, immediately cut his hair and beard. It is a well known fact that the Lord Buddha himself bore long locks and beard when he was a prince but when he renounced his princely life, he immediately got his hair and beard cut.

The monks were not at liberty to go wherever they wanted. They had to visit only those places as were allowed by the Lord. If they wanted to visit some places, they had to get the permission of the Lord. In Saṅgharākṣitāvadāna when merchants asked Saṅgharāksīta to accompany them to foreign lands, Saṅgharāksīta says, 'I am not independent' He accompanied them only after getting permission from the Lord.

Getting ordained as a monk was not an easy job. One had to take the permission of his parents or guardians before becoming a monk. The Buddha did not allow those, whose parents or guardians were not willing, to be ordained as

1. Divyāvadāna I p. 13 एकवसलाशिक उपाधौ सास्त्रितविये न त्रिपुटानि न
   त्रिपुट सा चैत्य क्षार्कर्मियों भवति, तां लक्ष्म्यां पुनर्भवि प्रहीतवया।
2. Ibid. I p. 13
3. Ibid XII p. 11
4. Ibid XIX p. 174
5. Ibid XXIII p. 205 "नाहे स्वाधीनः"
monks.\(^1\) Puṇa could be ordained as a monk only after death of his parccuts because they did not permit him in their life time.\(^3\) Some of the parents themselves donated their sons to the Saṅgha for making them monks. Saṅgharakṣita was promised to be given to the Saṅgha even before his birth by his parents. Accordingly he was given to the Saṅgha and he became a monk.\(^3\)

The Buddhist called women Mātugāma i.e. the mother folk. They respected women as mothers. Though they held women in high esteem yet they tried to avoid their company lest their physical charm should tempt them. Yet when they saw some woman in difficulty they hurried to serve her. In Pāṃśupradānāvadāna we find that Upagupta avoided the company of the courtesan Vāsavadattā by turning down her offer of love, but when she was punished to be disfigured and was thrown out of the town, he rushed to her and nursed her with the utmost care until her death.\(^4\)

In the Avadāna-Śataka it is mentioned that these monks held meetings twice a year at Śrāvasti. One meeting they held in the month of Āṣāḍha, at the beginning of rains and the second on the fullmoon-day in the month of Kārttika.\(^5\)

These monks wandered from one place to another. The common people paid them respect, visited them, put their problems before them and offered them food and other neces-

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1. Cf. Bigandet, p. *The Life or Legend of Gaudama*, Vol. I. p. 197 "The conversion of Nanda, who had become the presumptive heir to be the crown of Kapilavastu, grieved Śuddhodana so much that he, to prevent the recurrence of such an event, exacted from the great reformer that in after times no one could be admitted into the society of the perfect, without having previously obtained the consent of his parents."
2. *Divyāvadāna* I p. 11
3. Ibid XXII p. 205
4. Ibid XXVI p. 220
5. *Avadāna-Śataka* XXVI p. 84
cities of life. The spiritual life of the common folk was mainly
guided by the monks. Thus they played a very important role
in the general life of the society.

The householder-devotees of the Buddha were called the
Upāsaka and Upāsikās. Every Upāsaka and Upāsikā had to
observe four types of detachments viz.śramaṇātipāt-ivārītī, śraddha-
dāna-ivārītī, kāmabhīrāyachār-ivārītī, suṣra-meray-maṇḍ-pramādasyān-ivārītī. The
incumbrance of an Upāsaka or Upāsikā was performed by
making him or her take the resort of three refuges viz. The
Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṅgha. The importance of this
act of taking resort in those refuges is stated in the following
words of Śakra:—

ये बुधं शरणं यान्ति न ते गच्छन्ति दुर्गमितम् ।
प्रह्याय मानुषान् कायान् दिव्यान् कायानुपासते ॥

ये धर्मं शरणं यान्ति न ते गच्छन्ति दुर्गमितम् ।
प्रह्याय मानुषान् कायान् दिव्यान् कायानुपासते ॥

ये संघं शरणं यान्ति न ते गच्छन्ति दुर्गमितम् ।
प्रह्याय मानुषान् कायान् दिव्यान् कायानुपासते ॥

Two of the parrots were born in the category of the
Devas just for the reason of their taking resort in the three
refuges.8 One descending god, who was worried about his
taking birth in the form of a pig, was sent in the Tuṣita
heaven among the gods.

The Upāsakas and Upāsikās formed an essential factor
in the spread of Buddhism. They formed the back-bone of
monk’s community because they supplied the indispensable
wants of the monks viz. food, clothing, bed, medicament etc.
In return they were privileged to listen to the various
learned discourses delivered by the monks.

1. Divyāvadāna XXI p. 186-187
2. Ibid XIV p. 121
3. Ibid XVI p. 123
4. Ibid XIV p. 120
Religious Organisations:—

Four types of religious organisations are recorded in the Avadāna literature:

1. Family of monks (सिद्ध परिषद्)
2. Family of nuns (सिद्धृष्णि परिषद्)
3. Family of Upāsakas (उपासक परिषद्)
4. Family of Upāsikās (उपासिका परिषद्)

As the very names of these organisations suggest that the family of monks constituted of monks; of nuns constituted of nuns; of Upāsakas constituted of Upāsaka and of Upāsikās constituted of Upāsikās. These originations were governed by certain disciplinary regulations. Each monk and nun had to perform the act of meditation and study as a necessary part of their religious life. Mahāpanthaka attained the highest seat of Arhathood by performing these acts. The monks and nuns, generally in the group of 500, visited different places and delivered religious preachings among the people. Their visit was called Cārikā. The following five types of Cārikās are recorded in the Avadāna literature:

1. Araṇya-Cārikā
2. Nadi-Cārikā
3. Parvata-Cārikā
4. Śmaśāna-Cārikā
5. Janapada-Cārikā

These Cārikās bore quite spectacular appearance. Huge crowds of people assembled to witness the spectacle of these Cārikās. Mahāpanthaka visited the city of Śrāvasti where a huge crowd of spectators assembled to see him. A nun, named Śailā went to the city of Roruka to deliver religious discourses

1. Divyāvadāna XXI p. 185
2. Ibid XXXV p. 429
3. Ibid VIII p. 59
4. Ibid XXXV p. 429
to the queen and her friends. These Cārikās were postponed during rainy season. During rains they used to live at one place and deliver religious discourses. At the end of rainy season a ceremony called Pravāraṇā was held. Every fifth year this ceremony of Pravāraṇā, called Pañca-vārṣika, was celebrated with special pomp. King Asoka used to celebrate this Pañca-vārṣika Pravāraṇā. He donated 400,000 coins, feasted 300,000 monks, one Arhat and two teachers and offered his whole kingdom including all his queens, ministers, son Kuṇḍala and his own self to the Saṅgha. The family of monks was generally invited by householders for food etc. Some householders approached these monks at their Vihāras also. One householder is stated to have approached the monks living at Jetāgrove, with food sufficient for 500 monks. Feasting the family of monks was considered a very noble act. It was given the name of a Parva i.e. festival. A boy, could not get the sum of 500 kārśāpaṇas from his mother for feeding the family of monks. He, then, served in a family and earned the money by which he fed the holy family of monks.

The family of Upāsakas and Upāsikās lived in their normal domestic life and supported the families of monks and nuns. Some Upāsakas and Upāsikās were devoted to those monks and nuns so much that they could donate even their children to them on demand. Buddharaḵṣita and his wife were such Upāsaka and Upāsikā who promised to donate their son even before his birth, to Śāriputra. They did donate the same when the child was born. The family of Upāsakas

1. Divyāvadāna XXXVII p. 469
2. Ibid VIII p. 58
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid XXIX p. 297
5. Ibid XVIII p. 147
6. Ibid XXI p. 190
7. Ibid XXIII p. 204-205
8. Ibid XXIII p. 204-205
and Upāsikās went to their religious teachers daily for listening to their religious discourses. Sahasodgata was one such Upāsaka.  

Various religious sects:—

Besides Buddhism, six other religious sects were also prevalent in the society. The leaders of these six schools were Pūrṇa Kāśyapa, Maskarī Gosāliputra, Sañjayī Vairattīputra, Ajita Keśakambala, Kakuda Kātyāyana and Nīrgrantha Jñātiputra. These six leaders and their devotees felt jealous of the growing popularity of Buddhism. So they were always at cross with the Buddha and the Buddhists. They tried their best to outbid the popularity of Buddhism. They used to show miracles for proving themselves superior to the Buddha. These six famous opponents of Buddhism held a conference in the hall of recreation of Rājaγraha and pondered over the problem thus—“So long as the Buddha was not born into this world, we all received honours and gifts of food, clothing, shelter and medicament from monarchs, householders, guildsmen, lay-men, mayors and merchants. But since the entrance of Buddha on the stage of this world all the honour and attention of these people goes to him and his followers. No doubt we are superior in the possession of supernatural powers yet we are left to ourselves.” Pondering over thus they made a plan of holding a competition with the Buddha in showing miracles. The contest was arranged at their request by prasenjit at Śrāvasti in which the Buddha won over these heretics by giving a better show of miracles. A similar reference, is recorded in the Avadāna-Śataka also. There it is stated that one day two Śreṣṭhis of Śrāvasti, one devoted to the Pūrṇa and the other to the Lord, crossed over the heated discussion as to who—Pūrṇa or Gautama—is superior. Each wanted to prove his teacher relatively superior. The matter went to the king who ordered his ministers to arrange a contest between the two. On

1. Divyāvadāna XXI P. 192 एषोंहु बुद्धं भगवतं शरणं गण्धर्मि घम च भिक्षुसंस्थव च।
2. Ibid. XII P. 90
3. Ibid. XII P. 90
4. Ibid. XII P. 101
5. Avadāna-Śataka IX PP. 23-26
the seventh day the contest was announced to be arranged. A wide arena was prepared for the purpose. Sandal, flowers etc. were assembled and the follower of Pūrṇa stood in the midst of huge crowd of spectators and took an oath saying thus: "By the Satya by which Pūrṇa and other teachers, six in number, excel in the world, by that Satya may these flowers, this incense and this water reach unto them". Immediately after his oath was over the flowers fell on the ground, the fire of incense went out and water fell on the ground and disappeared. Thus he lost the game. Then the follower of Buddha stood up and took the oath thus—"By the Satya by which the Lord Buddha excels in the world, by that Satya may these flowers, this incense and this water reach unto him". No sooner had he said this then the flowers rose and got automatically arranged in the shape of a row of Haṁsas, incense took the form of cloud and the water took the shape of a rod of Vaidūrya. All these things, followed by the whole crowd of spectators, flew along the sky in the direction of Jetavanā till they reached the Lord. The flowers settled themselves on the head of the Buddha and the incense and water in front of him. Thus they proved the superiority of Lord Buddha over these six heretics.

The mutual intolerance among these sects is reflected in many Avadāna stories. In Vītāśokāvadāna the mention of a Nirgrantha showing disrespect to the Buddha-image of Puṇḍravardhana is made. Aśoka became so furious at this that he ordered all the Ājīvakas of Puṇḍravardhana to be slaughtered and in one day eighteen thousand Ājīvakas were slaughtered. Again, in the same Avadāna it is mentioned that once, some Nirgrantha dishonoured the statue of the Lord by throwing that on the feet of a Nirgrantha. King Aśoka punished the whole family of that Nirgrantha and burnt them alive. He also announced a prize of one Dīnāra to anyone who brought a head of Nirgrantha. The heretics, out of jealousy, prevented all the inhabitants of Bhadrānkarā city from seeing the Lord. They said, "Who-so-ever will go to see the Lord shall have to pay a fine of sixty Kārṣāpanas."

1. Divyāvadāna XXVIII P. 277
2. Ibid
3. Ibid IX P. 78-79
PART IV
AVADĀNA STORIES IN DIFFERENT VERSIONS

Some of the stories of the Avadānas are found in different versions. Though the same theme is generally maintained yet they differ in their details and settings considerably. Some such stories are given here.

The Story of Śibi:—

The story of Śibi, in the Avadāna-Śataka, is traced in the Jātaka literature also. In the Jātaka Śibi is stated to be the king of Aritṭhapura, while in the Avadāna literature he is referred to as the king of Śibighoṣa. In the Jātaka the amount of his alms is stated to be of six hundred thousand but in the Avadāna-Śataka no reference to the exact amount is mentioned. Here it is said that he gave food, cloth and other things to the needy. In the Jātaka the idea of giving the part of his body even to anyone, who might need it, crept up in his mind; but in the Avadāna-Śataka this idea, that 'the human beings are being satisfied by me but there is none to satisfy the small insects' crept up in his mind. So he, after inflicting wounds on his body, went to the dwelling place of the insects. Then Śakra, in order to test his genuineness, went to him. In the Jātaka it is mentioned that he appeared before him as a blind Brāhmaṇa and asked for his eyes. In the Avadāna-Śataka it is stated that first of all he appeared before the king in the form of a vulture and started plucking his eyes. When the king did not object to it and asked him to take with pleasure whatever it wanted, he appeared before him in the form of a Brāhmaṇa (not blind) and asked for his eyes. In the Jātaka Śibi's eyes are removed by his surgeon Śivaka in spite of lamentations of his family members and his subjects, and then given to the Brāhmaṇa. It is also stated there that Śibi, after becoming blind, wished to be an ascetic. Later on, Śakra came to his rescue and blessed him with the boon of restoring his eyes.
In the Avadāna-Śataka it is mentioned that when Śakra begged for his eyes, he readily agreed to donate. At this Śakra got pleased with him and did not take his eyes. The incidents of plucking and restoring of eyes are not mentioned in the Avadāna-Śataka.

In the Avadāna-Kalpalatā we find this story with still more variations. Here king Śibi is stated to be the king of Śivāvatī. As none in his subjects committed any evil deed so all of them attained heaven. When Indra, the king of heaven, found his heaven very much crowded, then, in order to put Śibi’s generosity to test, presented himself in the guise of a demon before him and uttered half of a sentence. When Śibi desired to listen to the other half also, he said, “As I am feeling very thirsty and hungry, I cannot relate the other half. You believe in non-violence so how can I expect from you blood and meat, through which my thirst and hunger can be quenched. I am therefore going in search of my food.” Śibi replied, “I can give you my own blood and flesh if you so please”. When the demon agreed to his proposal, he cut out his own flesh and served the same with blood to the demon. After having been satisfied, the demon asked the king, “You must be feeling pain in your wounds”? He replied, “As I have inflicted these wounds for the benefit of other being, I am not feeling any pain.” Hearing that the demon appeared in his true form (Indra) and healed his wounds.

The Vinaya-Vastu of the Mūlasarvāstivādins also records a story about some king Śibi of Śivaghoṣa, who was generous towards the beggars and ailing persons. Once an ailing householder came to him and asked for medical help. King sent for the physician who prescribed for him barley to be taken with the blood of a man who had never been hostile to anyone. Finding himself to be the proper person, he ordered his head to be cut into two pieces. Since the orderly refused to carry out this order, the king himself cut his head and served the patient with his blood. Thus the patient was cured.

Thus it is found that the idea of charity constitutes the main theme of all these stories.

The Story of Uttara:—

A story in the Avadāna-Ṣataka, entitled Uttara, resembles with a similar story in the Petavatthu. In this story the mother of Uttara is stated to have become a Pretī because she did not believe in charity. As it deals with the incident of becoming Pretī of Uttara’s mother therefore in the Petavatthu it bears the title ‘Uttaramātupeta’. In the Avadāna-Ṣataka Uttara is stated to be the son of a Śreṣṭhī who, after his father’s death, established a shop, and thus earned his livelihood. But in the Petavatthu Uttara’s father is stated to be in service with king Udena. After his father’s death he was offered the same post which he accepted. In the Avadāna-Ṣataka it is mentioned that Uttara used to pay visits to the Lord off and on. He wanted to take Pravrajyā also which his mother did not agree to. The Petavatthu records that once, he had gone to a forest for felling the trees. There he saw Mahākacāyanī and listened to his discourse. He took shelter in Three Refuges (Triśaraṇa) and invited the Lord to his house. He even persuaded his relatives also for performing such noble acts. His mother did not like his act of offering and hence cursed him by saying, “Let all these gifts, which you are offering against my wish, be turned into blood in the next world.” Once she did favour the act of offering a peacock-feather-fan. Consequently after her death, she became a Pretī, having blue, smooth, fine and long hair as a gift for her offer of peacock-feather-fan, but was not served with any food or drink. She suffered these in a like manner for forty-five years until a monk, at her request, offered drink, food and clothes to the Bhikkhusāṅgha. Whereas in the Avadāna-Ṣataka Uttara used to give his earning to his mother to serve the monks and the Brāhmaṇas. His mother did not serve any monk or Brāhmaṇa. After her death she became a Pretī and did not receive any food, drink or clothing for full twenty-five years. The river, to which she approached for drinking water, dried out. Once she went to Uttara, who was busy meditating at the bank of river Gaṅgā, and demanded water from him.
At first he did not recognise her, but when she revealed her identity, he scolded her and advised her to go to the Lord. The Lord sent her to the upper level of Pretaloka (Preta Mahārdheṣu). Again Utтарa asked her to donate something as she was now in a position to donate. But she felt otherwise. At this he reminded her of the consequences of not donating i.e. becoming a Pretī again. At this she gave out a yamāḷī. Utтарa put that on a peg. His mother, who in her heart of heart did not want to donate, stole the same during the night. Utтарa again went to her and brought that from her. Thrice that was stolen by his mother during the night time and was again brought by Utтарa. Later on, a monk cut and stitched that into a dress. Thenceforth that was not stolen by that Pretī.

The Story of Kuṇāḷa:—

The story of Kuṇāḷa is found in the Divyāvadāna and the Avadāṇa Kalpalatā of Kṣemendra. The main episodes are almost the same, viz. the birth of Kuṇāḷa with beautiful eyes, his marriage with Kañcanamālā, prophecy of Sthavira Suyaśa about the destruction of Kuṇāḷa’s eyes, passionately enamoured queen Tiṣyarakṣitā amorous invitation extended to and rejected by Kuṇāḷa, his campaign to Taxila, illness, successful cure by Tiṣyarakṣitā, seven days rule as a prize given to her, revenge upon Kuṇāḷa by getting his eyes plucked, his encounter as a blind wanderer with Aśoka, restoration of his eyes, etc. In the Divyāvadāna there is the mention of three dreams of Aśoka. In the first dream he saw Kuṇāḷa’s eyes being plucked by two vultures. In the second dream he saw Kuṇāḷa, with long hair, beard, moustaches and nails, entering into the city and in the third dream he saw Kuṇāḷa’s all the teeth being broken. The astrologers interpreted these dreams as indicating the death of Kuṇāḷa.1 In the Avadāṇa-Kalpalatā we do not find any such reference. Only at one place Aśoka says that he has always been haunted by bad dreams. Again, in the Avadāṇa-Kalpalatā, the mention of a Kuṇjakārna,2 ruler of Taxila, is made, but no such reference is found

1. Divyāvadāna p. 264
2. Avadāṇa-Kalpalatā p. 353
in the Divyāvadāna. Still more, an elaborate description about the campaign of Kuṇāla to Taxila is found in the Avadāna-kalpalatā, but in the Divyāvadāna only स्मृतयुक्त ताक्षशिलामण्डपः 1 is mentioned. In the Avadāna-kalpalatā, queen Tiṣyarakṣitā is shown to be pardoned by king Aśoka, but in the Divyāvadāna she is severely punished at the hands of Aśoka. In the Avadāna-Kalpalatā it is stated that when the king’s elephant saw blind Kuṇāla with his wife, he recognised him and sounded a note of welcome to the prince and the princess. This description is absent in the Divyāvadāna. It is interesting to note that some of the descriptions in the Divyāvadāna and Avadāna-Kalpalatā bear striking similarity to each-other. The following are some such similar lines:

**Divyāvadāna**

राजन में दुःखमलोकित कामिनी
तीर्थपकारेश्वरि न मन्युतापः।
मनः प्रसन्न यदि मे जनन्याः
वेनोढ़ूते मे नहने स्वयं हि।

tतत्तैं सत्येन ममातु ताभे
लोक्तिरूप प्रक्तत्तमेव सचः।

इष्टप्रसन्तमे पूर्वविचक्रशोभिते
नेतुषुमे प्रादुर्भवृषभु:।

**Avadāna-Kalpalatā**

राजन में कु लवासित कामिनी
तीर्थपकारेश्वरि न मन्युतापः।।
मनः प्रसन्न यदि मे जनन्याः
वेनोढ़ूते च स्वकरेण नेिः।

tतत्तैं सत्येन ममातु ताभे
लोक्तिरूप प्रक्तत्तमेव सचः।।

इष्टप्रसन्तमे पूर्वविचक्रशोभिते
प्रादुर्भवृषभुः।।

The legend of Kuṇāla, quite different in its nature, is found in the Pariśiṣṭaparvan 2 of Hemacandra also. There it is stated that once king Aśoka prepared a message asking his eight year old son Kuṇāla, residing at Ujjayinī, to study (ग्रंथयज). One of his queens wanted to have her own son be enthroned after Aśoka instead of Kuṇāla, whom king Aśoka wished to enthrone after him. She put a dot by her eye-ink upon that

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1. *Divyāvadāna* P. 263.20
message making it ब्रह्मीयः i.e. make him blind. The message was sent to the city of Ujjayinī. None dared to perform according to that message, but Kuṇāla, out of reverence towards his father by whom the message was supposed to have been sent, himself plucked out his eyes by hot iron-needles. When Aśoka came to know the tragedy, he was upset, but could do nothing except arranging for his livelihood. He gave him a village which yielded a handsome revenue. When Sāracchī, the wife of Kuṇāla, bore a son for him, he became worried about his future and wanted to regain his lost kingdom for him. Therefore he, in the guise of a musician, went to Aśoka and sang a song of his own tragedy, stating ‘the great grandson of Candragupta, the grand-son of Bindusāra and the son of king Aśoka, the great, asks for a penny from you’ (प्रपीतश्चन्द्रगुप्तस्य बिन्दुसारस्य नवुङ्कः । एवोजङ्गकाधियः सूनुरुः मार्गवति काकिस्योभु ॥4॥). On being enquired he revealed his identity. After recognising him, Aśoka asked him as to what he wanted. He said, “Just a penny (Kākinī)”. Then the ministers interpreted that by the word penny he meant the kingdom. Aśoka asked, “But how a blind man can rule?” He said, “It is not for me but for my son that I want this kingdom”. “But when is it born?”—was the eager question of curious proud grand-father. “Just now (सम्प्रति)” was his reply. Then Aśoka conferred his kingdom on that child and declared him his successor.

Thus it is found that the story of Kuṇāla is presented by Hemacandra in an altogether different light. The main cause of conflict between Kuṇāla and the queen (name is not mentioned by Hemacandra) varies. It is not the rejected love of a passionate woman but jealous mother’s blind love for her child’s prosperity that became the main reason in blinding of Kuṇāla. However, the main facts i.e. Kuṇāla was king Aśoka’s son; he was made blind; Sampratī, the son of Kuṇāla, became king after Aśoka etc., remain unaltered.
The story of Sudhana

The story of Sudhana Kumāra is also found in the Divyāvadāna and the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. Prince Sudhana, the hero of the story, is stated to be married to a kinnara girl Manoharā, abducted by a hunter from a bathing pool and presented to the hero. Following a royal intrigue, Sudhana is separated from Manoharā. Manoharā returns to her native place, giving her clues to a sage. Sudhana, bewailing her separation, meets the sage and by his honest assistance becomes successful in getting reunited to his love. This story of Divyāvadāna varies a little in some of the expressions from the story of the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. About king’s dream it is mentioned in the Divyāvadāna that he, in his dream, saw his stomach being ripped open by a vulture while in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā no mention of vulture as such is made. Secondly, in the Divyāvadāna it is stated that he saw his country being surrounded on all sides by his intestines, while in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā it is mentioned that he saw his country being surrounded by his enemies. The reference to the seven Ratnas entering his homes found in the Divyāvadāna, is missing in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. As regards the nomenclature of the hero, the Divyāvadāna states that he was named Sudhana after the name of his father ‘Dhana’, while in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā it is said that he was called Sudhana because so many treasures came into existence at the time of his birth.

Another version of this story is found in the Mahāvastu. Manoharā, the kinnara girl, was abducted by a hunter for sacrifice in a yajña being performed by a neighbouring king. There Sudhana preached the futility of sacrificing living beings. Impressed by his speech the king let loose all the beings. Sudhana brought Manoharā to his kingdom and got married to her. He got so deeply involved in his love that he neglected all

1. Divyāvadāna, XXX
2. Avadāna-Kalpalatā, 6 th.
3. Mahāvastu, II. 97
the princely duties entrusted to him by his father who, having come to know of it, got furious and put the prince into confinement and expelled Manoharā from his kingdom. Manoharā then returned to her father's place, leaving her whereabouts with two fowlers. Prince Sudhana, when set free with the help of these fowlers, got successful in reuniting himself with her.

The two versions of the story as mentioned above have some common points. They are:

i. Manoharā, the kinnara girl, is shown abducted by a hunter at a bathing pool. (The purpose of abduction, however, differs. According to the first version she is abducted for no special purpose but according to the second version, she is abducted for the purpose of sacrifice in a yajña.)

2. Sudhana's marriage with Manoharā is described in both the versions. According to first version, Sudhana secured Manoharā as a gift from some hunter while according to the second, he found her during his visit to a yajña.

3. The festivities in progress at the time of the entry of Sudhana to the kingdom of kinnara-rāja Druma, Manoharā's father, are referred to in both the versions.

Since both the versions occur in the source-books of Buddhism, there is every chance of their being sectarian in nature. But it appears that the version, found in the Mahāvastu is more sectarian in nature. Here the story is being employed as a vehicle for inculcating certain Buddhist morals and social ideals. Sacrifice, as such, is discarded by the Buddhists. A huge case in defence of this viewpoint is built while Sadhana discourages such sacrifices. He advocates harmlessness the best of religions and killing animals as worst of sinful acts. He also lays stress on following the tenfold virtuous path.

In both the versions of the Sudhanakumāravadāna the motif viz. the act of truth, is very tactfully handled but at different stages. In the Mahāvastu, it is the hunter who, with the help of the act of truth, gets successful in detaining Manoharā.
As directed by a sage, a hunter, desiring to capture Manoharā, utters the truth, "If this is true that you are the daughter of king Druma, move not a step further." By this truth she is bound and captured by him. In the Divyāvadāna, prince Sudhana takes resort to this motif for securing a renion with Manoharā. In order to test the genuineness of Sudhana's love for Manoharā, her father placed before him a number of kinnaris and asked him to identify her. Sudhana, pointing to her, said, "If it be true that you, standing before me, are Manoharā then let you step forward." Hearing this truth, she stepped forward and thus regained her mortal love.

The Story of Koṭikarna:—

The story of Śrōṇakoṭikarna is also found in the Divyāvadāna and the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. Both the sources are uniform regarding the accounts of Koṭikarna’s birth, nomenclature, going on a sea-voyage against the wishes of his parents, his visit to the city of the Pretas, his return, messages given to the concerned beings by him, his getting ordination in monkhood and becoming Arhat. These incidents remain unaltered in both the sources. The difference occurs only at one place. In the Divyāvadāna it is stated that when he wished to see the Rūpakāya of the Lord, his teacher gave five questions to put to the Lord which he did and got befitting answers. But in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā no mention of such questions and answers is found. The story of his previous birth is also the same in both the sources.

The Story of Pūrṇa:—

The story of Pūrṇa, son of householder Bhava, born of a slave-woman, is also found in the Divyāvadāna and the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. In the Divyāvadāna the story is better knitted in an elaborate style while in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā it is briefed in such a way that many of the incidents, mentioned in the Divyāvadāna, are absent in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. The instances of his selling the wood, named Gośirṣacandana, to the king, filing of a suite by traders against him in the royal court and the king’s verdict in favour of Pūrṇa, his going to the
house of Anāthapiṇḍada for getting ordination, the Lord’s mention of the feared future difficulties to be encountered, from the Ṣrōṇaparāntakas and his replies, ordination of 500 saints and saint Vakkali, his going to the city of Ṣrōṇaparāntakas by air, etc. are some of the incidents present only in the Divyāvadāna and not in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. The instances of Pūrṇa’s birth of a slave-woman, his sea-voyage and listening to religious songs during that voyage, his ordination as a monk, his going to the Ṣrōṇaparāntakas, rescuing of his brother Bhavila with all his fellows, religious preachings given to Kṛṣṇa and Gautama (two Nāgarājās according to the Divyāvadāna and two saints according to the Avadāna-Kalpalatā), preaching of four noble truths to the mother of Maudgalyāyana etc. are some of the incidents which are present in both the sources.

The story of Māndhātā:—

The story of Māndhātā is found in the Divyāvadāna as well as in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. Māndhātā, born from the head of king Upoṣadha, was very generous. Once he banished 500 saints from his kingdom because they had burnt many birds who disturbed them in their daily yajñas, studies etc. For his good actions he went to heaven where he was offered half the kingdom. One day an idea ‘why should I not be the sole ruler of this heaven? why should I have this divided kingdom?’ struck to his mind and for this selfish idea he was dethroned from heaven.

About the nomenclature of Māndhātā it is mentioned in the Divyāvadāna that at the birth of Māndhātā from the head of king Upoṣadha sixty-thousand wives of king Upoṣadha at once started to lactate and each one of them started saying to the child (‘suckle me, suckle me’) (मां धय, मां धय). These very words, after being repeated time and again, became Māndhātā and this became the name of the child. While in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā it is mentioned that when the queens (number is not mentioned) of king Upoṣadha saw the child, each one of them claimed ‘This adorable baby will bear me as a mother
(सं धारनिन्वत शिशु: शताध्योत्य जननीपदे). These very words (सं धा) having been repeated again and again became Māndhāta and thus child was known as Māndhātā. Here we find that the difference is only of words and not of sense.

In the Divyāvadāna it is mentioned that when Māndhāta saw people sowing seeds, he wished ‘May God bless my kingdom with the rain of different types of seeds’ and his wish was fulfilled. Similarly, when he saw people producing cotton, spinning threads and weaving clothes, then he prayed “May God bless my kingdom with the rain of cotton, thread and cloth”, and his wish was also fulfilled. When he saw his subjects were prosperous and satisfied, he wished ‘May God rain gold upon my ladies chamber for full seven days’ and this wish was also fulfilled. There is a detailed description about these rains in the Divyāvadāna while the Avadāna Kalpalatā is silent about such happenings.

Again, in the Divyāvadāna, a detailed description about his reign in other countries such as Pūrvavideha, Aparagodāniya, Uttaraku and mount Sumeru is given. While in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā this description is brief.

Besides, a clash, between the gods and the demons in which the gods, with the help of Māndhātā, won, is also mentioned in the Divyāvadāna but in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā, no such reference is found.

Lastly, in the Divyāvadāna, it is mentioned that after getting dethroned from the seat of heaven, king Māndhātā, while lying on his death-bed, advised the people, that the worldly desires should be condemned. Because they ever remained unsatisfied. In the Avadāna-Kalpalatā no such description is found.

1. Divyāvadāna PP-131-132
2. Ibid. PP-133-134
3. Avadāna-Kalpalatā 4th Pallava stanza 50
4. Divyāvadāna PP-137-138
5. Ibid P. 139/4 ‘कामो जुगुप्तितो’
6. Ibid P. 139/3
The Story of Dharmaruci:—

The story of a glutton Dharmaruci, who could not be satisfied by any amount of food but religious preachings, is found in the Divyāvadāna and the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. In both the sources the incident of attack on the ship and its survival and the stories of Dharmaruci’s previous births i.e. of Sahasrayodhi, Sumati and a murderer, are given. Of course the description is more detailed in the Divyāvadāna. The story of Dharmaruci, is found in the Mahāvastu-Avadāna also. The instances of Sumati¹ (Sumati according to the Divyāvadāna, and Megha according to the Mahāvastu) and the murderer,² Dharmaruci’s visit to the Lord, and the incident of attack on the ship, are found in both the sources. The name of the scholar (माशवकः) is given Megha in the Mahāvastu while in the Divyāvadāna it is Sumati. In the Divyāvadana it is mentioned that as he wanted to give a gift (दक्षिणा) to the teacher after the completion of his studies, so he went to the capital of Dvīpāvati, where he was offered many gifts and a beautiful girl. He accepted all the gifts except the girl because being a celibate he was not supposed to indulge in sex. Rejected by him she went to a gardener and gave all her Jewellery to him. In return she used to take some blue flowers daily from the gardener and offered the same to the Lord. Once she saw ten dreams and in order to know their forebodings she went to the Lord with seven flowers in her hand to offer him. In her way she met Sumati, who demanded five flowers from her. She gave him the flowers and put a condition that he, at the time of offering those flowers, would wish her to be his wife in all the future lives.

In the Mahāvastu it is stated that when Megha entered the city of Dvīpāvati, he found the city decorated. He enquired of a girl, named Prakṛti, about the cause of that decoration. She said, ‘As Dīpankara Buddha is to come today in this city,

2. Basak Mahāvastu PP. 304-305 Divyāvadāna PP-157-161
there is so much of decoration.' He wanted to have five flowers from her which she gave on the condition that he would marry her in all his future lives. The references of king Dipa’s Yajña and Prakṛti’s dreams are absent in the Mahāvastu-Avadāna.

A somewhat similar story, bearing the title Dhammaruciyathera Apadāna, is recorded in the Apadāna literature also.¹ There it is stated that at the time of Dipankara Buddha there lived a young man Megha, who entered the order and got ordained but later on fell in a bad company. He left the Buddha’s order and murdered his mother. As a punishment for this deed he was sent to the Avīci hell. Later on he was born as a fish. Once it attacked the ship of some merchants. They pronounced the name of Buddha for help. The ship was saved and the fish died. He was then born into Śrāvasti and bore the name of Dhammaruci. Hearing the Buddha’s sermon at Jetavana he got ordained as a monk.

The Story of Sangharakṣita :

The story of Sangharakṣita is also found in the Divyāvadāna and the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. Here also both the sources relate to the same story with the only difference that in the Divyāvadāna three monasteries are stated to be visited by Sangharakṣita while in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā only two are referred. The description of the first and the third monasteries is alike in both the sources, but that of the second is found only in the Divyāvadāna² and is missing in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā.³ Like other legends this is also found in a shorter framework in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā while the verbose style of the Divyāvadāna makes it a bit bulky. The incidents of Sangharakṣita’s birth, bringing up, voyage, encounter with the Nāgas, visit to different monasteries, preaching to one of the gods and the Buddha’s explanation for the difference in forms of crea-

¹. Khuddaka-Nikāya Vol. VII. 1959, P. 67
². Divyāvadāna P. 206.
³. Avadāna-Kalpalatā P. 430
tures are given more detailed descriptions in the Divyāvadāna than in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā.

The Story of Cūḍāpakṣa:—

The account of a young man's becoming rich through the sale of a dead mouse is found in the Divyāvadāna as well as in the Jātakas. Of course every minor detail of the story varies but the main episodes of the story, viz. his picking up the dead mouse on overhearing the words of a Śreṣṭhī, making bargains by selling that mouse to a tavern for a cat and finally getting married with the beautiful daughter of the Śreṣṭhī, are the same in both the sources. Other incidents, concerned with the investment of his capital and his trade such as whether he first of all got grams or mollases, whether he sold that to a gardener or a wood-cutter, whether he established various shops before going for the sea-voyage or removed some of rotten branches and leaves from the king's pleasure garden and thus got money for ship-fare by selling a grass-bundle etc., of course, very. In the Divyāvadāna it comes under an Avadāna entitled Cūḍāpakṣāvadāna while in the Jātakas it bears the title Cullakasetthi Jātaka.

The Story of the Miracles:—

The mention of the Lord showing miracles is met with, of course with different titles, in the Divyāvadāna and the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. In the Divyāvadāna it bears the title Prātiḥārya-Sūtra while in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā it is Prātiḥār-yāvadāna. Bimbisāra's visit to the Lord after rejecting the six non-Buddhist teachers, who wanted to challenge the Lord by showing miracles, found in the Divyāvadāna, is non-existent in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. The Lord, it is stated in the Divyāvadāna, wanted to know the place where the previous Buddha had shown miracles for the welfare of all the beings. After having been told about that place, he, accompanied by Ānand and fellow-monks, went to Śrāvasti. This incident is absent in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. Again, when the six non-Buddhist heretics came to know about the Lord's having gone to Śrāvasti, also went there. They asked the king to arrange a contest.

1. Divyāvadāna P. 437
2. Jātaka No. 4
between them and the Lord for showing miracles. In the Avadāna-Kalpalatā it is stated that as they were not permitted by Bimbisāra, so they, in order to seek the help of some other king for getting their purpose served, went to Śrāvastī. One Raktākṣa, who was well-versed in showing miracles, is shown appealing on behalf of those six non-Buddhist teachers to various sources for assisting them on the day of competition. One of these, Subhadra, scoffed at them for having such a silly idea since even the disciples of the Lord were more skillful in the art of showing miracles. Such references are not found in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā.

When every preparation for competition was done, the Lord was sent for by Prasenajit. The Lord showed so many miracles from his place which were mischievously claimed to have been shown by those non-Buddhist heretics. When the Lord entered the arena, one of the lay-devotees, named Luhasudata, came forward and offered his services for defeating those non-Buddhist heretics by showing super-miracles, but the Lord said, ‘It is me and not you who is to be competed by them. So you go and have a seat among the spectators.’ After him Mahāmaudgalyānā also offered his services for the same and was answered in the same way. Such references are absent in the Avadāna Kalpalatā.

The miracles, shown by the Lord, also vary in both the sources. The Divyāvadāna mentions that the Lord, by his powers, showed so many miracles. He became unseen in his seat, reached the eastern sky, moved, stayed, sat and laid down there and showed multi-coloured rays coming out from his body. When Prasenajit asked the opponents to show similar miracles in competition, they said, ‘These are minor things which every one can do’. Then the Lord, with the help of so many gods, showed other miracles also. Then again, when the opponents were invited to show similar miracles in their turn, each one of them put the responsibility upon the other among themselves and none of them dared to do the same. Then one of the Buddha’s devotees, who was the chief of
army of the Yakṣas, started pouring water and even stones upon them. The opponents, attacked by those showers of stones, escaped somehow while all the other spectators came to the shelter of Lord. One of the opponents, named Purṇa, went to a pond, tied a sand-pitcher to his neck and drowned himself in the pond. In the Avadāna-Kalpalatā only a few lines are devoted in the description of the Lord’s showing of miracles in which a few miracles such as enlightening the atmosphere by his power and making lotuses emerge from the earth etc. are described. It is also mentioned in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā that the opponents, after being defeated, sought refuge in the law of the Lord. Such references are not found in the Divyāvadāna.

The Story of Kāla:—

The incident of chopping of the arms and legs of Kāla by the king as a punishment and their restoration by Ānanda is found in both the sources with a slight variation. The Avadāna-Kalpalatā records that when Kāla’s relatives requested various non-Buddhist heretics to cure the injuries of Kāla, they all left away silently while the Divyāvadāna states that one of them, Purṇa rejected their request saying, “As kāla is devoted to the Gautama so let Gautama come and cure him.”

In the Divyāvadāna it is mentioned that the Lord sent Ānanda to cure him at his request but in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā no such reference of request and Lord’s sending of Ānanda is found. Kāla’s attaining the stage of Anāgāmi is also mentioned in the Divyāvadāna while it is absent in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā.

The Story of Jyotīṣka:—

The story of Jyotīṣka, with all the details, is found in the Divyāvadāna and the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. The incidents of the Lord’s prophecy about his birth, its refutation by a Kṣapaṇka (non-Buddhist), his father’s attempts for abortion, his birth, his bringing up by the king, his hostility towards Ajātaśatru, his ordination as a monk and ultimately the incident of his attaining Arhathood—all these details are found with slight varia-
tions in both the sources. In the Avadāna-Kalpalatā it is men-
tioned that when Subhadra (Jyotiśka’s father) did not
succeed in his attempt of abortion by medicine then he took
resort to forced pressings. Nothing else about this abortion
is given in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. In the Divyāvadāna the
description is more realistic. There it is mentioned that when
he started pressing her left side of the womb, the foetus
changed its place to the right side, and when he pressed the
right side, it went to the left side. Thus he went on repeating
the process on both sides, turn by turn. His wife, out of pain,
started crying, hearing which the neighbours came out of their
homes to inquire about the matter. He calmed them down
by saying that it was her delivery time. Then he took her in
a lonely corner of some forest and killed her.

An episode of two boys—one Brāhmaṇa boy, not devoted
to the Lord and the other Kṣatriya boy, devoted to the Lord,
their dialogue and going to the place where (Subhadra’s) dead
wife was to be cremated is an addition in the story of the
Divyāvadāna which does not exist in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā.

Subhadra obtained his child from Bimbisāra—this
simple expression is found in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā, while in
the Divyāvadāna it is mentioned that pressed by his brothers-
in-law, Subhadra went to Bimbisāra for getting Jyotiśka back
but the king answered, ‘I will not give him to you because I
did not take the same from you. I took him from the Lord so
I will return the same to the Lord only.’ Then Subhadra
approached the Lord. The Lord knew that if Subhadra did
not take his child he would die of vomiting hot blood. So
he ordered the king through Ānanda to hand the child over
to Subhadra. Thus the child was given to Subhadra.

A detailed reference to the pearl and the heavenly cloth
of Jyotiśka is found in the Divyāvadāna while in the Avadāna-
Kalpalatā we find its description in only two stanzas—one for
each—i.e. one for the pearl-utensil and one for the heavenly
cloth.
In the Divyāvadāna it is mentioned that Bimbisāra, attracted by the divinity of Jyotis'ka's cloth, himself asked for his invitation while in the Avadāna-Kalpalata no such reference of demanding invitation is found.

In the Divyāvadāna a detailed description of Jyotis'ka's beautiful home is found while in the Avadāna-Kalpalata the writer takes leave by saying that it was studded with pearls (स्तम्भया).

Reference of Devadatta, who instigated Ajātaśatru for usurping the kingdom of Bimbisāra, is found in the Divyāvadāna while in the Avadāna-Kalpalata no reference of Devadatta and his intrigue is found. Of course, word चुन्ना which means 'By way of treachery' occurs in the Avadāna-Kalpalata which suggests that some evil mind must have guided him.

In the Avadāna-Kalpalata it is mentioned that Jyotis'ka gave his house to Ajātaśatru and himself went to another house while in the Divyāvadāna it is mentioned that he exchanged his house with the royal palace.

A long description of Jyotis'ka's non-attachment with worldly things is found in the Avadāna-kalpalata but in the Divyāvadāna only a few lines sum up this description.

The Story of Supriya:

The legend of Supriya and his voyage to Badaradvipa is found in the Divyāvadāna and the Avadāna-Kalplatā. No doubt the main plot of the story is almost the same but some portion of the story varies in these two different sources. In the Avadāna-Kalpalata it is placed under the heading of Bada-

1. Divyāvadāna P. 172/18.
2. Avadāna-Kalpalata Pallava 81 stanza 52.
3. Divyāvadāna PP. 172-173.
5. Divyāvadāna P. 173/21
6. Avadāna-Kalpalata 9th Pallava stanza-53
7. Ibid stanza 57
radoṣpayātrāvadāna while in the Divyāvadāna it bears the title Supriyāvadāna.

Supriya, son of merchant Priyasena, was very generous. He wanted to satisfy all by his money, but as the money was limited and the number of beggars unlimited, he found himself incompetent for that purpose. He went to Ratnadvīpa to collect more and more money but while he was on his return journey his caravan was detained by some thieves who wanted to commit ‘theft upon that caravan. Supriya, knowing their intention, gave them six-times more than what they expected yet they were not satisfied. Then some god suggested him to go to the Badaradvīpa. He, after passing through so many hardships, succeeded in reaching there. He collected wealth from there, returned to his own country, satisfied all the needies and attained Brahmahood.¹

In both the sources the story, no doubt, is quite the same. It differs a bit in some minor details. In the Divyāvadāna we find the name of the Yakṣa as Nīloda while in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā it is given as Nila. Again, in the Divyāvadāna the name of a red-eyed demon is given Tārākṣa while in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā, it is given as Raktākṣa, which certainly seems to be more appropriate. Still-more, in the Divyāvadāna it is stated that Magha, as he could not sit due to ill health, kept lying in the bed during his journey to the Badaradvīpa while in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā no reference about his posture is given.

The Story of Maitrakanyaka :—

The story of a son who offended his mother by disobeying her and upon whose head a hot iron-wheel started to revolve as a punishment for the deed, is also found in both the sources i.e. the Divyāvadāna and the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. The main theme of the story is the same in both the sources but it is found that in the Divyāvadāna the descriptions are more

¹. Divyāvadāna-P.70/6 'महाब्रह्मायं संबूत्ता' and Avadāna-Kalpalatā 4th Pallava stanza 192. 'परमं ब्रह्मायं जगाम'.
elaborate than in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā. Maitrakanyaka's father's efforts for having a son, his birth and, bringing up, his establishing various shops, his intention for a sea-voyage, his mother's pathetic pleadings for not going on a sea-voyage, his reaching to the city of Ramaṇaka, his enjoyment there with heavenly nymphs, his departure from there in spite of their persistent requestes for not resuming his journey towards south, his encounter with the man, who was undergoing the punishment which was to befall upon him, etc. are given very elaborate expression in the Divyāvadāna while in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā each one of these descriptions is concluded in just one or two stanzas.

Some minor factual variations also occur in these two sources. The name of Maitrakanyaka's father is given Maitra in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā while in the Divyāvadāna it is given as Mitra. His mother's name is given Vasundhārā in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā while the Divyāvadāna is silent about it. It is stated in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā that Maitrakanyaka was given girlish name for fear of ill luck while in the Divyāvadāna no special reason for naming is given. The Divyāvadāna states that Maitrakanyaka made an enquiry about his paternal profession but in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā no mention of any such enquiry is made. Still more, in the Divyāvadāna Maitrakanyaka is stated to have established three shops before starting for a sea-voyage but in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā only selling of things is stated to be his sole profession and changing over from one shop to another is not mentioned.

Again, the Divyāvadāna records that jealous-minded neighbours used to instigate him to leave his present profession and to pursue some other one and it was as a result of their instigations that he established and left three different shops and ultimately started on a sea-voyage, but in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā no such evil-minded instigations are given. Somehow he came to know about the profession of his family and became eager to follow the same. Only this much is mentioned in the Avadāna-Kalpalatā.
The study of these stories reveals that since the subject matter of these stories is dealt with at the hands of different authors at different times, so the details have changed to suit the levels of the contemporary audiences. The Avadāna kalpalatā is a later entry to the Avadāna literature. It is claimed to be written in the eleventh century A.D. In this work the author has tried not to give place to unnecessary and irrational details. This has resulted in its brevity. Also, since at that time Buddhism was on its decline in India, so it is a bit less sectarian in nature, in spite of the fact that the whole Avadāna literature was meant to propagate the morals of Buddhism and to prove it superior to others.
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Buddhist - Avadanas