

# The Pregnancy of Māyā: I. The five uncontrollable longings (*dohada*)

Hubert Durt

## Introduction

In a previous article<sup>1</sup>, I pointed out what may appear as a contradictory stance concerning the mother of the Buddha. There have been two attitudes towards her role in the Buddhist scriptures. On one hand, there is a tendency to treat her as an abstraction. This conception originated in the Mahāyanic *Dharmakāya* doctrine, in which the Buddha was regarded as an emanation of the Dharma. In this conception, *Prajñā*, transcendental insight, is symbolized as the mother of the Buddha. By extension, this theory, when put into Tantric garb, resulted in a multiplication of entities called “Mothers of the Buddha.”

On the other hand, there is a literary and artistic tradition which emphasized the carnal link between mother and son. This attitude discloses an historical approach towards the Buddha as a man; it tended to focus on “concrete buddhology,” in contrast to the “abstract buddhology” described above (needless to say, “buddhology” refers here to the specific study of the Buddha, as opposed to this word’s new and, alas!, very common use as “Buddhist studies”). When the emphasis was placed on the “biographical,” or rather “hagiographical,” aspects

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<sup>1</sup> “L’apparition du Buddha à sa mère après son nirvāṇa dans le *Sūtra de Mahāmāyā* (T. 383) et dans le *Sūtra de la Mère du Buddha* (T. 2919),” in J. P. Drège ed., *De Dunhuang au Japon, Études chinoises et bouddhiques offertes à Michel Soyumié*, Paris - Genève: Droz, 1996, pp. 1-4.

of the story of the historical Buddha Śākyamuni, who was regarded as a leader and a model, attention was also devoted to his carnal mother: Mahāmāyā, Māyā-the-Great, as she is called in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*, my main source in this article. She is often called Māyādevī, with *devī*, “goddess” signifying queen. I prefer to use here the simplest form of her name, that is, Māyā.

We know that any attempt toward an historical reconstruction of the human career of the Buddha is doomed, because his figure has been surrounded by much “docetic” influence. I borrow the term “docetism”<sup>2</sup> from christology, as it denotes the tendency to consider the events in the lives of Jesus Christ or Śākyamuni as appearances (Greek: *dokesis*) and thus to systematically recreate the events as symbolic episodes in the career of heroic, supra-human or divine characters. Because the hagiographies of Śākyamuni had been compiled at a comparatively late date, they were receptive to such influences<sup>3</sup>.

According to this hagiographical tradition, the Buddha thus had a father and a mother. King Śuddhodana, the father, is highly visible in the legend of Siddhārtha, who later becomes Śākyamuni, although his role during the period preceding the birth of his son is rather limited. We see him mostly as fulfilling the desires of Queen Māyā. Māyā, the mother, plays a much more important role. I will not deal here with the various and abundant sources<sup>4</sup> that detail the conception of the future Buddha. The conception is represented by the episode of the dream of Queen Māyā and it is famous in both literary and artistic traditions. Dreams are a common phenomenon in the Indian tradition of child-

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<sup>2</sup> See Mircea Eliade ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, IV, New York-London: Macmillan, 1987, pp. 383-384, s.v. Docetism (by PHEME PERKINS).

<sup>3</sup> See the chapter “Le Buddha divinisé” in Étienne Lamotte, *Histoire du bouddhisme indien*, Louvain: Bibliothèque du Muséon, 1958, pp. 713-759.

<sup>4</sup> Max Deeg is preparing a new enquiry into the “Dream of Māyā”.

bearing. Another feature of the Indian tales about childbearing is the uncontrollable craving, called *dohada*, which occurs during pregnancy. Moreover, the unique phenomenon of the surging of milk in the mother's breasts<sup>5</sup> may occur long after the lactation period, especially when, after a lifelong separation, a mother meets her natural child.

There is no explicit mention of virginity in the Buddhist scriptures, although such an assumption seems to have been made in the Classical West, where information about Buddhism was scarce. Well known is the reference to the birth of the Buddha made by Saint Jerome<sup>6</sup> (ca. 347-419), wherein he documents two assertions: a virginal conception of the Buddha and his birth from the side of his mother (*traditur quod Buddam, principem dogmatis eorum, e latere suo virgo generavit*). The second point, the birth of the future Buddha from the right side of his mother, is well documented in the Buddhist tradition.

Māyā, the mother, is thus the most prominent figure in the story of the conception and birth of the Buddha. The conception of the Buddha is traditionally illustrated by two different scenes: the first is the dream of Queen Māyā and the second is the scene of the brahmin specialists of auspicious signs (*naimittikas*) explaining this happy dream to King Śuddhodana. In the most common literary and artistic tradition, the

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<sup>5</sup> This aspect of the Māyā legend will be considered in a forthcoming study on the *Sūtra of Mahāmāyā* (*Mo he mo ye jing* 摩訶摩耶經, T. XII n°383).

<sup>6</sup> Henri de Lubac, *La rencontre du bouddhisme et de l'occident*, Paris: Aubier, 1952, p.27, n.96 refers to Jerome, *Adversus Jovinianum Liber I*, capitulum 42 (*Patrologia Latina*, vol 23, col. 273). A recent reference to this Latin quotation appears in Heinz Bechert, "The Earliest Reliable Information on the Central Conception of Buddhism in Western Writing : The Report by Simon de La Loubère (1691)" in Christine Chojnacki, Jens-Uwe Hartmann and Volker M. Tschannerl ed., *Vividharatnakaraṇḍaka, Festgabe für Adelheid Mette, Indica et Tibetica*, 37, Swisttal Odendorf, 2000, p. 57.

event depicted after the dream of Māyā is the birth of the future Buddha. This very well-known scene takes place in the Lumbinī garden when Māyā stands under a tree grasping one of its branches. In some cases, the baby leaving her right side is visible. In order to analyse the extremely rich literary and artistic tradition of the birth of the Buddha, an International conference is to be held in Lumbinī in the near future<sup>7</sup>.

This paper will investigate an aspect of the nine, or according to the classical Indian method of calculation, ten month period of gestation that occurred between Buddha's conception and birth. As is well known in the Indian gynecology, during pregnancy a mother is suffused by the virtues or the defects of the embryo whom she is bearing. These virtues and defects result from the *karman* inherited by the foetus or, in the case of some defects, from a particular curse at the time of the conception. The effects of inherited *karman* are manifested even before the birth of the individual. A few examples will show how interrelated are the embryonic life and the active life of the Buddha and of other figures of the Buddhist legends.

When bearing a child, a mother is called *dohadini* (Pāli: *dohaḷini*, Modern Sinhalese: *doladukin*<sup>8</sup>), that is, she is subject to an impulse called *dohada* (*dohaḷa* in Pāli<sup>9</sup>, *dohalaka* in Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit<sup>10</sup>), which is generally translated as the "uncontrolled cravings of a pregnant

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<sup>7</sup> This conference will be held in Nepal, at the Lumbini International Research Institute.

<sup>8</sup> According to Maurice Bloomfield, "The Dohada or Craving of Pregnant Women: A Motif of Hindu Fiction," *JAOS* 40 (1920), pp. 1-24, especially p. 4 and p. 6.

<sup>9</sup> See F. L. Woodward and others, *Pāli Tipiṭakam Concordance II*, Pali Text Society, London: Luzac and co. 1957, p. 377, ss.vv. *dohaḷa*, *dohaḷāyati*, *dohaḷin*.

<sup>10</sup> Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary* (Yale University Press, 1953), repr. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970, p. 272, s.v.

woman<sup>11</sup>.” This psychological theory has been substantiated in the medical field by the observation of a second heart, the heart of the embryo, in the body of the mother, since the fourth month of pregnancy. As we will see, Indian embryology found echoes in literary texts. In the lexicographical field, there have been different etymologies of *dohada*: its possible derivation from (1) \**dvi-hṛd*, *dvaihrdayya*, double-heart; (2) \**dauhrda*, painful heart (with the pejorative prefix *du*); (3) *dohā-da*, milky secretion (from *doha*, milk)<sup>12</sup>.

This article will focus on the five *dohadas* of Māyā which are listed in the *Samghabhedavastu* of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*, a Sanskrit manuscript from Gilgit that Raniero Gnoli edited and published in 1977<sup>13</sup>. Prof. Gnoli has titled the passage wherein the satisfaction of Māyā’s five longings are described as “Pains of childbirth<sup>14</sup>.” In order to elucidate this episode, first I will recapitulate the conclusions of the *dohada* phenomenon made by previous scholars and will also propose a new interpretation, centered on the character of the embryo. I will then

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<sup>11</sup> Otto Böhtlingk, Rudolf Roth, *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch* III (St-Petersburg, 1859-1861), repr. Tokyo: Meicho-fukyū-kai, 1976, p. 787, s.v. *dohada*: “das Gelüste schwangerer Frauen nach bestimmten Dingen,” and by extension “Schwangerschaft.”

<sup>12</sup> O. Böhtlingk, “*Dohada*”, *ZDMG* 55 (1901), p. 98.

<sup>13</sup> *The Gilgit Manuscript of the Samghabhedavastu*, edited by Raniero Gnoli & T. Venkatacharya, Part I, Roma: Istituto per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1977, pp. 40-44. Two passages of this text consulted for this article have been translated from the Sanskrit manuscript by G. Tucci, *Il trono di diamante*, Bari: De Donato, 1967, pp. 67, 76. Further, the translation of the Tibetan version of this text in William Woodville Rockhill, *The Life of the Buddha* (London: Trubner, 1884), reprint New Delhi: NAVRANG, 1991, p. 15, has been shortened considerably.

<sup>14</sup> In his edition of the Sanskrit text, Prof. Gnoli has divided the contents of the passage studied here into three sections entitled: “Conception; auspicious signs in the dream” (pp. 40-41), “The Buddha in his mother’s womb” (pp. 41-43), and “Pains of childbirth” (pp. 43-44).

present the five *dohadas* of Māyā limiting my comparisons of this episode in Māyā's story to a few Buddhist sources, in particular, the *Maṇicūdāvadāna*, a Sanskrit text edited and published in 1967 by Ratna Handurukande<sup>15</sup>.

### General considerations on *dohada* in Buddhism

*Dohada* is a subject that has been well researched. Most of these studies, which cover a much broader area than the Buddhist sources, seem to have been made in the short period from the end of the nineteenth century until the first twenty years of the twentieth century. The principal works, already referred to in the *Introduction*, are a philological study by Heinrich Lüders<sup>16</sup>, published in 1898, and a medical

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<sup>15</sup> *Maṇicūdāvadāna being a Translation and Edition and Lokānanda a Transliteration and Synopsis*, Pali Text Society, London: Luzac and Co. 1967. The *Maṇicūdāvadāna*, which also exists in the *Avadāna-kalpalatā* as III<sup>rd</sup> *pallava*, seems to be an hybrid composition that was perhaps influenced by the Māyā legend, although, as R. Handurukande states (p.xxxiii), it was "over-shadowed early in its history by the more popular *Viśvantara Jātaka*." See Leslie Grey, *A Concordance of Buddhist Birth Stories*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2000, pp. 239-240. Elements of the *Maṇicūda* story are contained in the IV<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Nepalese *Svāyambhuwamahāpurāṇa* in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. This manuscript has also been studied by Ms. Handurukande (*op. cit.* p. xxxiii-xlv).

<sup>16</sup> Heinrich Lüders, "Zwei indische Etymologien," *Nachrichten der Göttingischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, Philologische-Historische Klasse*, 1898, pp. 1-5, reprinted in *Philologica Indica, Ausgewählte kleine Schriften von Heinrich Lüders*, Göttingen : Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1940, pp. 44-47.

study by Julius Jolly<sup>17</sup>, published in 1901. Maurice Bloomfield's<sup>18</sup> literary study followed in 1920. In the age of "Gender studies," it is rather strange that this aspect of the Indian vision of women has not attracted more attention. I apologize for not yet having access to Rahul Peter Das's forthcoming book<sup>19</sup>.

Bloomfield's brilliant review of several Buddhist and Jaina texts is illuminating for our research. Planning an encyclopedic treatment of Hindu fiction, Bloomfield considered that "*dohada* unconsciously assumes in the minds of the fictionists certain systematic aspects." He treated the concept of *dohada* under the following six rubrics, reproduced hereunder:

"I. *Dohada* either directly injures the husband, or impels some act on his part which involves danger or contumely.

"II. *Dohada* prompts the husband to perform deeds of heroism, superior skill, wisdom, or shrewdness.

"III. *Dohada* takes the form of pious acts, or pious aspirations.

"IV. *Dohada* is used as an ornamental incident, that does not influence the main events of a story.

"V. *Dohada* is feigned by the woman, in order that she may accomplish some purpose, or satisfy some desire.

"VI. *Dohada* is obviated by tricking the woman into the belief that her desire is being fulfilled."

These rubrics, centered on the relation between husband and wife,

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<sup>17</sup> Julius Jolly, *Medizin in Grundriss der Indo-Arischen Philologie und Altertumskunde*, Strassburg: Karl J. Trübner, 1901, pp. 52-55 (# 40. Schwangerschaft and # 41 Embryologie of Chapter IV. Entwicklungslehre und Gynäkologie).

<sup>18</sup> See note 8.

<sup>19</sup> Rahul Peter Das, *The Origin of the Life of a Human Being. Conception and the Female according to Ancient Indian Medical and Sexological Literature*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2001.

neglect the expected child and his influence, although this aspect is crucial to several plots of the Buddhist narrative literature. As said above, *dohadas* are connected to the virtuous or nefarious desires of the embryo whom the mother is bearing. For example, the mother of a virtuous child will benefit from the innate qualities of her embryo. The story of Śāriputra's mother recounted in the *Upadeśa*<sup>20</sup>, illustrates this transference of virtues. She became astonishingly wise while expecting the birth of her son. We know that Śāriputra became the paragon of wisdom in the Community surrounding Śākyamuni. As we will see, the innate wisdom and compassion of the future Buddha will exert influences on the three first longings among Māyā's five *dohadas*.

This embryological theory is not limited to psychological effects. Psychism and somatism are also included in this theory. I will only allude here to the somatical aspects of *dohada*. A research on that subject should take into account that the Buddhist texts on maternity emphasize the connection between milk (*doha*) and blood, and that blood is often referred to in the *dohada* tales. Before discussing the five very special *dohadas* of Māyā I will attempt to recategorize the *dohadas* into a typology that is much more primitive than the typology of Bloomfield, which is based on sophisticated narratives. I must add that, although the examples that I will give include cases where the term *dohada* is missing, it is obvious that the influence of the embryo on the mother is being described.

Two supplementary observations have still to be made concerning

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<sup>20</sup> *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* [大智度論], T. XXV n° 1509, k.1, p. 61b 24-28; k. 11, p.137c10-13; Étienne Lamotte, *Traité de la grande vertu de sagesse*, I, Louvain: Bibliothèque du Muséon, 1944, pp. 47-48; II, p. 639. Lamotte refers to a tale of the *Liu du ji jing* 六度集經 (n° 66) on the same subject: T. III n° 152, k. 6, pp. 35b-36a, translated in Edouard Chavannes, *Cinq Cents Contes et Apologues*, I, Paris: Leroux, 1910, p. 241.



the *dohada* as a leitmotif in the Indian world and as a theme almost unknown to the Chinese public, who were avid readers of the Chinese translations of *dohada* tales. First, we must be aware that an analysis of the literature on *dohada* covers a very long stretch of time and thus many strata of literary elaboration. Some *Jātakas* are very archaic<sup>21</sup>. As Gregory Schopen has repeatedly pointed out, the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* is the result of a long process, and so contains archaic elements and later accretions<sup>22</sup>. As *terminus ad quem*, the Gilgit manuscripts related to this Vinaya are a product of the seventh century<sup>23</sup>. Some of the most famous collections of narratives, Somadeva's *Kathāsaritsāgara*<sup>24</sup> (which includes Buddhist tales) and Kṣemendra's *Bodhisattvāvadāna-kalpalatā* (which focuses on Buddhist tales) are not older than the eleventh century. A fortiori the lack of a datable chronology even affects a collection used by Bloomfield, this is Edward Harper Parker's *Village Folk-tales of Ceylon*<sup>25</sup> wherein *dohada* (called *doladuk* in Sinhalese) is a common feature. Moreover, as it is obvious in the *Jātaka* and *Avadāna* literature, many of these stories are interrelated and stories in one genre have influenced those in the other genre.

Second, my research reveals that the Chinese Buddhists did not coin a technical term for the translation of the concept of *dohada*. This

<sup>21</sup> Oskar von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996), reprint New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1997, pp. 54-58.

<sup>22</sup> Gregory Schopen, "Two Problems in the History of Indian Buddhism: The Layman/Monk Distinction and the Doctrines of the Transference of Merit," and other articles collected in *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist monks*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997, p. 47 and *passim*.

<sup>23</sup> O. von Hinüber, "Die Bedeutung des Handschriftenfundes bei Gilgit," *ZDMG, Supplement V* (1983), p. 64.

<sup>24</sup> See Nalini Balbir, ed. *Océan des rivières de Contes*, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Paris: Gallimard, 1997, pp. 1566-1567, s.v. Envie (*dohada*).

<sup>25</sup> 3 vols., London: Luzac, 1910-1914.

absence was guessed by Bloomfield<sup>26</sup> when he compared a Jaina tale of the *Pārśvanātha Caritra* to its Chinese counterpart in the collection of Chavannes<sup>27</sup>. We will see the vagueness of the terms used in the Chinese versions of the five *dohadas* of Māyā. This observation does not imply that the Chinese were indifferent to the changes during pregnancy in the *qi* 氣 state of a woman. More study is needed on this matter, which has been marginally dealt with in a recent work by Alan Cole<sup>28</sup>.

Our grass-roots analysis of *dohada* results in the six following characteristics:

1. A *dohada* is a craving that is exclusively felt by women as it is linked to pregnancy, which needs not always to be clearly mentioned. It is extended to the animal and vegetable realms.
2. A *dohada* seems to be linked only to the birth of a son, although Bloomfield<sup>29</sup> mentions a Sinhalese folk-tale wherein the woman who experienced a *dohada* then gave birth to a girl.
3. A *dohada* is an urgent and periculuous craving for a precise object. In several cases, the woman claims that she is going to die if her wish is not fulfilled. A certain medical text<sup>30</sup> alludes to the defects that may mar the embryo. We will find an echo of this danger in the case of the future Buddha. In most of the stories, the husband is charged with the burden of satisfying the desires of his wife.

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<sup>26</sup> *Art. cit.*, p. 9, n. 18.

<sup>27</sup> E. Chavannes, *Cinq Cents Contes et Apologues*, I, n° 20, pp. 72-75.

<sup>28</sup> *Mothers and Sons in Chinese Buddhism*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998, Chapter nine : Buddhist Biology.

<sup>29</sup> *Art. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>30</sup> "By not agreeing to the craving of a pregnant woman, the embryo might suffer damage" (*dohadasyāpradānena garbho doṣam avāpnuyāt*), *Yājñavalkya* III, 79, referred to by Lüders, *art. cit.* (1940), p. 47, n. 1, and by Bloomfield, *art. cit.*, p. 4.

4. The most basic *dohadas* are material: a longing for food and drink, or for a bath<sup>31</sup> or a walk in a park. However, these primitive impulses may be “sublimated,” as in the Māyā legend. This sublimation is bound to the qualities of the son to be born.

5. Most commonly the woman expresses only one *dohada* but it can happen that her desires multiply. This multiplicity of desires occurs most often when desires are sublimated. This is seen, for instance, in the stories of mothers of prestigious sons: Māyā and the Buddha, Phu satī and Vessantara, predecessor of the Buddha, and Kāntimatī and Maṇicūḍa. However, Bloomfield mentions a Sinhalese book of verse, the *Nikini Katāva* (Nikini story)<sup>32</sup> in which the drama is heightened because a devious woman’s *dohada* is repeated with each new husband she takes. Her repeated marriages come about because each *dohada* results in the death of her present husband.

6. As it has been alluded to earlier, a *dohada* can be either good or bad and this orientation depends upon the virtuous or perverse nature of the embryo. The neutral desire to eat something may be sublimated in the eagerness to feed the monks<sup>33</sup>. But *dohadas*, being generally a primitive impulse towards a wordly satisfaction and being a female impulse, were looked upon with suspicion. In the context of *Jātakas* where cleverness is highly appreciated, cravings for food by living beings, who were considered as inferior, required a predatory act. Such are the

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<sup>31</sup> *Dhammapada Commentary* IV, 3. See Burlingame, *Buddhist Legends*, II, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1921, p. 39.

<sup>32</sup> *Art. cit.*, p. 22-23.

<sup>33</sup> A common feature in the *Dhammapada Commentary*. (V, 15b; VI, 5b) as in the legends of Māyā, Phusatī, Kāntimatī. See Burlingame, *Buddhist Legends* II, p. 151, p. 184; and Handurukande, *op. cit.* p. xxx.

*caṇḍali*'s craving for a mango<sup>34</sup>, the female jackal's craving for a fish<sup>35</sup>, the queen crow's craving for a meal prepared for a human king<sup>36</sup>. In these stories, the *caṇḍali*'s husband was the Bodhisattva born as a *caṇḍala* and the queen crow was Mahāprajāpatī, the sister of Māyā and the stepmother of the Buddha, in a former life. Those predatory acts are presented in a humorous rather than a vile manner. An impressive *dohada* was the irrepressible appetite of the mother of Dharmaruci, the Buddha's disciple<sup>37</sup>. Her hunger was the consequence of conceiving Dharmaruci, who was the sea-monster *Timiṅgala* in a former life. It is interesting to note that in the Dharmarucyavadāna of the *Divyāvadāna*<sup>38</sup>, the term *kṣudduḥkha* (hunger-pain) is used, but not the term

<sup>34</sup> Chavaka Jātaka (n° 309), J. Fausböll ed. III, p. 27.22, 28.3. See Bloomfield, *art. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>35</sup> Dabbhapuppha Jātaka (n° 400), Fausböll ed. III, p. 333.15. See Bloomfield, *art. cit.*, p. 16. Bloomfield refers to Ralston, *Tibetan Tales*, p. 332 ff. without mentioning the absence of *dohada* in the Tibetan version. The mother of the jackal plays in the Tibetan version the same role as the spouse in the *Jātaka*. See "The two otters and the jackal" in *Tibetan Tales Derived from Indian Sources Translated from the Tibetan of the Kahgyur by F. Anton von Schiefner and from the German into English by W.R.S. Ralston* (London: Routledge, 1925), reprint Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1990. See also Foucher, *Les vies antérieures du Bouddha*, Paris: PUF 1955, pp.133-134. La Fontaine's *L'huitre et les plaideurs* has been inspired by the same source.

<sup>36</sup> Supatta Jātaka (n° 292), Fausböll ed. II, p. 433.29, 435.9,10 and 16. See Bloomfield, *art. cit.*, p. 11. Compare to *Mahāvastu*, Senart ed., III, p. 125.16.

<sup>37</sup> Dharmaruci had been in his previous life the sea-monster *Timiṅgala*, who sacrificed himself by not devouring living beings. After his death and during the process of his rebirth, Dharmaruci's mother was always hungry and, after he was born, Dharmaruci was hungry for the major part of his life. See *Upadeśa* [大智度論], T. XXV n° 1509, k. 7, p. 109a; Lamotte, *Traité I*, pp. 410-414; Foucher, *Vies antérieures*, pp. 50-62.

<sup>38</sup> *Divyāvadāna*, Cowell ed. (n° 18), pp. 234.18.

*dohada*.

The *dohadas* can express themselves as more sinister cravings, such as the craving to eat hearts or to drink blood. An example is the story of a female crocodile, who wishes to eat the heart of a monkey<sup>39</sup>. This story is considered one of the most humorous of the *Jātakas*. Its commentary, of much later redaction, reveals the dark posteriority of this episode: the monkey and would-be victim is the Bodhisattva, the female crocodile will be reincarnated as the infamous Ciñcā Māṇavikā, who accused the Buddha of making her pregnant, and her crocodile husband, who was ridiculed by the monkey, will become Devadatta. There are darker stories that definitely do not have a happy ending. This occurs in the story of the jealous queen recounted in the popular Chaddanta Jātaka<sup>40</sup>, where the term *dohaḷa* is frequently used without any allusion to the existence of an embryo.

A typical example of an embryo having a bad influence on his mother is the story of Ajātaśatru. All the details are interesting in the story of the pregnancy of Ajātaśatru's mother, whose name is not mentioned in the commentary of the Thusa Jātaka<sup>41</sup>. She is known in other traditions as Vaidehī, "coming from [the country of] Videha<sup>42</sup>." Her original name was Celā<sup>43</sup> or Vāsavi. I will only recall here that, as

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<sup>39</sup> Sumsumāra Jātaka (n° 208), Fausböll ed. II, p. 159.1 and 20, and its variants (J. n° 342, 57, 224). See Bloomfield, *art. cit.*, pp. 12-13, and Foucher, *Vies antérieures*, p. 95-98.

<sup>40</sup> Chaddanta Jātaka (n° 514), Fausböll ed. V, p. 40. 18, 19 and 27, p. 41. 4. See Foucher *Vies antérieures*, p. 121-125.

<sup>41</sup> Thusa Jātaka (n° 338), Fausböll ed. III, p. 121.21.

<sup>42</sup> This is her name in the Pure Land Sūtra tradition, as well as in the *Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanā* tradition, and their Chinese translations.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Jampa Losang Panglung, *Die Erzählstoffe des Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya analysiert auf grund der Tibetischen Uebersetzung*, Tokyo: The Reiyukai Library, 1981, p. 63.

a result of a malediction, the heart of the embryo was filled with hate for his father, King Bimbisāra; that the queen felt an uncontrollable desire to drink the blood of her husband and that the benevolent but overpowered king conceded to her desire and offered her his blood. In the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* version of this story<sup>44</sup>, Vaidehī experiences two sinister cravings. The queen first craves the flesh of the king and then she craves his blood. This story presents the perfect example of perverse *dohada*. Well known is the etymology of the name of this devious son who will become the star in the most famous parricide story in Buddhist literature: Ajātaśatru<sup>45</sup>, *wei sheng yuan* 未生怨, who, although not yet born (*a-jāta*) was already the enemy (*śatru*) [of his father].

I conclude this short overview on impure cravings for human flesh and blood with the story of the redemption of the possessor of an evil *dohada*: in the popular Vidhurapaṇḍita Jātaka, a Nāga queen longed to eat the heart of a wise preacher, but her *dohada* was converted into the desire to listen to the predications of this wise man<sup>46</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> In Schiefner - Ralston, *Tibetan Tales*, "Prince Jivaka," p. 84. The story is known also in the Jaina tradition. See Bloomfield, *art. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>45</sup> On the Ajātaśatru Legend, see Jean Filliozat, "Le complexe d'Edipe dans un tantra bouddhique", *Études tibétaines dédiées à la mémoire de Marcelle Lalou*, Paris: A. Maisonneuve, 1971, pp. 142-148; Sueki Fumihiko 末本文美士, "The Tragedy in Rājagṛha in the *Guan-Wu-liang-shou-jing*", *Tōhō* 2 (1986-11), pp. 255-264 and the chapter "Ōjajō no higeki 王舎城の悲劇" in *Jōdo bukkyō no shisō* 浄土仏教の思想, vol. 2, Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 1992, pp. 47-72; Jonathan Silk, "The composition of the *Guan Wuliangshoufo-jing*: Some Buddhist and Jaina Parallels to its narrative frame", *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 25 (1997), pp. 181-256; H. Durt, "Quelques aspects de la légende du roi Ajase (Ajāta-śatru) dans la tradition canonique bouddhique", *Ebisu* [Tokyo: Maison Franco-Japonaise] 15 (1997), pp. 13-27.

<sup>46</sup> Vidhurapaṇḍita Jātaka (n° 545), Fausböll ed. VI, p. 263.3, p. 308.20. See Bloomfield, *art. cit.*, p. 21.

In the tales of the rejection of the body (*ātmaparityāga*), that is abundantly represented in the *Jātakas* and *Avadānas*, we find a more positive appreciation of flesh and blood because they are offered to the needy as food or as medicine<sup>47</sup>. In the famous story (and its many variants<sup>48</sup>) of the sick man who, in order to be cured, needed to drink the blood of somebody who had never been angry, the Bodhisattva who volunteered for this sacrifice is known by a variety of different names: Prince Candraprabha, King Sivi. In the version in the *Avadāna-kalpalatā*, King Sivi, who gave his blood to the sick man for six months, had not only been of gentle temperament throughout his life, but had also been born from a mother who had not felt anger during King Sivi's pre-natal period<sup>49</sup>.

As can be inferred from the examples quoted above, it was difficult for Buddhists to consider positively the woman's instinctive impulse that is *dohada*. It thus becomes interesting that the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* uses the term *dohada* to describe the purified impulses of the exalted mother of the Buddha.

I used the term "sublimated *dohada*" for the wish to offer a meal

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<sup>47</sup> Durt, "Du lambeau de chair au démembrement : le renoncement au corps dans le bouddhisme ancien," *BEFEO*, "Mélanges du Centenaire," 87,1 (2000), pp. 7-22. On this subject, see Iwamoto Yutaka 岩本裕, "Candraprabha no fuse [布施]" in *Bukkyō setsuwa no genryū to tenkai* 佛教説話の源流と展開, Tōkyō: Kaimei shoin, 1987, pp. 211-228; Okada Mamiko 岡田真美子, "Chi no fuse monogatari 血の布施物語 (I)", *IBK*, 43 (1994), pp. 207-211.

<sup>48</sup> See L. Grey, *Concordance*, p. 49, s.v. Candraprabha, and the references to Lamotte, Iyanaga, Seidel, in Durt "Two interpretations of human-flesh offering: misdeed or supreme sacrifice," *Journal of the International College for Advanced Buddhist Studies*, 1 (1998), pp. 78, nn. 5, 6, 7.

<sup>49</sup> *Avadāna-kalpalatā* n° 85: Hitaiṣyavadāna, str. 22, P.L.Vaidya ed., p. 489.27.

to the Community of monks that was expressed by different ladies<sup>50</sup>. In the stories of two of the three queens who became mothers of sons who exemplify paragons of virtue, we find such ordinary *dohadas* as the wish to view a garden (*udyānāni paśyeyam*). This was the fourth wish of both Māyā and Kāntimatī. Māyā's fifth wish was to actually visit the garden called Lumbinī, and so explains the somewhat incongruous birthplace of the Buddha.

We find mainly multiple and sublimated *dohadas* in the stories of Queen Māyā in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* and of Queen Kāntimatī in the *Mañicūḍāvadāna*<sup>51</sup>. Further, there are similarities between the wishes of these two queens. As we will see, the first and most developed *dohada* of Māyā is her desire to drink water from the four oceans. It refers to the magnitude of the wisdom that will be reached by her son. The third and most developed *dohada* of Kāntimatī is her desire to preach to the multitudes. It shows her wisdom and her compassion, making manifest the power (*anubhāva*) of the bodhisattva to be born<sup>52</sup>. Other *dohadas* are inspired by compassion only: Māyā's second and third *dohadas* are her remarkable wish to free the captives and her wish to present gifts to the needy. Compassion also motivated most of Kāntimatī's *dohadas* (1, 2, 5, 6, 7) of which the most remarkable is the fifth *dohada*: her wish to take care of sick people. In a future article I plan to study the pregnant Māyā as Curatrix: living medicine "*bhaiṣajya-bhūti*," as she is presented in the *Lalitavistara*<sup>53</sup>. In the Pāli tradition, the somewhat more "simple" form of the two wishes of

<sup>50</sup> See note 33. Cf. also the story of Brahmavatī in "The Dumb Cripple," Schiefner - Ralston, *Tibetan Tales*, p. 247.

<sup>51</sup> *Mañicūḍāvadāna* (*Avadāna-kalpalatā* n°3) and Ratna Handurukande ed., cf. note 15.

<sup>52</sup> *Mañicūḍāvadāna*, Ratna Handurukande ed., Prose text, p. 4.15.

<sup>53</sup> *Lalitavistara*, chapter 6, v. 31, Hokazono Kōichi 外園幸一 ed., Tōkyō: Daitō Shuppansha, 1994, p. 424.8.



Phusatī, “perpetually addicted to gift” (*sadā dānaratā*)<sup>54</sup>, are evidently connected with the profligacy for giving that will characterize her son Vessantara. When in the state of *dohada* (*dohaḷinī hutvā*), she wishes to have six almshouses built (at the four gates of the city, in the middle of the city, and at the entrance to her palace) and she wishes to give away six hundred thousand gold coins every day<sup>55</sup>.

### The *dohada* tradition in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*

I will first recall that the extended account of the *Life of the Buddha* in the *Samghabhedavastu* of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* is only occasionally connected with the crime of disruption of the Community (*saṃghabheda*). The pregnancy of Māyā and the birth of the Buddha have no connection with the crimes of Devadatta’s which are lengthily described in later parts of the *Samghabhedavastu*. In the first chapters of the *Life of the Buddha*, one finds an account of the five strange desires of Māyā, desires that, after being produced (*utpanna*) by Māyā, had to be fulfilled or “expelled” (*prativigata*) by her husband, King Śuddhodana. The same terms are used in the narrative of the wishes of Kāntimatī which are fulfilled by her husband, Brahmadata, king of Sāketa.

There are two extant Chinese versions of the account of the pregnancy of Māyā recording her longings: (1) the translation of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya Samghabhedavastu*, the *Gen-ben-shuo yi-qie-you-bu pi-nai-ye po-seng-shi* 根本說一切有部毘奈耶破僧事 (T. 1450, k. 2,

<sup>54</sup> As defined in the “Vessantaracariyam” vv. 8 and 9 in N. A. Jayawickrama ed., *Buddhavaṃsa and Cariyāpiṭaka*, Pāli Text Society, London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974, p. 7.

<sup>55</sup> Vessantara Jātaka (n° 547), Fausböll ed. VI, p. 484.26-29. See Margaret Cone and Richard F. Gombrich, *The Perfect Generosity of Prince Vessantara: A Buddhist Epic*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977, p. 8.

pp. 107b25-108a2), which was carried out by the Tang period translator Yijing (635-713), and (2) the biography of the Buddha, called *Zhong-xu mo-he-di jing* 衆許摩訶帝經 (T. 191, k. 3, p. 939a6-b5), for which Nanjō Bunyu had proposed the Sanskrit title *Samadatta Mahārāja sūtra*. This compilation, which follows rather closely the passage of the Māyā's story in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*, had been done by the Kashmiri monk Faxian 法賢<sup>56</sup> during the years 982-1001 of the Song dynasty. Before the discovery of important parts of the Sanskrit *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya* in Gilgit, this huge scripture was known through its Tibetan translation, the *Dulva*. The account of the life of the Buddha in the *Dulva* has been partly translated and partly summarized by W.H. Rockhill<sup>57</sup> in 1884.

We have seen that the state of *dohada* could bring about a holy or an evil result; examples are the tales of the mothers of Śāriputra and of Ajātaśatru. It seems that it is only in this Sanskrit Vinaya tradition that the term *dohada* is used in the tale of the birth of the Buddha. If we investigate the Chinese sources, we find that, although the Sanskrit account has been translated twice into Chinese, the Chinese texts do not contain a "technical term" translating *dohada*. Apparently the translators could not find a pre-established rendering of this concept or did not care to coin a Chinese equivalent for it. We find in Yijing's translation general and vague terms that are associated with thought, and not with an instinctive impulse like *dohada*. The *dohada* is described by Yijing<sup>58</sup> as a "sudden personal thought" (忽自思念). Perhaps under

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<sup>56</sup> Faxian (act. 980-1000) had started to work in China under the name of Dian Xizai 天息災. See Jan Yün-Hua, "Buddhist Relations between India and Sung China," *History of Religion* IV, 1 (1966), pp. 34-36.

<sup>57</sup> W. W. Rockhill, *The Life of the Buddha* (London: Trubner, 1884), reprint New Delhi: NAVRANG, 1991, p. 15.

<sup>58</sup> T. XXIV n° 1450, k. 2, p. 107c13-14.

the influence of Yijing, the Song translation<sup>59</sup> uses almost the same terms, a “sudden personal idea of drinking” (忽自思飲). In the narrative of Yijing, we find two references<sup>60</sup> to a “desire” which is “mental” (意欲). The others expressions are referring to the mind. They are the already mentioned 思念<sup>61</sup>, but also 心願<sup>62</sup>, 意<sup>63</sup>, 思<sup>64</sup>, 念<sup>65</sup>, 思惟<sup>66</sup> and 念意<sup>67</sup>. In the Song shorter narrative<sup>68</sup>, the second *dohada* (liberation of the captives) is expressed as a request (請) to the king, the third *dohada* (gift to the needy) is expressed as a wish (願) to the king and the wish to stay in a garden is expressed as a thought (思).

The only reference to Chinese embryology may be detected in a sentence of the Song translation<sup>69</sup>. Māyā is described as able to receive “affluence of supplementary vitality (*qi*) without pains and fatigue” (氣力增盛無諸疾苦). In the corresponding Sanskrit passage<sup>70</sup>, it is said that, according to the rule (*dharmatā*), although Māyā is “bearing the Bodhisattva” (*bodhisattvaṃ dhārayanti*), she is not suffering of exhaustion. “Feeling exhausted” is expressed by the two almost synonymous terms *śrāntakāyā* and *klāntakāyā*. This observation belongs to a lengthy passage<sup>71</sup> detailing the nine aspects of the *dharmatā* regulating

<sup>59</sup> T. III n° 191, k. 3, p. 939a22.

<sup>60</sup> T. XXIV n° 1450, k. 2, p. 107 c23 and 29.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107 c19 and 22.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107 c14.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107 c19.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107 c20.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107 c22, 23, 24, 26.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107 c25.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107 c27.

<sup>68</sup> T. III n° 191, k. 3, p. 939 a29, b1 and 2.

<sup>69</sup> T. III n° 191, k. 3, p. 939a20.

<sup>70</sup> Gnoli ed., p. 42.21-24.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 41-43.

the entrance (*avakrānti*) and residence of a future Buddha into a maternal womb (*mātuḥ kukṣi*). This passage concerned with the purity of Māyā is located between the section concerned with her four dreams and the section concerned with her five *dohadas*<sup>72</sup>.

In reading the Sanskrit account of Māyā's pregnancy, we have to make a distinction between the four dreams (*svapna*) of the queen, which are expressed in the present tense of the indicative, and her five wishes (*dohada*), expressed in the optative. I will only list here these four dreams: (1) the entry into her womb (*kukṣim bhittvā praviṣṭa*) of a six-tusked white elephant, (2) the feeling of being projected above in the air (*upari vihāyasā gacchāmi*), (3) the climbing (*abhiruhāmi*) a high rocky mountain, (4) the receiving the homage of a big crowd (*mahājanakāyo me praṇāmaṃ karoti*). These dreams, especially the first, are a well-known topic in the literature on the conception of the future Buddha. They are found also in the two Chinese versions close to the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*<sup>73</sup>. They were explained by the Brahmins endowed with the capacity of interpreting the dreams (*svāpnādhyaya-vid*) and the signs (*naimittika*) as pronouncements of the lofty destiny of the son of Śuddhodana and Māyā: he would become either a king *Cakravartin* or a *Tathāgata Samyaksambuddha*<sup>74</sup>.

The first *dohada* expressed by Māyā is her desire to drink the water of the four oceans (*aho batāhaṃ caturbhyo mahāsamudrebhyaḥ pāniyāṃ pibeyam*). It corresponds to the ambivalent characteristics of the *dohada* that have been described above. As explained by the *naimittikas*,

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<sup>72</sup> Cf. *supra* note 14.

<sup>73</sup> T. III n° 191, k. 3, p. 939 a6-8, where the first dream in the Sanskrit text is divided in two dreams, and where the second and third dreams in the Sanskrit text seem to have been combined in one dream. The version of T. XXIV n° 1450, k. 2, p. 107b11-15 is close to the Sanskrit text.

<sup>74</sup> Gnoli ed., pp. 40-41.

it indicates that her son, if he leaves the world to become a recluse (*pravrajitvā*), will contemplate the whole of the sea of knowledge (*sakalam jñeyārṇavam*). But the *naimittikas* admonish the king, stating that if he cannot satisfy the wish of his wife, the child will become deformed (*vyāṅga*) or deficient (*vikalāṅga*). This threat of a possible imperfection (不円満) of the body of the prince is mentioned only in the Song version<sup>75</sup>. The Sanskrit as well as the Chinese refer to the intervention of the heretic expert in magics (*indrajāla*) “Red Eyes” (Raktākṣa Parivrājaka, 赤眼外道 in Yijing, 囉羯多芻 in the Song text). Red Eyes has Māyā climb to the top of an high tower (*upariprāsādata*) where he has her drink the water of the four oceans that he has magically produced<sup>76</sup>.

Māyā’s four following *dohadas* can be divided in two groups. The first group expresses the compassion of the queen and the embryo she bears for the captives and people in need: Māyā wishes that all the bonds be undone (*sarva-bandhana-mokṣa kriyeta*) and that gifts be given (*dānāni diyeran*) and merits gained (*puṇyāni kriyeran*). These two wishes lead the king to free prisoners and to make offerings to needy people. The merits are not mentioned in the two Chinese versions. The Song text refers explicitly to the gift of food and clothes to the poors feeling cold. Although it is only in Sanskrit that these two wishes are expressed as *dohada*<sup>77</sup>, the generosity of Māyā toward the prisoners and the poor during her pregnancy is a leitmotif of most of the texts<sup>78</sup>.

<sup>75</sup> T. III n° 191, k. 3, p. 939a25.

<sup>76</sup> Gnoli ed., pp. 43-44; T. XXIV n° 1450, k. 2, p. 107c15-18; T. III n° 191, k. 3, p. 939 a25-28.

<sup>77</sup> Gnoli ed., pp. 44.1-5.

<sup>78</sup> Particularly expressive of the generosity of Māyā are the verses in the *Xiuxing benqi jing* 修行本起經, T. III no 184, k. 1, p. 463b24-c6, translated by E. Zürcher, *Het Leven van de Boeddha*, Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 1978, pp. 56-57.

of the *Lalitavistara* tradition narrating the conception and the birth of the future Buddha.

As mentioned before the pregnancy longings of queen Kāntimatī before the birth of the generous Maṇicūḍa had principally gift as object: gift of gold to ascetics, brahmins and mendicants (first *dohada*), of food of six flavours to the great multitude (second *dohada*), of richness to the poors (sixth *dohada*) and, with her own hands (*svahastena*), of food and cloths to the holy ones, ascetics and brahmins (seventh *dohada*). The third *dohada* of Kāntimatī had been to teach by herself the dharma to the multitude and her fifth *dohada* was to take care of the sick (*glānānāṃ satvānāṃ upasthānaṃ kuryām*)<sup>79</sup>.

The second group of Māyā's *dohada*<sup>80</sup> is related to the rather unexpected place where Māyā gave birth to her son: Lumbinī, the garden of her father, King Suprabuddha (善悟王 in Yijing, 酥鉢囉沒駄王 in the Song account). Māyā expresses the wish that first she might see pleasurable parks (*udyanāni paśyeyam*) and then that she might reside in the [Lumbinī] pleasurable park (*udyanāne tiṣṭheyam*). Perhaps due to the influence of the Māyā's tale, a similar wish is expressed as the fourth *dohada* of Kāntimatī<sup>81</sup>.

We know that the garden of Lumbinī (藍毘尼 in Yijing, 龍弭禰園 in the Song account) was on the way that led from Kapilavastu, seat of her marital life with King Śuddhodana, to Devadaha, where she is supposed to have lived with her family before her marriage<sup>82</sup>. The account in the *Samghabhedavastu* emphasizes the point that it is Māyā's father, King Suprabuddha, who is the owner and care-taker of the garden of

<sup>79</sup> *Maṇicūḍāvadāna*, Ratna Handurukande ed., Prose text, pp. 3-7.

<sup>80</sup> Gnoli ed., pp. 44.5-14.

<sup>81</sup> *Maṇicūḍāvadāna*, Ratna Handurukande ed., Prose text, pp. 6.9.

<sup>82</sup> G.P. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names II*, London: John Murray, 1938, pp. 608-609, s.v. Māyā.

Lumbinī<sup>83</sup>. That a birth should take place among the family of the bride is a common feature of Indian lore and life.

## Conclusion

The common feature of the three texts, belonging to the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* tradition, presented here is their focus on the five wishes, called *dohada* in the Sanskrit version, that characterize the pregnancy of Māyā. This occurs despite the fact that these texts are filled with eulogies to the purity of Māyā. In a lengthy eulogy<sup>84</sup> to the maternal womb (*mātuḥ kukṣi*), where the Bodhisattva takes residence, the *Samghabhedavastu* insists, as does the *Lalitavistara*, on the following points: that the mother is free of any defilement in conformity to the child who came into her womb (*kośogata*), and that she observes a perfect conduct, especially chastity. It is, in fact, in a description of her chastity that she is, for the first and only time, called “Mother of Siddhārtha<sup>85</sup>.” The last fixed rule (*dharmatā*) concerning Māyā stipulates that she is no longer subject to any carnal desire and no longer the object of such a desire. It is remarkable that this eulogy to the purity of Māyā immediately precedes the account of her *dohadas*, which can be regarded as a record of female servitude and thus as an anticlimax.

This is the first part of a comparative study of the Buddhist textual traditions that focus on Māyā’s pregnancy. Further, this study highlights one of the multiple aspects in the process of deification of the Buddha. This process did not, however, succeed in clearing out his natural mother, Māyā. Although the instinctive impulse that is *dohada*

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<sup>83</sup> Gnoli ed., pp. 45.9-11.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.7.

belongs, as other manifestations, to the *dharmatā* fixing the destiny of the mother and her son, one finds something refreshing in the application of an accepted and inescapable rule of Indian embryology to the legend of the Buddha. *Dohada* expresses the link between the character of the child to be born and the irrepressible womanly nature of his mother. The references to *dohada* are of course not without a lesson. The first three of Māyā's *dohadas* symbolize the Buddha's unlimited wisdom and compassion, which he possessed even before birth. The last two of Māyā's *dohadas* explain why her child was born in such an unexpected birthplace as Lumbinī.

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*Professor,  
International College  
for Advanced Buddhist Studies*