

Chronicle of the King Asoka

(English Version)

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-AS DEPICTED IN THE HISTORY OF BUDDHISM IN INDIA-

(Translation in English)

The emergence of Emperor Asoka in the 110th year of the Nirvana of Buddha is chronicled in the chain of events which unfolded in the country of Champā-Anan where the wealthy king of the Solar race (Sans. Surya-vamsa, Tib. Nyi-ma'i Rigs) called Ne-mi-ta, with his 500 ministers, conquered the regions of the north. At first, he had six sons dGe-ba-can, Sin-rta-can, Dun-can, Nor-can, Pad-ma-can, and the sixth, gSer-can.

In another time, the King lived with the wife of a merchant and impregnated her. Later, the King's mother died and on the day which ended the period of mourning (Mya-ngan bSal-ba) rites, the wife of the merchant gave birth to a son. As he was born on the said day, he was named Mya-ngan Med.

As he grew, he engaged himself in learning the 60 branches of fine art (sGyu-rtsal Drug-cu), investigating arts (brTag-pa), alphabet (Yi-ge), and palmistry (Lag-rTsis).

At around the same time, the ministers asked a fortune-teller Brahman in the midst of assembled people as to which prince would rule the kingdom. The Brahman said that it would be the one who would eat the best of food, wear the best of dresses, and sit on the best of thrones.

When two ministers asked the Brahman secretly to explain what he meant by the best of food, best of dresses and the best of thrones, the Brahman explained that the best food is cooked rice ('Bras-chan), the best of dresses, the thick cloth (Ras sBom-po) and that the best of thrones was the earth (Sa-gshi). The message thus foretold that although the princes had lived in perfect grandeur, it was Mya-ngan Med, who sustained on ordinary food and dress, who would be the next King.

Meanwhile, the hilly tribes of Nepal and Kha-sha rebelled. Mya-ngan Med was despatched with troops to subdue them. He succeeded in his mission without too many hardships and imposed taxes on them. He enforced an annual tribute on them which he then offered to the King. Impressed by his mental abilities, fortitude and bravery, the King offered Mya-ngan Med a grant of whatever he wished for. Since he was under threat from his other brothers, Mya-ngan Med requested that he be allowed to stay at Pataliputra and that all the household articles that he wished for be provided. The King gave him all the household articles and planted 500 groves in the town. Surrounded by 100 women musicians, he indulged himself in sensual pleasures.

Then, King Tsa-ma-sa of Magadha died of old age. Some of his sons, from the 12, were installed on the throne, but none ruled for long. Even a Brahman ministers called Da-na-tshul Zab-pa took over the reigns for some time. During his reign, however, the minister made enemies with king Ne-mi-ta after a long battle on shores of the Ganges in which the six elder sons of the King took part.

Soon, King Ne-mi-ta too died of old age. As it was felt that the proclamation of the death of the King would make the people of Magadha strong, it was kept a secret. The two ministers ruled in lieu of the dead King. After seven days, the people of the town, having come to know of the truth, had the two ministers thrown out of power. At that time, it was felt that the moment of truth, as prophesied earlier by the Brahman, had arrived. Mya-ngan Med was installed on the throne.

The six brothers learned of his enthronement on the day they acquired six towns after their victory over Magadha. Thus, they with their retinue of 500 ministers, did not advance further north and ruled over the six towns like Magadha and Anga.

The first son was a follower of the esoteric doctrine of Lokayata ('Jig-rten rGyan-phen-pa) school; the second was a follower of Mahadeva (Lha-chen-po); the third a follower of Vishnu (Khyab-'jug); the fourth a follower of the Trithika doctrine, Darsana (Rig-byed mTha'i gSan-ba sMra-ba); the fifth a follower of Nigrantha (gCer-bu-pa) of Kanci (gSer-can); and the sixth a follower of a Brahman called Ku-sil-lu who had lived a life of chastity. They made progress in each of their beliefs. Mya-ngan Med worshipped the Brahman Dakini of the Bri-ku lineage (Bri-ku'i Rigs-kyi Dran-sron mKha-'gro-ma) and orgy (Srin-po) from whose teachings he came to regard the goddess Uma and the pantheon of demons of the cemetery (Dur-phrod-kyi Ma-mor) as gods.

For some years, he fully indulged in sensual pleasures because of which he came to be known as Kama Asoka or 'Dod-pa'i Mya-ngan Med.

In due course of time, rivalry developed between him and his elder brothers. They fought for many years and he finally killed all his six elder brothers and their 500 minister. Besides, he also conquered several towns and became the ruler of the entire region between the Land of Snow (Kha-ba -can and the Vindhya hills (Ri-bo 'Bigs-byed).

Having become so turned to violence that he could neither rest nor eat without performing acts like punishing or chopping, Mya-ngan Med begin the day by killing, binding and striking in order to fulfill his desire.

Then, as told by the heretical Brahman, he assiduously started human sacrifices. In fact, he went on to construct a sacrificial house when a Brahman called Ba-lan sNa-

ba, of the Bri-ku lineage, told him that the kingdom would prosper if he sacrificed 10,000 human beings. Mya-ngan Med's search for a person capable of performing such a deed proved futile until he found a person of the lowest caste in Ti-ra-hu-ti. All the people to be sacrificed were sent to the sacrificial house and the executioner took on a vow to accomplish the task. When about a thousand people had been so killed, the executioner went outside the town and met a monk who, upon learning of his repulsive deeds, narrated the sufferings that awaited him in hell. The warning taught the executioner of the many more ways than just beheading to kill a person. He learnt burning, cutting, skinning and many others which he implemented at his sacrificial house and put to death about 5,000 people. At that time, his name was changed-he now came to be known as Chandrala Asoka or gTum-po Mya-agan Med.

Then, a disciple of Arhat Gragpa, Cramanera (dGet-tshul), who had attended many sermons and read many texts (Man-du Thos-pa) and who had dwelt in the infallible knowledge of Prayoga-Marga (sByor-lam), arrived at the sacrificial house after having lost his way. As the executioner prepared to strike him down with his sword, Cramanera requested that he be killed after seven days- a period which he promised he would spend at the sacrificial house-and also narrated the punishment that awaited the executioner in hell. The executioner accepted Cramanera's suggestion.

In the seven days that he spent at the sacrificial house, Cramanera, because of his exposure to the flesh, blood, bones and intestines there, attained the realisation of impermanence and the 16 kinds of truths. He attained Arhathood and became accomplished in miracles.

On the seventh day, miracles abounded around the sacrificial house. Cramanera was thus marked for a different death. He was put in a large copper vessel filled with sesame oil (Til-mar) and set on fire. The fire, although it burned through the day and night, caused him no harm. The king, when he was informed of the incident, was surprised and left for the sacrificial house to verify things for himself. When he reached there, the executioner ran out brandishing a sword claiming that even the king would have to fall to his sword because of the vow taken by him to kill everyone coming to the house till the figure of 10,000 had been reached. Here, the king pointed out that the executioner would have to be killed first because it was he who had come to the sacrificial house first. While they were arguing, Cramanera displayed more miracles by bringing down rain, thunder and lightning. He himself appeared floating in the sky and soon had the king and his executioner bowing at his feet. The seed of enlightenment had awakened in them.

Cramanera then delivered his preaching and the king, overcome by extreme repentance, destroyed the sacrificial house (mChos-shyin Khang-pa) immediately. Further, the king requested to admittance to the path of Cramanera (dGe-tsul) so that he could atone for his sins. Cramanera said he was unable to do so and that the King's sins could be atoned only by Grags-pa'i rGyal-mtshan, an Upadhyaya Arhat (mKhan-po dGra-bcom-pa) who lived in the Grove of Birds (Bya-gag-gi Kun-dga'-ra-ba) further east. The king immediately sent his emissaries to look for the Arhat requesting him to come to Pataliputra. The Arhat, realising that if he did not go, the king would surely come and that this would prove more harmful for the people, went to Pataliputra and

gave teachings to the king. In the evenings, he also gave counsel to the four attendants ('Khor rNam-pa bShi). The king devoted all his time towards virtuous acts, one of which was to make offerings to 30,000 monks everyday.

**A CHRONICLE OF KING ASOKA
AS DEPICTED IN THE HISTORY OF BUDDHISM IN TIBET WITH MINOR
VARIATION**

Chos-'byung mkhas-pa'i dGa'-ston says

"In the grove of birds in the east,
Lived a disciple of Arya Ananda,
Known as dGe-slong dBang-po'i-sde or Grags-pa,
possessing eight memoirs of Arhat,
known as dGra-bcom rNam-thar brGyad.
His disciple Cramanera gShon-ru,
on his round of alms,
captured by the king,
who having not killed such a person,
told the executioner to cook him,
in the copper vessel.
Whereupon the Cramanera stated that,
his embracing of religious life,
not being fulfilled,
shall go into contemplation for seven days,
which request granted by the executioner.
But he perceived nothing upto the fifth day,
when the queen who was convicted of crime,
was killed and chopped in his presence.
Her fine body which gives joy to all,
now in filthy intestines and excrements,
brought transformation in him,
from such a disgusting sights.
At this moment of utter sorrow,
Cramanera thus attained Arhathood.
Seven days after,
in a copper vessel filled with mustard oil,
he was cooked.
When on opening the vessel next day,
he lies like a sparkling dew drop,
without injury being incurred.
Ashamed of his act,
the king enquired about this miracle.

He was told of the virtue of Arhathood,
attained from seven days of contemplation.
Lamenting over the sinful acts,
accumulated over a long time,
the king sought from the Cramanera,
atonement of the sins committed."

Again the Cramanera says, "I, the Cramanera, do not know anything. Only in the presence of the Upadhyaya will you obtain atonement." Having said so, the Cramanera displayed miracles and then passed into Nirvana (Mya-nan-las-'das). It is said that a stupa was erected on the spot over his relics.

The King's capital was to the east of Bodh Gaya at a distance of dpag-tshad 10 near the river Ganga.

The king sent an envoy to the Arhat Graga-pa with a message that, either the Arhat should come to the king or the king would come to him in his endeavour to cleanse his sins.

As it was felt that the arrival of the king would be harmful, the Arhat immediately went to the King and after helping him atone his sins, told him to erect ten millions stupas of the Buddha's relics.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE DEFEAT OF NAGAS BY THE KING ASOKA

When the Arhat Grags-pa was residing in other places like Magadha, about 500 merchants of the king Mya-ngan Med were commissioned to fetch jewels from the jewel Island and were returning with different types of jewels; but, as they rested by the side of the ocean, the Nagas unleashed a tidal wave which swept away all their merchandise into the ocean. The merchants returned, but their journey sustained on the generosity of others.

Word reached Pataliputra that the merchants would be arriving in seven days. People, unaware of what fate had befallen the traders enroute, assembled to see the jewels and their distinctive qualities. Even the king was present. On the seventh day, as the king and a large number of people went to the grove, they saw the merchant party arrive covered only by their upper garments and in a tormented state. It was a comic sight and the assembled group broke into laughter. Later, when the king enquired about this, the merchant party narrated their story. They said that if the Nagas were not subdued immediately, no one would go to fetch jewels in the future. They requested the king to devise a way to quell the Nagas.

The Brahman and the assembled people could, however, not suggest how the king was to achieve this. Then, an Arhat, who possessed six kinds of foreknowledge

(mNon-par-ses-pa Drug-dan IDan-pa), said he felt that the king would be able to show the way out. If the Arhat himself, who has abided by the vows of Bhikshu (dGe-lon-phyogs Zin-pa) should show the way that would create doubt in the mind of the king and the heretics would hold him in contempt. Having felt so, he said, "Oh great king! There is the way for this. This evening " The God of the House' (Khyims-gyi Lha) shall show it."

Then, at the break of day, 'the God of Sky' (gNam-mkha-la gNas-pa'i Lha), who dwelled above the house, told the king to worship Buddha on a large scale, and the Nagas would be subdued. The 'God of Earth' (Sa-la gNas-pa'i Lha) then suggested that the king worship monks in the state of Arhathood to subdue the Nagas.

The entire population which had been summoned earlier were then told of the prophecy and the ministers, when asked to explain it, replied that the king consult the Arhat who had made the first prophecy the previous day. The Arhat was invited over and he said he would devise a way to prove its truth. He scripted a message on a copper plate (Zans-gyi Glags-bu) and threw it in the river Ganga. The message commanded the Nagas to obey the command of King Mya-ngan Med and that all the jewels taken from the merchants be returned to them. Also, on the summit of very tall stone pillar at the intersection of big roads of the town, a vessel containing one gold image each of the king and the Naga was kept.

The next morning, the agitated Nagas generated a huge whirlwind which flung the copper plate to the door of the palace. The image of the king proceeded to prostrate at the image of the Naga. The king asked the Arhat of this. The Arhat said that it indicted that the Nagas had more merits. He went on to advise that in order to accumulate more merits, the king should worship the Buddha and the Sangha on a still greater scale. The king, therefore, offered worship to the Buddha's Body (sKu-gzugs) and the receptacle seven times more than the previous time.

The Arhat, in the meantime, went to the abode of gods and Nagas and extended an invitation to all the Arhats. The king also constructed a big ceremonial house. Through the call of a bell, all the Arhats residing in Mount Sumeru (Ri-rab) and those residing in its circumference were collected. A congregation of 60,000 Arhats was worshipped for three months. As a result, the king's image turned bigger each day and on the 45th day the images of the king and the Naga became equal. On the next 45th day, the image of the Naga prostrated at the feet of the king's. All those in the congregation were also greatly excited to find out such a merits being derived from worshipping the Three Gems (Sans. Tri Ratna, Tib. dkon-mchog gSum).

The next day, a Naga arrived in the form of a human being with the copper plate which had been thrown into the Ganga earlier. He informed that the precious jewels (Rin-po-che) had been brought to the shore and called upon the merchants to proceed and fetch them. When the king started to do so, the Arhat stopped him saying, "Oh king! This is not worthy of you. You should send a message that they should come after seven days with a jewels loaded on their shoulders and offer them to you. That would be worthy of the king." The king acted accordingly.

On the 7th day, in the middle of the area encircled by the king and a large number of people, the Nagas arrived in the form of merchants and offered the jewels. They

prostrated at the feet of the king. For the assembled people it provided a spectacular show and the event was observed as a great festive occasion.

There the King even cultivated the spells of gNod-sbyin Sin-rta whereby horses as big as elephants, and human beings as tall as palm trees (Tah-la'i sDong-po) was formed into four branches of troops of gNod-sbyin.

The regions south of Vindhya ('Bigs-byed) and many others were conquered without causing harm along with the 'Land of Snow' (kha-ba-can) in the north. The mountainous kingdom of Khotan (Li-yul), the east, south and west regions of the earth that touched the ocean and about 50 subcontinents followed suit.

An account of the Prophecy of the Buddha as told by the Arhat Gragspa and About the Buddha's relics as Obtained by the King Ma-Skyes-Dgra

According to rGya-gar Chos-'byung, after the conquest of regions of Jambudvīpa and about 50 subcontinents by the king Ashoka, the Arhat Grags-pa narrated the prophecy made by the preceptor Samyak-sam-Buddha (sTon-pa Yan-dag-par rdzogs-pa'i Sans-rgyas). He told the king that the stupa containing essential relics of the Tathagata (De-bshin-gsegs-pa) should adorn the higher regions of the earth. For this the relics of the Buddha would be required.

The Buddha's relics had earlier been acquired by King Yudhisthira (Ma-skyes-dgra) and were buried under the great stupa of Magadha. The king, the Arhat Grags-pa proceeded for the stupa along with a group of people and started excavating. At the depth of about three men, they found an iron wheel on fire turning with great force which made further progress difficult.

Finally, with the help of old woman of the locality, they proceeded for dPag-tshad 3 in the west and diverted a stream which stopped the turning wheel and extinguished the fire.

Excavating further, they discovered a copper plate with an inscription informing that the relics of the Tathagata which lay below in a large Brebo of Magadha would be discovered by a humble king. On reading this, the king Mya-ngan Med turned back in anger claiming that he was not the humble king referred to in the inscription and that it would have to be another king in the future who shall discovered the relics. The Arhat Grags-pa, however, intervened and urged him to complete the work. Finally, when a depth of about seven men was reached, an enclosed series of trunks made of steel were found. Totalling about seven, the inner most revealed the relics of the Buddha which had earlier resided in one large Bre-bo of Magadha. The four sides of a trunk shone self illuminating precious jewel, kept as ritual abjects that shined to a distance of about a rGyan-grags.

When the king realised that the entire riches of the kingdom could not match the

value of even one of the gems, his anger subsided. He took one large bre-bo of precious relics from there and ordered that the rest be restored and area enclosed again. The iron wheel was thus replaced and the secret stream put on its original course. The fire lit again and the wheel started turning.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF 84 000 STUPAS OF BUDDHA'S RELICS BY THE KING ASOKA

The king give directions to the people living at a periphery of his kingdom. The responsibility fell on the entire strength of messengers, working units and the powerful gNod-sbyin. Stupas at eight great sacred places were constructed; an intermediate circumambulatory path of Bodh Gaya was constructed. Stupas of essential relics of the Buddha were constructed in the entire regions of the earth as far as Khotan in the north. Over the period of a single day and night construction of 84,000 stupas was completed.

Then he gave directions to the entire regions. For all the stupas, butter lamps, incenses and thousand upon thousand garlands were offered for worship. Gold, silver and 10,000 vases of Vaidurya filled with fragrant water and five kinds of elixir were offered to the Bodhi tree (Byah-chub Shing). Incenses and 10,000 butter lamps were offered for worship even from a distance.

He invited 60,000 Arhats and requested them to dwell everyday in the sky of Patliputra and worshipped them with the entire provisions for three months. The Buddhist saints (Phags-pa Slob-pa) and the ordinary monks (So-sor sKye-bo'i dGe-'dun) were worshipped in the higher regions. Besides, each monk was offered garments worth 100,000 times.

That evening, the King carried on the shoulders of powerful gNod-sbyin, went to see the stupas with his retinue and in seven days had circumambulated all the stupas of precious relics in the world and had offered prayers more than ten times. All the stupas of Buddha and Sravak (Nyen-thos) were offered ornaments of gold. The Bodhi tree was profusely adorned with precious jewels.

On the seventh day he offered solemn prayers again and again that he attain Buddhahood from his virtuous deeds. He called upon the people to cultivate the same feeling and to rejoice over this. Many people however said that what the king had said entailed too much work for insignificant results; that, if the so called Anuttara Bodhisattva (Bal-na-med-pa'i Byan-chub) became non-existent in a short while then the solemn prayers of the king would go unfulfilled. The king then said, "if my solemn prayer is fulfilled this great earth shall also tremble. From the sky shall fall a shower of flowers." Immediately after the words were uttered, the earth trembled and from the sky fell a shower of flowers to which the assembled people also were filled with great devotion and made solemn prayers.

According to Chos-'byung mKhas pa'i dGa'-ston in which is given an account of the Buddha's relics:

"In the post Nirvana of the Buddha,
the champions from the land of sDig-can,
the royal descendent Bu-lu-ka from the land of rTog-gyo,
Brahman from the abode of Vishnu,
Sakya from Vaishali in Kapilavastu,
along with Licchavis,
they all proceeded to fetch the relics.
The king Yudhisthira also mounted an elephant.
With a host of troops,
he started to move.
But remembering the teacher,
he fainted and fell down.
Injured and unable to move,
he sent dByar-byed with a host of troops.
So to fetch the holy relics,
seven divisions of troop went.
Each said to the champions of rTswa-can:
'This teacher for a long time,
has been my perceptor,
when I am shaken and in misery,
As he passed away in your neighbourhood,
bestow on me, a portion of his relics.
At the precious reliquary enshrining the relics,
I shall offer prayers'.
The champions replied:
'The relics which we shall also honour accordingly,
cannot bestow on you'.
They replied:
'We will unleash war on the champions'.
So, they started gathering troops.
In the suits of armour,
the champions also waited in readiness.

But the Brahman Bre-bo-dang Nyam-pa said:
'The teacher is eulogized for his virtue of perseverance,
so in cultivating the perseverance,
to kill one another for the relics is uncalled for.
I will divide the relics into eight equal parts.
I will keep the vase to offer prayers'.
Hearing him, they all rejoice,

and agreement between them was reached.
The relics like a mustard-seed,
divided into eight equal parts.
The relics obtained being one Khal of Magadha,
they took their shares from it.
The Brahman Na-ya-gro-dah skyes,
but obtained burnt remains only.
The other ten enshrining the relics,
made into reliquaries,
in their own lands.
The relics share of Yudhisthira,
enshrining in a casket,
concealed with the Sutra,
for the sake of the king Asoka,
who came hundred years,
after the Nirvana of the Buddha.
Upon the arrival of the king Asoka,
a Bikshu called dBang-po'i-sde, discovering them,
achieved conversion of the king,
through the Sutra.
The relics acquired by the king Asoka,
disseminate into eighty four thousand stupas,
accomplished through the Bodhisattva's activities,
as prophesised in the Sutra".

**AN ACCOUNT OF DHARMA RAJA ASOKA'S CONVERSION INTO
BUDDHISM. GENEROUS OFFERING OF LARGE QUANTITY OF GOLD AND
ARTICLES TO THE MONKS. THE DHARMA RAJA ASOKA BECOMES
FAMOUS AS THE CHOS-GRYAL MYA-NGAN MED.**

At the time of consecration ceremony of the stupas the monks offered worship for three months. On the final day, the king hurriedly assembled the ordinary monks (So-so'i skye-bo'i dGe-slon) and offered large scale worship in the grove. An old monk who sat at the top of the row was extended great honour. This old monk was slow in understanding (Thos-pa Nyung-ba) and was extremely dull. He was not capable of pronouncing even one verse. Among the younger monks there were, however, a number of those learned on the Tripitaka (sDe-snod).

In the post feasting period, those in the lower rows asked the old monk whether he understood the reason for his being so highly honoured by the king. The old monk admitted he did not. They told him that it was because that the king, desirous of receiving

teachings, would come to him soon. Learning this, the old monk became disheartened. He realised that despite the 60 years since his ordination, he could not pronounce even one verse, and rued that if he had known beforehand he would have given the sumptuous food to another monk. In a state of sorrow, he started contemplating upon how to handle the situation. The local deity of the grove, feeling that it would be harmful if the king lost faith in the old monk, appeared before him in an incarnated form and advised him that if the great king came to receive the teachings, he should be asked to reflect upon what there was to see in his kingdom when even the earth, mountain and lakes are subject to decay.

Then, the king arrived. He was dressed in a set of golden coloured garments and sat down to receive the teachings. The old man repeated what the local deity of the grove had told him. Since the king was devoted he accepted the words to be very true. Bristles of hair stood up in awe as he tried to discern the meaning. Again, the deity of the grove told the old monk that offerings made by the faithful should not be squandered away. He then sought counsel from a teacher, underwent steadfast concentration upon it, and after three months attained Arhathood (dGra-bcom-pa), whereupon, in the grove Yongs-'du-sa-brtol of Trayatrimisa (Sum-bcu rTsa-gsum) realm he entered into the "summer retreat" (dByar-gnas).

Finally he arrived in Pataliputra into the midst of an assembly of a large number of people. From the dresses presented by the king came a sweet fragrance of the wood of Yongs-'du-sa-stol which permeated the whole area. The other monks were curious to learn more about it. He then amazed them by recounting his story of how a monk of extremely dull intellect had attained Arhathood because of the virtue of the Dharma. This, in turn, was due to offering of one's dress. The altruistic power of charity being seen, once again 300,000 monks were gathered to observe the fifth-year festival. In the first part of the morning, Arhats (dGra-bcom-pa) were worshipped, in the second, the venerable preceptors ('Phags-pa Slob-pa), and in the third part, ordinary monks (So-so skye-bo'i dGe-'dun) were worshipped with offerings of food and the finest cloths.

Then, in the final phase of his life he promised to offer 100 million gold to each monk of the western kingdom (Ni-hog), to the monks of Kashmir (Kha-che) and to the monks of Tho-gar. He made generous offerings to the monks of Kha-che and Tho-gar. Other requirements were also offered in the same quantity. When there was a shortage of 4 million gold and requirements for the monks of Ni-hog, the king was afflicted by a serious illness. The king's nephew called Nor-lha-byen, custodian of the treasury of gold, broke the promise of the king by not offering the remaining gold to the monks. The king gave away half of sKyu-ru-ra, which helped quench his thirst, to the large number of Arhats who were present there. These Arhats, in one voice, praised the king and told him that compared to more than 96 million gold he had offered when in complete freedom, the present offering would incur much more merits.

Then, a maid servant who waved a fan with its handle made of jewels, fell asleep due to the heat. The fan fell and hit the king. In earlier times, when the people honoured him by washing his feet, such a thing would have never occurred. The king felt that all held him in contempt as he neared his end and died in an annoyed state. On account of being annoyed at the time of his death, he was born as a Naga (Klu) in the great lake

of Patliputra and when the Arhat Grags-pa investigated into where the spiritually inclined king was reborn, he came to know that he was born in that great lake. The Arhat Grags-pa then came to the shore of the lake and by the sheer force of their antecedent favourable disposition, the Naga came to the surface of the lake and appeared before the Arhat. As the Naga was eating away the birds, insects and worms, the Arhat delivered a teaching calling upon the great king to remember his spiritual disposition. It is said that at that moment he stopped eating and died and was reborn among the gods of Tusita (dGa'-ldan-gyi Lha).

The king constructed monasteries in all conquered lands. By sowing the seed of Dharma in such large measures, the doctrine of Buddha flourished in all the directions.

After his conversion into Buddhism his name was changed-he became famous as Dharma Asoka or Chos-rgyal Mya-ngan Med.

When the king could not offer more than 96 millions gold to the monks of the western region (Nyi-hog), a wise councillor suggested that a way would be to offer the kingdom to the monks. This was done.

In order to enhance the virtue of the king, the monks administered the kingdom for two days. Thereafter, an immeasurable amount of gold and precious jewels were offered to the monks. The kingdom was bought back and the king's nephew Mya-ngan Bral was installed on the throne.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE EARLIER PROPHECY OF THE BUDDHA ABOUT THE COMING OF DHARMA RAJA ASOKA AND THE COMPLETION OF 84,000 STUPAS OF THE BUDDHA'S RELIC

Once upon a time,
When the Buddha arrived in the town,
two boys playing as king and minister,
and making palace and treasury out of sand,
are filled with devotion,
when they saw the Buddha approaching.
Thinking as an object of offering,
two boys drew out handful of sand.
As they began to offer,
they could not reach the Buddha's alm-bowl.
One boy bend and the other climb on him to offer.
On seeing them,
the Buddha lowered his alm-bowl.
But the mother of the boys,
not pleased with offering of sands to the Buddha,
admonished the boys,
of their impolite conduct being shown.

The Buddha said to Ananda:

"The merits of such virtuous thought of offering,
shall not go unrewarded,
for the sand I received,
shall be mixed with fragrance,
and shall anoint the Buddha's sanctuary.

The boy climbing to offer,
shall become the Emperor Asoka.

The offering of sand,
equal, to its particle,
shall become the stupas containing my relics,
which shall be erected all over.

The other boy who bend,
shall become his minister.

Then happiness shall prevail in the world."

The Buddha said so to Ananda.

The spot on which the boys offered sands,
now stands the Buddha's stupa in Nalanda.

Under the patronage of King Yudhisthira,
for the sake of the doctrine,
conquered Magadha, Anga, Vaishali, Kosali and Varanasi.

Like a one white parasol,
covering the entire regions,
the doctrine of Buddha,
became one single unit of worship.

Within five years of the reign of king Yudhisthira, the Buddha died. Generally 32 lines of kings ruled the kingdom. After the demise of the 10th in the line, the Dharma Raja Asoka arrived as stated in the Li-yul rGyal-rabs.

"Hundred years after the Buddha's passing away,
Mya-ngan Med, the sovereign of the world,
shall arrive in the world.
Said to belong to the Sakya Ri-brag-pa lineage,
as depicted in some royal testament of Tibet."

According to sPrin-chen-po, in the ancient times, a councillor Dam-chos dKyil-'Khor-gyi mdZod made a solemn prayer before the Sans-rgyas Klu-rigs sGron-ma because of which he was born as Sa-kya'i bsTan-pa Byin-pa'i rGyal-po who then became the Brahman Kan-di-na-ya. He made a prophecy that in the 120th year after his death, a descendant of the Mauryas, the king Mya-nan Med would become a universal ruler.

Again Karuna-pundarika (sNying-rje Chen-po Pad dKar) states, "in the 100 year after my Pari-nirvana (Yons-su Mya-ngan-las-'das), a son of the town of sKya-snar called king Mya-ngan-Med of the Maurya dynasty who is spiritually inclined to be

Dharma Raja shall arrive. He at one time, in one day, shall construct 84,000 stupas of my relics." There are many more similar references in other sutras (mDo) that it would occur in the 100th year. Manjusri-mula-tantra ('Jam-dpal rTsa-rgyud) states:

"I would pass into the higher region of the earth.
Hundred years after my death,
sins shall be committed in no time.
In the prevailing obscuration and ignorance,
the region shall become inhospitable,
which even the Jinas (rGyal-ba) would abstain from.
During that very inauspicious time,
in the city of flowers (Me-tog-can),
a person called Mya-ngan Med,
shall rule the kingdom.
As an embodiment of great miracle power,
he shall emerge as a universal monarch.
Entire regions of the world,
shall be adorned with the stupas of my relics.
He shall live for hundred and fifty years.
At the age of eighty-seven,
the stupas of the higher regions shall be worshipped."

He was a convener of the religious council said to have held till the 110th year of the Nirvana of Buddha and, therefore, up to age of sixty-three years, the king Mya-ngan Med, was involved in an immoral acts at a time when he was known as gTum-po Mya-ngan Med. From the age of sixty-three years he followed the path shown by Kalyanimitra (dGe-ba'i Ses-gnyen) and became famous as the Dharma Raja Asoka (Chos-rgyal Mya-ngan Med).