THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

TO FEEL LIKE WE FEEL:

READING THE *PRECIOUS BANNER SŪTRA* AS AFFECTIVE REGIME

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For Alayna, Elodie, and Claire

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ABBREVIATIONS, CONVENTIONS, AND DEFINITIONS

*Sanskrit	A reconstructed Sanskrit word on the basis of the Tibetan.
Apostrophes	Vertical single apostrophe (') used to represent the Sanskrit *avagraha* and the Tibetan *'a-chung*; curved apostrophes (’) are reserved for English possessive constructions and quoted speech within quoted speech.
ARIRIAB	*Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology*
BAB	McRae, John and Jan Nattier, eds. *Buddhism Across Boundaries: The Interplay of Indian, Chinese, and Central Asian Source Materials*. Taipei, Taiwan: Fo Guang Shan Foundation for Buddhist and Culture Education; *Sino-Platonic Papers* 222 (2012).
BDRC	Buddhist Digital Resource Center (https://www.bdrc.io/)
BHSD/G	Edgerton, Franklin. *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*. 2 vols. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970.
BLSF	Karashima, Seishi and Klaus Wille, eds. *The British Library Sanskrit Fragments: Buddhist Manuscripts from Central Asia*. 3 vols. Tokyo: The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University, 2006–2015.
chapter x	References to sūtra chapters are in lowercase (e.g., chapter one).
Chapter X	References to dissertation chapters are in uppercase (e.g., Chapter One).
diss.	Dissertation
EB	*The Eastern Buddhist*
ed.	Edition, edited by
fragmentary	Folio(s) from the Gilgit manuscript of the *Precious Banner* is damaged to one degree or another; marked by ellipses.
GM	Dutt, Nalinaksha, ed. *Gilgit Manuscripts*, 2nd ed., 4 vols. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1984 (1939–59).
HR	*History of Religions*
IIJ	*Indo-Iranian Journal*

IOL TIB J	Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang held at the British Library.
JAAR	*Journal of the American Academy of Religion*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JIABS	*Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*
JIP	*Journal of Indian Philosophy*
JOI	*Journal of the Oriental Institute*
JOS	*The Journal of Oriental Studies*
JRASGBI	*The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*
missing	Folio(s) from the Gilgit manuscript of the *Precious Banner* is missing.
RC	*Religion Compass*
RET	*Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines*
repr.	Reprint, reprinted
Skt.	Sanskrit
Skt. (K)	Kurumiya, Yenshu, ed. *Ratnaketuparivarta: Sanskrit Text*. Kyoto: Heirakuji-Shoten, 1978.
SII	*Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik*
T	Taishō number; Takakusu, Junjirō and Kaigyoku Watanabe, eds. *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*. Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924–34.
Tib.	Tibetan
Tib. (K)	Kurumiya, Yenshu, ed. *'dus pa chen po rin po che tog gi gzuṅs, Being the Tibetan Translation of the Ratnaketuparivarta*. Kyoto: Heirakuji-Shoten, 1979.
trans.	Translator, translated by
s.v.	*sub verbo* ("under the word"); refers to dictionary entries

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ABSTRACT

The *Precious Banner Sūtra* (Skt. *Mahāsaṃnipātaratnaketudhāraṇīsūtra*, *Ratnaketuparivarta*; Tib. *'Dus pa chen po rin po che tog gi gzungs*) has been known to scholarship for over a century, yet little attention has been paid to its riveting narrative of Māra's failed yet incompletely quelled rebellion against the Buddha. Grounded in the history of religions and informed by affect theory, the sociology and history of emotions, and narratology, this dissertation argues that the *Precious Banner* contains what I call an *affective regime*—a set of feeling rules, disseminated in this case through religious narrative, that seeks to structure the affective orientation of its readers as well as to evoke in the reading present the emotions put forward as normative in the text through such literary strategies as focalization, analepsis and prolepsis, and self-reference. In so doing, I argue, the *Precious Banner* seeks to call into being a transhistorical religious community. Chapter One begins with a survey of the preservation and citation of the *Precious Banner* on the part of Buddhists, followed by a discussion of the methodological framework signaled by the phrase *affective regime*. Chapter Two then dives into the text. It first argues that Māra's narrative is central to the sūtra, based on a general overview of the sūtra, and further shows that his affective orientation is central to his narrative through an analysis of the sūtra's first chapter, which leaves Māra wallowing in his lamentation room in what can only be called a cliffhanger. Chapter Three then argues that though Māra is affectively misaligned in the sūtra—evidenced by his seemingly ever-increasing hostility, powerlessness, and isolation and his being bound by a fivefold fetter in the presence of a giant preaching lotus at the conclusion of the sūtra's third chapter—he is not condemned to remain misaligned for the duration of his story, the end of which is intimated but never narrated. Based on a reading of a past-life story told in the sūtra's second chapter, I argue that Māra has the capacity to free himself from his dilemma by affectively reorienting himself.

Chapter Four then examines the feeling rules delivered to Māra, foregrounding Śākyamuni's imperative that he ought to be happy, and the consequences Māra faces on account of his refusal to respond properly thereto. The feeling rules given to Māra, I argue, hang over readers—as do the consequences of refusing to respond properly—in part through the homologous relationship readers share with Māra with respect to the sūtra, itself effected by the sūtra's strategic self-reference through the mouth of Śākyamuni. Chapter Five then moves away from Māra to consider the affective reorientation of other misaligned actants, as well as the affective course correction of actants who are properly aligned but are nevertheless told to feel differently than they do. With these surveys, I argue on the one hand that alignment has social consequences and, on the other hand, that the affective course correction in the narrative is a facet of the sūtra's larger strategy to constitute itself as a source of joy for readers living in a buddha-less world. Chapter Six then returns to the world of scholarship. My reading of the *Precious Banner*, I argue, exemplifies the value of holistic reading as opposed to methods that privilege episodes taken out of context. Such a method, when grounded in sufficiently theorized foundations, promises to yield still richer dividends. With the methodological framework of *affective regimes*, I gesture toward a synthesis of the antithetical views of Bruce Lincoln and Donovan Schaefer regarding how religious discourse plays a role in the process of social formation by drawing on Sara Ahmed and Arlie Russell Hochschild. The *Precious Banner*, I suggest, is at once a tool of normative ideology and sentiment evocation. It seeks to structure how it will be received as it is being received. Insofar as it succeeds in its aims, it calls into being a transhistorical community with itself as the joyful object at its center. An instantiation of this, I suggest, can be glimpsed at Gilgit (and perhaps among my readers, too). The dissertation closes with reflections on avenues for further research.

CHAPTER ONE

The *Precious Banner* and the Affective Regime
An Introduction

I

Having prepared the *Precious Banner Dhāraṇī Sūtra*, which removes many fears, through the firstfruits of whatever merit I have generated with a joyful mind ever zealous in devotion, may this whole world always meet with this very *Precious Banner*, the ornamented teaching of the Sage, the meaning of which is clear, and which shines with excellent qualities.

— The Assembly of the Fine Dharma: the glorious Paṭola King Vikramādityanandin, the glorious Queen Surendramāla, the Uvakhī(?) glorious Queen Dilnitapuṇyā, the donor who had this book written, Metalagornikṣiṇa, his wife, Āysātikasumonviltā, and [his/her?] mother, Aspinaśūlā.[1]

In its most general form, the question that underlies the present work is this: How does religious discourse constitute communities like the one evidenced in the above colophon of the Gilgit manuscript of the *Precious Banner Sūtra*? While such a question resists any single answer, I propose that one of the ways religious discourse contributes to the formation of communities is through the dissemination and realization of what I will call *affective regimes*. Taking up the methodology implicit in this latter phrase, we will explore this problematic by undertaking a sustained analysis of the *Precious Banner*, an important mid-first millennium Mahāyāna sūtra

[1] Skt. (K): saṃskṛtvā ratnaketum pracurabhayaharān dhāraṇīm yan mayāgryam puṇyaṃ kiṃcit prasūtaṃ pramuditamanasā sarvabhaktyādṛtena | sarvo 'yaṃ tena loko munivacanakathālaṃkṛtāṃ ratnaketum hy etām eva sphuṭārthām atiguṇaviśadāṃ prāpnuyāt sadya eva || || saddharmasaṃgraho śrīpaṭolaṣāhi vikramādityanandasya śrīmahādevyāṃ surendramālāyāṃ tathā sārdhaṃ uvakhī śrīmahādevyāṃ dilnitapuṇyāṃ || tathā sārdhaṃ pustakalikhāpitaṃm idaṃ mahādānapati metalagornikṣiṇasya tathā sārdhaṃ bhāryā āysātikasumonviltāyāṃ tathā sārdhaṃ mātā aspinaśūlāyāṃ || (178.1–178.8). The second half of Kurumiya's reading has been silently modified to accord with Oskar von Hinüber, "Die Kolophone der Gilgit-Handschriften," *SII* 5–6 (1980): 49–82, at 58–59. See above for abbreviations, conventions, and definitions. All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

that thematizes affect in its riveting narrative of Māra's failed but incompletely quelled rebellion against the Buddha Śākyamuni. Grounded in the history of religions and drawing insights and tools from affect theory, the sociology and history of emotions, and narratology, I argue that the *Precious Banner* contains a set of feeling rules that, by means of a complex and self-referential religious narrative, enjoins and encourages readers to adopt a shared affective orientation toward the sūtra itself—*to feel like we feel*, as it were. And insofar as readers adopt the affective orientation put forward as normative in the sūtra, I further contend, they are ushered into an empowered community transhistorical in scope. While the sūtra's affective regime and the community it seeks to call into being are not limited by space and time, I want also to suggest that the names registered in the Gilgit colophon constitute an instantiation of this transhistorical community. In working to understand these claims and how the sūtra goes about actualizing its extratextual aims, my readers will perhaps learn a bit more than they would otherwise want to about this single Mahāyāna sūtra. But my aim in reading this example of religious discourse is to grapple with questions of interest to those engaged in the critical and historical study of religions—questions regarding the complex relationship between religious discourse and the social worlds it aims to produce—and to offer as a modest contribution thereto the methodological framework signaled by the phrase *affective regime*.

The remainder of this chapter introduces the *Precious Banner Sūtra* and the methodology to be deployed in the coming chapters. At the risk of putting the proverbial cart before the horse, section II briefly treats how the *Precious Banner* has been taken up in Buddhist contexts. More specifically, we address the question of why the sūtra merits sustained attention by surveying the preservation and citation of the sūtra on the part of Buddhists. As we will see, beyond copying and translating the text, Buddhists have put passages of the sūtra to work in service of their own

agendas. The sūtra, in other words, has often served as what we might call a proof text. While I do not wish to critique this mode of textual engagement on the part of Buddhists themselves, my reading is more holistic and has broader aspirations. To be specific, my project interrogates the *Precious Banner* as a coherent religious narrative with discernible extratextual aims. In so doing, the dissertation contributes to our knowledge of a familiar but understudied Mahāyāna sūtra as well as to the larger field of history of religions.

The specifics of the methodology to be deployed in our analysis of the sūtra will be the focus of section III. I should say a bit about it here, though, to avoid trying the reader's good will and patience too much. By *affective regime* I mean *a set of feeling rules*, disseminated in this case through a religious narrative, *that seeks to structure the affective orientation of readers as well as to evoke in the reading present the emotions put forward as normative in the text*. The methodology signaled by this phrase will have us pursue two main lines of investigation. First, we will seek to identify feeling rules within the narrative by raising a set of questions about the characters or actants therein—questions focused, that is, on how, in what narrative context, and with what consequences they affect and are affected by one another. Second, we will explore how the sūtra works to realize its affective regime by analyzing how it leverages such narrative strategies as focalization, analepsis and prolepsis, and self-reference to encourage readers to align themselves with the sūtra's affective regime—that is, to respond properly to the feeling rules expressed within and through the sūtra. These two lines of investigation will by and large be undertaken at the same time, but it is perhaps helpful to distinguish them at the outset.

In framing and reading the *Precious Banner* as *affective regime*, I aim to contribute to the study of this particular sūtra and to ongoing conversations on Mahāyāna sūtras more generally. Recent scholarship on the *Precious Banner* tends to lift passages from the text and place them in

the service of their own agendas and arguments. In this, buddhologists mirror the practices of the Buddhists they study. Though such treatments are not wrong, I suggest that we would do well to read holistically. Doing so allows us to better understand its aims as a narrative. In taking such an approach to this particular Mahāyāna sūtra, I find myself in harmony with the recent wave of literary-critical scholarship on Mahāyāna sūtras. What sets the present reading apart from those currently on offer, however, is the concern to think specifically about the role Mahāyāna sūtras play in the process of social formation through the inculcation of affective orientations. In this, my work contributes as much to conversations in the history of religions concerning the complex relationship between religion, affect, and society as it does to Buddhist studies. And in so doing, I suggest, my project invites us to see Gilgit with fresh eyes. The details of how my project contributes to the scholarly conversations named above will have to wait until the final chapter of the dissertation. But it is my hope that scholars working in Buddhist studies and the history of religions will follow along in the intervening chapters and thereby find utility in the methodology I propose. Before discussing methodology, however, we will spend a fair bit of time in weeds more buddhological in nature. Readers not interested in the latter sort of detail are welcome to jump ahead to section III.

II

That the *Precious Banner Sūtra* merits sustained scholarly attention cannot (or at least should not) be taken for granted. One reason to study this sūtra is that it was important to Buddhists at various times and places. Another reason is that it promises to be useful in thinking through a set of broader questions. With respect to the first of these, we would do well to look for signs of the sūtra's importance to historical Buddhist communities. An initial survey of extant manuscripts and translations will show that a range of Buddhists put resources toward preserving the sūtra.

This picture will be followed by a more focused, though not exhaustive, survey of references to the sūtra in one Indic and a handful of Tibetan Buddhist compositions.

Preservation of the *Precious Banner*

Like all other Mahāyāna sūtras, the *Sūtra of the Precious Banner Dhāraṇī of the Great Assembly* (Skt. *Mahāsaṃnipātaratnaketudhāraṇīsūtra* or *Ratnaketuparivarta*; Tib. *'Dus pa chen po rin po che tog gi gzungs*),[2] which we will call the *Precious Banner* for the sake of brevity unless there is reason to do otherwise,[3] is a work of unknown provenance. We do not know with any specificity or certainty who composed the sūtra, where it was composed, or whether it was initially an oral or written composition. Nor do we know whether it was produced all at once or stitched together from preexistent parts.[4] What we do know is that the sūtra as we have it now is a work of thirteen chapters,[5] that it is preserved and extant (in various configurations) in Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan, and that it circulated (again, in part or in whole) in South, Central, and East Asia. And while there is no concrete evidence suggesting as much, scholars suspect that the form in which the sūtra comes down to us is the product of an urbane male monastic located in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent sometime during the second quarter of the first millennium.[6]

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[2] The first letter of Tibetan proper names will be capitalized throughout this dissertation. This is not meant to suggest that these letters are Tibetan renderings of retroflex Sanskrit consonants (D for ḍ, e.g., or N for ṇ), as is relatively common in scholarship on Tibetan literature. Personal names are rendered phonetically in the body for the sake of readers not familiar with Tibetan orthography.

[3] In the sūtra's fifth chapter, the text refers to itself (through the actant of Śākyamuni) as the *Dharma Discourse of the Great Assembly* suggesting that an alternative rendering of the full title could be something like *The Great Assembly Sūtra a.k.a. the Precious Banner Dhāraṇī Sūtra*.

[4] The argument that the sūtra is a composite document has recently been advanced, though the evidence adduced is not entirely compelling. In Chapter Two, I argue that even if the sūtra as we have it today is a composite document, the narrative stitching was done so well as to render any seam practically invisible.

[5] Of the sūtra's thirteen chapters, half are very short. The first six constitute about seventy percent of the sūtra. And of the remaining seven, only one (chapter eight) reaches the length we would find if the text were distributed evenly over thirteen chapters (roughly seven and a half percent).

[6] *GM*, 4:i–iii.

Sanskrit manuscripts of the *Precious Banner* have been discovered at Gilgit (Pakistan), Kathmandu (Nepal), Bamiyan (Afghanistan), and near Khotan (Xinjiang). The most complete manuscript comes from Gilgit. Identified by Madhusudan Kaul Shastri in 1931, and later edited by Nalinaksha Dutt and again by Yenshu Kurumiya,[7] the *Precious Banner* was among the many works preserved by the Buddhists at Gilgit.[8] Though we do not know as much as we would like about the material costs of this process, the colophon of the manuscript (provided in the epigraph above) provides us a window into the donative community. We will return to the Gilgit context toward the end of the dissertation—for it is at Gilgit, I will suggest, that we can glimpse a realization of the sūtra's affective regime. For now, let us note that this colophon, when seen in the light shed by the available literary, paleographical, epigraphical, and art historical evidence, allows us not only to date this manuscript of the *Precious Banner* to roughly the first quarter of the seventh century but also to infer that the people at Gilgit, both elite and common, engaged in Buddhist practice.[9]

[7] Madhusudan Koul [=M. S. Kaul Shastri], "Report on the Manuscripts found at Navapura (Gilgit)," in *Transactions of the Seventh All-India Oriental Conference* (Baroda, 1933), 5–10; M. S. Kaul Shastri [=Madhusudan Koul], "Report on the Gilgit Excavation in 1938," *The Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society* 30 (1939): 1–12; *GM*, 4:i–xiv (introduction), 4:1–138 (Skt. text); Skt. (K).

[8] For an exhaustive list, see Oskar von Hinüber, "The Gilgit Manuscripts: An Ancient Buddhist Library in Modern Times," in *From Birch Bark to Digital Data: Recent Advances in Buddhist Manuscript Research*, ed. Paul Harrison and Jens-Uwe Hartmann (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2014), 79–135. For more on the discovery of the Gilgit manuscripts, see Gérard Fussman, "Dans quel type de bâtiment furent trouvés les manuscrits de Gilgit?," *Journal Asiatique* 292, nos. 1–2 (2004): 101–50; Gregory Schopen, "On the Absence of Urtexts and Otiose Ācāryas: Buildings, Books, and Lay Buddhist Ritual at Gilgit," in *Écrire et transmettre en Inde classique*, ed. Gérard Colas and Gerdi Gerschheimer (Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 2009), 189–219.

[9] There is ample evidence for this claim. See, for example, Oskar von Hinüber, "Namen in Schutzzaubern aus Gilgit," *SII* 7 (1981): 163–71; idem, "The Paṭola Ṣāhis of Gilgit—A Forgotten Dynasty," *JOI* 36 (1986/1987): 221–29; idem, "More on Gilgit Bronzes and Some Additions to 'Die Palola Ṣāhis,'" *ARIRIAB* 12 (2009): 3–6; idem, "The Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra at Gilgit: Manuscripts, Worshippers, and Artists," *JOS* 22 (2012): 52–67; Rebecca Twist, *The Patola Shahi Dynasty: A Buddhological Study of their Patronage, Devotion and Politics* (Saarbrücken, Germany: VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, 2011).

More fragmentary and thus numerous are the manuscripts discovered at Kathmandu, Bamiyan, and Khotan. Cecil Bendall, though unfamiliar with the *Precious Banner* "as a separate work" at the time, identified a fragment of the sūtra's fifth chapter in a bundle of manuscripts at the royal library at Kathmandu in 1900.[10] Some fifteen years later, A. F. Hoernle identified a fragment of the work's second chapter among a collection of manuscripts from Central Asia.[11] The last two decades have seen more identifications, especially with respect to the fragments discovered at Bamiyan and Khotan. Seishi Karashima, Takamichi Fukita, Saerji, Jens-Uwe Hartmann, and Chanwit Tudkeao have identified fragments from all but the seventh chapter of the sūtra's total thirteen.[12] The geographic distribution of these Sanskrit manuscripts goes a long

[10] "Colophon of one," Bendall jots in a bullet point fashion, "*mahāyāna sūtrād = Ratna ketu parivartāt = paṇcamo lakshaṇā-parivarta*. I have not succeeded in identifying the *Ratna ketu parivarta* as a separate work." Louis de La Vallée Poussin later transcribed the bit of the sūtra that Bendall had identified. This fragment, while physically in Nepal, was written in a script used at Gilgit between the sixth and eighth centuries. Since no inscriptions written in this script have come to light in Nepal, we can cautiously infer that the manuscript was produced in the northwest of the subcontinent and transported to Nepal. Cecil Bendall, "Nepal Mss.," *JRASGBI* 32, no. 2 (1900): 345–47, at 345; Louis de La Vallée Poussin, "Mss. Cecil Bendall II," *JRASGBI* 40, no. 1 (1908): 45–53, at 45–51; Kengo Harimoto, "In Search of the Oldest Nepalese Manuscript," *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 84, no. 1 (2011): 85–106, esp. 95–100; Hisashi Matsumura, "Marginalia to the Sanskrit Fragments of Some Buddhist Texts," *Central Asiatic Journal* 37, nos. 1–2 (1993): 120–49, at 127–29.

[11] A. F. Rudolf Hoernle, *Manuscript Remains of Buddhist Literature Found in Eastern Turkestan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1916), 100–103.

[12] Seishi Karashima, "Four Sanskrit Fragments of the *Ratnaketuparivarta* in the Stein Collection," in *BLSF*, 1:177–89; idem, "The Sanskrit Fragments Or. 15010 in the Hoernle Collection," in *BLSF*, 2:1.335–588, at 379–82, 432–35, 443–46, 476–77, 510–11, and 538–39; Takamichi Fukita, "The Sanskrit Fragments Or. 15009 in the Hoernle Collection: Or. 15009/301–350" in *BLSF*, 2:1.298–330, at 300–301; Saerji, "A New Fragment of the *Ratnaketuparivarta*," *ARIRIAB* 11 (2008): 95–103; idem, "More Fragments of the *Ratnaketuparivarta* (1)," *ARIRIAB* 13 (2010): 111–20; idem, "More Fragments of the *Ratnaketuparivarta* (2)," *ARIRIAB* 14 (2011): 35–57; idem, "Sanskrit Texts Discovered From the Southern Silk Road: Taking the *Ratnaketuparivarta* as an Example," in *Sanskrit on the Silk Route*, ed. Shashibala (New Delhi: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 2016), 89–98; Jens-Uwe Hartmann and Chanwit Tudkeao, "Three Sanskrit Fragments of the *Ratnaketuparivarta*," in *BLSF*, 2:1.589–96; Chanwit Tudkeao, "Zentralasiatische Versionen des Ratnaketuparivarta: Eine Studie zur Überlieferung des Ratnaketuparivarta und Kritische Ausgabe der Sanskrit-Fragmente" (PhD diss., Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, 2010); idem, "The Relationship between the Early Chinese Translation and Central Asian Versions of the *Ratnaketuparivarta*," *Thai International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 3 (2012): 91–101; idem, "Three Fragments of the *Ratnaketuparivarta*," in *BLSF*, 3:2.587–91.

way toward demonstrating the importance of the sūtra to a range of Buddhists, but there is still more evidence for this claim.

The *Precious Banner* was translated into Chinese twice. The first of these efforts was led by a scholar-monk named Dharmakṣema (385–433) around the year 420. Born in Central India, Dharmakṣema was eventually invited to the Northern Liang court at Guzang in order to translate Buddhist texts.[13] Known to have lived in Dunhuang for a time and to have traveled from Guzang to Kucha and Khotan to retrieve texts for translation while in the service of the Northern Liang court, Dharmakṣema likely acquired the sūtra somewhere along the Silk Road.[14] The second Chinese translation was produced around the year 630 under the direction of a scholar-monk named Prabhākaramitra (sometimes Prabhāmitra).[15] Also born in Central India, he lived and studied at Nālandā for some time before being summoned by the Tang court at Chang An to translate Buddhist texts,[16] having been noticed by Xuanzang (602–44) on his stop in Magadha as

[13] *Bao chuang fen* 寶幢分 (=*Ratnaketuparivarta*) (T 13, 397:129–54) in *Da fang deng da ji jing* 大方等大集經 (=*Mahāsaṃnipātasūtra*). There is debate about when exactly Dharmakṣema arrived in Guzang, in what order and when he translated specific texts, and so on. The details of that debate are not relevant here. For more, see Jinhua Chen, "The Indian Buddhist Missionary Dharmakṣema (385–433): A New Dating of His Arrival in Guzang and of His Translations," *T'oung Pao* 90, nos. 4–5 (2004): 215–63.

[14] It is perhaps worth noting here that Gilgit was likely a major source of the Khotanese literary tradition. See Lore Sander, "Early Prakrit and Sanskrit Manuscripts from Xinjiang (Second to Fifth/Sixth Centuries CE): Paleography, Literary Evidence, and Their Relation to Buddhist Schools," in *BAB*, 26–49, at 45, citing Oskar von Hinüber, *Die Erforschung der Gilgit-Handschriften* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979), 329–60; Jason Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks: Mobility and Exchange within and beyond the Northwestern Borderlands of South Asia* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 295–97. For more on Kuchean Buddhism, see Mariko Namba Walter, "Tokharian Buddhism in Kucha: Buddhism of Indo-European Centum Speakers in Chinese Turkestan before the 10th Century C.E.," *Sino-Platonic Papers* 85 (1998): 1–30.

[15] *Bao xing tuo luo ni jing* 寶星陀羅尼經 (=*Ratnaketudhāraṇīsūtra*) (T 13, 402:536–82).

[16] Prabodh Chandra Bagchi, "A Buddhist Monk of Nālandā Amongst the Western Turks" (1928), in *India and China: Interactions through Buddhism and Diplomacy—A Collection of Essays by Professor Prabodh Chandra Bagchi*, ed. Bangwei Wang and Tansen Sen (Delhi: Anthem Press India, 2011), 105–8; Ritsu Akahane, "Prabhākaramitra: His Name and the Characteristics of His Translation of the *Prajñāpradīpa*," *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 63, no. 3 (2015): 1295–1301.

"skilled in theoretical discussion."[17] While Prabhākaramitra's translation resembles the Gilgit text more closely than does Dharmakṣema's,[18] we regrettably do not know where his source text came from or whether he worked from multiple variants.

The *Precious Banner* was also translated into Tibetan (at least) twice. This is suggested by the attestation of two titles (*'Dus pa chen po dkon mchog dbal*, on the one hand, and *'Dus pa chen po rin po che tog* on the other) among the manuscripts of the work found at Dunhuang.[19] The "canonical" version—that is, the one whose readings are preserved in the Kangyur—is known only by the second of the above titles.[20] And its colophon suggests that a previous translation was improved upon by Yeshe De (fl. eighth–ninth cent.) and the Indian scholar-monk Śīlendrabodhi (fl. eighth–ninth cent.) around the turn of the ninth century.[21] Unfortunately, we again do not have a sense of their source(s), the relationship of their source(s) to the ones found

[17] Xuanzang, *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions*, trans. Li Rongxi (Moraga, CA: BDK America, Inc., 1996), 251.

[18] Tudkeao, "The Relationship between the Early Chinese Translation and Central Asian Versions," 91–101.

[19] The two titles are synonymous. Both *dkon mchog dbal* and *rin po che tog* are translations of *ratnaketu*. The second translation equivalent was settled on when translation procedures were established during the reign of Tridé Songtsen (r. 804–815). Not all of the texts bearing the first title are clearly consistent with one another (thus suggesting more than two translations). Jacob Dalton and Sam van Schaik, eds., *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Stein Collection at the British Library* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 25 (IOL Tib J 156), 26 (IOL Tib J 157), 27 (IOL Tib J 158), 27–28 (IOL Tib J 159), and 28–29 (IOL Tib J 160).

[20] The "non-canonical" variants—that is, the ones whose readings are not preserved in the Kangyur—have yet to receive sustained study. Kurumiya has taken small strides toward this end in his edition of the Tibetan, and Dalton and van Schaik's work on the texts from Dunhuang is a useful starting point for interested parties. Tib. (K).

[21] The colophon reads: "The Indian scholar Śīlendrabodhi and the venerable chief editor-translator Yeshe De were commissioned to update and finalize the text according to the new translation system" (Tib. [K]: rgya gar gyi mkhan po shī le ndra bo dhi dang | zhu chen gyi lo tsāb ban de ye shes sdes zhus te | skad gsar bcad kyis kyang bcom nas gtan la phab pa || [271.1–271.3]). NB: all reproductions of Kurumiya's edition of the Tibetan silently accord his transliteration style to the now more common Wylie transliteration method (ṅa→nga, ź a→zha, etc.).

at Dunhuang, the relationship between these and the initial translation, or when exactly the initial translation was made.[22]

That the *Precious Banner* was translated at all further shows that the sūtra was important to historical Buddhists. But this claim becomes stronger when we consider how intensive and expensive the translation process was. For one, there was the issue of retrieving the texts—itself an arduous task.[23] Second, the translations themselves required substantial material resources and intellectual labor. Chinese translation committees, for example, were composed of multiple individuals conversant to some degree in both the source and target languages, each of whom

[22] It is possible that the sūtra was first translated as early as the reign of Songtsen Gampo (r. 629–49). According to a number of Tibetan histories, Songtsen Gampo sent Tönmi Sambhoṭa (fl. seventh cent.) to India to develop a script for the Tibetan language. Upon his return to the court, the fourteenth-century *Mirror Illuminating the Royal Genealogies* tells us, Tönmi had already translated the *Precious Banner* himself. According to the earlier *Testament of Ba*, however, Tönmi simply brought a copy of the text back with him. If either scenario obtained, then we have not only reason to suppose that the *Precious Banner* was first translated into Tibetan sometime around the middle of the seventh century but also further evidence that the sūtra had some measure of importance to Buddhists in the South Asian cultural milieu at that time. But even if, as van Schaik writes, "Nothing . . . can be traced back with any certainty to Tönmi Saṃbhota," reference to the *Precious Banner* in the *Testament of Ba* is still significant. Likely composed/compiled in the ninth or tenth century, the *Testament* purports to recount events from the early imperial period up to the late eighth century. That the *Testament* names the *Precious Banner*, in other words, shows that the sūtra was believed to have been brought to Tibet early in the first dissemination.

For the story of Tönmi from the *Mirror Illuminating the Royal Genealogies*, see Per K. Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historiography: The Mirror Illuminating the Royal Genealogies—An Annotated Translation of the XIVth Century Tibetan Chronicle: rGyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994), 173 (Tibetan text: Bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan, *Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* [BDRC W23770] [Delhi: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Center, 1973], story of Tönmi at 73a.1–82b.5, reference to the *Precious Banner* at 76a.4–76a.5). For the story of Tönmi from the *Testament of Ba*, see Karénina Kollmar-Paulenz, "The Buddhist Way into Tibet," in *The Spread of Buddhism*, ed. Ann Heirman and Stephan Peter Bumbacher (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 303–40, at 312–13 (Tibetan text: *Dba' bzhed*, in *Rba bzhed phyogs bsgrigs* [BDRC W1KG6259] [Pe cin: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2009], 237–81, reference to *Precious Banner* at 238.1–238.8). For van Schaik's remark on Tönmi, see Sam van Schaik, "A New Look at the Tibetan Invention of Writing," in *New Studies of the Old Tibetan Documents: Philology, History and Religion*, ed. Yoshiro Imaeda, Matthew T. Kapstein, and Tsuguhito Takeuchi (Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2011), 45–96, at 52. And for more on the dating of the *Testament* of *Ba*, see Sam van Schaik and Kazushi Iwao, "Fragments of the *Testament of Ba* from Dunhuang," *JAOS* 128, no. 3 (2008): 477–87.

[23] For a fascinating study of the paths by which Chinese pilgrims traveled through mountains, see Haiyan Hu-von Hinüber, "The Suspended Crossing (*Śaṅkupatha*) in the Gorges of the Indus River as Described by Chinese Pilgrims Faxian, Dharmodgata and Xuanzang," *ARIRIAB* 23 (2020): 167–86.

played a key role in the process.[24] And in the Tibetan case, translators working in the first dissemination (*snga dar*) were paid thirty-three times more than imperial guards.[25] Translation thus required, indeed *requires*,[26] an enormous investment of time, energy, and resources. Such investment was worthwhile because the preservation of Buddhist texts via translation generated merit and prestige for the translation teams and those who sponsored their work.

Citation of the *Precious Banner* in Buddhist Literature

Let us now turn to citations of the *Precious Banner* in Buddhist literature.[27] Not intended to be exhaustive, the survey aims to further show that the sūtra has been a valued source of tradition for Buddhists. Though examples from Khotan and China could be included,[28] I limit myself to

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[24] See, for example, Jan Nattier, *A Guide to the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Translations: Texts from the Eastern Han and the Three Kingdoms Periods* (Tokyo: The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University, 2008), 19–20; Erik Zürcher, "Buddhism Across Boundaries: The Foreign Input," in *BAB*, 1–25, at 12 and 20; Daniel Boucher, "Gāndhārī and the Early Chinese Buddhist Translations Reconsidered: The Case of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*," *JAOS* 118, no. 4 (1998): 471–505.

[25] Georgios Halkias, "Translating the Foreign into the Local: The Cultural Production and Canonization of Buddhist Texts in Imperial Tibet," in *Translation and Global Asia: Relocating Networks of Cultural Production*, ed. Uganda Sze-pui Kwan and Lawrence Wang-chi Wong (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2014), 143–66, at 149.

[26] As a contemporary example, consider that 84000 invites donors to sponsor the translation of sūtras at the rate of $25,000 USD per 100 pages. "Sponsor a Sūtra," 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha, last accessed January 15, 2022, https://read.84000.co/about/sponsor-a-sutra.html.

[27] For a more sustained treatment, see Adam T. Miller, "On the Significance and Use of the *Precious Banner*: Toward a Reception History of the *Ratnaketuparivarta*" (manuscript in progress).

[28] The ninety-ninth verse of the *Precious Banner*'s fourth chapter is quoted, for example, in the mid-first millennium Khotanese *Book of Zambasta*'s sixth chapter, which contains a series of quotations from a number of sūtras.

For all proposed identifications of the sūtra's quoted in the *Zambasta*'s sixth chapter, see Ruixuan Chen and Diego Loukota Sanclemente, "Mahāyāna Sūtras in Khotan: Quotations in Chapter 6 of the *Book of Zambasta* (I), *IIJ* 61 (2018): 131–75, Table 1 (138). For the Khotanese text and translation, see R. E. Emmerick, ed. and trans., *The Book of Zambasta: A Khotanese Poem on Buddhism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 118.17–118.18 (Khotanese text), 6.20 on 119 (translation); Ruixuan Chen and Diego Loukota, "Mahāyāna Sūtras in Khotan: Quotations in Chapter 6 of the *Book of Zambasta* (II)," *IIJ* 63 (2020): 210–61, both at 241. For the Sanskrit text, we have to look beyond Gilgit. The folio containing this passage is missing from the Gilgit text, but a fragment of this passage from Central Asia has been identified by Tudkeao and supplemented by Chen and Loukota. Tudkeao, "Zentralasiatische Versionen des Ratnaketuparivarta," 120; Chen and Loukota, "Mahāyāna Sūtras in Khotan," 242. For the Tibetan text, see Tib. (K): 120.19–120.22.

For more on Khotanese Buddhism, see Jan Nattier, "Church Language and Vernacular Language in Central Asian Buddhism," *Numen* 37, no. 2 (1990): 195–219; Prods Oktor Skjærvø, "Khotan, An Early Center of Buddhism in

Indic and Tibetan compositions for reasons of competence. As we will see, the sūtra has been used to highlight the necessity of renunciation, to disapprove of astral science for ascetics, to illustrate the inevitability of death, to affirm that there can be more than one buddha in a single world at the same time, to legitimate the use of song as a pedagogical tool, to suggest a source for a richer telling of Śākyamuni's biography, and to elaborate on dependent origination.

We begin with Atiśa Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna (982–1054), who quotes the *Precious Banner* twice in his *Great Sūtra Compendium*, the only extant Indic-language composition to quote the sūtra to my knowledge.[29] The first quotation—drawn from the eleventh verse of the sūtra's first chapter, which reports the words of encouragement Śāriputra delivers to his followers after Māra had approached them in the form of Aśvajit in an attempt to dissuade them from taking refuge in the Buddha—appears in a chapter that highlights the necessity of renunciation in the quest to overcome suffering.[30] The second quotation—drawn from three verses (92–94) from the sūtra's

Chinese Turkestan," in *BAB*, 106–41; Hiroshi Kumamoto, "Textual Sources for Buddhism in Khotan," in *BAB*, 142–49; Giuliana Martini, "Bodhisattva Texts, Ideologies and Rituals in Khotan in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries," in *Buddhism Among the Iranian Peoples of Central Asia*, ed. Matteo De Chiara, Mauro Maggi, and Giuliana Martini (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2013), 13–69.

[29] The *Great Sūtra Compendium*, which provides quotations from a range of sūtras, śāstras, and vinaya texts without commentary, was likely written before Atiśa's arrival in Tibet in 1042. The work was translated into Tibetan in the early twelfth century, and it is on account of this translation that we know of the work today. Kaie Mochizuki, "Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna's Activities at the Vikramaśīla Monastery in Relation with the Pāla Dynasty," *Oriental Culture* 96 (2016): 63–80; Kazuo Kano, "The Transmission of Sanskrit Manuscripts from India to Tibet: The Case of a Manuscript Collection in the Possession of Atiśa Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna (980–1054)," in *Transfer of Buddhism Across Central Asian Networks* (*7th to 13th Centuries*), ed. Carmen Meinert (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 82–118, at 93–94; Kaie Mochizuki, *A Study of the Mahāsūtrasamuccaya of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna*, A Report of Grant-in-Aid for Encouragement of Young Scientists (Project 12710009) (Minobu: Minobusan University, 2002), 5.

[30] "The *Precious Banner* states: 'The world is tormented by decay and surrounded by death. Therefore, to eliminate both [decay and death], renunciation should be taken up'" (rin po che'i tog las kyang | 'jig rten rga bas gzir gyur cing || 'chi bdag gis ni yongs bskor ba || de phyir snyi ga spang ba'i phyir || rab tu byung ba legs par gzung || zhes gsungs so ||) (Kaie Mochizuki, *A Study of the Mahāsūtrasamuccaya of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna II: Tibetan Text* [Minobu: Minobusan University, 2004], 166.13–166.17). Parallel passage: Skt. (K): 2.7–2.10; Tib. (K): 15.9–15.12.

fourth chapter, which reports the speech of Śākyamuni to a sage named Jyotīrasa—appears in a chapter condemning[31] the practice of astral science on the part of ascetics.[32]

Shifting gears to Tibet—the Kagyu patriarch Gampopa Sönam Rinchen (1079–1153) quotes the sūtra in his *Jewel Ornament of Liberation* to illustrate the transience of human life.[33] The quoted passage—which corresponds to a verse Pūrṇa recites in the sūtra's third chapter to a host of māras who were attempting to seduce him away from monastic life with spirited song and dance[34]—appears to leverage the claim that life surges toward death to not so subtly suggest that

[31] Whether the *Precious Banner* condemns astral science is open to interpretation. Jeffrey Kotyk notes that two attitudes are represented in the Chinese translations of the sūtra—one of ambivalence and one of "rejection." The variance perhaps indicates two competing attitudes toward astral science on the part of the Indic transmitters of the sūtra, on the part of the Chinese translators, or both. Without more evidence, it is difficult to say. Jeffrey Kotyk, "Buddhist Astrology and Astral Magic in the Tang Dynasty" (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2017), 58, 59, 59 n. 18.

[32] "The *Precious Banner* says: 'Having conceptuality as their purview, naïve beings have desires. And on account of that, they are deluded. Abiding in conceptual thought, they have disease. Dogs, snakes, tortoises, and many other living beings are born under Puṣya, but they are not stably happy. As you are liberated by absorption and magic, so am I omniscient. Why, then, don't you ask me something?'" (rin po che'i tog gi mdo las kyang | kun du rtog pa'i spyod yul can || byis pa gang la chags 'dug pa || de ni byis pa'i rmongs pa ste || sems la gnas shing rims nad bcas || khyi dang sbrul dang rus spal dang || srog chags gzhan yang rnam mang po || skar ma rgyal la gang skyes pa || de dag bde la brten ma yin || ji ltar bsam gtan rdzu 'phrul dang || thar pa khyod kyis rnyed pa bzhin || nga yang thams cad gzigs pa na || ci phyir nga la khyod mi 'dri || zhes gsungs so ||) (Mochizuki, *A Study of the Mahāsūtrasamuccaya of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna II: Tibetan Text*, 320.19–321.1). Parallel passage: Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 119.14–119.25.

[33] "Accordingly, the *Precious Banner* states: 'Friends, this life goes quickly, like a swift and violent waterfall. Foolish people don't realize it. Unwise, they are arrogantly intoxicated with wealth'" (de ltar yang 'dus pa rin po che'i tog las | grogs dag tshe 'di myur 'gro ste | ri gzar chu drag mgyogs 'dra na | byis pa'i skye bos mi shes te | mi mkhas longs spyod dregs pas myos |) (Sgam po pa bsod nams rin chen, *Dwags po thar rgyan*, in *Bstan rim gces btus* [BDRC W4CZ2193] [Ldi li: Bod kyi gtsug lag zhib 'jug khang, 2009], 45–243, at 71.17–71.19). Parallel passage: Skt (K): 66.18–20/67.1–3, 67.7; Tib. (K): 79.16–18, 22 (see note below for an explanation of these unusual ranges).

The *Jewel Ornament* treats six main themes: Buddha-nature as the primary cause of awakening, human existence as the necessary basis for awakening, spiritual mentors as the condition of awakening, spiritual instructions as the means to awakening, the perfect body of a Buddha as the result of awakening, and benefiting living beings without conceptual thought as the performance of awakening (rgyu ni bde gshegs snying po ste | rten ni mi lus rin chen mchog | rkyen ni dge ba'i bshes gnyen yin | thabs ni de yi gdams ngag ste | 'bras bu rdzogs sangs rgyas kyi sku | 'phrin las rtog med 'gro don mdzad | [Sgam po pa bsod nams rin chen, *Dwags po thar rgyan*, in *Bstan rim gces btus*, 46.2–46.4]). The most extensive section details the means to awakening. In this section, basics like impermanence and suffering are discussed, as are Mahāyāna-specific topics like the perfections and the bodhisattva stages. It is in his treatment of impermanence that Gampopa cites the *Precious Banner*.

[34] This isn't quite accurate for reasons that are best relegated to a note. The verse quoted is one in a series of very similar verses. These verses are so alike, in fact, that the copyists, redactors, and/or translators (perhaps even the initial authors, whoever they might have been) lightened their load by using *peyālam* (Tib. *de bzhin du sbyar*) to signal that the first three pādas of the verse were to be assumed while only slight variations on the last pāda were to

readers ought to heed the practical guidance to be offered in his treatise. Writing about two centuries later, the Nyingma teacher Longchen Rabjampa (1308–1364) uses the same passage in his *Great Chariot* to much the same effect.[35]

Writing about a century after Gampopa, the Drigung Kagyu patriarch Jikten Gönpo (1143–1217) refers to the *Precious Banner* in the *Launching Point into the Ocean of Treatises*, a collection of teachings recorded and compiled by his students.[36] Specifically, he mentions the sūtra in order to address what for some must have been a problematic implication of successful tantric practice grounded in a mentalist interpretation of dependent origination—namely, the idea that multiple awakened beings could exist in the world at the same.[37] It is not clear why Jikten

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be supplied. In the Sanskrit, there are two variants of the third pāda, as indicated by the slash in the reference just given. One reads *na ca jānati bāliśo jano*, while the other reads *na ca paśyati bāliśo jano*; the Tibetan opts in all cases for *shes* (Skt. [K]: 66.20 and 67.13 [jānati], 67.3 [paśyati]; Tib. [K]: 79.9, 79.17, and 80.13 [shes]). In the series, Pūrṇa characterizes foolish people as arrogantly intoxicated with the objects of the senses, wealth, welfare, status, pleasure, and other such things.

[35] Klong chen rab 'byams pa dri med 'od zer, *Rdzogs pa chen po sems nyid ngal gso'i 'grel pa shing rta chen po*, in *Rdzogs pa chen po sems nyid ngal gso rtsa 'grel* (BDRC W3CN3433) (Gser rta rdzong: Gser thang bla rung lnga rig nang bstan slog gling, n.d.), 111–746, at 152.17–152.18.

[36] The teaching in question begins with a thesis: "the meaning of all Buddhist scriptures is dependent origination" (sangs rgyas kyi sde snod thams cad kyi don rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba yin te |). Emphasizing the role of mind in the arising of phenomena, Jikten goes on to make the basically tantric points that "saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are entirely one's own thought" ('khor 'das thams cad rang gi bsam pa yin pas |) and that "one attains buddhahood . . . by mixing the clear light of cultivation with the clear light of the dharmakāya" (bsgoms pa'i 'od gsal dang chos sku'i 'od gsal gnyis 'dres pas . . . sangs rgya ba yin gsung |) ('Jig rten mgon po, *Bstan chos rgya mtsho'i 'jug ngogs*, in *Chos rje rin po che'i bka' 'bum* [BDRC W30101], 5 vols. [New Delhi: Kangsar Tulku, 1969–71], 5:186a.6–5:194b.4 [cataloguers' pagination, 5:371.6–5.388.4]), at 5:189a.3–5:189a.4 [cataloguers' pagination, 5:377.3–5.377.4], 5:189a.5 [cataloguers' pagination, 5:377.5], and 5:189b.3–5:189b.4 [cataloguers' pagination, 5:378.3–5:378.4]).

[37] "[Jikten] also said, 'This saying that one Teaching does not have two Teachers is in the Bon Collection, and not in the scripture of the Tathagata. The [*Precious Banner*] tells how there are many Buddhas in lower and higher worlds'" (Dan Martin, "Beyond Acceptance and Rejection? The Anti-Bon Polemic Included in the Thirteenth-Century *Single Intention* [*Dgong-gcig Yig-cha*] and Its Background in Tibetan Religious History," *JIP* 25, no. 3 [1997]: 263–305, at 280 [Martin's translation, brackets mine]). Tibetan text: yang bstan pa cig la ston pa gnyis mi 'byung ba ni bon 'bum na 'dug | de bzhin gshegs pa'i bka' na mi 'dug gsung | 'dus pa rin po che tog nas 'og gi 'jig rten dang steng la sogs na sangs rgya ba mang po bshad gsung ngo || ('Jig rten mgon po, *Bstan chos rgya mtsho'i 'jug ngogs*, in *Chos rje rin po che'i bka' 'bum*, 5:189b.5–5:189b.6 [cataloguers' pagination as cited by Martin, 5:378.5–5:378.6]).

selected the *Precious Banner*, and not some other Mahāyāna sūtra, to make this point. But if in need of evidence for this claim, the *Precious Banner* surely delivers in spades.[38]

Tsangnyön Heruka (1452–1507), the madman of Tsang, quotes the *Precious Banner* in *Opening the Eyes of Faith* "as evidence that [songs of realization (Skt. *dohā*; Tib. *mgur*)] are not a Tibetan invention, but are firmly rooted in the early Buddhism of India, where even the Buddha's own disciples advocated the performance of song."[39] The quotation is actually more of a summary detailing the four great disciples' respective entries into Rājagṛha as narrated in the sūtra's third chapter.[40] Enveloped by singing and dancing māras, each disciple responds by reciting verses and *dhāraṇī*s such that the māras are overjoyed and sit down to hear the Dharma.

[38] At the opening of chapter six, for example, six directional buddhas appear in the presence of the Buddha without any issues (Skt. [K]: 121.1–122.15; Tib. [K]: 160.2–161.22). See also the immediately preceding events, narrated at the end of the sūtra's fifth chapter, where readers are introduced to an enormous number of buddhafields replete with their own populations of buddhas and bodhisattvas. With their attention drawn to Sahā by means of the Buddha's supernormal power, they make ready to travel there in the knowledge that there won't be any accommodation issues (Skt. [K]: 115.3–120. 6; Tib. [K]: 154.6–159.18).

[39] Stefan Larsson and Andrew Quintman, "*Opening the Eyes of Faith*: Constructing Tradition in a Sixteenth-Century Catalogue of Tibetan Religious Poetry," *RET*, no. 32 (2015): 87–151, at 99.

[40] "Moreover, the [*Precious Banner*] says, 'Once the four heart-sons *śrāvaka-arhats*, noble Śāriputra and the rest, were staying to collect alms at the four respective gates, the eastern and so forth, of the great city Rājagṛha. Several emanations of *māra* appeared to each one of the Noble Ones. They ridiculed and laughed at them, saying: "Ascetic, sing a song! Ascetic, do a dance!" In response, the Noble Ones said, "Friends, let us sing like it has never been done before in the world! Let us dance like it never has been done before in the world!"' Thus, they defeated all (the emanations of *māra*) by means of dharma songs and established them on the path of ripening and liberation" (sangs rgyas 'dus pa rin po che tog gi mdo las | 'phags pa shwa ri'i bu la sogs pa'i thugs sras nyan thos dgra bcom pa bzhis | rgyal po'i khab kyi srong khyer chen po'i shar la sogs te | phyogs kyi sgo bzhi re rer bsod snyams kyi phyir bzhugs pa las | 'phags pa rnams re re bzhin la | bdud kyi sprul pa du mas bco (co) 'dri dang gzhad gad du | dge sbyong glu long shig | dge sbyong gar byos shig | ces zhus pa'i lan du | 'phags pa rnams grogs po dag sngon chad 'jig rten du ma byung ba'i glu blang par bya'o | sngon chad 'jig rten du ma byung ba'i gar sgyur bar bya'o | zhes gsungs shing thams cad chos dbyangs kyis pham par mdzad nas smin grol la bkod pa lags shing | (Larsson and Quintman, "*Opening the Eyes of Faith*: Constructing Tradition," 114 [authors' translation, parentheses original], Tibetan text at 137.14–138.2 [parentheses original]; see also Fig. 2.3, folio 2.4–2.7, for the text in xylograph).

Skt. (K): 62.14–64.6, Tib. (K): 75.4–76.17 (Śāriputra through the southern gate); Skt. (K): 64.7–65.15, Tib. (K): 76.18–78.7 (Maudgalyāyana through the eastern gate); Skt. (K): 65.16–68.2, Tib. (K): 78.8–80.19 (Pūrṇa through the northern gate); Skt. (K): 68.3–70.15, Tib. (K): 80.20–83.10 (Subhūti through the western gate).

Writing roughly a century later, the historian Tāranātha (1575–1638) lists the *Precious Banner* as a source for providing a richer narrative of the Buddha's life in the postscript to his biography of Śākyamuni, titled *Sun of Faith*. To be more precise, he states that the Buddha's biography would be improved by including the story of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana's conversion as recounted in the *Precious Banner*'s first chapter.[41] The basic account of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana's conversion is well known from other sources. What makes the *Precious Banner*'s telling unique is the inclusion of Māra who, as we will see below, kicks up a lot of dirt in an effort to dissuade them from taking refuge.

Our last example comes from Ngawang Lobzang Chöden (1642–1714), who quotes the *Precious Banner* in his *Explanation of the Essence of Dependent Origination*.[42] Among other iterations of the formula, including a transliteration (rather than a translation) of the one perhaps best known in Sanskrit,[43] he provides the *Precious Banner*'s expanded formula, which appears three times in the sūtra's first chapter.[44] The first instance occurs during the well-known first

[41] "The Transcendent One's biography stems equally from the three baskets, but it seems necessary to make a distinction between the Mahāyāna and the Hīnayāna. The *Extended Performance*, for example, details his life from dwelling in Tuṣita Heaven until the turning of the first wheel of Dharma. If one wanted to flesh out the period after the first sermon according to mode common to Mahāyāna texts, the story of the model pair [i.e., Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana] as told in the *Precious Banner* [along with other stories from other texts] could be added. That would make for a very good biography" (de bzhin gshegs pa'i rnam par thar pa sde snod gsum las byung mnyam yin yang | theg pa che chung gi dbye ba phyed dgos par snang ste | 'phags pa rgya che rol pa las | ston pa dga' ldan du bzhugs pa nas | chos 'khor thog mar bskor ba'i bar rgyas par 'byung ba lta bu | theg chen gyi lugs yin pas de'i rjes 'thud par 'dod na | 'dus pa rin po che tog las 'byung ba'i mchog zung gi lo rgyus dang | . . . kha bskang na shin tu legs par 'gyur la |) [Tāranātha, *Bcom ldan 'das thub pa'i dbang po'i mdzad pa mdo tsam brjod pa mthong bas don ldan rab tu dga' ba dang bcas pas dad pa'i nyin byed phyogs brgyar 'char ba*, in *Tā ra nā tha'i gsung 'bum* (BDRC W22277), 17 vols. (Leh: C. Namgyal and Tsewang Taru, 1982–87), 12:1–12:166 (cataloguer's pagination, 12:1–12:331), at 12:165a.5—12:165a.7 (cataloguer's pagination: 12:329.5–12:329.7)], ellipsis mine). This passage came to my attention through Masaaki Nohnin, "On '*Shakuson Eden*,' a Tibetan Illustrated Biography of the Buddha: The Edification of Ajātaśatru and the Nirvāṇa of the Buddha," *Journal of World Buddhist Cultures* 1 (2016): 3–23, at 7 and n. 8. The translation above, however, is my own.

[42] Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan, *Rten 'brel snying po'i rnam bshad bder gshegs dgongs rgyan*, in *Gsung 'bum* (BDRC W1KG1321), 7 vols. (Pe cin: Pe cin par khang, nineteenth cent.), 2:419–2:446.

[43] ye dharmā hetuprabhavā hetuṃ teṣāṃ tathāgato hy avadat | teṣāṃ ca yo nirodha evaṃvādī mahāśramaṇaḥ ||.

exchange between Aśvajit and Śāriputra,[45] the second and third when Śāriputra reports (and repeats) to Maudgalyāyana what he had heard.[46] After showing that the same truth can be expressed in multiple ways through scriptural citation, Ngawang then proceeds to explain the significance of the formula and the effects of its contemplation.

III

As the above survey has shown, Buddhists in a range of times and places have seen fit not only to copy and translate the *Precious Banner* but also to cite passages therefrom in treatises toward one end or another. The aim of this section is to lay out the methodology to be deployed in the coming chapters—a methodology which, by contrast to the citations given above, takes a more holistic approach to the sūtra toward a critical understanding of how religious narrative discourse works to call communities into being. I use the term *methodology* here, rather than either *method* or *theory* alone, because the two are in this case a package deal—the method of reading proposed here is grounded in a particular set of assumptions about religion and affect. By now crying out for clarification, these two terms will be treated first. From there, we unpack the definition of *affective regime* offered above with the *Precious Banner* in view, though attempting to keep the remarks sufficiently general as to be transferable to other texts and contexts. If we conceptualize methodology as a spectrum, with *theory* on one end and *method* on the other, we will move from

[44] The *Precious Banner* says: "Just as the Guide taught that the world arises with karma and the afflictions as its primary and efficient causes, he also taught the efficient cause of the cessation of karma and the afflictions. Having himself known the most excellent liberation, where there is no suffering dependent on birth, old age, and death, the Wise Bull teaches it" ('dus pa rin po che tog las | ji ltar 'jig rten las dang nyon mongs rgyur bcas byed rgyu ldan 'byung dang | las dang nyon mongs pa dag ldog rgyu de yang 'dren pas rab tu gsung | gang na skye dang rga dang rgud pa'i sdug bsngal nges par mi gnas pa | thar pa mchog de smra ba'i khyu mchog de yis rang gis mkhyen te gsungs |) [Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan, *Rten 'brel snying po'i rnam bshad bder gshegs dgongs rgyan*, in *Gsung 'bum*, 2:426.3–2:426.4]).

[45] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 9.12–9.17.

[46] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 12.6–12.11, 13.2–13.6.

the former to the latter. Things must be presented in some order, after all, but it is important to keep in mind their integration in practice. Given our particular understanding of *religion* and *affect*, we then address the relationship between affective orientation and community with reference to feeling rules. Recoverable in a range of forms and from a range of sources, feeling rules establish what it is *to feel like we feel*—that is to say, they establish certain feelings toward certain objects of discourse and experience as *normative* (and others, by extension, as *deviant*). In the case of the *Precious Banner*, their study gives us a sense of how the sūtra enjoins readers to feel with respect to the Dharma, particularly as instantiated in the *Precious Banner* itself. In order to best understand how the sūtra realizes its aims, we turn to narrative. Generally speaking, narrative is one of many possible sources for feeling rules. But in its religious mode, narrative is perhaps especially compelling (in the normative sense)—and even more so, I suggest, when it displays metatextual characteristics. In coupling incentives and threats of both proximate and ultimate soteriological relevance with affective orientations toward the sūtra itself, while at the same time affording in the reading present the precise context in which to respond to its norms, the *Precious Banner* makes it quite difficult for readers to ignore the feeling rules it delivers within and through its narrative.

Religion and Affect

Let us start with the deceptively simple identification of the *Precious Banner* as a religious text, as an example of religious discourse in written form. What exactly this means ought not be taken for granted—for the meaning of the adjective *religious* and its related substantive (that is, what meaning these terms will have for us in the coming pages) is far from obvious. That notions of affect are central to the dissertation might prime some readers to anticipate a model of *religion* in line with those offered by romantics like Friedrich Schleiermacher and Rudolf Otto, for example,

or psychologists such as William James.[47] But such definitions as these are not well suited to the current project by virtue of their emphasis on private experience. With interiority as their center of gravity, these theories of religion do not readily allow phenomena identified as *religious* to be situated in relation to the social world. And since this project has the social in addition to matters of affect in view, we must look elsewhere for a more adequate foundation.

The sociological tradition, much more amenable to our central questions than romantic theology/phenomenology or psychology, offers us a touchstone in Émile Durkheim. Famously theorizing religion as having its origins and ultimate referent in society, and particularly in the collective effervescence produced through communal rituals in which the social body celebrates and (re)constitutes itself, Durkheim certainly points us in a useful direction. But despite its evident strengths, his work is an imperfect fit for our aims. First, one of the two central elements of his definition of religion is *belief* relative to sacred things.[48] While Durkheim's work is full of critical potential for those who read between the lines and draw out the implications of his basically constructionist stance on a number of issues,[49] a definition offered in terms of *discourse*

[47] These names are not selected at random. They are familiar faces in courses on classical theories in the history of religions. And further, they are given their own chapters in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*. For Schleiermacher, religion is "a sense and taste for the infinite." For Otto, religion has as its essence the experience of the holy, a numinous Something both aweful (i.e., *awesome* in the archaic sense) and attractive. For James, religion is the feeling of an individual in solitude. See Jacqueline Mariña, "Friedrich Schleiermacher and Rudolf Otto" and Jeremy Carrette, "William James," in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, ed. John Corrigan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 419–37 and 457–73; Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, ed. Richard Crouter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996 [1799]); Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy; an Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958); William James, *Writings, 1902-1910*, ed. Bruce Kuklick (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1987).

[48] For Durkheim, religion is "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and surrounded by prohibitions—beliefs and practices that unite its adherents in a single moral community called a church" (*The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, ed. Mark Sydney Cladis, trans. Carol Cosman [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008], 46).

[49] The conservative nature of his intellectual project, in some ways a result of the unstable times in which he lived and wrote, leaves his constructivism (*avant la lettre*) and critical potential buried under the surface at times. The former and the latter, respectively, have been developed to good effect in Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Anchor Books, 1990) and Russell T. McCutcheon,

or *claim* would right off the bat have more teeth than one framed in terms of *belief*—insofar as the former are available for analysis while the latter is not.[50] Second, the centrality of ritual in his theory makes it a touch less than ideally suited to this project given that the primary object of analysis is a written text. This is not meant as a critique of theorizations that foreground matters of practice. Rather, it is a matter of source materials and to what they give us access. Our sources thus guide our choice of methodological framework just as much as our questions do.

Tracing the many fecund trails of social theory surrounding Durkheim (over the Marxian hills and through the Weberian woods, as it were) up to the present, we find that Bruce Lincoln's model of religion is well suited to our sources and our questions alike. It might not seem so at first, given that we are concerned also with matters of affect, but its utility will become clear as we progress. In its most basic form, Lincoln's definition of religion is "that discourse whose defining characteristic is its desire to speak of things eternal and transcendent with an authority equally transcendent and eternal."[51] In this formulation, both content and form are key. Among other kinds of content (e.g., mythic pasts, endtimes, superhuman beings, etc.), religious discourse can be identified by its promises of salvation from proximate and ultimate woes.[52] And in terms

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"Redescribing 'Religion' as Social Formation: Toward a Social Theory of Religion," in *Critics Not Caretakers: Redescribing the Public Study of Religion* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), 21–39. Like Schleiermacher, Otto, and James, Durkheim also has his own entry in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*. See W. S. F. Pickering, "Emile Durkheim," in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, ed. John Corrigan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 438–56.

[50] See also Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors: Thinking about Religion after September 11*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 115 n. 15.

[51] Bruce Lincoln, "Theses on Method," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 18, no. 3 (1996): 225–27, at 225; idem, *Gods and Demons, Priests and Scholars: Critical Explorations in the History of Religions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 1–3, at 1.

[52] I here draw on Martin Riesebrodt, who offers a basically Weberian theory of religion in terms of rational social action. For Riesebrodt, people engage in religious practices because they believe that doing so will result in salvation from immediate woes (e.g., illness, famine, conflict) or ultimate woes (e.g., sinfulness, saṃsāra). These motivations, he suggests, are sufficient to explain why religion existed, exists, and will continue to exist (despite the prognostications of the proponents of the secularization thesis). In many ways, I am sympathetic to this picture. And

of form, religious discourse offers such promises as if from some place beyond the vicissitudes of history. Elsewhere, Lincoln expands this definition in terms of discourse to include ritual, community, and institution.[53] These additional elements have a central place in his thinking on religion—in this broader framework, institutions regulate and perpetuate those discourses and practices with reference to which communities emerge—but discourse remains the governing category in this latter formulation, as well. We will turn to the question of how this has anything to do with affect and social formation soon, but for now let us establish that the *Precious Banner* counts as an example of religious discourse.

The *Precious Banner* frames itself as a report of events centering on the liberative speech and actions of the Buddha and other awakened or nearly awakened beings. Entirely devoid of defects of all kinds, buddhas and highly advanced bodhisattvas see the world aright. As such, they know everything there is to be known—or, at the very least, everything of soteriological relevance to sentient beings, which is still a staggering amount of information, involving as it does the karmic history and trajectory of all sentient beings. In short, buddhas are omniscient and infallible.[54] Their words and deeds are well beyond the realm of contestation. And what's more,

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in many ways, his methodological individualism informs my discussion of feeling rules and emotion work. Yet it strikes me that a model of religion that foregrounds discourse rather than practice and belief is more useful insofar as it is only through the former that the latter become plausible, meaningful, and useful to subjects. Martin Riesebrodt, *The Promise of Salvation: A Theory of Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

[53] "A proper definition [of religion]," Lincoln writes, "must . . . be polythetic and flexible, allowing for wide variations and attending, at a minimum, to these four domains: 1. A discourse whose concerns transcend the human, temporal, and contingent, and that claims for itself a similar transcendent status. . . . 2. A set of practices whose goal is to produce a proper world and/or proper human subjects, as defined by a religious discourse to which these practices are connected. . . . 3. A community whose members construct their identity with reference to a religious discourse and its attendant practices. . . . 4. An institution that regulates religious discourse, practices, and community, reproducing them over time and modifying them as necessary, while asserting their eternal validity and transcendent value" (*Holy Terrors*, 2nd ed., 5–7; *Gods and Demons, Priests and Scholars*, 75–76, ellipsis mine).

[54] For more on this matter, see Paul J. Griffiths, *On Being Buddha: The Classical Doctrine of Buddhahood* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

arising spontaneously out of their infinite wisdom and compassion, their speech and actions are always exactly what their audiences need to see and/or hear to accomplish or make progress toward soteriological ends—and this even if the speech is false or the actions harmful.[55] The *Precious Banner* claims to grant access not only to these liberative words and deeds, but also to the contexts in which they were uttered and performed as well as their effects on sentient beings. And in so doing, the sūtra promises its readers the very same proximate and ultimate salvation that buddhas and bodhisattvas deliver to their audiences within the sūtra.

What role does an example of religious discourse like the *Precious Banner* play in social formation? This, of course, is the question that orients this dissertation. And now that we have a sense of what makes a discourse *religious*, we can begin to approach my proposed answer in terms of affective regimes. We turn first again to Lincoln. Engaging much the same question as ours in *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, Lincoln illustrates and defends the following general proposition through the comparative examination of case studies: "Ultimately, that which holds society together or takes it apart is sentiment, and the chief instrument with which such sentiment may be aroused, manipulated, or rendered dormant is discourse."[56] This statement rings true in its clarity and concision. But for all that this picture seems to get things right, some scholars wonder whether discourse is given too much explanatory power at the expense of what Lincoln calls sentiment. One such scholar is Donovan Schaefer, who argues that such approaches to the question of religion and social formation assume that discourses "attach to bodies and get

[55] An example of this can be found in the *Precious Banner* when, as we will see in greater detail later, the Buddha causes himself to appear in a remarkable array of forms appropriate and beneficial to the dispositions, capacities, and needs of those who watching him walk through Rājagṛha (Skt. [K]: 101.6–101.18; Tib. [K]: 111.19–112.17).

[56] Bruce Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society: Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual, and Classification*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014 [1989]), 9.

them to move"[57] yet are at pains to explain *how*. To understand this complex process, Schaefer suggests we turn to affect.

In *Religious Affects*, Schaefer's primary contention is that the study of religion would do well to absorb not only the fact that human beings are animals with complex biological histories but also that the various configurations of sentiments conducive to and constitutive of the social would be impossible without the presence of relatively stable biological hardware that varies from species to species. It is not always clear, however, where Schaefer locates *religion* under this claim, how *religion*, *affect*, and *language* relate (in the case of human animals), and in which direction Schaefer would have the study of religions proceed. At times, he defends an updated phenomenological claim that religion is a species-specific non-discursive affective response to power, where *power* seems to require no interpretation to be registered as such.[58] Other times he maintains that *religion* is a word many people would likely use to denote some (but not all) of these species-specific non-discursive affective responses to power.[59] And still other times he frames religion in terms more cultural than biological, more mental than material—as something

[57] Donovan O. Schaefer, *Religious Affects: Animality, Evolution, and Power* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 35.

[58] "Otto's model of religion, then, is a confluence of two intransigent affective forms: fear + wonder. Affect theory allows us to reexamine these older phenomenological models of religion—swept away by the linguistic turn—with a twist: where Otto . . . saw religious emotion as transcendent and apolitical, affect theory prompts us to ask how these embodied affective potentials form and accelerate systems of power" (Schaefer, *Religious Affects*, 54). Guided by this understanding of religion, Schaefer later entertains and appears to maintain the claim that chimpanzees are being religious when they spontaneously dance before a raging waterfall.

[59] "An animalist approach to the elemental dances refocuses us not on the semantic content of religious experience—the network of signs we tattoo on the skin—but on the way a collision between a body and a world becomes a ligature for the circulation of affects. Affective economies produce formation of power that then get called religious—in humans no less than in other animals. Rather than a discursive apparatus, affect theory understands religion as a dance: a homeodynamic correspondence between a body and a thickly textured world propelled by the fluid currency of affect" (Schaefer, *Religious Affects*, 182).

outside bodies capable of tapping into and exploiting biological processes with a range of social consequences.[60]

The ambiguity in Schaefer's characterization(s) of religion arises in large part from the two families of affect theory he draws on throughout the book.[61] One of these families, tracing its own genealogy through Deleuze back to Spinoza, theorizes affect as independent of discourse and frames it as explanatorily basic in social analysis, as that which fully explains the always-ongoing processes of social formation.[62] The other family, standing closer to the sociology of emotions, frames affect as inextricably linked with both biological hardware and discourse, thus granting no part of the puzzle analytical privilege or undue explanatory power.[63] I do not wish to dismiss out of hand the merit of studies of religion grounded in the first of these models. But it strikes me that they are only possible (if at all) in ethnographic contexts. If historians of religion had access to "embodied indexes of affect, including postures, muscle tension, tones of voice, facial expressions, gestures, speeds, and all our other subtle affective cues,"[64] then such a model

[60] "Religion can be an engine for the production of racialized difference, a set of felt social categories that then spawn intellectualized justifications for scorn. But religion need not be socially divisive: it also operates on our bodies to elicit other affects—equally addictive, but entailing a different set of political effects. The struggle for justice, the felt interrelation of love, the demand for compassion—all are compulsions within bodies that can be elicited, activated, and charged by what gets called religion. Religion is not doomed or destined to either of these affective regimes; it coassembles with the full range of animal compulsions to produce complex contradictory landscapes" (Schaefer, *Religious Affects*, 142). Note here that Schaefer uses the term *affective regimes* in a way that seems similar to my own use. His use, however, is not explicitly theorized as having something to do with language, ideology, or narrative even in this context, which on my view comes closest to articulating the most useful position.

[61] For an outline of these two families, themselves artificial and ideal-typical, see Schaefer, *Religious Affects*, 23–34. For another discussion of the same basic distinction, see Margaret Wetherell's discussion using Ben Anderson and Arlie Hochschild as examples: "Feeling Rules, Atmospheres and Affective Practices: Some Reflections on the Analysis of Emotional Episodes," in *Privilege, Agency and Affect: Understanding the Production and Effects of Action*, ed. Claire Maxwell and Peter Aggleton (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2013), 221–39.

[62] For a widely cited example of this family, the name of which exemplifies the position, see Brian Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect," *Cultural Critique* 31 (1995): 83–109.

[63] Sara Ahmed and Arlie Russell Hochschild, whose work will be discussed below, perhaps best exemplify this approach, though they are not always (or even often) claimed by affect theorists as one of their own.

[64] Schaefer, *Religious Affects*, 212.

might present itself as useful. But we do not and cannot have access to this kind of evidence. Our sources are necessarily discursive—which is to say that our access to the past (if not also the present) is always discursively mediated, even in the case of material evidence—and this fact requires historians of religions to adopt methodological postures more in line with Schaefer's third characterization of religion and the second family of affect theory that grounds it.

We will thus proceed, again on account of both our questions and our sources, under the assumption that a complex relationship obtains between discourse and affect. Can we say more? We surely need to if this framework is going shed light on the way in which religious discourses "attach to bodies and get them to move" such that they form communities.[65] Let us begin, then, with a few observations about affect before turning to the question of social formation. First, affects are relational. They arise in encounters between bodies, some of which are loci of what we recognize as subjectivity. All bodies have "*the capacity to affect and be affected*" according to recent developments of Spinoza's thought.[66] This includes what we typically think of as objects—a rock is worn down by a current of water; a current of water takes the shape of the rock as it moves over it. But we will leave aside affective encounters between objects alone since we will be largely interested in subjects—both human and otherwise in the world of the *Precious Banner*, only human in the world outside the sūtra. With this stipulation, we can make the second observation that affects are intentional. They are about something. They have content—be it a person, an object, an event, a proposition, an absence, or a collection of these. That which affects a subject is part of the content, but it is not always (or even often) the whole of it. Encounters can

[65] Schaefer, *Religious Affects*, 35.

[66] This phrase comes from Ruth Leys, "The Turn to Affect: A Critique," *Critical Inquiry* 37, no. 3 (2011): 434–72, at 442 n. 42. An expanded account of Leys's critique of contemporary affect theory can be found in *The Ascent of Affect: Genealogy and Critique* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

(and often do) call other things to mind—if one associates a certain sweet aroma with someone with whom one has a hostile relationship, for example, an encounter with that scent could give rise to feelings of ill will toward that individual. And this leads to our third observation: affects are evaluative. By virtue of how they feel, affects constitute assessments of objects as beneficial or harmful to the subject in a way that seems automatic. Under this description, affects are much like what we think of when we talk about emotions.[67] And following Sara Ahmed, we will use the terms interchangeably hereafter.[68]

For Ahmed, emotions mark entanglements with and orientations toward the world of experience.[69] They indicate not only *that* but also *how* subjects are in relation to things in the world. From the perspective of persons, emotions seem automatic. It is perhaps because of this seeming, I think, that some affect theorists hold that affects operate wholly independently of discourse. But that affects *seem* natural does not make them so—at least not completely. While they require biological hardware, as Schaefer is keen to point out, their intentional and evaluative nature—however phenomenologically immediate—shows that emotions can be cleanly separated

[67] Though concerned with ethics rather than social formation, Martha Nussbaum has been a useful guide. Similarly, William Reddy's definition of *emotion* and theorization of *emotional regimes* have helped to give shape to the methodology proposed here, though I do not wish to adopt the normative aspect of his project. Barbara Rosenwein, who draws on Reddy's work while eschewing its normative aspects, has also shaped my ideas with her theorization and study of *emotional communities*. See Martha Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

[68] The reasons Ahmed uses *emotion* and *affect* interchangeably, and indeed appears largely to prefer the former, are important but nevertheless exceed the scope of this introduction, to say nothing of this footnote. Suffice it to say that Ahmed rejects the idea (present in some philosophical and political discourse as well as in some strains of affect theory) that emotions and emotion-talk can or should be pushed to the margins of our thinking (a task often achieved through feminization) as if they have no role or significance in the social worlds we inhabit.

[69] Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); idem, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); idem, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2015).

neither from those discourses that allow their objects to be identified nor from personal histories, values, goals, and trajectories, all of which are deeply (in)formed by cultural and social contexts. Emotions, in short, are as naturalized as they are natural.[70] If the biological hardware that makes emotions possible is only *relatively* stable—accident and adaptation guarantee change on an evolutionary scale—the emotions that make use of them are even less so. Affective orientations are difficult to change, but they are far from permanent.

While not in these terms, of course, that affective orientations are malleable is central to the *Precious Banner*.[71] Countless actants—many of them quite close to Māra—undergo what we will call affective reorientation. For some it is practically automatic; for others it takes a little bit more time. But affective reorientation, or affective alignment (here in the verbal, normative sense of the word), is the rule in the narrative.[72] Māra, however, is a consistent exception. He does not feel how the others (come to) feel, and he persistently refuses to (try to) feel not only how other actants feel but also how other actants (including the Buddha) tell him he should feel about his experiences. And on account of his refusal, itself a sign of his affective misalignment, he remains bound by a fivefold fetter (Skt. *pañcabandhana*; Tib. *bcings pa lnga*) in the presence of (at first) a giant preaching lotus, (later) the lotus and the Buddha together, and (later still) the lotus, the

[70] "Somewhat ironically," Ahmed writes, making this same point, "there is nothing more mediated than immediacy" (*The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 2nd ed., 212).

[71] The same is true of the Buddhist tradition, broadly speaking. The root of suffering, which is the central problem from which the tradition claims to be capable of liberating sentient beings, is desire or craving. One of the main types of desire is sexual desire. Celibacy is thus a valorized practice, at least in the Indian context. Yet it is a difficult lifestyle to maintain. And because of that, the tradition devised methods by which (particularly male) aspirants to celibacy could work to eradicate sexual desire entirely, one of which is meditation on bodies as rotting corpses—the idea being that such contemplation will yield revulsion toward that which would otherwise elicit sexual desire. See Liz Wilson, *Charming Cadavers: Horrific Figurations of the Feminine in Indian Buddhist Hagiographic Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Thanks to Bruce Winkelman for this observation.

[72] I use *alignment* language to signal the normative orientation according to the sūtra. While there are many possible orientations, only one of them is "proper." When an actant is (or becomes) properly oriented, they fall in line with the normative vision of the text. Any other orientation is misaligned to one degree or another.

Buddha, and myriad other buddhas from around the cosmos—powerless, isolated, and forced to endure Dharma talks, dialogues, and *dhāraṇī*s that produce in and for him a terrible headache, a putrefying body, and seemingly ever-increasing scorn. All hope is not lost, however. By means of analepsis and prolepsis (more on these technical terms below), the narrative intimates that if Māra were to put in some effort—that is, if he were to engage in what Arlie Russell Hochschild calls *emotion work* with reference to the *feeling rules* delivered to him—he could make himself be "in line" and thus be relieved from his proximate woes and (eventually, at least) his continued existence in saṃsāra. What he stands to lose is as clear as what he stands to gain. The onus is on him. And readers, I contend, have a similar responsibility: fall in line—or better, *feel* in line—or risk ending up like Māra.

Affective Alignment, Social Formation, and Feeling Rules

With this understanding of religion, affect/emotion, and affective (re)orientation/alignment in place, let us now turn to the question of how religious communities are constituted in part by affective alignment through the dissemination of feeling rules. In his expanded definition of religion, Lincoln specifies *religious community* as a group "whose members construct their identity with reference to a religious discourse and its attendant practices."[73] But it strikes me

[73] The subsequent gloss reads as follows: "Those who revere the same texts (whether written or oral), adhere to the same precepts (taken from those texts and their commentaries), and engage in the same sorts of practices (grounded in texts and precepts) have a great deal in common. Even when they disagree with one another, their disagreements are framed by reference points on which they can concur: How is this Scripture to be interpreted? When (and how) should that ritual be performed? What is the best response to a given behavior that shared values define as a moral failing? All of this creates the basis for strong sentiments of affinity that are also fostered by specific aspects of discourse and practice, like regular assemblies for worship, prohibitions on intermarriage with outsiders, or threats of excommunication for various infractions. Individual and collective identifies come to be embedded in groups that are bound together in this fashion. Borders, simultaneously social and religious, hold members of one group separate from those whose beliefs and practices differ sufficiently that they can be marked as other. Even seemingly trivial differences—those of diet and dress, for example—can assume enormous import in the construction of alterity. But the fact is, these hardly trivial, for practices understood to be governed by sacred injunctions constitute the observant as faithful and righteous, radically different from nonobservant outsiders, who are constituted as neither" (Lincoln, *Holy Terrors*, 2nd ed., 6–7, quote in body at 6).

that common points of reference are not quite sufficient for the existence of social groups. In the social geography of the *Precious Banner*'s story world, two groups are discernible. One sees its numbers increase rapidly as the narrative progresses, while the other dwindles at the same rate. Central to this change, according to both the sūtra itself as well as the framework we have been developing, is affect. Actants in both groups construct their identities with reference to the same things, but how they are affected by these points of reference differs. And it is the nature of their emotional reactions, which lay bare their affective orientations, that (re)locates them in one or the other group. To put it succinctly, it is *affective* orientation that matters, not just orientation. While reference to shared elements of religious discourse and practice plays an important role in the formation of social groups, as Lincoln's work makes abundantly clear, the affective links between subjects and objects (some of which are subjects in their own right) are not to be found in nature waiting for discursive activation.[74] Reference to the American flag or the President of the United States, for example, does not affect all Americans in the same way—to say nothing of people from other nation-states. And while I do not think it is inaccurate to say that Americans constitute a community in an almost banal sense insofar as they share those objects of common reference, it is also evident (particularly considering the recent political climate in the United States and the accompanying global public health crisis) that how subjects *feel* with respect even to objects of common reference is integral to social formation.

Let us now introduce an important shift in framing that will bring into even clearer view how affective orientations have social consequences. In our discussion so far, we have noted that emotions arise in subjects through encounters with objects in a way that seems automatic. This is

[74] We will revisit this in more detail in Chapter Six.

more or less to say that emotions feel caused, that subjects feel passive in being affected. And, of course, there is some truth to this characterization. But this also amounts to saying that emotions are *attributed* to some source or another. This shift in language is not trivial—especially when we consider that *emotion* includes *movement* in its semantic domain. On this point, using as an example what Lincoln would call a *sentiment of estrangement*, Ahmed writes:

> The attribution of feeling toward an object (I feel afraid because you are fearsome) moves the subject away from the object, creating distance through the registering of proximity as a threat. Emotions involve such affective forms of (re)orientation. It is not just that bodies are moved by the orientations they have; rather, the orientations we have toward others shape the contours of space by affective relations of proximity and distance between bodies.[75]

Insofar as they are attributed, in other words, emotions move affected subjects toward or away from affecting objects. This movement can be literal (physical), figurative (mental), or both. But in any case, the social consequences of emotions are clear. As Ahmed writes, "emotions work to shape the 'surfaces' of individual and collective bodies."[76] Boundaries are constituted in part *of* as well as *through* affective processes that are at once biological and discursive, personal and social, stable and malleable.

In cases involving subjective points of view, Schaefer emphasizes, affects are contingent on the presence of relatively stable, species-specific biological hardware. This applies to human and non-human animals alike. What is perhaps unique about the case of human animals is the dialectical relationship that obtains between cultural and social conditioning, on the one hand, and the intentional reflection and work on the part of individuals, on the other hand, toward the

[75] Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 2–3.

[76] Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 2nd ed., 1.

(re)structuring of affective orientations toward the world of experience.[77] To shed some light on this complex and dynamic relationship, sociologist of emotions Arlie Russell Hochschild theorizes what she calls *feeling rules*. Characterizing them at one point as "the underside of ideology,"[78] she defines feeling rules as "guidelines for the assessment of fits and misfits between feeling and situation."[79] These guidelines can be expressed in any number of ways, but what they aim to establish in general terms is how an individual should feel in any given situation. Or, to put the same idea in catchy social terms, feeling rules aim to establish what it is *to feel like we feel*. In what we might call their organic form, feeling rules subtly lay out lines of affective orientation as if they are part of the natural order of things.[80] But they can also be artificial. It was, in fact, based largely on the analysis of artificial feeling rules gleaned from airline training manuals (supplemented by ethnographic exchanges with airline flight attendants and bill collectors) that Hochschild developed her argument that the *emotion work* central to everyday life has transformed into *emotional labor* in contemporary capitalist societies (insofar as corporations work to secure future business [and thus profit] through marketing and selling the

[77] I do not wish to claim that all human affective responses are culturally and socially conditioned. To say as much is not only unnecessary for my project but would also be rather naïve since there are good biological reasons to believe that some of our affective responses are genetically hardwired insofar as they are maximally conducive to survival. Nor do I wish to claim that conditioning plays no role among other social species with sufficiently complex brain development (e.g., other hominids, dolphins, elephants, etc.). The last thing I want to do is reproduce an untenable human exceptionalism that claims humans differ from non-human animals *in kind* rather than simply *in degree*.

[78] Arlie Hochschild, "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure," *American Journal of Sociology* 85, no. 3 (1979): 551–75, at 557.

[79] Hochschild, "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure," 566. As Wetherell puts it elsewhere: "Feeling rules are cultural tools specifying the kinds of emotions appropriate in different situations" (Wetherell, "Feeling Rules, Atmospheres and Affective Practice," 223–24).

[80] When a bride, for example, reports feeling bad about feeling stressed and anxious on her wedding day because "her wedding is supposed to be the happiest day of her life." Or when a man who feels unperturbed by the news of terminal illness is asked why he is not more upset.

positive demeanors of their employees).[81] Needless to say, my project does not have much at all to do with the commodification of emotions or the exploitation of emotional labor. But it draws on Hochschild's insight in arguing that religious narratives can be a potent source of feeling rules and thus play a significant role in social processes.

To begin putting the four scholars named and discussed above into dialogue, for Lincoln discourse—*religious* and *narrative* being two subtypes that, in our case, overlap—is a critical tool for the mobilization of sentiment toward social ends. For Schaefer, affects largely evade the clutches of discourse but are nevertheless socially consequential. These two positions border on incompatibility. But reading Ahmed and Hochschild together, I think, allows for some ground to be carved out between them, for something of a synthesis to be reached.[82] Following Ahmed, we can appreciate emotions and the affective orientations that give them structure as both products and productive of social worlds. The organization and evocation of the kinds of sentiment that are conducive to the formation, maintenance, modification, and dissolution of social groups, in other words, exist in a dynamic relationship with the social world as inherited and imagined. And following Hochschild with this in mind, we can identify feeling rules as the facet of ideology that seeks to orient the foundations of sentiment, the very tendencies of individuals to feel one way or another in any given situation, prior to (or at the same time as) attempts to evoke the emotions put forward as normative. And that there are feeling rules at all (and of whatever type), following Ahmed and Hochschild together now, lays bare not only that emotions are difficult to pin down

[81] Arlie Russell Hochschild, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*, twentieth anniversary ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

[82] More on this in Chapter Six.

with language (as Schaefer and Lincoln both maintain) but also that there are very real things at stake in trying to orient them, to align them.[83]

One of the things at stake, as historian of emotions William Reddy notes, is "the unity of a community."[84] The implications of feeling rules and emotion work, in other words, do not stop at the individual—although their demands, of course, extend to the individual. Sometimes, as we have seen, they are bound up with a corporation's quest for reputation and profit. (The warm and welcoming disposition of a flight attendant is part of an airline's brand, product, and marketing all at once.) Other times, their scope is not quite so narrow. (The successful inculcation of certain norms of feeling toward a flag, e.g., are part of the calculus that makes what we call nations what they are.) Taking all this together, it is my contention that feeling rules, in standing collectively

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[83] It is the attempt to orient on the part of feeling rules, understood as one of the complex ideological mechanisms by which individuals are socialized, that I aim to identify with the language of *regime*. And it is in effort to avoid writing off the dynamic ability of individuals to negotiate and maneuver within their social worlds that I adopt the language of *emotion work*.

[84] "Because emotions are closely associated with the dense networks of goals that give coherence to the self, the unity of a community—such as it may be—depends in part on its ability to provide a coherent set of prescriptions about emotions" (Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling*, 61). While there is much to be admired about Reddy's work on these coherent sets of prescriptions, which he calls "emotional regimes," I do not adopt his language for a couple of reasons. First, his project has an explicitly normative dimension that I do not wish to address here. (Part of this project involves distinguishing between emotional *regimes* and emotional *refuges*.) Second, it strikes me that the source material I work with is sufficiently different to merit a shift in language from *emotional regime* to *affective regime*—and this because, in addition to being a source of these norms of feeling, the *Precious Banner* constitutes not only one of the objects of these norms but also the very means by which it aims to realize its own aims.

It is for this second reason, in fact, that I do not adopt Barbara Rosenwein's language of *emotional communities*, though her work has been instructive in developing my own thinking. To get at historical emotional communities, or "groups in which people adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and value—or devalue—the same or related emotions" (*Emotional Communities*, 2), Rosenwein argues that we must look for "the framework in which such evaluations take place and derive their meaning" (15). And to best do this, we need to examine discussions and depictions of emotions in our sources, tracing along the way which are valorized and why, which are devalued and why, and so on. This point of method has served as a useful guide in my research. Rosenwein, however, is in her work able to draw on an enviably wide range of genres—funerary inscriptions, didactic writing, personal correspondence, courtly literature. In the case of first millennium South Asia, the record is not so lush. And what's more, the *Precious Banner* is comparatively less revealing than such sources as the ones she treats due not only to its religious form and content but also to the degree to which it conceals the circumstances of its own historical emergence. The interpretive difficulties posed by its form, content, and history notwithstanding, the sūtra retains value for our questions insofar as the feeling rules it articulates are made particularly difficult to ignore by virtue of the sophisticated mechanisms employed in its narrative.

as a normative picture of *how we feel* in any given context, play a central role in constituting social groups. Insofar as individuals live by such norms, try to feel in accordance with them, or even so much as acknowledge their rightness, they share an affective orientation such that they are predisposed *to feel like we feel* toward objects of common reference—including, importantly for us, the very tool within and through which the feeling rules are disseminated.

Narrative

In light of what we have discussed, for our purposes we can describe an affective regime as a set of norms of feeling expressed within and through narrative that establishes what it is *to feel like we feel*. The element of this methodology that has yet to be unpacked in any substantial way is *narrative*.[85] What exactly is narrative, and what insight do we gain from studying the *Precious Banner* in these terms? As a first pass, we can follow Steven Collins in specifying narrative by distinguishing it from what he calls systematic thought.[86] In the latter, the order in which things are represented makes no difference for the interpretation of the whole or its parts. Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Higher Teaching* and its accompanying auto-commentary (*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*), for example, begins by separating the fundamental building blocks of reality (Skt. *dharma*; Tib.

[85] For my thinking on narrative, and on how to read Mahāyāna sūtras in particular, I am indebted to Buddhist studies scholars Steven Collins, Alan Cole, and Charlotte Eubanks, as well as narratologists Gérard Genette and Michael Kearns. Steven Collins, *Nirvana: Concept, Imagery, Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); idem, *Nirvana and Other Buddhist Felicities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Alan Cole, *Fetishizing Tradition: Desire and Reinvention in Buddhist and Christian Narratives* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2016); idem, *Text as Father: Paternal Seductions in Early Mahāyāna Buddhist Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Charlotte D. Eubanks, *Miracles of Book and Body: Buddhist Textual Culture and Medieval Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980); idem, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Michael Kearns, *Rhetorical Narratology* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).

[86] "But the practices and the articulation of systematic thought do not depend, as does narrative, on a specific sequential ordering of its constituent parts; nor does it require voice(s), perspective(s), plot-structure(s) (e.g., initial situation → change (reversal) → resolution, etc.); nor does it require, as do all but a few recent Western texts, characters and their interaction" (Collins, *Nirvana: Concept, Imagery, Narrative*, esp. 12–28, quote at 13; see also Collins, *Nirvana and Other Buddhist Felicities*, 234–81).

chos) into broad types—e.g., impure and pure, conditioned and unconditioned, and so on—but it could just as sensibly have started with the types of suffering. The aim of the *Treasury of Higher Teaching* is to reduce the world of experience to its constituent parts and to typologize those parts in detail (and from competing perspectives at that, with Vasubandhu's own reflected in the auto-commentary). The order in which these simples and their various groupings are represented does not impact the significance of the whole. The system has a coherence independent of the order in which its particulars are presented. The significance of a narrative, by contrast, depends on the order in which events are depicted.[87]

This leads helpfully to the distinction between *story* and *narrative*, perhaps the most basic distinction in narratology.[88] A story depicts a chronologically ordered series of causally related events (fictional or otherwise). It is a representation of events as they unfold. Now, of course, the world exceeds any single story one could tell about it. One could easily describe at length a delimited physical space at a single moment in time, to say nothing of what happens there over the course of even half an hour. But a story does more than offer descriptions of states of affairs connected by conjunctions and accompanied by time stamps. A story posits causal relationships. What gets selected for representation in a story, therefore, is by that very selection deemed salient and worthy of attention. Selection, in other words, is not arbitrary. It serves a purpose. In addition to selection, the order in which selected events are represented—if they deviate from the

[87] "In Buddhist systematic thought, the beginning and end points of an exposition can differ, as can the ordering of the intervening items, without any basic change in the meaning of what is said in and through the list thus ordered. In narrative, by contrast, differences in any of these three things must have an effect on meaning; and significant differences may lead one to say that the story has a different meaning, or even that one is dealing with a different story" (Collins, *Nirvana: Concept, Imagery, Nirvana*, 15).

[88] Readers familiar with narratology will likely notice that something is amiss in this language. The usual words for this distinction are *story* and *discourse* (also *histoire* and *discours*, *fabula* and *sjuzhet*). I have decided to use the word *narrative* instead of *discourse* to avoid confusion (since I use *discourse* in a sociolinguistic/rhetorical sense and narrative [understood properly as story + discourse] is a tool of discourse so conceived).

order in which they occur, which they often do because stories are almost never so simple as to be represented in a linear fashion—is also the product of selection. The selected order of selected events (i.e., the plot) is what makes a narrative what it is. If a story is *what* occurs in the order in which it occurs, then a narrative is *how* and *in what order* those occurrences are represented. The distinction between story and narrative will be central to our analysis of the *Precious Banner*, as the sūtra leverages it in leaving the end of Māra's story unnarrated. This feature, I will argue, is one of the mechanisms by which the sūtra encourages its readers to adopt the normative affective orientation expressed within and through the sūtra—an affective orientation which constitutes the Dharma, particularly as instantiated in the *Precious Banner* itself, as a source of joy.

Narratology offers us an additional set of tools in *prolepsis* and *analepsis*, technical terms denoting the narration of events that occur after (prolepsis) or prior to (analepsis) the moment in story time to which readers have been led. As we know, narratives are not beholden to story time. They are free to jump backward and forward at will. The context in which they are used places constraints on how they are to be read, and they themselves in turn place constraints on how we read the whole in which they figure.[89] Any type or number of voices can be used to tell of the past or the future (more on focalization below), and there are several reasons a narrator might want to do so—to generate suspense, to provide important pieces of information to readers

[89] A contemporary example illustrates this point well. The Hulu series *Shrill*, starring Aidy Bryant of Saturday Night Live fame, can be interpreted as primarily narrating the ups and downs of Annie Easton's personal and professional life—that is, up until the last few episodes, when the plot begins to focus more squarely on the growth and longevity of the relationship between Annie and Fran (played by Lolly Adefope) through analepsis. With this narrative shift—which was an intentional move made by the writers and producers in post-production in the wake of Hulu's decision to cancel the series—the significance of the whole series also shifted in many ways. Suddenly, the point of the series was to celebrate Annie and Fran's enduring and loving friendship (Savannah Salazar, "Aidy Bryant and Lolly Adefope's *Shrill* Friendship Was 'Love at First Sight,'" *Vulture*, May 10, 2021 [last accessed January 15, 2022], https://www.vulture.com/2021/05/aidy-bryant-and-lolly-adefope-on-their-shrill-friendship.html). My thanks to Alayna for saving me from embarrassing myself and (stepping in it intentionally now) saying *Shrill* was on Netflix.

at certain points in the narrative while at the same time withholding others, and so on. Both types of narration are common in Mahāyāna sūtras, and they tend to be offered through actants rather than by the outermost narrator. It is common, for example, for awakened and nearly awakened beings to narrate aspects of their own futures by way of vows (Skt. *praṇidhāna*; Tib. *smon lam*) or aspects of the pasts and futures of other beings in the sūtra's story world by way of past life stories (Skt. *jātaka*, *pūrvayoga*; Tib. *skyes pa'i rabs*, *sngon byung ba*) and prophecies (Skt. *vyākaraṇa*; Tib. *lung bstan pa*). Though it may seem odd to identify vows and prophecies as instances of prolepsis, and accounts of the past as instances of analepsis, we should recall the status of buddhas and bodhisattvas in the sūtras through whom these narrations of future events are delivered. When they speak, they speak the truth—or, following Natalie Gummer, we could also say that their speech *makes* the truth.[90] In the case of the *Precious Banner*, it is an intimated prolepsis nested within analepsis that allows the sūtra to leave the end of Māra's story unnarrated and to leverage that narrative silence toward extratextual ends. Through a *pūrvayoga* told by the Buddha in the sūtra's second chapter, readers learn why Māra is hostile toward the Buddha in the sūtra's main story world. Yet at the same time, readers learn something that Māra seems not to remember—namely, that he at one point asked that a prior incarnation of Śākyamuni foretell him to awakening in the future. And in a moment of charged narrative silence, this request goes wholly unanswered. By the end of the sūtra, due to an instance of teased or intimated prolepsis delivered through the Buddha in the fifth chapter, readers know that Māra has the potential to

[90] Gummer's seems to be the best line of interpretation in cases when beings make vows in the presence of buddhas and bodhisattvas and subsequently have their vows ratified by the same. In such cases, buddhas and bodhisattvas make the speech of average beings in the audience count as prolepsis. Without ratification, such speech would be something like an unguaranteed aspiration. See Natalie Gummer, "Speech Acts of the Buddha: Sovereign Ritual and the Poetics of Power," in "History, Performativity, and Solidarity in the Study of Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature," special issue, *HR* 61, no. 2 (2021): 173–211.

find closure—pending, as I will argue, his affective reorientation—but that he does not put in the requisite emotion work to realize it.

Śākyamuni's *pūrvayoga* leads us nicely into a discussion of *focalization*, a term used to talk about the perspective(s) through which narrators tell stories and through which readers have access to the events narrated. Picking up the *Precious Banner*, one notices relatively quickly that the narrator adopts a third-person omniscient perspective (*zero focalization*). A third-person omniscient narrator looks down at the story world, as it were, with perfect access not only to the events that take place but also to the internal states of the actants (thoughts, motivations, and so on). While the narrator's adoption of this perspective is clear from the outset, it is perhaps most evident when the narrator has access to things accessible only to divine beings.[91] At one point, for example, a towering lotus emerges in the center of Rājagṛha and begins to emanate Dharma teachings appropriate to beings dwelling at all levels of the Buddhist cosmos. Some of these teachings are presumably audible only to the elite class of divinities dwelling in the highest heavens, but the narrator faithfully reports them without issue. Returning as a brief aside to the question of what makes the *Precious Banner* an example of religious discourse, we might also apprehend this feature of the narrative as marking the sūtra as the speech of a (self-)privileged perspective whose knowledge in many ways approaches that of the buddhas and advanced bodhisattvas whose speech and actions are narrated.

But the narrator does not adopt a third-person perspective exclusively. At times, the narrator adopts first-person points of view (*internal focalization*). This strategy allows readers to see events as actants see them (with the benefit of also having access to the whole story world

[91] As Alan Cole writes, "[M]any Mahāyāna sūtras deal in omniscient narrators that are fundamentally impossible. In many sūtras, the story is told from a point of view that no one in the story could occupy and in fact bounces between geographic and temporal time zones that no one person could be privy to" (*Text as Father*, 15).

via the omniscient narrator). In the *Precious Banner*, readers experience the story world from the perspective of a number of actants. Though his is not the only perspective adopted—indeed, it is through Śākyamuni that our narrator recounts particularly salient analepses and prolepses—most of our attention will be given to the narrator's use of Māra as focalizer. Following Alan Cole, whose words I freely adapt here to fit our context, I argue that Māra is "structurally most like the reader—experiencing the events of the sūtra, which are tantamount to the sūtra itself, and yet still at a distance from that moment of perfect sparking."[92] Despite living through events that spark joy in nearly every other actant, and despite being enjoined to feel differently than he does with respect to these same events as well as the sudden affective reorientations of others, Māra is deeply affected in all the wrong ways. He doesn't feel like the others feel, and it renders him increasingly powerless and alone.

That Māra and the reader occupy a similar structural location with respect to the sūtra is a suggestion grounded in the text. At a few points above, I have described the events in the sūtra as identical to the sūtra. This may strike some as odd. But it is a claim made in and by the sūtra itself. It is not uncommon for Mahāyāna sūtras to refer to themselves.[93] Such metatextuality, I

[92] The original quote in its larger context is part of Cole's answer to the curious question of why those healed by Jesus in the Gospel of Mark do not join the ranks of the disciples as one might expect. In short, he sees it as part of a complex literary strategy by which readers are allowed, even invited, to have the conceit that they "know better" than did the typically doltish disciples. "One might first think," Cole begins, "that the author wants to show the healed person heading off to alert others to the possibility of being healed, and in some cases something like this is suggested. However, I think the better explanation of this conundrum involves noting that the narrative has positioned the disciples to be structurally most like the reader—observing the healing and yet still at a distance from that moment of perfect sparking. Thus, the disciples, as a category, must remain defined as semi-converted: they 'saw' everything, just as the reader did, but they, again like the reader, have to take it all on faith without a direct 'zapping' from Jesus" (*Fetishizing Tradition*, 102–3).

[93] Cole, *Text as Father*, esp. 1–23; Eubanks, *Miracles of Book and Body*, esp. 19–61; Alexander James O'Neill, "Self-Referential Passages in Mahāyāna Sutra Literature," *Pacific World* 4, no. 1 (2020): 41–57. This feature, it is perhaps worth noting, is not unique to Mahāyāna sūtras among religious texts. Some Hindu literature also refers to itself in paratextual material called *phalaśruti* (sometimes *śrutiphala*) (Adam T. Miller, "The Long Arm of the Law: The Generative Power of Metatextuality in Mahāyāna Sūtras," in "History, Performativity, and Solidarity in the Study of Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature," special issue, *HR* 61, no. 2 [2021]: 137–44, at 143–44 and nn. 13–14). Similar observations could be made about the Qur'ān. As Daniel A. Madigan notes, "The Qur'ân is both itself and *about*

contend (along with others), affords sūtras the ability to do things in the world.[94] In the present case, metatextuality is in large part what makes it possible for the *Precious Banner* to realize its affective regime in the reading present. At a particularly climactic episode in the narrative, to which we will attend in Chapter Four, the Buddha tells Māra that he ought to be happy because it is on his account (Māra's, that is) that the *Precious Banner* is being taught. At this moment, the sūtra becomes something like a Möbius strip or a hall of mirrors, blurring the line between the events narrated and the narration of the events, between the story world and the world outside the text. If we accept the hopefully uncontentious claim that readers are like Māra insofar as both are in saṃsāra and neither is *naturally* wired to feel joy on account of the Dharma, we can appreciate how this feature of the sūtra allows it to express norms of feeling *within* the narrative to Māra as well as *through* the narrative to its readers. When the Buddha tells Māra to be happy about what he experiences (which together constitute the sūtra) because he is the reason the sūtra is being taught (in which the Buddha tells Māra to be happy about what he experiences [which together constitute the sūtra] because he is the reason the sūtra is being taught [in which the Buddha tells Māra to be happy . . . you get the idea]), the Buddha is telling *you* in the reading present

itself" (*The Qur'ân's Self-Image: Writing and Authority in Islam's Scripture* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001], 62). And as Jonathan Hoffman argues, the Qur'ān refers to itself to establish itself as the authoritative final revelation vis-à-vis other, prior revelations ("'*This is the Book about which there is No Doubt*': The Objectives of Quranic Self-Referentiality," *Quranica* 11, no. 1 (2019): 1–14). Much the same could also be said about the Book of Mormon, whose narrators and/or compilers express anxiety about their skill as authors and about the reception of their work in the future. On this matter, see Grant Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), passim. For broad discussions of metatextuality in literary studies, see Linda Hutcheon, *Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradox* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980); Patricia Waugh, *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1984).

[94] See Miller, "The Long Arm of the Law"; David Drewes, "The Problem of Becoming a Bodhisattva and the Emergence of Mahāyāna"; Gummer, "Speech Acts of the Buddha"; and Christian K. Wedemeyer, "Rhetorics of Solidarity in Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature: Or, 'You're So Vain, I Bet You Think This Sūtra is About You,'" in "History, Performativity, and Solidarity in the Study of Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature," special issue, *HR* 61, no. 2 (2021): 137–44 (Miller), 145–72 (Drewes), 173–211 (Gummer), 212–37 (Wedemeyer).

(whenever and wherever you happen to be) to encounter the sūtra before you as a source of joy.[95] By dangling carrots and sticks of soteriological relevance before Māra, moreover—with those carrots and sticks being linked rather clearly to affective orientations toward the sūtra—the *Precious Banner* gives readers every incentive to feel not like Māra feels but like *we* feel.

Reading the *Precious Banner* as Affective Regime

What I mean by *affective regime* and how it relates to the question of social formation should by now be clear enough to proceed. Now, the question is: How do we go about reading? Our questions and framework, together with the structure and content of the *Precious Banner*'s narrative, draws our attention to certain features of the text at the expense of others and thus structures in advance the questions to be raised. The narrowest range of questions has to do with the narrative itself: Who/What affects (or fails to affect) whom? Through what speech and/or action? In what narrative context? What are the locations of these actants in the sūtra's social geography? What emotion words are used to describe actants as they affect and are affected? And what are the consequences of their affective states and (re)orientations? To these questions should also be added those which Bruce Lincoln urges scholars of religions to raise of their sources: "'Who speaks here?' . . . 'To what audience? In what immediate and broader context? Through what system of mediations? With what interests?' And further, 'Of what would the speaker(s) persuade the audience? What are the consequences if this project of persuasion should happen to succeed? Who wins what, and how much? Who, conversely, loses?'"[96] These

[95] I am certainly not the first to suggest that Mahāyāna sūtras are in many ways about themselves and that their metatextuality allows them to address/interpellate their readers. In the conclusion to his study of a set of other Mahāyāna sūtras—the *Lotus*, the *Diamond,* the *Tathāgatagarbha*, and the *Vimalakīrti*—Alan Cole writes: "Close readings of these sūtras show that there is plenty of evidence to assume that their content is about the form that purveys this content: the narratives are, obviously, about the narratives and their relationship to the reader who is holding their textual vehicles" (*Text as Father*, 340).

[96] Lincoln, "Theses on Method," 225–26; see also, Bruce Lincoln, "How to Read a Religious Text: Reflections on Some Passages in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad," *HR* 46, no. 2 (2006): 127–39.

questions draw attention to the identities and locations of speakers and auditors alike, along with the interests of the former and the implications of speech for the latter, within the narrative itself. Answering these questions constitutes the first stage of research (and really the bulk of the project), as the resultant answers constitute the contours of the affective regime in the sūtra.

The second stage will be to ask a similar set of questions to the world *outside* the text. In addition to highlighting the interests of those responsible for the production, dissemination, and reception of the *Precious Banner*, such questions open up the possibility to think about the aims of the affective regime for readers and the social implications of its successful realization. The *Precious Banner* never tells readers *how to feel*, but rather shows narrative actants *affecting* (or *trying to affect*) others and *being affected* in a range of ways. The question, then, becomes: What is the aim of the sum total of these depictions? Why is the story of Māra told in the way that it is? Why is the end of his story never narrated? Why does the narrative foreground Māra's emotions and, by extension, the affective orientation that grounds them? Does this tell us something about how we should read it? And does this tell us something about what the narrative wants to impart to its readers? In the end, I argue that the sūtra delivers not only a normative framework for how to feel but also encourages individuals to do *emotion work* with reference to the norms by means of the narrative strategies outlined above. Presented with an affective regime through a complex and sophisticated religious narrative, readers come to know how they are to affectively orient themselves to the sūtra if they expect to receive the promises of proximate and ultimate salvation that it offers. A social effect of all this is that, insofar as readers across space and time work to adopt the affective orientation enjoined by the sūtra, they constitute an empowered religious community transhistorical in scope. (And this, it should be noted, has the potential to include not only myself but also you, my reader.)

Though the affective regime has no temporal or geographical limitations, I humbly ask that my readers keep in view the role it played in the formation of community at Gilgit during the third quarter of the first millennium—for toward the end of the final chapter, we will return to the colophon with which we opened this dissertation in the hopes that our analysis of the sūtra's narrative will allow us to see it anew when compared with other Gilgit colophons. Although my principal aim is broader in scope, it is my hope that this dissertation helps us understand how the *Precious Banner* played a role in constituting the community at Gilgit through the dissemination and realization of an affective regime—a set of feeling rules expressed within and through religious narrative that enjoins and encourages the cultivation of a positive affective orientation toward the *Precious Banner* itself.

IV

What remains to be accomplished in this first chapter is the customary chapter outline by which, in a way quite different from most narratives, readers are told what to expect and when. At the risk of ruining some of the fun, then, I here engage in some (but hopefully not too much!) genre-appropriate foreshadowing. If Chapter One outlines mostly in the abstract the methodology to be deployed in our analysis of the *Precious Banner Sūtra*, Chapter Two provides more text-internal justification for its actual deployment and stands as a first pass at the same. Based on a general overview of the sūtra's treatment of Māra, Chapter Two first argues that Māra's story is central to the text, that his story extends beyond the sūtra (insofar as its conclusion is implied but never narrated), and that his narrative is the main thread that ties the sūtra's thirteen chapters together. Second, based on a focused reading of the sūtra's first chapter—which right away sets Māra off on an emotional rollercoaster that sends him to his lamentation room in what can only be called a

cliffhanger, often using Māra himself as a focalizer—Chapter Two further contends that Māra's affective orientation is central to his narrative.

Chapter Three continues to follow Māra as he spirals further into terror and rage, only to be posed with a feeling rule in interrogative form—*how can you be upset?!*—toward the end of the sūtra's third chapter, with the aim of establishing that Māra is *affectively misaligned*. With that, we then attend to the past life story Śākyamuni tells in the sūtra's second chapter. Tracing a prior incarnation of Māra through the Buddha's account of the past, I show that the sūtra thereby gives readers reason to think that Māra is not condemned to remain misaligned, despite what his later appearances in the sūtra suggest. In so doing, we will see that Māra's affective orientation is central not just to the narrative of Māra told in the sūtra but also to Māra's *story*, which readers learn extends beyond the sūtra by the latter's end. And last, our reading of the sūtra's first three chapters will at this point allow me to put more flesh on my claim that Śākyamuni's *pūrvayoga*, itself an instance of nested external analepsis with a glaring proleptic silence, is one of the literary strategies by which, in conjunction with the narrator's use of Māra as a focalizer and the sūtra's self-referentiality, the sūtra's affective regime impinges upon readers.

Chapter Four then turns to other feeling rules delivered to Māra, his consistent refusal to respond properly, and the consequences of his continued affective misalignment. As we will see, Māra seeks assistance from a number of actants in the sūtra—ranging from his courtesans and children to māras from around the cosmos. At first predisposed to be hostile toward Śākyamuni, just as Māra himself is, these actants ultimately undergo what we will call affective reorientation. While the details of their reorientations will be addressed in Chapter Five, Chapter Four attends to the feeling rules they deliver to Māra from their newfound alignment—all of which, in effect, tell Māra that he ought not be angry. We then turn to a set of positive feeling rules given to Māra

by Śākyamuni and other aligned actants—all of which, in effect, tell Māra that he ought to find joy in the Dharma. With and through this analysis, I argue that the sūtra's representation of the consequences of Māra's misalignment in the face of an assortment of similar injunctions to feel differently than he does—again, taken together with the narrator's use of Māra as a focalizer and the sūtra's strategic self-reference—shows readers the consequences of not being the kinds of beings for whom the Dharma is a source of joy. In short, readers are to be glad in the *Precious Banner*—or risk ending up like Māra.

Chapter Five, as noted above, centers on affective reorientation—or, to be more precise, *affective reorientation* and what we will call *affective course correction*—with an eye toward the soteriological and social implications of alignment both within the sūtra's narrative world and in the reading present. First, we discuss a range of actants who come to be aligned—having been (in most cases) predisposed to be hostile toward the Buddha. The aim of this analysis is to show that affective alignment entails both empowerment and community within the narrative world of the sūtra—in stark contrast to the miserable impotence and isolation Māra experiences due to his misalignment—and to suggest, in a way resembling our analysis of the consequences of Māra's misalignment, that the sūtra's representations of the benefits of alignment stand as carrots (as opposed to sticks) for compliance on the part of readers with the feeling rules expressed to them through the sūtra. We then turn to a set of devotees who, though already approximating proper alignment, are nevertheless told by the Buddha to feel differently than they do. These devotees, as we will see, fear living in a world without the Buddha. But the Buddha tells them not to fear because he will always teach the Dharma in the world. This final bit of narrative analysis lays bare an additional strategy by which the sūtra reaches into the reading present. The world that Śākyamuni's devotees fear is precisely the one in which readers find themselves. And yet, the

Buddha makes clear, readers ought not mourn or be afraid—for they have before them tangible proof of the Buddha's continued teaching in the world. And this tangible proof, the *Precious Banner* itself, is something about which readers ought to be glad.

Chapter Six takes leave of the *Precious Banner* to outline some of the ways in which our reading contributes to Buddhist studies and to the history of religions. I first suggest that our holistic approach stands as a corrective supplement to the episode-centric approach typically employed in scholarship that makes use of the *Precious Banner*. Such an approach is not itself novel, as my subsequent survey of the recent wave of scholarship that treats Mahāyāna sūtras *as literature agential in extratextual processes* will show. But what is unique about my reading, to reiterate what was said above, is its concern to interrogate themes of affect and emotion with the social world explicitly in view. And it is just this concern that puts my work in conversation with the broader history of religions, and particular with scholars whose work pertains to the complex relationship between religious discourse and the formation and maintenance of social groups. In general terms, then, Chapter Six outlines in more concrete detail than we were able to do here in Chapter One how the framework of affective regimes seeks to reach a synthesis between Lincoln and Schaefer drawing on Hochschild and Ahmed. And with this in place, we then return briefly to Gilgit and draw things to a close by pointing out some paths for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

"Pained, Dispirited, and Regretful"
Reading for (Māra's) Affective Orientation

I

Chapter One began with an overview of the extant manuscripts and translations of the *Precious Banner Sūtra* and subsequently developed something of a reception history, surveying references to the work in Buddhist compositions. We then laid out in detail the methodological framework signaled by the phrase *affective regime*, which will have us train our sights on themes of affect and emotion in the sūtra's narrative to discern a set of socially consequential feeling rules. With this framework in place, we now dive headlong into the *Precious Banner* and its narrative world, where we will stay for the next four chapters. That this sūtra presents us with a narrative world in the singular—that is, that this sūtra is and ought to be read as a cohesive religious narrative—is a claim that has yet to be properly argued for. While the methodology section above takes steps toward its justification, the present chapter considers a fuller range of evidence for this claim. Once this task is completed, we then take a first pass at deploying the methodology developed to begin addressing questions about the structure and aims of the work. Toward these two ends, we will pursue two lines of investigation and argument in the coming pages. As in Chapter One, each of these will be given its own section below.

The first aim of this chapter is to show that the main story narrated in the sūtra—a story of failed yet incompletely quelled rebellion on the part of Māra against the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha[1]—gives us reason to treat the sūtra as a coherent narrative unit. While scholars

[1] Gergely Hidas makes a similar observation, saying that the *Precious Banner* "is composed around a story of Māra's resistance against the Tathāgata," but does not develop the idea further. Gergely Hidas, "Dhāraṇī Sūtras," in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Buddhism. Vol 1. Literature and Languages*, ed. Jonathan Silk, Oskar von Hinüber, and Vincent Eltschinger (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 129–137, at 132.

have noted that Māra is central to the first three (of thirteen) chapters, they have also mistakenly suggested that his story concludes at the end of the third chapter with his "conversion." And while it has recently been argued that the sūtra as it comes down to us is a composite document, attention to some of the more subtle details of Māra's narrative evince a narrative integrity with implications for how read the work. Based on a reading of the sūtra more holistic than has been previously conducted, in short, I argue that the unfinished story of Māra narrated in the sūtra (among other things) weaves the sometimes seemingly disconnected chapters together into a coherent whole and thereby warrants us to treat the sūtra as such.

The second aim of this chapter is to show that Māra's affective orientation is central to his narrative and thus to demonstrate in more detail than was given in Chapter One why this sūtra is well suited to analysis in terms of affect and emotion. We will accomplish this aim by undertaking a close reading of the sūtra's first chapter, attending to plot development, narrative structure, and focalization. Māra, as we will see, finds himself on an emotional roller coaster from his first appearance as an actant. A series of blunders and failures sends him reeling. And at the end of the first chapter, in what we can recognize as a cliffhanger, Māra is left wallowing in his lamentation room upon facing the fact that he is growing increasingly powerless and alone. The plot and structure of the sūtra thus give us several good reasons to read for Māra's affective orientation, which will continue to occupy us in Chapters Three and Four. And further, it gives us reason to read for affective orientations more broadly, on the part of the many other actants in the narrative, some of which will be treated in Chapter Five.

II

In this section, two main claims are advanced. First, I argue that Māra's story as narrated in the *Precious Banner* is not brought to a satisfying conclusion. Second, I show that Māra's story is

one of the main threads that tie the chapters of the sūtra together and thus that the sūtra ought to be treated as a coherent whole. These two contentions stand in contrast to prior readings of the sūtra. The first, to be specific, serves as a quick corrective to treatments of the sūtra that have read Māra's narrative as coming to a satisfying conclusion, to one degree or another, with Māra's ostensive conversion at the end of the sūtra's third chapter. The second aims to complicate a recent suggestion that the sūtra as it comes down to us is a composite document. The sūtra's narration of Māra's story, among other things, gives us reason to approach the sūtra not as a composite document but instead holistically, as a cohesive and coherent religious narrative. Building on these two arguments, the next section follows Māra through the sūtra's first chapter to show that the sūtra thematizes Māra's affective orientation as well as affect and emotion more broadly. In pursuing these lines of argument, I aim to lay the groundwork for our subsequent interrogation of the affective regime delivered to readers through the sūtra's metatextual religious narrative.

That Māra is central to two of the first three chapters of the *Precious Banner* is not terribly difficult to discern given that his name is in their titles.[2] That his story extends beyond these is less apparent, especially given that his story comes to what might mistakenly be taken to be a satisfying conclusion near the end of the third chapter. This latter reading has been proposed by John Strong and William Giddings who, in their work on Upagupta's binding of Māra[3] and

[2] The first chapter is called "The Humiliation of Māra" (Skt. mārajihmīkaraṇa; Tib. bdud spa bskong ba), the third "The Taming of Māra" (Skt. māradamana; Tib. bdud btul ba).

[3] Though there are multiple variants (not to mention more details than will be given here), the basic story of Upagupta and Māra can be characterized as one of conflict and pacification. Continually disrupted by Māra while teaching the Dharma, Upagupta wonders why the Buddha never subdued Māra in times past. Coming to realize that the Buddha left that job to him, Upagupta devises a plan to tame Māra once and for all. As an insincere gesture of friendship, Upagupta offers Māra a garland of flowers that, once accepted, transforms into a garland of corpses (snake, dog, and human). When Māra realizes that he cannot remove the corpses, he then recognizes the power of the Buddha (and Upagupta, too), undergoes a conversion, and is thereby released. The story continues to include a fascinating episode wherein Māra agrees to take on the guise of Śākyamuni so that Upagupta can "see" the Buddha,

the history and function of the Māra mytheme,[4] suggest that Māra undergoes a "soteriological transformation" in the sūtra and "find[s] faith in the *tri-ratna*." These readings are not entirely without grounds, but they are not quite right either. Toward the climactic end of the sūtra's third chapter, as we will examine in more detail Chapter Three below, Māra launches a desperate attack against a gigantic preaching lotus and the beings listening to the Dharma emanating therefrom. Unable to lay even so much as a finger on the lotus or the crowds, Māra thinks to retreat to his palace. But when he thinks of doing this, he sees himself bound by a "fivefold fetter" (Skt. *pañcabandhana*; Tib. *bcing ba lnga*). An onlooker by the name of Ghoṣavati advises Māra to go to the Buddha for refuge. Māra thus turns in the direction of the Buddha (who is not yet present, it should be noted) and declares his intent to take refuge. And when Māra does this, he is released from the fivefold fetter.

It is on the basis of this episode that Strong and Giddings suggest that Māra's narrative finds some closure in his "conversion." But this is not how the third chapter ends. Though Māra *verbally* takes refuge in the Buddha, it is clear from context that he does so insincerely out of self-interest. The only thing he wants is to be released from the fivefold fetter so that he can

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but these details will suffice. Strong brings the *Precious Banner* to the table because there is another one of these binding scenes. In reading the sūtra as drawing the story of Māra drawn to a more or less satisfying conclusion with his binding and subsequent release—in ceasing to read the story at this point, in other words, and not realizing that Māra gets himself bound again and never manages to actually get himself released—Strong is able to combine this instance of the binding of Māra motif with others to suggest that it (that is, the motif) "signif[ies] not only Māra's imprisonment, his capture, or his physical restraint, but also his 'ordination,' his soteriological transformation, his introduction to the Buddhist Path" (*The Legend and Cult of Upagupta: Sanskrit Buddhism in North India and Southeast Asia* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992], 93–117, esp. 98–104, quotes here and in the body at 101).

[4] Giddings refers to the *Precious Banner* in order to flesh out his comparison between Māra and the opponents of Indra in earlier, Vedic literature. While Māra and Indra's opponents share similar functions, their representation in narrative literature differs insofar as Māra is never finally defeated while Indra's opponents are. Insofar as Giddings does not maintain that the sūtra brings the conflict between Śākyamuni and Māra to an end, his reading is better than the one offered by Strong. He still, however, suggests that the sūtra depicts Māra finding faith in the Three Jewels, which is not the case. William James Giddings, "A Structuralist Examination of the Origins of the Māra Mytheme and its Function in the Narrative of the *Dàoxíng Bōrě Jīng*, the Earliest Complete Recension of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñā-pāramitā-sūtra*" (PhD diss., King's College London, 2014), quote in the body at 193.

retreat to his palace, and the text makes this abundantly clear. Just prior to following the sage advice of Ghoṣavati, Māra thinks to himself: "With pleasant words, I should go to the ascetic Gautama for refuge. Then I would be released from these fetters."[5] Immediately after taking refuge and seeing himself freed, he thinks to retreat and thus finds himself bound again. So intent is he on stealing away, Māra goes back-and-forth between thinking of going to the Buddha for refuge (and thus being free) and retreating (thus being bound) a total of seven times. In the end, Māra gives up and sits down. And it is precisely in this situation that Māra stays for the rest of the sūtra. In all the subsequent chapters in which he appears as an actant—namely, the fifth, sixth, ninth, and eleventh—the narrator visits Māra and depicts him as sometimes seething with anger, sometimes writhing in pain, but always more than a little upset on account of what has happened and continues to happen around him. One thing it never depicts, *pace* both Strong and Giddings, is a "soteriological transformation" on his part.[6] He consistently refuses to make a genuinely joyful turn toward the Buddhist path. And as a consequence, he remains in a liminal (un)bound state. The end of his story is never narrated in the sūtra.

That Māra takes refuge for the wrong reasons—illustrative of, in terms we will develop more fully in Chapter Three, his affective misalignment—is critical to our understanding of the text and how it works. It is part of what allows the sūtra to leverage the distinction between Māra's story and his narrative toward the realization of its affective regime. When met with this episode at the end of the third chapter, readers are meant to infer that his declaration does not hold any weight at that particular moment. And yet, because of an account of the past told by

[5] Skt. (K): atha mārasya pāpīmata etad abhavat | yat tv ahaṃ santoṣavacanena śramaṇaṃ gautamaṃ śaraṇaṃ vrajeyaṃ yad aham ebhyo bandhanebhyaḥ parimucyeyam || (84.6–84.8); Tib. (K): de nas bdud sdig can 'di snyam du bdag gi tshig snyan pas dge sbyong gauta ma la skyabs su song la | bcings pa 'di las bdag grol bar bya'o snyam du bsams te | (94.25–95.1).

[6] In his summary of the sūtra, Dutt similarly characterizes Māra as undergoing a conversion experience. He says in his final remark on chapter three: "At last he submitted to the Buddha wholeheartedly" (*GM*, 4:ix).

Śākyamuni in the sūtra's second chapter (to be addressed in Chapter Three), they also already know that there is hope for him yet. Readers are expected to recognize that the end of the sūtra's third chapter does not conclude Māra's story. Yet as they move through the sūtra and reach its final lines, readers come to realize that Māra does not find closure—at least not in the pages of the sūtra. For Māra to find closure, the sūtra consistently suggests through telling his story in the way that it does, he will have to undergo a wholesale affective reorientation. Though Māra is reliably presented in the narrative as affectively misaligned in contrast to other actants, who (sometimes immediately, other times eventually) respond "properly" to the events narrated in the sūtra (which are tantamount to the sūtra itself), the fact that the sūtra never narrates the end of Māra's story leaves open the possibility that Māra could put in the emotion work necessary to authorize his declaration and thus set him on the right path. We will continue to develop this argument in later chapters. For now, let us turn to the second contention of this section—namely that the narrative of Māra is one of the main threads that tie the sūtra's chapters together and thus that the sūtra not only can but in many ways ought to be treated as a coherent whole.

Strictly speaking, it is not necessary to argue that the *Precious Banner*'s thirteen chapters *can* be treated as together constituting a unified whole—I could simply declare my intent to do so and proceed accordingly. The claim that they *ought* to be so treated, however, could be called into question in light of some of the remarks accompanying the recent English translation of the sūtra published by 84000, a translation project that seeks to make Buddhist literature accessible to a wider readership.[7] In their introductory remarks, the Dharmachakra Translation Committee suggests that the sūtra is a composite text "redacted from at least two independent works."[8] In

[7] Dharmachakra Translation Committee, trans. *The Ratnaketu Dhāraṇī*, version 1.0.14, last accessed January 15, 2022 (84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha, 2021 [2020]), https://read.84000.co/translation/toh138.html.

[8] Dharmachakra Translation Committee, trans., *The Ratnaketu Dhāraṇī*, s.1.

defending this claim, the translation team distinguishes two previously independent works on the basis that they feature two distinct *dhāraṇī*s (Tib. *gzungs*).[9] The *dhāraṇī* called Precious Banner (after which the sūtra receives one of its names) plays a role in the first five chapters of the sūtra (particularly the second chapter), but it drops out of the picture altogether by the end of the fifth, at which point the *dhāraṇī* called Body Destroyer (Skt. *samucchrayavidhvaṃsanī*; Tib. *lus 'joms pa*) comes to the fore. While there is truth to this, the matter is quite a bit more complicated for reasons to be outlined below. Perhaps recognizing as much, the translation team at one point notes that the narrative of Māra lends a sense of unity to the sūtra.[10] Yet they do not interrogate whether and to what extent this sense of unity weakens their hypothesis about the work's being a composite document. To develop this idea, then, I propose that the sūtra's narrative of Māra is the main thread that ties the sūtra's chapters together and that the sūtra's intermittent attention to and consistent depiction of Māra beyond the sūtra's first three chapters warrants us to treat the sūtra as a unified whole.

The first three chapters of the sūtra, as we have discussed, move readers through a good portion of the basic story. In fact, they trace the contours of the plot such that a reader would have a good sense of the story even if she were to stop at the end of the third chapter with the binding of Māra, his self-interested and insincere (and thus ineffective) pledge to take refuge, and his resultant (un)bound state. But more details of the story can be gleaned by reading further in the text. The fourth and fifth chapters pick up threads from the first three chapters and follow

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[9] For those of my readers who do not specialize in Buddhist studies, dhāraṇīs are something like magical mnemonic formulae, sets of words and syllables that encode the Dharma and accomplish things in the world when recited. For more on this term, see Jens Braarvig, "*Dhāraṇī* and *Pratibhāna*: Memory and Eloquence of the Bodhisattvas," *JIABS* 8, no. 1 (1985): 17–29; Ronald M. Davidson, "Studies in Dhāraṇī Literature I: Revisiting the Meaning of the Term *Dhāraṇī*," *JIP* 37, no. 2 (2009): 97–147.

[10] Dharmachakra Translation Committee, trans., *The Ratnaketu Dhāraṇī*, i.14 and n. 8.

them, filling in gaps in the story as told so far and continuing to develop the narrative. In the third chapter, for instance, readers are briefly introduced to a sage named Jyotīrasa, whom Māra (disguised as Maheśvara) tricks into helping him assail Śākyamuni by serving as a distraction.[11] This sage plays a central role in the fourth chapter,[12] which (in addition to being named after Jyotīrasa) narrates a series of events that occur at the same time as some of the events narrated in chapter three. Chapter five continues where chapter four leaves off, eventually meeting up with and surpassing the binding scene narrated at the end of chapter three.[13] To use narratological vocabulary, chapters four and five together constitute a mixed analepsis—that is, a narration of events that occurred prior to the moment in story time to which readers have already been led yet reaches that same moment and moves beyond it.

This does not help us to establish that Māra's narrative ties the whole sūtra together, for it is late in the fifth chapter that the translation committee identifies a seam. Although they are right to point out that the *dhāraṇī* called Precious Banner takes a backseat by this point, other *dhāraṇī*s (not just one) are named and take turns playing the lead role. And further, the events depicted after the alleged "split" ultimately relate to the story told in the first five chapters of the sūtra. Taking up the second of these points first—the sixth chapter unfolds on account of the events narrated toward the end of chapter five, which themselves refer to the end of chapter three. The events in question feature Jyotīrasa, Śākyamuni, and Māra. At the end of chapter four,

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[11] Skt. (K): 60.11–61.2; Tib. (K): 72.11–73.6. This connection is noted by the committee (Dharmachakra Translation Committee, trans., *The Ratnaketu Dhāraṇī*, n. 247).

[12] Skt. (K): 101.19–107.11 (fragmentary, missing); Tib. (K): 112.18–129.3.

[13] In this chapter, for example, Śākyamuni enters Rājagṛha, goes to the center of the city, and lifts up and waves the gigantic preaching lotus in the presence of which Māra sits (un)bound (Skt. [K]: missing; Tib. [K]: 138.17–139.3). Here, too, Māra again feigns to take refuge in the Buddha, but this time to Śākyamuni's face rather than simply in his direction as before (Skt. [K]: missing; Tib. [K]: 140.13–141.16).

the sage Jyotīrasa receives a prediction from the Buddha after a long conversation about astral science. In his new capacity as an advanced bodhisattva, Jyotīrasa fashions a jeweled staircase to the top of the gigantic preaching lotus in the middle of Rājagṛha. Śākyamuni subsequently ascends this staircase to preach the Dharma. Once atop the lotus, Śākyamuni looks to Māra and practically (and benevolently) threatens to foretell him to awakening.[14] Enraged by this, Māra lashes out and exhales scorching hot breath at Śākyamuni.[15]

Māra's actions harm no one. Instead, Śākyamuni transforms the hot breath into beautiful flowers, which then transform into beautiful parasols floating above myriad buddhas and bodhisattvas throughout myriad buddhafields.[16] The bodhisattvas ask their respective buddhas why flower-parasols had just appeared in their respective buddhafields,[17] to which the buddhas respond with a description of Śākyamuni. In addition to describing his great qualities, they also say that he desires to declare the *dhāraṇī* called Body Destroyer.[18] Having never heard Body Destroyer, the bodhisattvas express a desire to travel to Sahā to hear Śākyamuni teach it. But they wonder how everyone will fit. In a passage reminiscent of the *Instruction of Vimalakīrti* (*Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*), the buddhas assure them that there is nothing to worry about because Śākyamuni can manipulate the elements and space at will. The beginning of chapter six depicts these beings, several of them named, descending onto Sahā and being seated on lotus-thrones.

[14] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 151.1–151.4.

[15] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 151.5–151.8.

[16] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 151.9–151.13.

[17] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 151.13–151.16.

[18] Skt. (K): . . . vajradharmasamatāpratītyadharmahṛdayasamucchrayavidhvaṃsanīṃ nāma dhāraṇīmudrāpada-prabhedapraveśyavyākaraṇīm . . . bhāṣituṃ | (114.7–114.9, fragmentary); Tib. (K): de bzhin gshegs pa de da ltar . . . chos mnyam pa nyid rdo rje lta bu brten pa'i chos kyi snying pos lus 'joms pa zhes bya ba'i gzungs phyag rgya dang | tshig rab tu dbye ba la 'jug pa lung bstan pa 'chad par bzhed do || (151.21 . . . 153.9–153.11; ellipsis mine)

Although the translation committee claims that "the [Body Destroyer] section marks a change in the narrative,"[19] the story remains the same insofar as the events narrated are situated in temporal sequence and causal relationship. The events at the end of chapter five are not only prompted directly by an event clearly rooted in the previous chapters but also extend into the sixth chapter and beyond.

There are other signs internal to the text that recommend we treat the sūtra as a whole, some of which could easily fly under the radar if not reading carefully. In addition to delivering Body Destroyer,[20] the *dhāraṇī* promised in the fifth chapter, the sixth chapter delivers several other *dhāraṇī*s. Of particular relevance for our present concern is the one delivered by a figure named Mahābrahmaghoṣa. This *dhāraṇī*, called Unharmed by the Army of Māra, is important because both it and Mahābrahmaghoṣa appear in paratextual material at the beginning of the sūtra. This fact, however, appears to have gone unnoticed by the translation committee. While they name the *dhāraṇī* in their translation of the homage section,[21] they do not name it in the sixth chapter when it used in the narrative (or in the eighth chapter where it is mentioned).[22] Granted, the Tibetan is not exactly the same in both cases. (Unfortunately, the Sanskrit is missing here.) The homage section explicitly names the *dhāraṇī* (using *zhes bya ba*),[23] while in the sixth

[19] Dharmachakra Translation Committee, trans., *The Ratnaketu Dhāraṇī*, i.11.

[20] This dhāraṇī further appears, by way of mention rather than use, in chapters seven, ten, and eleven: Skt. (K): missing (chap. 7), missing/fragmentary (chap. 10), 159.1–159.2 (chap. 11); Tib. (K): 202.5–202.6 (chap. 7), 229.9–229.11 (chap. 10), and 243.18–243.20 (chap. 11).

[21] ". . . the dhāraṇī called *unharmed by the assemblies of Māra*" (Dharmachakra Translation Committee, trans., *The Ratnaketu Dhāraṇī*, h.3).

[22] ". . . this dhāraṇī, which cannot be defeated by the hosts of Māra . . ." (Dharmachakra Translation Committee, trans., *The Ratnaketu Dhāraṇī*, 6.79); ". . . this dhāraṇī, which the hosts of Māra cannot defeat . . ." (Dharmachakra Translation Committee, trans., *The Ratnaketu Dhāraṇī*, 8.4).

[23] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): bdud kyi 'khor gyis mi tshugs pa zhes bya ba'i gzungs (3.10).

and eighth chapters *unharmed by the army of Māra* is a clause subordinate to the word *gzungs* (Skt. *dhāraṇī*).[24] The participles differ slightly—the homage section reads *mi tshugs pa*, while the sixth and eighth chapters provide *mi thub pa*. And there is some variance with one noun—the homage section and chapter six provide *'khor*, while the eighth gives *tshogs*. At the end of the day, however, these differences are inconsequential. Both verbs have the same basic sense of *unharmed* or *unbeaten*, and both nouns can mean *host* or *horde* (and, by extension, *army*).

These differences notwithstanding, it is clear that the *dhāraṇī* in the homage section is the one Mahābrahmaghoṣa delivers in the sixth chapter. Let us consider them in comparative frame. In the homage section, Mahābrahmaghoṣa is an object of reverence, and the *dhāraṇī* is provided (and to be employed) in full:

> Praise to the Transcendent Jyotiḥsomyagandhāvabhāsaśrī![25] Praise to Mahābrahmaghoṣa! Praising them, this *dhāraṇī* called Unharmed by the Army of Māra should be employed. May we perfect this technique! It goes like this: a ba me a ba me | aṃ ba re | aṃ ba re | pa ri kun dza | na ṭa na ṭa | pu ska ra ba ha | dza lu kha | kha ma kha ya | i li mi li | ki li mi li | ki rti ba ra | mu dre mu dre khe svā hā ||[26]

The passage in the sixth chapter, spoken by Mahābrahmaghoṣa, reads as follows:

> Those who uphold this Dharma discourse of the *dhāraṇī* called Unharmed by the Army of Māra, having written a bit of it[?] [Tib. *than bris*], and who wish to expound this Dharma discourse while sitting on the lion-throne of a Dharma preacher somewhere, should at the outset utter these words of mantra. These words of mantra will summon me. And I myself, along with my retinue, will come to that place in order to protect and safeguard the preachers of Dharma and their auditors. It goes like this: a ba me a ba me |

[24] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): bdud kyi 'khor gyis mi thub pa'i gzungs kyi chos kyi rnam grangs (191.22–192.1), bdud kyi tshogs kyis mi thub pa'i gzungs 'di (206.2–206.3).

[25] Tib. 'Od zhi spos snang dpal. This name corresponds to the name Jyotiḥsomyagandhāvabhāsaśrī attested later in the Sanskrit. See Skt. (K): 33.7, Tib. (K): 44.13.

[26] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): de bzhin gshegs pa 'od zhi spos snang dpal la phyag 'tshal lo || tshangs pa chen po dbyangs can la phyag 'tshal lo || de la phyag 'tshal te | bdud kyi 'khor gyis mi tshugs pa zhes bya ba'i gzungs 'di sbyor bar bgyis | bdag gyis rig sngags 'di grub par gyur cig | 'di lta ste | a ba me a ba me | aṃ ba re | aṃ ba re | pa ri kun dza | na ṭa na ṭa | pu ska ra ba ha | dza lu kha | kha ma kha ya | i li mi li | ki li mi li | ki rti ba ra | mu dre mu dre khe svā hā || (3.8–4.3).

a ma ba re | a ma ba re | pa ri ku ñdza | nā ṭa nā ṭa | pu śka ra ba hā | dza lu kha | ma kha ya | i li mi li | ki li mi li | kī rti tsa ra mu dre | mu dra mu khe | svā hā ||[27]

There are differences between the two instances of *dhāraṇī*, to be sure, but none amounts to much—especially considering not only the range of readings underlying Kurumiya's editorial choices[28] but also what Mahābrahmaghoṣa says about how the *dhāraṇī* ought to be used. In accordance with Mahābrahmaghoṣa's recommendation, this *dhāraṇī* is placed at the outset of the sūtra in the homage section. When exactly the homage section was added is not clear, but that this *dhāraṇī* appears in it signals that the sixth chapter was taken to be part of the *Precious Banner* by at least some readers/redactors, not a separate work or a later addition.[29] (It signals, too, that some read the sūtra for content and likely recited it in ritual contexts.)[30] Also, that the *dhāraṇī* has a proper name gives us another reason to question the adequacy of the translation

[27] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): gang dag bdud kyi tshogs kyis mi thub pa'i gzungs kyi chos kyi rnam grangs 'di than bris nas 'chang ba rnams dang | gang na chos smra ba'i seng ge'i khri la mchis te | chos kyi rnam grangs 'di yang dag par rab tu 'chad par 'tshal ba | de dag gis der thog mar gsang sngags kyi tshig 'di dag brjod par bgyi'o || gsang sngags kyi tshig 'di dag gis bdag 'gug par 'gyur te || bdag nyid 'khor dang bcas ba phyogs der mchis nas | chos smra ba de dag dang | chos nyan pa de dag bsrung ba dang | sba bar bgyi'o || 'di lta ste | a ba me a ba me | a ma ba re | a ma ba re | pa ri ku ñdza | nā ṭa nā ṭa | pu śka ra ba hā | dza lu kha | ma kha ya | i li mi li | ki li mi li | kī rti tsa ra mu dre | mu dra mu khe | svā hā || (192.5–192.17)

[28] See Tib. (K): 3 nn. 11–14, 4 nn. 1–7, 192 nn. 19–26.

[29] While the homage section is present in the Tibetan, neither Chinese translation includes it and the folio of the Gilgit manuscript on which one would expect to find it is unfortunately missing. Jan Nattier notes, citing personal communication with Gregory Schopen, that the Gilgit manuscripts occasionally include homage verses, but their exact contents are not always the same as what is found in the Tibetan translations of the same texts. So, while it is possible that the Sanskrit manuscript included an homage verse, we cannot be certain. And even if we had reason to believe that it did, we cannot be certain to what extent the Tibetan text corresponds or deviates. Jan Nattier, *A Few Good Men: The Bodhisattva Path According to* "*The Inquiry of Ugra* (*Ugraparipṛcchā*)" (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), 27.

[30] That the *Precious Banner* was likely recited in ritual contexts is further supported by its mention in the sixth–eighth century ritual compendium, the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (P. L. Vaidya, ed. *Mahāyānasūtrasaṁgraha, Part II* [Darbhanga: Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1964], 79.14). For an English translation, see Dharmachakra Translation Committee, trans., *The Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī*, version 1.21.11, last accessed January 15, 2022 (84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha, 2022 [2020]), https://read.84000.co/translation/toh543.html#UT22084-088-038-1814, 1.190. For a study of the first eleven chapters of the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, see Glenn Wallis, *Mediating the Power of Buddhas: Ritual in the Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002).

team's justification for claiming the sūtra to be a composite text. If two *dhāraṇī*s are named in the sixth chapter (rather than one), and if both feature together not only in chapter six but also separately in later chapters of the sūtra (which they do),[31] then we are warranted in treating the *Precious Banner* as a coherent narrative unit—and this even if the sūtra as it comes down to us is, in fact, a composite document.

Beyond this, however, the most significant reason to read the *Precious Banner* as a unified whole is the recurring and consistent representations of Māra. After chapter three, the conclusion of which depicts Māra stuck in an (un)bound state, readers leave Māra until the fifth chapter, in which Māra makes two appearances. At some point after Māra's first feigned declaration to take refuge, Śākyamuni makes his way to the center of Rājagṛha, where he approaches the gigantic preaching lotus mentioned above, picks it up, and waves it with ease. As readers will recall from chapter three, Māra is right there witnessing all this happen. And at this point in the narrative, we see him again feign to take refuge in the hopes of being released from the fivefold fetter—this time in the presence of the Buddha rather than simply in his direction.[32] And as if shrugging it off, Śākyamuni tells Māra to go wherever he wants.[33] But Māra can't move, he explains, because when he thinks about going home he is bound by the fivefold fetter.[34]

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[31] The Body Destroyer is promised in chapter five, delivered in chapter six, and mentioned/discussed in chapters seven, ten, and eleven. Unharmed by the Army of Māra is introduced and delivered in chapter six, represented in the paratextual homage section, and mentioned/discussed in chapter eight. The twelfth chapter, which details the vows of a yakṣa general named Āṭavaka, delivers a dhāraṇī unique to the chapter called Approaching the Adamantine Sky (Skt. vajrakhavasarī; Tib. rdo rje nam mkha' rtog 'jug). The main thing that ties the twelfth chapter to the rest of the sūtra is the presence of Kautūhalika.

[32] Skt. (K): 108.4–108.7 (fragmentary); Tib. (K): 140.13–141.1.

[33] Skt. (K): 108.9–108.10 (fragmentary); Tib. (K): 141.3–141.6.

[34] Skt. (K): 108.12–108.13 (fragmentary); Tib. (K): 141.8–141.11.

Śākyamuni quickly clarifies that Māra continues to be bound because he has not freed himself from conceptuality, then turns his attention elsewhere, leaving Māra to stew.[35]

Māra's second appearance in chapter five, as we saw above, is when he exhales fiery breath at Śākyamuni while the latter is seated atop the gigantic preaching lotus. Let us now consider what prompts Māra to engage in such behavior. Prior to the fire-breathing episode, Śākyamuni addresses Māra directly with a series of verses from the top of the giant lotus. After rehashing a handful of moments in their troubled relationship, Śākyamuni concludes with a threat (from Māra's perspective, anyway) to foretell Māra to awakening.[36] But this is not the first thing Śākyamuni says to Māra from his elevated lotus throne. The very first thing he says to Māra, in a remarkable moment of metatextuality that will serve to orient Chapter Four below, is that Māra ought to be happy because it is on his account that the very sūtra readers have before them is being taught in the first place.[37] As discussed in Chapter One, metatextuality is critical for our understanding of the sūtra and how it accomplishes its aims. Through self-reference, the sūtra effectively dissolves the boundary between the world of the text and the world beyond the text and thereby enables itself to reach into the reading present and impart its affective regime to readers wheneve and wherever they happen to be. We will return to this and other feeling rules in subsequent chapters. For now, after basking in the fact that Śākyamuni himself gives us reason to locate Māra and his narrative at the very center of the *Precious Banner*, we continue to track the sūtra's depictions of Māra to solidify the point with further evidence.

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[35] Skt. (K): 109.1–109.4 (fragmentary); Tib. (K): 141.13–141.16.

[36] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 148.16–151.4.

[37] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): bdud sdig can ji ltar khyod kyi rkyen gyis deng 'dir 'dus pa chen po'i chos kyi rnam grangs bshad pas . . . khyod dga' bar gyis shig || (148.1–148.2 . . . 148.8; ellipsis mine).

Māra's next appearance in the sūtra occurs in chapter six—after a dialogue between Mahābrahmaghoṣa and Śākyamuni and before the former's declaration of the *dhāraṇī* called Unharmed by the Army of Māra. When we are first introduced to Mahābrahmaghoṣa, he is described as a tenth-stage bodhisattva-mahāsattva who appears in the presence of Śākyamuni in the form of a beautiful woman wearing fine jewelry.[38] The pair proceed to have a conversation about the nature of buddhahood, which is at one point likened to space.[39] Upon hearing this conversation—which, it should be noted, is the last in a series of similar exchanges between Śākyamuni and powerful beings who deliver a host of *dhāraṇī*s (some of them named, others not)—Māra chimes in. He first asks how and why the qualities of buddhahood harm him and do damage to his realm if they are, like space, insubstantial and inexpressible.[40] And he concludes with a description of the kind of pain he endures on account of what he has been hearing, including an awful headache and a putrefying body.[41] Śākyamuni assures Māra that his physical ailments will disappear if only he would generate the intent to attain awakening. But he refuses. This episode is not only consistent with what we have seen from Māra in chapters three and five, but it also continues to build tension by withholding the resolution that some readers might be expecting on account of the past life story told by Śākyamuni in the second chapter.

From here, the sūtra leaves Māra for a while. He does not appear as an actant in the very short seventh or eighth chapters, both of which are clearly connected to the rest of the sūtra by virtue of their discussions of the Body Destroyer (chapter seven) and Unharmed by the Army of

[38] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 187.20–188.8.

[39] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 189.2.

[40] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 189.16–19.

[41] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 190.7–190.10.

Māra (chapter eight). Māra appears again in the (again very short) ninth chapter, which ends with a brief exchange between Śākyamuni and Māra. Having together witnessed a group of powerful buddhas vow to protect the Dharma and anyone who upholds it, Śākyamuni strongly advises Māra to give up his fight and aspire to attain awakening.[42] In the face of yet another opportunity to change his ways, Māra again obstinately refuses to do so.[43] Again, this is consistent with what we have seen above. At this point, readers might reasonably wonder whether the tension the narrative has built will ever be released. But it never is.

The last appearance of Māra in the sūtra occurs in the eleventh chapter, another relatively short chapter which depicts Māra in the same situation. After Śakra, Brahmā, and the Four Great Kings vow to maintain and protect those who uphold the Dharma, a bodhisattva by the name of Kautūhalika approaches the Buddha to ask a question. (Kautūhalika, whose name appropriately means *the curious one*, also appears in the second, sixth, eleventh, and twelfth chapters to ask questions of the Buddha.) Specifically, he asks whether Māra and his followers have come to be positively disposed toward the three jewels.[44] Śākyamuni informs him that such is not the case, but he also suggests that all hope is not lost. Even though they lack virtuous roots and mentors, among other things, they will eventually come to have confidence in awakening by virtue of seeing such a great collection of buddhas (hearkening back to the series of events that bridge the fifth chapter to the sixth, when myriad buddhas and bodhisattvas descend upon Sahā) and hearing the *dhāraṇī*s delivered in the sūtra.[45] Kautūhalika rejoices in the power of the sūtra to

[42] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 227.16–227.22.

[43] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 228.2–228.3.

[44] Skt. (K): 160.8 (fragmentary); Tib. (K): 249.14–249.15.

[45] Skt. (K): 160.8–161.7 (fragmentary); Tib. (K): 249.15–250.10.

bring about awakening by merely being heard.[46] But moments later, complicating this claim about the sūtra's power, Māra again protests in defiance.[47] This is where the eleventh chapter ends. And moreover, it is where the sūtra leaves Māra for good.

From the moment Māra sits down at the end of chapter three, defeated in his (un)bound state, until the end of the eleventh chapter, the sūtra is consistent in its representation of Māra. Readers continue to find him in the presence of the Buddha and myriad other powerful beings, unable to leave, sometimes angry, sometimes in pain, and always in a foul mood. Insofar as Māra is explicitly described as being bound by a fivefold fetter only in chapters three and five, it is possible that these representations occur in what were initially separate texts, as the Dharmachakra Translation Committee claims. But because there is nothing prohibiting it, it is also easy to supply this bit of information when reading these brief Māra episodes. And indeed, this reading becomes plausible in light of the fact that, toward the end of the eleventh chapter, a figure named Agastī delivers a *dhāraṇī* designed to (among other things) bind beings who would do harm to those who uphold the Dharma with a fivefold fetter.[48]

If Māra's story is central to the *Precious Banner*, insofar as it is through its narration that the sometimes seemingly disconnected chapters are held together, then we would do well to attend carefully to how the sūtra depicts him. Before moving forward to do just this, let us recall what has been established in this section. First, Māra's story does not come to a conclusion with his "conversion" at the end of the sūtra's third chapter. Second, we have good reason to read the *Precious Banner* as a unified whole. This much is clear from the fact that we can trace a story

[46] Skt. (K): 161.7–162.1 (fragmentary); Tib. (K): 250.10–250.14.

[47] Skt. (K): 164.4–164.6; Tib. (K): 255.11–255.14.

[48] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 253.11.

through the chapters. We can do this by following the events closely, for example, and by keeping track of when and where *dhāraṇī*s appear and are used. But what most strongly makes the case for reading the sūtra as a coherent narrative unit is that the sūtra's narrator returns to Māra and represents him consistently throughout. The authors/redactors were not compelled to check in with Māra from time to time, but they did. And the fact that they did not only permits but invites us to approach the sūtra's chapters as a coherent whole tied together by Māra's story, to interrogate the workings of Māra's narrative and what it aims to impart to readers. Let us now turn to the promised close reading of the sūtra's first chapter to show that Māra's affective orientation is central to his narrative.

III

Māra's first appearance in the sūtra is as an object of paratextual discourse—his name, as we saw above, appears in the name of the *dhāraṇī* called Unharmed by the Army of Māra given in the homage section at the beginning of the sūtra. But he appears as an actant early in the sūtra's first chapter, and he remains central throughout. Although he appears elsewhere in the sūtra—in chapter two as a karmically related actant, and in chapters three, five, six, nine, and eleven as an actant proper—we restrict ourselves here to following Māra closely through the first chapter. As we will see, the sūtra foregrounds and thematizes Māra's affective orientation—or, to put a finer point on it, his affective misalignment. To reiterate what has been said or otherwise gestured at in the introduction and other places above, by *affective orientation* I have in mind both the capacity to affect as well as the tendency to feel certain ways on account of certain objects of discourse and experience. By *affective misalignment* I mean particularly to identify, from the normative perspective of the sūtra, an incapacity to affect coupled with a tendency to be affected in a way that is perceived as *out of line*.

The analysis will be organized according to what we will call episodes, sections of the sūtra that center on interactions between Māra and other actants. We will begin with a discussion of Māra's interaction with Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana and his subsequent interaction with the Buddha, which together affect Māra so deeply that he retreats to his lamentation room (Skt. *śokāgāra*; Tib. *mya ngan gyi khang pa*). From there, we turn to interactions between Māra and his courtesans and his children, at the end of which he again retreats to his lamentation room in a state of heightened negative emotionality, increasingly isolated and with diminished capacity to affect. This room is where the first chapter leaves Māra until the beginning of chapter three. And it is also how the first chapter ends. What the sūtra gives us, then, is what we call a cliffhanger. After narrating a particularly intense moment in Māra's story, the narrator turns our attention elsewhere. This structural feature of the sūtra, I argue, functions to highlight Māra's affective misalignment as a prominent theme—again, *misalignment* according to the sūtra's normative framework—and thus demonstrates why the *Precious Banner* is particularly well suited for analysis in terms of affect and further still in terms of social formation.

Māra, Śāriputra, and Maudgalyāyana

The first chapter begins with a (re)telling of the "conversion" of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana by Aśvajit. This story,[49] likely familiar to Buddhist audiences, provides the gateway into the sūtra's story of Māra. To summarize the events briefly: Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana are wandering ascetics on a joint quest for immortality. Apparently experimenting with a range of

[49] The *Precious Banner*'s version of the story, to which Tāranātha refers in the epilogue to his *Sun of Faith* (as we saw in Chapter One), is similar in structure to the version found in the Pāli *Mahāvagga*. It differs in some interesting respects, however, the most significant being the inclusion of Māra. In this, the *Precious Banner*'s version differs also from the expansive treatment of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana's "conversion" in the *Chapter on Going Forth*. See I. B. Horner, trans., *The Book of Discipline*, 6 vols. (Lancaster: Pali Text Society, 1951), 4:52ff; Robert Miller et al., trans., *The Chapter on Going Forth*, version 1.35.8, last accessed March 3, 2022 (84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha, 2022 [2018]), https://read.84000.co/translation/toh1-1.html, 1.283ff.

methods, each promises to tell the other if he finds something that works. One day, Śāriputra sees Aśvajit and is captivated.[50] After learning a bit about the Buddha and his teachings from Aśvajit, Śāriputra returns to tell Maudgalyāyana, after which they decide to make their way to the Buddha's presence with the intention of taking refuge.

When Māra catches wind of this, readers are right away given a glimpse into his inner life. Upon hearing that Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana plan to take refuge in the Buddha, Māra thinks to himself:

> "Alas! If these two become students of the ascetic Gautama, they will render my kingdom empty! I will go there and dissuade those two good people from going forth and will make them hold wrong views."[51]

The narrator does not directly describe Māra's emotional condition at this point—such descriptions come later. But readers can immediately tell that Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana's decision to go forth under the teaching of Śākyamuni upsets Māra not only by the fact that his thought begins with ***hā* / *kyi hud***—an expression of sadness, pain, anger, or general unease—but also by the content and tone of the subsequent internal monologue. And readers also see that the perceived threat mobilizes Māra to act.

Such glimpses into Māra's inner world occur relatively often in the *Precious Banner*. They are valuable insofar as they allow readers to adopt this actant's private, limited perspective on events, while at the same time having the broader view offered by the omniscient narrative

[50] On the power of monastic bodies, past and present, see Susanne Mrozik, *Virtuous Bodies: The Physical Dimensions of Morality in Buddhist Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) and Jeffrey Samuels, *Attracting the Heart: Social Relations and the Aesthetics of Emotion in Sri Lankan Monastic Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), esp. 21–42.

[51] Skt. (K): missing, though *kyi hud* is likely rendering *hā* (see, e.g., Skt. [K]: 83.14 and Tib. [K]: 94.17); Tib. (K): kyi hud de gnyis gal te dge sbyong gau ta ma'i slob mar gyur na bdag gi bdud kyi yul stongs par byed par 'gyur gyis | bdag der song ste skyes bu dam pa de gnyis rab tu 'byung ba las bzlog la sdig pa can gyi lta ba 'dzin du 'jug go snyam ste || (14.9–14.12).

perspective. (In other words, readers know what Māra knows [and what he feels about what he knows] as well as some of the things he doesn't know.) As we will see, such representations rarely, if ever, stand alone in the narrative. They are often accompanied by descriptions of his internal state (offered by the narrator, by other actants, or by Māra himself) as well as by words and actions on Māra's part in response to whatever conditioned his internal state. In any event, this particular incident marks a moment of destabilization for Māra in this narrative. Those familiar with Buddhist literature will know that this is not the *first* destabilizing moment in Māra's broader story—if *firsts* can be coherently spoken of in the Buddhist imaginary—but this is the first instance readers are given in this particular narrative.[52]

In this context, we know that the decision of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana is what prompts Māra to lament silently to himself. We do not know how he learns of their decision. But we are told what he plans to do, why he plans to do it, and what he does. Worried that his kingdom will become empty as the Buddha continues to attract followers—worried, that is, in a way that mirrors how he felt when Śākyamuni sat down under the bodhi tree, where the latter would eventually attain awakening (a parallel we will have occasion to explore further in Chapter Four below)—Māra makes a number of attempts to mitigate the problem. First, he takes on the guise of Aśvajit (we'll call him Pseudo-Aśvajit when appropriate), whose brief iteration of Śākyamuni's teachings—an expanded version of the famous *ye dharmā* formula[53]—prompted Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana to go to the Buddha. Aśvajit's words are as follows:

> "Just as the Guide taught that the world arises with karma and the afflictions as its primary and efficient causes, he also taught the efficient cause of the cessation of karma

[52] As mentioned above, a temporally, though not narratively, prior destabilizing moment in Māra's karmic history is told in the sūtra's second chapter. This story will be addressed in Chapter Three.

[53] Ngawang Lobzang Chöden gives this formula in his *Explanation of the Essence of Dependent Origination*, as we saw in Chapter One. For more on the formula, see Daniel Boucher, "The *Pratītyasamutpādagāthā* and Its Role in the Medieval Cult of the Relics," *JIABS* 14, no. 1 (1991): 1–27.

> and the afflictions. Himself knowing the most excellent liberation, where there is no suffering dependent on birth, old age, and death, the Wise Bull teaches it."[54]

With the intention of turning the would-be disciples back from going to the Buddha for refuge, Pseudo-Aśvajit approaches them and takes back what Aśvajit previously said to them:

> "What I said to you earlier about the primary cause, for example, and the efficient cause was false. I said that in order to ascertain limitations in your mental practice and how you are. All that was said is useless. There is no cause at all. In this case, how could there be any results of good and bad actions? || 1.9 ||
>
> "Right away, you should both indulge yourselves and have fun. Death does not exist, nor does birth, illness, and old age. Suffering does not exist, nor does the world beyond. There are no results of actions, beneficial or not. There is no causality. The son of the Śākyas speaks for the sake of gain in this life. Do not go to him with faith." || 1.10 ||[55]

Pseudo-Aśvajit is sly here. He first claims to have lied previously, then frames their prior exchange as a test. Whether Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana failed or passed the test is not clear. On the one hand, it seems they passed insofar as Pseudo-Aśvajit is now giving them alleged access to a more rarefied presentation of the truth. But on the other hand, it seems they failed insofar as they were on their way to see Śākyamuni. The rhetorical ambiguity here is noteworthy, as is its likely status as a play on skillful means (Skt. *upāyakauśalya*; Tib. *thabs mkhas*). While legible as a slippery means by which Māra aims to draw in his audience by implying they are somehow at once bereft and worthy of privileged knowledge, Pseudo-Aśvajit's "correction" of

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[54] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): ji ltar 'jig rten las dang nyon mongs rgyur bcas byed rgyu ldan 'byung dang || las dang nyon mongs pa dag ldog rgyu de yang 'dren pas rab tu gsungs || gang na skye dang rga dang rgud pa'i sdug bsngal nges par mi gnas pa || thar pa mchog de smra ba'i khyu mchog de yis rang gis mkhyen te gsungs || 1.2 || (9.12–9.17).

[55] Skt. (K): uktaṃ pūrvam idaṃ mayā hi vitathaṃ hetūpamaṃ kāraṇaṃ yuvayor eva mahaḥpracāraniyamaṃ vijñāyatuṃ kiṃ yuvāṃ | sarvaṃ caitad apārthakaṃ hi kathitaṃ nasty atra hetuḥ punaḥ kṛṣṇasyāsya śubhasya karmaṇa iha prāptiḥ phalaṃ vā kutaḥ || 1.9 || kṣipraṃ kāmaguṇeṣv atīva carataṃ krīḍāṃ yuvāṃ vindataṃ mṛtyur nāsti na janma nārtijarase lokaḥ paro nāsti vā | puṇyāpuṇyaphalaṃ ca karmajanitaṃ nāsty atra hetukriyā lābhāye vadatīha śākyatanayo mā śraddhayā gacchathaḥ || 1.10 || (1.5–2.4); Tib. (K): kho bos sngar smras rgyu dang byed rgyu lta bu de ni log pa ste || khyed gnyis yid kyi spyod pa ci la nges pa bgam par bya ba'i phyir || smras pa de dag thams cad don yod ma yin 'di la rgyu yang med || dge dang mi dge'i las de'i 'bras bu thob pa 'di na ga la yod || 1.9 || myur du khyed gnyis 'dod pa'i yon tan rnams la rab spyod rtsed mo byos || skye rga na 'chi med cing sdug bsngal med de 'jig rten pha rol med || bsod nams bsod nams ma yin las bskyed 'bras med rgyu dang byed pa med || rnyed phyir 'dir ni śā kya'i bu yis smras kyis dad pas ma 'gro zhig || 1.10 || (14.17–15.4).

his own prior words is not so different from what the Buddha does in other Mahāyāna literature (underwritten by appeals to skillful means).[56] The *real* truth, Māra as Pseudo-Aśvajit claims now to be revealing, is that the moral law of cause and effect does not obtain. Therefore, the pair should recognize Śākyamuni for the fraud that he is and enjoy the pleasures of the world.

Māra fails. And he will fail time and time again—it is a refrain that readers will come to expect—which only makes him more upset. Readers gradually see Māra unravel as the chapter unfolds. And this unraveling is often signaled by emotional vocabulary. (Compared to what we will see later, Māra's course of action here is rather tame.) But before moving forward, it is important to point out that emotionality as such is not coded negatively. We are not dealing with some kind of arch-rationalist fantasy here. Rather, certain emotional responses to certain events, objects, or facts about the world are coded negatively—by virtue of the fact that it is Māra who feels them (and, as a correlate, loses his capacity to affect others)—while others are coded positively. With that in mind, let us return to the aftermath of this first episode and continue to track Māra.

Upon being addressed by Pseudo-Aśvajit, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana sense that something is not quite right. In fact, they immediately recognize that it is in fact Māra, not Aśvajit, who has approached them. Turning their backs toward Māra, they form a huddle with their followers. Śāriputra says:

> "Listen up, you brahmin youths. Remember the faults of saṃsāra. The world is afflicted by old age and surrounded by death. To abandon those two, we would do well to take up wandering." || 1.11 ||[57]

[56] For more on this and other strategies by which Mahāyāna sūtras relocate the entirety of Buddhist tradition in themselves, even if/when they say something at odds with prior tradition, see Alan Cole, *Text as Father*; idem, *Fetishizing Tradition*.

[57] Skt. (K): śṛunata yūyaṃ māṇavakāḥ smarata saṃsāradoṣān || jarayā pīḍito loko mṛtyunā parivāritaḥ | ubhayos tatprahāṇāya pravrajyāṃ sādhu gṛhṇatha || 1.11 || (2.7–2.10); Tib. (K) differs, placing the first non-metrical line in verse: bram ze'i khye'u khyod nyon cig 'khor ba'i skyon || dran par gyis la 'jig rten rga ba yis || gzir zhing 'chi bdag gis ni rab bskor ba || de gnyis spang phyir rab byung legs par zung || 1.11 || (15.9–15.12).

After Śāriputra rallies the troops, so to speak, Maudgalyāyana turns to Māra—unmasked, though still standing there in the guise of Aśvajit—and delivers the following strong rebuke:

> "Recognized as superior and upheld in the mind of the wise, the Dharma brings an end to the three sufferings. Therefore, there is nothing anywhere that could shake our conviction. We are ever determined to pacify craving with steadfast mind—may our mind not be agitated by the words of a jackal in the form of a lion." || 1.12 ||[58]

With this response, making crystal clear just how badly he had failed, Māra retreats. The narrator describes him at this point as pained, dispirited, and wishing things had gone differently (Skt. *duḥkhito durmanā vipratisārī*; Tib. *sdug bsngal zhing yid mi bde ste yid la gcags*). This set of adjectives describes Māra with some frequency in this chapter, often in the less than desirable (from his perspective, at least) aftermath of similar events.

Given the frequency of these modifiers, it is worth spending a bit of time drawing out their affective resonances.[59] The word *duḥkhita* is derived from the word *duḥkha*, and thus readily brings to mind all manner of misery and suffering, from the particular to the existential. The use of this descriptor at the outset asks us to appreciate the broad affective force of this encounter. Though his failures are particular, and thus have a localized sting, they also carry with

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[58] Skt. (K): ājñātaḥ pravaraḥ satāṃ matidharo dharmas triduḥkhāntakṛt kaścin nāsti yadāvayor matim imāṃ vyuccālayet sarvathā | tṛṣṇāyāḥ praśamāya dhīramanasāv āvāṃ sadā vyutthitau mā siṃhākṛtinā sṛgālavacanair āvāṃ mater bhrāmaya || 1.12 || (2.12–2.15); Tib. (K) differs, pluralizing *dharma* (*chos rnams*) and thus perhaps referring more specifically to the liberative potential of analyzing phenomena into smaller constituents: mkhas pa'i blo 'chang sdug bsngal gsum mthar phyin mchog chos rnams kun shes kyis || rnam pa kun tu bdag cag blo gros 'di las bskyod nus su yang med || sred pa rab zhi bya phyir bdag cag brtan pa'i yid kyis rtag tu 'bad || seng ge'i gzugs can va yi tshig gis nged kyi blo gros ma bsgyur cig || 1.12 || (15.14–15.20).

[59] A similar phrase occurs quite often in Pāli literature. Michael Nichols writes: "Those who have read the early Pāli stories of Māra, particularly those collected in the *Mārasaṃyutta*, know that there is a stock phrase that ends most of the encounters in that text between the Buddha and Māra. After Māra has taken his shot at distracting, tempting, or intimidating the Buddha and inevitably fails, the following is related: 'Then Māra the Evil One, saying "The Blessed One knows me, the Well-Born One knows me," saddened and downtrodden, disappeared from there'" (*Malleable Mara: Transformations of a Buddhist Symbol of Evil* [Albany: State University of New York Press, 2019], 193). While I see the point, I hesitate to dismiss this as a stock phrase for reasons that will become clear below.

them a sense of generalized anguish. That Māra is not physically harmed in this interaction suggests that he is afflicted by primarily mental *duḥkha*. And that this is the case is made clear by the next adjective in the series. The word *durmanas* is what is known as a *bahuvrīhi*, a kind of compound used to modify a noun (stated or implied) outside of the compound itself—a standard English example is *redcoat*, as in *the redcoats are coming*. It is composed of the prefix *duḥ-* (*dur-* in this case on account of euphony rules), which lends words a sense of *bad*, *difficult*, or *low*, and the noun *manas*, which hovers around words like *mind*, *spirit*, or *attitude*. To capture the sense, we might translate the term as downcast, depressed, disheartened, or dispirited. Any such translation would be suitable, provided the weight of the adjective tilted the scale toward the mental. The third adjective in our series, *vipratisārin*, is formed by adding the possessive suffix *-in* to the noun *vipratisāra*. Edgerton's dictionary entry for this noun reads "discontent for something done or not done (usually, but not always by oneself) in the past."[60] We might say, then, that it means something like *regret* or *remorse*. Such a simple translation will not do in this context, however, at least not without a bit of clarification. While it may not yet be clear, it will become abundantly so that Māra does not *regret* or *feel remorse* for his actions in the sense usually meant (at least in my idiolect). Rather, he regrets how things turn out. He wishes things would have gone differently. Drawing on Edgerton, we could say that he is discontent about *not* acting in a way that resulted in the attainment of his aims. *Regret* carries this sense, to be sure, but it is not the first thing that comes to mind when I hear the word. Taken together, these three words signal Māra's affective orientation as he believes himself to be watching his kingdom slowly erode.

[60] *BHSD*, s.v. vipratisāra.

Such affects as the ones Māra experiences here can weaken and paralyze—lethargy is often a bedfellow of malaise, as Śāntideva notes in a quite different context.[61] But Māra is not idle for long. He springs back into action as soon as Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana start to make their way toward Śākyamuni. Though acting from a distance, his tactics are no less direct. In a passage to be treated in Chapter Five, Māra attempts to manipulate the perception of the pair and their followers such that they are terrified and turn back. But he is unsuccessful.[62] This failure, I suggest, is on account of Māra's affective misalignment as well as the proper affective alignment of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. For reasons that will grow increasingly clear as we proceed, to be aligned with the Buddha is to have access to his power. Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana thus do not experience the frightening obstacles at all. From one perspective, the Buddha here interferes with Māra's capacity to affect. But as will be explored in Chapter Five, it is also the case that Śākyamuni interferes with the latter group's capacity to be affected. With this first episode, we are already beginning to see the implications of proper alignment. There are evaluative links being made between (mis)alignment, capacities/tendencies to affect and be affected, and social boundaries, and these links will only come into greater relief as we move forward in the text.

Māra and Śākyamuni

The next episode follows closely on the heels of the first, and it too involves disguises and attempts at deceptive persuasion. In the moments following Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana's

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[61] Writing on the importance of cultivating patience (*kṣānti*) in the *Training Anthology* (*Śikṣāsamuccaya*), Śāntideva says that "Depression drains you of joy and paralyzes you" (līnatvād vā hatotsāho gṛhyate parayāpadā). Cecil Bendall, ed., *Çikshāsamuccaya: A Compendium of Buddhistic Teaching Compiled by Çāntideva, Chiefly from Earlier Mahāyāna-Sūtras* (St. Pétersbourg: Imperial Academy of Sciences, 1902), 180.10 (Skt. text); Charles Goodman, trans., *The Training Anthology of Śāntideva: A Translation of the Śikṣā-samuccaya* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 179 (English trans.).

[62] Skt. (K): 3.14–4.10, fragmentary; Tib. (K): 16.14–17.6.

ordination, Māra appears in the Buddha's assembly—first in the guise of Śiva and again in the guise of Brahmā. (As above, we will refer to him as Pseudo-Śiva and Pseudo-Brahmā when appropriate.) Standing before Śākyamuni, Pseudo-Śiva claims superiority over the Buddha and offers to show him the real path:

> "Wise men who conduct themselves in accordance with the meaning of the treatises have gone to the farther shore with respect to knowledge. They all bow down before my two good feet. I am their guide. Hey Gautama, quickly go to me for refuge today together with your circle of students right away. I will teach you the wide and clear path leading to nirvāṇa." || 1.14 ||[63]

These are some big claims, to be sure, but they are not surprising given their purported source and his reputation. Categorically rejecting the backhandedly generous offer, the Buddha fires back with a comparison of Maheśvara's path and his own, saying:

> "Your path leads living beings to an unfortunate destiny and makes them meet with an ocean of suffering. This path of mine dries up the ocean of suffering for the animate and inanimate world. Why do you prattle on so boldly, you crooked, shameless windbag with the voice of a jackal? You are defeated. The work of Māra can't affect me in this life at all." || 1.15 ||[64]

Śākyamuni does not call out Māra directly here, but instead only refers to the "work of Māra" (Skt. *mārakarman*; Tib. *bdud kyi las*). This, I think, is a rather slick way to throw both Māra and Śiva under the bus with a single verse. Though we cannot say much at all about the "original" version of the sūtra, the fact that Śiva is called Maheśvara in the Gilgit variant suggests that the

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[63] Skt. (K): ye śāstrārthapa . . . vidyāsu pāraṃgatāḥ te sarve praṇamaṃti matsucaraṇau teṣām ahaṃ nāyakaḥ | kṣipraṃ maccharaṇaṃ saśiṣyapariṣaṃ gacchādya bho gautama sphītaṃ nivṛti . . . taṃ vakṣyāmi mārgaṃ tava || 1.14 || (6.11–6.14, fragmentary); Tib. (K): gang dag bstan bcos don spyod mkhas pa rig pa'i pha rol song || de kun nga yi rkang la phyag 'tshal de dag 'dren pa nga || gau tam slob ma 'khor bcas nga la deng myur skyabs 'tshol cig || mya ngam [read: mya ngan, see Skt. (K): 6 n. 21] 'das 'gro rgyas pa gsal ba'i lam ni khyed la bshad || 1.14 || (18.16–18.19).

[64] Skt. (K): tvanmārgo jagato 'sya durgativaho duḥkhārṇavaprāpako mārgo me sa carācarasya jagato duḥkhārṇavocchoṣakaḥ | kiṃ bhūyo lapasi pragalbhamukharo dhṛṣṭaṃ sṛgālasvaraḥ vyābhagno 'si na mārakarma iha me śakto 'si kartuṃ punaḥ || 1.15 || (7.1–7.4); Tib. (K): khyod lam 'gro ba 'di dag ngan 'gror 'dren cing sdug bsngal rgya mtsho rnyed par byed || nga yi lam ni rgyu dang mi rgyu 'gro ba'i sdug bsngal rgya mtsho skems byed pa || 'chal ba 'dzem pa med cing mu cor smra ba va skad da yang ci zhig zer || khyod ni bcom zin bdud kyi las kyis nga la da yang 'dir ni byed mi nus || 1.15 || (18.21–19.4).

sūtra—to borrow Peter Bisschop's characterization of the *Coffer's Display* (*Kāraṇḍavyūha*)—at some point circulated in a "strong milieu of Śaivism."[65] Conflating Śiva and Māra, or at least putting the two on the same team, thus allows for the Buddha to assert his superiority over both at the same time.

Whatever the case may be, Śākyamuni is met with a second familiar face after ridding himself of Pseudo-Maheśvara. In the guise of Brahmā, Māra then appears before the Buddha and encourages him to reap the fruits of his labor by choosing right then and there to enter final nirvāṇa. In a tone markedly different from that of Pseudo-Maheśvara, and in a way that inverts the words Brahmā says to the Buddha in traditional accounts of their interaction after the latter attains awakening,[66] Pseudo-Brahmā speaks in a spirit of deferential concern:

> "By means of your insight, the sprouts of existence—your karma and afflictions—have been crushed. Why, then, do you endure further miseries here for the sake of living beings like this, Sage? Nowhere in this world, Master, are there people fit to be your vessel. Devoid of defects, why don't you pass into nirvāṇa right away? The time is now!" || 1.16 ||[67]

The difference in tone here is clear, almost drastic, but the end game remains the same. By contrast to Pseudo-Maheśvara, who attempts to neutralize the threat of Śākyamuni by coaxing

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[65] Peter C. Bisschop, "Buddhist and Śaiva Interactions in the Kali Age: The *Śivadharmaśāstra* as a Source of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*, *IIJ* 61, no. 4 (2018): 396–410, at 400.

[66] The *Saṃyutta Nikāya*'s account of the moments following the Buddha's awakening depicts Brahmā begging the Buddha to teach. While the Buddha expresses hesitation, Brahmā manages to convince him that—contrary to what Māra says as Pseudo-Brahmā in this context—there are indeed beings who are suitable vessels for the teaching. See Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans., *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000), 231–33, at 232–33. For more on this episode in Buddhist literature, and particularly in the Pāli canon, see Dhivan Thomas Jones, "Why Did Brahmā Ask the Buddha to Teach?," *Buddhist Studies Review* 26, no. 1 (2009): 85–102.

[67] Skt. (K): karmakleśabhavāṃkurapramathanaṃ yat te kṛtaṃ prajñayā duḥkhāny utsahasīha kiṃ punar itas sattvārtham evaṃ mune | nāsty asmiṃ jagati prabho kvacid api tvatpātrabhūto janaḥ kasmāt tvaṃ vigatāmayo na tvaritaṃ nirvāsi kālo hy ayam || 1.16 || (7.7–7.11); Tib. (K): khyod kyi shes rab kyis ni las dang nyon mongs srid pa'i myu gu rab tu bsal || de yi slan chad thub pa ji slad sems can don 'dir 'di ltar sdug bsngal spro || gtso bo 'gro ba 'di na khyod kyi snod 'gyur skye bo gang na'ang ma mchis te || dus 'di lags na skyon dang bral khyod ci yi slad du mya ngan myur mi 'da' || 1.16 || (19.8–19.15).

him and his followers down the wrong path, Pseudo-Brahmā resorts to flattery and strategic silence. While he extols the power of Śākyamuni's insight (Skt. *prajñā*; Tib. *shes rab*), he also omits any reference to his boundless compassion and his skill in liberative strategies. Though Māra likely thinks himself clever, the Buddha picks up on this omission and, in a way that echoes but slightly modifies the way in which Śākyamuni agrees to teach in traditional accounts,[68] makes it central to his retort:

> "I see unworthy beings, as numerous as the sands of the Ganges. Through compassion, I will liberate those who are established as my disciples. Only when I finish liberating living beings—the middling, the best, and the lowest—will I pass into nirvāṇa. Why, foolish one, are you inviting me to treachery?" || 1.17 ||[69]

After these two additional failures, Māra is again described as pained, dispirited, and full of regret (Skt. *duḥkhito durmanā vipratisārī*; Tib. *sdug bsngal zhing yid mi bde ste yid la gcags*). But that is not all we are given. The narrator further tells readers:

> Then, Wicked Māra—pained, dispirited, and regretful—disappeared, went to his own palace, entered the lamentation room, and sat down. And at that very moment, all the beings living throughout Māra's house asked one another: "Why did our great king enter the lamentation room and sit down? Does anyone know?"[70]

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[68] Initially thinking the Dharma would be too difficult for beings to fathom, the Buddha surveys the world and sees that there are indeed some beings—in the traditional Pāli account, conceptualized as lotuses of various quality—who would be receptive (Bodhi, trans., *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, 233). Here in the *Precious Banner*, by contrast, the Buddha vows to stick around until even the lowest are ferried to the further shore.

[69] Skt. (K): gaṃgāvālukasannibhān asadṛśān sattvān prapaśyāmy ahaṃ ye me vainayikāḥ sthitāḥ karuṇayā te saṃpramokṣyā mayā | madhyotkṛṣṭajaghanyatām upagato nirmokṣya niṣṭhā jagat nirvāsyāmi tato nimantrayasi mām śāṭhyena kiṃ durmate || 1.17 || (7.13–8.2); Tib. (K): ngas 'dul gang 'khod sems can mthungs med gang gā'i bye ma snyed || ngas mthong de dag nga yi snying rjes thar par bya ba yin || 'gro ba rab 'bring ngan par gyur pa thar te mthar thug na || de nas mya ngan 'da' yis blo gros ngan pa g.yos ci bskul || 1.17 || (19.17–19.21).

[70] Skt. (K): atha punar api māraḥ pāpīmān duḥkhito durmanā vipratisārī tatraivāntardhāya svabhavanaṃ gatvā śokāgāraṃ praviśya niṣaṇṇaḥ | tatkṣaṇam eva ca sarvamārabhavananivāsinaś ca sattvāḥ parasparaṃ pṛcchaṃti sma | ko hetur yad ayam asmākaṃ mahārājaḥ śokāgāraṃ praviśya niṣaṇṇo na ca kaścij jānīte || (8.3–8.7); Tib. (K): de nas yang bdud sdig can sdug bsngal zhing yid mi bde nas yid la gcags te de nyid du mi snang bar gyur nas rang gi gnas su song ste mya ngan gyi khang par zhugs nas 'dug pa dang | de'i mod la bdud kyi gnas na 'khod pa'i sems can kun phan tshun 'di skad du ci'i rgyus bdag cag gi rgyal po chen po 'di mya ngan gyi khang par zhugs te 'dug pa su'ang mi shes so zhes 'dri'o || (20.1–20.5).

With this we are pointed in the direction of the next episode—the exchange between Māra and his courtesans. But first a brief excursus on the term *śokāgāra* is in order.

The term *śokāgāra* does not appear often in Sanskrit literature. It occurs twenty-one times, so far as I can tell, and exclusively in Buddhist literature—five times in the *Precious Banner*, twelve times in various *avadāna*s, and four times in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*. While Monier-Williams glosses this compound as "an apartment to which women retire for weeping,"[71] in all instances it is a man who enters to the room.[72] And on my reading, this body of literature depicts men entering the lamentation room not necessarily because it is inappropriate for men to express sorrow or other similar emotions in public, though this is possible, but rather

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[71] Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, s.v. śoka (1593, col. 2: sokâgāra). Egerton appears to be the only other dictionary to contain an entry for this compound: "*grief-house*, *hall of lamentation*" (*BHSD*, s.v. śokāgāra). I was unable to locate the compound in Wilson, Apte, or Macdonell (Sanskrit-English), in Burnouf or Stchoupak (Sanskrit-French), or in Böhtlingk and Roth (Sanskrit-German).

[72] Karen Muldoon-Hules notes the discrepancy between Monier-Williams's gloss and actual usage in her 2011 dissertation, but she does not investigate the matter further ("Brides of the Buddha and Other Stories: Reading the Women's Stories of the 8th *Varga* of the *Avadānaśataka* in Context" [PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2011], 117 n. 224). She appears to remove this note from the book based on the dissertation (*Brides of the Buddha: Nuns' Stories from the Avadānaśataka* [Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017]). Not everyone has noticed the discrepancy, however, and it has led to some stretched interpretations. Phillip Scott Ellis Green, for example, cites Monier-Wiliams's entry to bolster his claim that the story of Muktā contains a role reversal between herself and her father. "Moreover," he writes, "an obvious role reversal has occurred between father and daughter. The daughter, for example, takes control in planning her own future, not her father. Further, it is the daughter who comforts the father. Somewhat amusingly, it is the father we find pouting in his *śokāgāram* . . . while staring out the window lost in thought and deeply troubled. Here the stereotypical image of a father coming to comfort his daughter, who has shut herself away in her room weeping, has been reversed" ("Female Imagery in the *Avadānaśataka*" [Master's thesis, University of Florida, 2007], 42). While Muktā's taking her fate into her own hands surely amounts to a role reversal, that only men enter the śokāgāra significantly problematizes Green's claim that the father's entry into the śokāgāra is part of that reversal.

For the instances of the compound, see: P. L. Vaidya, ed., *Avadānaśatakam* (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1958), 27.1–27.2, 168.26, 188.19–188.20, 190.19, 197.22–197.23, and 217.12–217.13; idem, ed., *Divyāvadānam* (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1959), 177.26–177.27; Kanga Takahata, ed., *Ratnamālāvadāna: A Garland of Precious Gems or a Collection of Edifying Tales Told in a Metrical Form Belonging to the Mahāyāna* (Tokyo: Toyo Bunku, 1954), 104.9–104.11, 273.29–273.30, 404.19–404.21, 439.6–439.7, and 439.10–439.11; Raniero Gnoli, ed., with the assistance of T. Venkatacharya, *The Gilgit Manuscript of the Saṅghabhedavastu: Being the 17th and Last Section of the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādin*, 2 vols. (Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1978), 2:161.7–161.10; and *GM*, 3.1:64.16–64.18, 3.1:64.21, and 3.1:65.5.

to signify to readers that he needs some time to process a perceived crisis and to plan his next moves.[73] The *śokāgāra*, in other words, is a literary device. Entry into the room has a similar function in the *Precious Banner*'s narrative world, too. It serves as a cry for help to other actants. Unlike readers, actants are able to offer assistance of one kind or another to the sorrowful party. And this is what we will see in the coming pages, which give readers insight into why Māra's courtesans and children come in turn to his aid as well as the aftermath of their interactions. That the narrator places Māra in the lamentation room serves not only to add a bit of drama to the story but also to highlight Māra's emotions as thematically central. That this is the case will be further evidenced not only by the other mentions of the lamentation room elsewhere but also by the introduction of heightened emotional vocabulary as the narrative develops.

Māra and the Courtesans

The next several twists and turns in Māra's narrative occur while he is seated in the lamentation room. He retreats to the room after being rebuffed by the Buddha. Readers know the true identity of Pseudo-Maheśvara and Pseudo-Brahmā, thanks to the narrator, and they can also reasonably surmise that the Buddha knew precisely whom he was addressing (though this is not explicitly said to be the case). Readers also well know how Māra is feeling when he enters the room. The inhabitants of his palace, by contrast, are perplexed. They see him storm off to the lamentation room, but no one knows why.

Sensing that their presence is needed, Māra's courtesans—called *kanyā*, which often means *daughter* but here clearly means something more like *harem girl*—come to cheer him up with song and dance. Māra asks them to stop, but the courtesans do not seem to get the memo that their master is not in the mood. Seven times Māra has to cry out for them to stop before the

[73] For more on this, see Adam T. Miller, "Who Enters the Lamentation Room, and Why?: Theorizing '*śokāgāra*' as Literary Device in (Buddhist) Sanskrit Literature" (manuscript in progress).

courtesans fall quiet and still. One of the courtesans, Vidyudvalgusvarā, breaks (in accordance with her name, which means Melodious Lightning) what must have been a rather awkward silence:

> "Master, did you see a death omen just now? Did something agitate you when you were out in the world today? Do you have some powerful enemy here? Why do you grieve and not pass the time joyfully?" || 1.18 ||[74]

Vidyudvalgusvarā surely means well with this line of questioning. Neither she nor any other courtesan had witnessed the events discussed above. So, for all she knows, Māra just woke up on the wrong side of the bed. The first three questions seem almost rhetorical—from her vantage point, the answer to each of them would obviously be *no* on any other day. But the last question is certainly an earnest one: What could have happened such that the Lord of Desire does not feel like cutting loose and having a good time with his girlfriends?

Māra's response to this question is critical in terms of narrative development. It does not yield anything near what he hopes it would. In fact, it yields the exact opposite. He says to his courtesans:

> "I have an enemy in the world who is strong, whose thought is restrained, whose mind is knowledgeable in the varieties of illusion—the son of the Śākyas. And if he is not destroyed one way or another, he will render my Desire Realm empty." || 1.19 ||[75]

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[74] Skt. (K): kiṃ te vibho cyutinimittam ihādya dṛṣṭaṃ kiṃ vā jagad dhutavahākulam adya jātaṃ | śatrus tavādhikabalaḥ kim ihāsti kaścit . . . samāśrayase saśokaḥ || 1.18 || (9.5–9.8, fragmentary); Tib. (K): gtso bo khyod kyis deng 'dir 'chi 'pho'i ltas shig gzigs sam ci || 'on tam ci zhig de ring 'gro ba zhugs kyis 'khrugs gyur tam || 'on te 'di na khyod dgra stobs chen 'ga' zhig mchis lags sam || ci yi slad du khyed ni dgyes par mi bzhugs thugs ngan mdzad || 1.18 || (20.22–21.2); Cf. Dutt's reconstruction: kiṃ te vibho cyutinimittamihādya dṛṣṭaṃ kiṃ vā jagaddhutavahākulamadya jātaṃ | śatrustavādhikabalaḥ kimihāsti kaścit kiṃ vā na nandasi samāśrayase saśokam || 1.18 || (*GM*, 4:13.13–13.16).

[75] Skt. (K): śatrur mamāsti balavān nigṛhītacetā māyāsu śikṣitamatir bhuvi śākyaputraḥ | tatprakṣayo yadi na cāsti kathaṃcid evaṃ śūnyaṃ kariṣyati mameha sa kāmadhātum || 1.19 || (9.10–9.13); Tib. (K): nga la dgra yod pa ni stobs ldan sems thul ba || sa steng śā kya'i bu pho sgyu ma bslabs pa'i blo || de ni ci nas gal te brlag par ma gyur na || de yis nga yi 'dod khams 'di ni stongs par byed || 1.19 || (21.4–21.7).

Vidyudvalgusvarā responds with an eagerness to help coupled with an almost flippant attitude toward the severity of the problem:

> "Master, by what means, strength, vigor, and courage is he to be totally destroyed here and now? Who is strong enough to put an end to the ocean of craving whose long banks encircle the triple-world?" || 1.20 ||[76]

The first question seems to be an earnest one, if a bit naïve from Māra's perspective, while the second seems rhetorical. Himself not yet sure which course of action to take, Māra responds only to the rhetorical question, describing his enemy in three verses:

> "Whose snares are generosity, temporary vows, ambition, pity, and commitment, and who wields a bow and the supreme weapon of the empty and signless, he teaches the cessation of becoming once and for all, having conformed with the path of tranquility delivered from saṃsāra. || 1.21 ||
>
> His students dwell in empty cities and towns, in the interior of forests, and in mountain hollows, too. With minds engaged in meditative concentration, they live in solitude and are always intent on the destruction of faults in accordance with the practice. || 1.22 ||
>
> The good Upatiṣya and Kolita, with the help of the Buddha's supernormal potency, powers, and compassion, are disciplined by the Sage. By whose well-disciplined Dharma the triple-world is to be disciplined in accordance with thorough practice—he will render this Desire Realm of mine empty." || 1.23 ||[77]

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[76] Skt. (K): svāminn upāyabalavīryaparākramaiḥ kaiḥkartuṃ kṣayaṃ param aśeṣam ihādya tasya | kaḥ śaknuyāt tribhavabandanadīrghatīraṃ tṛṣṇārṇavaṃ kṣapayituṃ valasā . . . yuktaḥ || 1.20 || (9.15–10.2, fragmentary); Tib. (K): gtso bo srig gsum bcings sred rgya mtsho mtha' rings la || zad bgyid nus pa'i stobs dang ldan pa su zhig mchis || bdag po thabs stobs brtson 'grus rtsal rnams gang gis kyang || de la de ring ma lus bgyid par nus ma mchis || 1.20 || (21.9–21.12). Cf. Dutt: svāminnupāyabalavīryaparākramaiḥ kaḥ kartuṃ kṣayaṃ paramamīśa ihādya tasya | kaḥ śaknuyāt tribhavabandhana-dīrghatīraṃ tṛṣṇārṇavaṃ kṣapayituṃ balaśaktiyuktaḥ || 1.20 || (*GM*, 4:14.7–14.10).

[77] Skt. (K): dānavratāśayadayāpraṇidhānapāśaḥ śūnyānimittaparamāstragṛhītacāpaḥ | niḥśeṣato bhavanivṛttyupadeśakartā saṃsāraniḥsṛtapathapraśamānukūlaḥ || 1.21 || śūnyeṣu grāmanagareṣu vanāntareṣu girikandareṣv api vasaṃti tasya śiṣyāḥ | dhyānābhiyuktamanasaḥ praviviktacārā doṣakṣayāya satataṃ vidhivat prayuktāḥ || 1.22 || ṛddhyā balaiḥ karuṇayā ca sahāyavantāv upatiṣyakaulitav anau muninā vinītau | trailokyasarvavidhinā suvinītadharmā śūnyaṃ kariṣyati sa me kila kāmadhātuṃ || 1.23 || (10.4–10.15); Tib. (K): sbyin dang brtul zhugs bsam pa smon lam snying rje'i zhags pa can || stong pa mtshan ma med pa'i mtshon cha mchog dang gzhu thogs te || 'khor ba las byung rab tu zhi ba'i lam dang mthun gyur nas || srid pa ma lus bzlog pa nye bar bstan par byed pa po || 1.21 || de yi slob ma bsam gtan la ni mngon par brtson yid kyis || dben par rgyu zhing nyes pa zad par bya phyir khor zug tu || cho ga bzhin du zhugs nas grong dang grong khyer stong pa dang || nags kyi nang dag dang ni ri yi sman ljongs rnams na gnas || 1.22 || rdzu 'phrul dang ni stobs dang snying rje'i grogs dang ldan pa yi || dam pa nye rgyal pang nas skyes gnyis thub pas btul bar 'gyur || rab dul chos can 'jig rten gsum kun cho ga bzhin du btul || des ni nga yi 'dod khams 'di dag stongs par byed par 'gyur || 1.23 || (21.14–22.4).

With these three verses, Māra speaks what he knows to be the truth about the Buddha and the fate he believes himself to be facing. Given that his courtesans are his audience, it is safe to say that Māra does not expect what comes next. Rather than eliciting declarations of loyalty, support, or anything of that sort, Māra's candid truth-telling causes all the courtesans to make spontaneous and lavish offerings toward Śākyamuni right where they stand, to attain rarefied states proper to bodhisattvas (Skt. *bodhisattvasamādhi*; Tib. *byang chub sems dpa' ting nge 'dzin*), to utter spontaneous verses in praise of Śākyamuni, to rebuke their former master for not reorienting himself, and ultimately to abandon Māra for the Buddha. We will have occasion to return to this series of events in Chapters Four and Five below. Suffice it to note here that Māra, stewing in his lamentation room, embodies what we will explore further in the next chapter as affective misalignment. What Māra experiences sends him spiraling into anger, frustration, and depression. It also significantly diminishes his capacity to affect others according to his wishes, and it renders him increasingly isolated.

That this is the case is shown clearly by the effect (or lack thereof) of his words on his courtesans, whose subsequent actions could not have been farther from what Māra assumed and hoped they would be. Not only does he have to repeat his plea seven times to get the courtesans to stop doing what they were doing, but he is also unable to stop them from leaving his presence and going to Śākyamuni. Full of frustration (Skt. *paramaduṣṭamanas*; Tib. *shin tu gdug pa'i yid dang ldan pa*), Māra attempts to manipulate the perception of his courtesans such that each sees herself bound by a fivefold fetter, thinking they will be unable to leave when they see themselves in such a condition. But, as we will see in more detail in Chapter Five, their affective orientation

is such that he cannot bind them[78] and such that they are unaffected when Māra conjures a fierce storm in order to terrify and disorient them.[79]

If this all sounds familiar, that's as it should be. The episode outlined above mirrors in many ways the episode featuring Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. The differences, though, are worth highlighting again before moving forward. Māra's presence in the lamentation room at the beginning of the episode signals to readers and actants alike something of an emotional spike, a new intensity of feelings that had been stirring within him since his failure to dissuade Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana as Pseudo-Aśvajit. When visited by his courtesans, Māra assumes that they are on his side and that he can thus be open with them. But his words backfire, setting off a chain of events he could not possibly have foreseen. The magnitude of his emotions correlates with a decrease in his capacity to affect others in the way he wishes and an increase in his isolation. With the end of this episode, aspects of the sūtra's affective regime come into clearer view than before. It is difficult to express the affective regime in its totality. An affective regime can be described as a total narrative fact (to play on Marcel Mauss's total social fact),[80] as a feature of the narrative as whole that refracts differently depending on where in the narrative readers find themselves. Following Māra through his many interactions in this particular narrative allows us to see the sūtra's affective regime from a few angles.

Māra and His Children

The next section of the narrative is a long one. It first centers on Māra and his children, turns to Māra's children and the Buddha, and then returns to Māra. The end of this protracted episode

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[78] Skt. (K): 13.12–13.17; Tib. (K): 24.9–24.15.

[79] Skt. (K): 13.18–14.7 (fragmentary); Tib. (K): 24.16–25.7.

[80] Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans. W. D. Halls with a foreword by Mary Douglas (London: W. W. Norton, 2000).

brings the first chapter of the *Precious Banner* to a close, and the sūtra leaves Māra behind until the third chapter (apart from his identification with a character from the past life story told in the sūtra's second chapter). Here we will only treat those sections of the narrative in which Māra features as a central actant. At the conclusion of the previous section, Māra is unable to stop his courtesans from leaving him and taking refuge in the Buddha (a series of events he himself unintentionally set into motion). We pick the narrative back up with a description of his further intensified emotional state—signaled by his continued presence in the lamentation room and the addition of a fourth adjective to the series of three discussed previously—as well as some words from Māra himself:

> Then Wicked Māra—exceedingly bitter, pained, dispirited, and regretful—crying out loudly to his children and attendants, filled his home with sound:
>
> > "Come here, dear children and attendants! We are being deprived of our influence, strength, and power. One whose innermost nature is like a poisonous tree has arisen here and now. A deceptive cheat with pleasant speech—he is the son of the Śākyas." || 1.29 ||[81]

The increasing desperation is palpable in the tone of this verse. But heightened emotionality and diminished capacity to affect does not mean that Māra is any less a strategic actor. It seems, in other words, that Māra learns his lesson after what happened with his courtesans and tries a different strategy—one less grounded in straightforward truth-telling and more in defamatory rhetoric. It is, of course, narratively true that the Buddha is slowly chipping away at Māra's

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[81] Skt. (K): atha māraḥ pāpīmān bhūyasyā mātrayā duṣṭaduḥkhito durmanā vipratisārī [rudan] mahāsvareṇa svaputragaṇapāriṣadyān vikrośan sarvaṃ mārabhavanaṃ śabdena pūrayāmāsa | āgacchatha priyasutā gaṇapāriṣadyā bhraṣṭā vayaṃ svaviṣayāt svabalāc ca riddeḥ | jāto 'tra eṣa viṣavṛkṣa ivāntarātmā māyāśaṭho madhuravāg iha śākyaputraḥ || 1.29 || (14.8–14.14, see also 14 n. 16); Tib. (K) differs, suggesting that Māra refers narrowly only to himself: de nas yang bdud sdig can rab tu khros shing sdug bsngal te yid mi bde zhing yid la gcags nas ngu zhing skad chen pos rang gi bu dang tshogs kyi 'khor la bos te bdud kyi gnas thams cad sgras gang bar byas so || sdug pa'i bu dang tshogs kyi 'khor rnams tshur shog cig || nga ni bdag yul rang gi rdzu 'phrul stobs las nyams || śā kya'i bu 'di sgyu ldan g.yo can ngag 'jam la || khong nas rang bzhin dug sdong 'dra ba 'dir skyes so || 1.29 || (25.8–25.15).

power and influence. That fact is why Māra calls out to his children in the first place. But instead of providing a description of the Buddha's teachings and the implications thereof, as he did for the courtesans, Māra characterizes Śākyamuni as a poisonous tree and as a liar with honeyed speech. Whether these characterizations are apt, of course, depends on perspective. To Māra, they are just as true as what he told the courtesans. But even in his exasperation, it seems he realizes that his attempts at sentiment evocation need to be more pointed, more inflammatory, if they are to be successful in any sense.

Māra's children and attendants rush to his side. Speaking from a place of reverent concern as well as genuine confusion, Māra's son Jayamati addresses their father with a question:

> "Why are you dispirited, furious, and bitter? The burning of our era is not happening here, so you aren't dying today. You don't have any prosperous enemies here. Why are you delusional? Why are you acting crazy?" || 1.30 ||[82]

While Vidyudvalgusvarā was optimistic and almost flippant about the alleged problem, Jayamati takes a more direct approach, one perhaps more appropriate for a son than a courtesan to take, telling his father that he is overreacting, that he has no reason to be "dispirited, furious, and bitter" (Skt. *durmanāḥ paramakopaviduṣṭacetā*; Tib. *thugs khros rab tu 'khrugs shing thugs mi dgyes*). Of course, Jayamati does not yet know precisely what is really at issue. And Māra is quick to point this out:

> "You do not see the vile son of the Śākyas seated in the shadow of the tree, yet you tell me that I have no strong enemies near me! How? One by one, that singularly powerful

[82] Skt. (K): kiṃ durmanāḥ paramakopaviduṣṭacetā no kalpadāha iha na cyutir adya te 'smāt | śatrur na cāsti tava kaścid iha pravṛddho mohaṃ gato 'si kim ivānyamatir va [sic; read: vā] kasmāt || 1.30 || (15.4–15.7); Tib. (K): ci slad thugs khros rab tu 'khrugs shing thugs mi dgyes || bsreg bskal deng 'dir ma byung 'di nas khyod ma 'phos || 'di na khyod lhag dgra ni su yang ma mchis na || khyod ci rmongs par gyur tam ci slad gzhan du dgongs || 1.30 || (26.4–26.7).

> rogue is leading everyone astray. Together with our sons and armies, we *are* burnt by fire and burning flames." || 1.31 ||[83]

While there might not be a literal fire, Māra makes it clear that he sees the beginnings of an urgent, burning problem. Māra continues to respond to Jayamati's words:

> "Those foremost people who are prosperous, reputed, famous, wise, and occupied in composing many treaties and poetic compositions—together they have hastily gone to the son of the Śākyas for refuge today, drawn by the hook of the Dharma. This enemy of mine, who has an appealing form but deceitful intentions, is tyrannical. || 1.32 ||
>
> "My dearest servant girls, pitiless, have tossed me aside. Today, right before my eyes, they have gone to the ascetic for refuge. By means of illusion, this rogue will render this entire triple-world empty if we do not quickly and diligently reduce this powerful one to ashes this very day." || 1.33 ||[84]

Māra retorts that yes, in fact, he does have an enemy, contrary to what Jayamati and the others might think. And that enemy is Śākyamuni. His activities are detrimental to Sahā like fire. His strength increases as his following grows. The growth threatens to be exponential, especially in light of his own unwitting contribution of his personal harem to the Buddha's fold. And if he seems out of sorts, it's because he has just been abandoned by courtesans whom he had thought were loyal. Finally, Māra concludes his rejoinder by turning the fire rhetoric against Śākyamuni.

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[83] Skt. (K): na tvaṃ paśyasi śākyaputraviṣalañ [read: śākyaputravṛṣalañ] chāyāniṣaṇṇaṃ drume yad vākyaṃ vadasīha nāsti balavāñ chatrus tavety agrataḥ | sarve tena śaṭhena caikabalinā saṃbhrāmitā naikaśo aṅgāreṇa vayaṃ . . . yadvad . . . || 1.31 || (15.9–15.12, fragmentary); Tib. (K): śā kya'i bu pho dmangs phal shing gi grib ma 'dug pa ma mthong ngam || ci phyir 'di na khyod kyi mdun na stobs dang ldan pa'i dgra med smras || stobs gcig ldan pa g.yo can de yis thams cad rnam pa du mar bslus || bdag cag bu dang sder bcas me lce 'bar dang bcas pa'i me yis bsregs || 1.31 || (26.9–26.15).

[84] Skt. (K): ye 'py asmin jagati pradhānapuruṣā vikhyātakīrtiśriyo vidvāṃso bahuśāstrakāvyaracanāvyagrāḥ samagrā drutam | etaṃ śākyasutaṃ gatā dya śaramaṃ dha . . . tatv eṣa priyavigrahaḥ śaṭhamatiḥ śatur mamātyuddhataḥ || 1.32 || etā vai paricārikāḥ priyatamāḥ protsṛjya māṃ niṣkṛpāḥ . . . taṃ śramaṇaṃ gatā dya śaraṇaṃ kṛ . . . | . . . kṛtsnam idaṃ bhavatrayam ataḥ śūnyaṃ śaṭho māyayā bhasmīkurma ihādya yady atibalaṃ nāśu prayatnād vayaṃ || 1.33 || (15.13–16.4, fragmentary); Tib. (K): 'jig rten 'di na skyes bu gtso bo dpal dang brjod pa rnam grags pa || mkhas pa bstan bcos snyan dngags mang po byed brtson 'thun par myur bar yang || chos kyi kyo ba btang gis drangs te śā kya'i bu 'di'i skyabs deng song || lus mdzes g.yo can blo gros ldan 'di nga yi dgrar ni rab tu gnan || 1.32 || rab tu sdug pa'i g.yog mo de dag snying rje med pas nga bor te || nga la dpang btsugs nas ni de ring dge sbyong de yi skyabs su dong || gal te bdag cag myur bsgrims stobs chen 'di deng thal bar ma byas na || g.yo dang sgyu yis srid pa gsum po de dag ma lus stongs par byed || 1.33 || (26.16–27.8).

Eloquence may not be something we typically associate with Māra, but this point-by-point response to Jayamati shows him to be a fine orator.

In this case—unlike with Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, the Buddha, and the courtesans before—Māra's words carry some persuasive force. Māra's children agree to organize and attack Śākyamuni with the ultimate goal of reducing him to ashes. "So be it," they say—but not without a weighty caveat:

> "We will display all of our supernormal potency, power, influence, authority, and apparitional capacity. If we can reduce this son of the Śākyas to ashes, that's good. But if we cannot, then we will go to him for refuge."[85]

They hedge here because they remember what happened in the not-so-distant past at the bodhi tree, where Śākyamuni singlehandedly defeated them. Now that he has so many followers, Māra's children continue, the likelihood of their success cannot be very high.[86] Their threat at this moment to take refuge upon failure could be construed as an expression of disloyalty, self-interest, or an intent to conform to the norms of combat etiquette implicit in a swath of Buddhist literature.[87] In any case, Māra responds with an imperative that reads more like a plea: "If you manage to kill the ascetic Gautama, come back again. But even if you can't, come back anyway so we can protect our dwelling."[88]

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[85] Skt. (K): evaṃ astu yad asmākam ṛddhibalaviṣayānubhāvavikurvitaṃ sarvaṃ darśayiṣyāmaḥ | yadi śakyṣyāma etaṃ śākyaputraṃ bhasmīkartum ity evaṃ kuśalam | yady evaṃ na śakṣyāmas taṃ śaraṇaṃ gamiṣyāmaḥ | (16.6–16.8); Tib. (K): de ltar bgyi'o || bdag cag gis rdzu 'phrul dang | stobs kyi yul gyi mthu dang | rnam par sprul pa de dag thams cad bstan te | śā kya'i bu 'di gal te thal bar bgyid nus pa de lta na ni legs | de ltar ma nus na ni de la skyabs su mchi'o || (27.10–27.13).

[86] Skt. (K): svayam eva tata pratyakṣo 'si yad vayaṃ mahāsainyaparivṛtāḥ prāg eva ekākinādvitīyenānena śākyaputreṇarddhibalena parājitāḥ kiṃ punar etarhy anekapari . . . (16.8–16.10, fragmentary); Tib. (K): yab nyid kyi mngon sum du gyur pa lags te | gang bdag cag sde chen pos yongs su bskor ba | sngar śā kya'i bu gcig pu gnyis su med pa 'dis rdzu 'phrul gyi stobs kyis rab tu pham par bgyis na da g.yog mang por gyur pa lta ci smos || (27.13–27.16).

[87] For more on this, see Stephen Jenkins, "Debate, Magic, and Massacre: The High Stakes and Ethical Dynamics of Battling Slanderers of the *Dharma* in Indian Narrative and Ethical Theory," *Religion and Violence* 4, no. 2 (2016): 129–58.

Acting on Māra's behalf, his children assume a truly expansive military formation and subsequently cover the earth in darkness, hurl a variety of natural projectiles (meteors, e.g.) in the Buddha's direction, cause earthquakes, and conjure violent showers of falling weapons.[89] Since Māra is not present in the narrative action, the details need not sustain us at this point of the study. Suffice it to say here that the attack fails miserably, as we by now have come to expect, and that many of Māra's children go to the Buddha for refuge. The sūtra dwells on the aftermath of the failed attack for a while but returns to Māra at the end of chapter one. Though many of his children take refuge in the Buddha, some return to their shared home as their father had commanded. They give Māra a brief report on what happened, saying:

> "We were not able to harm even a single pore of the ascetic Gautama. And on top of that, some twenty thousand of your children went to him for refuge and sat down before him to listen to his dharma."[90]

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[88] Skt. (K): yadi śaknutainaṃ śramaṇaṃ gautamaṃ ghātayituṃ punar āgacchata || atha na śaktās tathāpy āgacchata | svabhavanaṃ punaḥ paripālayiṣyāmaḥ || (16.11–16.13); Tib. (K): gal te dge sbyong gau ta ma 'di gsod nus na slar shog shig | ci ste ma nus na'ang bdag cag gi gnas kyang bsrung gis slar shog shig || (27.17–27.19).

[89] Skt. (K): atha māraparṣaddvādaśaviṃbarāṇi tato 'tikramya ita ūrdhaṃ yāvac caturāśītiṃ yojanasahasrāṇi spharitvā tādṛśaṃ mārabalariddhivegaṃ darśayām āsuḥ | sarvacāturdvīpikāyām ākāśaṃ mahākālameghair āpūrayām āsuḥ | mahākālavāyubhiś colkāpātaiś ca sumeruṃ parvatarājānaṃ pāṇibhiḥ parājaghnuḥ | sarvāṃ cāturdvīpikāṃ prakampayām āsuḥ | paramabharavāṃś ca śabdān samutsasarjuḥ | yato nāga mahānāgāḥ yato yakṣā mahāyakṣāḥ sarvāvantyā mahāpṛthivyāḥ sagiriśailaparvatāyāḥ sumeroś ca parvatarājñaḥ kaṃpaṃ viditvā sarasāṃ mahāsarasāṃ nadīkunadīmahānadīnāṃ mahāsamurdrāṇāṃ ca saṃkṣobhaṃ jñātvā gaganatale tasthuḥ | sā ca māraparṣat sumerumūdhani sthitvā yojanapramāṇāṃ vṛṣṭim abhinirmimīyāṃgamagadheṣu samutsasarja | mahāntaṃ cāsimusalapāṣāṇatomarabhiṇḍipālanārācakṣuraprakṣuramukhakṣurakalpavāsimukhavāsidhārakarālacakravikrāla-cakradṛḍhakharaparuṣarūkṣavarṣaṃ nirmāyotsasarja || (16.14–17.12); Tib. (K): de nas bdud kyi 'khor dkrigs phrag bcu gnyis po de dag de nas 'phags te | 'di nas steng du dpag tshad brgyad khri bzhi stong gi bar du bkang nas de 'dra ba'i bdud kyi stobs kyi yul gyi rdzu 'phrul drag po bstan te | gang gling bzhi pa'i nam mkha' thams cad sprin nag po chen po dang | rlung nag po chen po dang | skar mdas bkang nas ri'i rgyal po ri rab la'ang lag gis brdabs te | gling bzhi pa thams cad rab tu g.yos par byas nas shin tu 'jigs pa'i sgra rnams kyang 'byin to || de dag gis klu dang | klu chen po dang | gnod sbyin dang | gnod sbyin chen po dag gis sa chen po brag dang rir bcas pa thams cad dang ldan pa dang | ri'i rgyal po ri rab kyang g.yos par rig | mtsho dang | mtsho chen po dang | 'bab chu dang | chu bran dang | 'bab chu chen po dang | rgya mtsho chen po rnams kyang 'khrugs par rig nas nam mkha'i dkyil na 'khod do || bdud kyi 'khor de dag ni ri rab kyi zom la 'khod nas | dpag tshad tsam gyi rdo'i char mngon par sprul te nam mkha' las kun tu 'bebs so || ral gri dang | gtun shing dang | rdo ba dang | mtshon rtse gnyis dang | ste'u ka ma dang | lcags mda' dang | spu gri dang | spu gri lta bu dang | dgra sta dang | ste'u so lta bu dang | ste'u so dang | kha rang rong can dang | shin tu rang rong can dang | sra ba | drag pa | rtsub pa | rno ba'i char rab tu sprul te kun tu phab bo || (28.1–28.18).

[90] Skt. (K): ekaromakūpam api vayaṃ tasya śravaṇasya gautamasya na śaktā vidhvaṃsayituṃ iti || bhūyaś ca viṃśatisahasrāṇi tam eva śaraṇaṃ jagmuḥ tasyaiva cāgrato niṣaṇṇā dharmaśravaṇāya || (22.12–22.14); Tib. (K): dge sbyong gau ta ma de'i ba spu'i khung bu gcig kyang bdag cag gis gzhig par ma nus na gsad par lta ci smos | de'i steng du bdud nyi khri de'i skyabs su dong ste | chos mnyan pa'i phyir de'i mdun na 'khod do || (33.10–33.13).

Struck by the bad news, Māra grows "exceedingly incensed, pained, dispirited, and regretful." We see here the same three adjectives as before together with a fourth (Skt. *bhūyasyā mātrayā caṇḍībhūto duḥkhito durmanā vipratisārī*; Tib. *rab tu khros te sdug bsngal zhing yid mi bde nas yid la gcags*). In the Tibetan, this list of four is the same as the list of four given after Māra's courtesans abandon him to take refuge in the Buddha. But the Sanskrit we have, which underlies or corresponds to *rab tu khros*, differs in this case. Previously Māra is described as *bhūyasyā mātrayā duṣṭaduḥkhito durmanā vipratisārī*, which I rendered "exceedingly bitter, pained, dispirited, and regretful." Here *duṣṭa* is replaced by *caṇḍībhūto*. The latter is an adjective formed by adding what is called (in Pāṇinian parlance) a *cvī* suffix to *caṇḍa*, yielding *caṇḍī*, and using the latter form as a prefix before *bhūta*, a past passive participle of √*bhū* (to become), to mean "'becoming [*caṇḍa*], not having been it before.'"[91] Given the sense of novelty associated with words formed with *cvī* suffixes, the compound indicates an altogether new affective state on the part of Māra—and this despite the Tibetans' choice to translate both *duṣṭa* and *caṇḍībhūta* with the same *rab tu khros*.

With this new level of intensity established and in mind, let us turn to what Māra says in response to the news he receives. It is just one verse, but it is worth some attention given its location in the narrative. Situated at the conclusion of the first chapter, after which the sūtra shifts focus away from Māra and onto the Buddha, this verse reads like a cliffhanger at the end of an episode of a serialized drama. Having lost a few battles but not yet the war, we can imagine Māra speaking grimly through gritted teeth:

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[91] Gary A. Tubb and Emery R. Boose, *Scholastic Sanskrit: A Manual for Students* (New York: The American Institute of Buddhist Studies at Columbia University in the City of New York and Columbia University's Center for Buddhist Studies and Tibet House US, 2007), 83–84 (1.42.4), at 83.

> "My fortune will be gone and will not return until that son of the Śākyas is destroyed. Not speaking or thinking about anything else, we should plot how to destroy this son of the Śākyas today." || 1.44 ||[92]

With these sinister words, Māra again enters his lamentation room.[93] Though described as entering the room "in very bad spirits" (Skt. *durmanaska* [sic] *eva*; Tib. *yid mi bde*), it seems as though the room has taken on an additional function. While continuing to serve as a place to which Māra can retreat and get some time to himself, it here takes on something of a "war room" quality. In this room, Māra sits with his emotions and allows them to guide his next moves.

IV

Section II of this chapter sought to establish that the main story of the sūtra is one of failed but incompletely quelled rebellion on the part of Māra. It also sought to justify treating the sūtra as a whole—and this regardless of whether the sūtra was initially composed as a whole or was only later made into one. In many ways, these two claims go hand in hand. And a number of reasons were brought to the table to defend both of them. That the sūtra's first five chapters are related is well established. The first three chapters are a clear unit, while chapters four and five together constitute a mixed analepsis (that is, an analepsis that meets up with and surpasses the point in story time to which readers have already been led). Moreover, we traced the transition between chapters five and six and found it to be seamless, in contrast to the claims of the Dharmachakra Translation Committee to have identified a splice late in the fifth chapter with the introduction of

[92] Skt. (K): lakṣmī gatā mama punar na paraiti tāvad yāvat kṛto . . . śākyasutasya nāśaḥ | tūṣṇīṃ sthitā vayam ananyamanaḥpratarkāḥ śakyātmajaṃ katham im' adya tu ghātayema || 1.44 || (22.17–23.2, fragmentary); Tib. (K): śā kya'i bu ni ji srid brlag par ma byas pa || de srid bar du nga yi dpal song slar mi 'ong || śā kya'i bu 'di ji ltar de ring bsad snyam ste || bdag cag gzhan la yid mi rtog cing mi smra 'dug || 1.44 || (33.16–33.19). Cf. Dutt: lakṣmīrgatā mama punarna paraiti tāvad yāvanna mama rājya śākyasutasya nāśaḥ | tūṣṇīṃ sthitā vayamananyamanaḥpratarkāḥ śākyātmajaṃ kathamimammadya tu ghātayema || 1.44 || (*GM*, 4:26.6–26.9).

[93] Curiously, we are never told explicitly that he leaves the room. But that he is here represented as entering the room allows us to infer that he had left at some point.

the Body Destroyer *dhāraṇī*. And further still, we saw that the two *dhāraṇī*s employed in chapter six—the Body Destroyer and Unharmed by the Army of Māra—appear in chapters seven, eight, ten, and eleven, and one is even represented and employed in the paratextual homage section. An additional reason, which was passed over quickly above because it would be a mistake to make too much of it on its own, is that Kautūhalika appears in chapters two, six, eleven, and twelve to ask questions of the Buddha. But the most compelling reason is the sūtra's treatment of Māra. That the sūtra returns periodically to Māra when it could just as easily have left him for good in chapter three suggests that his story is of central importance to the sūtra as a whole.

Section III built on this foundation to further argue that Māra's affective orientation—or, as we will frame it in Chapter Three, his affective misalignment—is central to his narrative. This claim, which will be shown more clearly as we move forward, was advanced and preliminarily defended through a close reading of the first chapter, with attention paid to the representation of Māra's interactions with a range of actants. We focused first on his failure to dissuade Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana from taking refuge in the Buddha and his subsequent failure to get rid of the latter. As a result of these failures, Māra retreats to his lamentation room—pained, despondent, and full of regret—to process this moment of crisis. His retreat to this room marks for readers a heightened state of emotionality. It also gets the attention of his courtesans, whom Māra directs toward Śākyamuni quite by accident. Unable to stop his courtesans from going to the Buddha due to his diminished power, he cries out to his children—exceedingly bitter, pained, dispirited, and regretful. They agree to help him, but most end up taking refuge in Śākyamuni in the end. "Exceedingly incensed, pained, dispirited, and regretful" as a result of the cumulative weight of these betrayals, Māra again enters the lamentation room to plot his next moves. The next two chapters treat the results of this plotting. As we will see, things don't go well for him.

CHAPTER THREE

"How Can You Be Upset?!"
Māra as Affectively Misaligned

I

"Angry, afraid, and desperately crying out," we read toward the end of what is arguably the *Precious Banner*'s most climactic episode, "Māra lamented: 'Alas! Dear children and relatives, we shall no longer see one another!'"[1] Apparently resigned to his impending demise, Māra receives a piece of unsolicited advice from a former ally named Ghoṣavati. In the form of a wheel-turning monarch (Skt. *cakravartin*; Tib. *'khor los sgyur ba*), Ghoṣavati says:

> "Hey! Why, with troubled mind, do you weep and wail right now? Without fear, go right away for refuge to the best of sages, the chief of all beings. He is the defense and resort of the world, the lamp and refuge, the protector, the eliminator of threefold suffering. Venerating him, you will surely attain peace and happiness." || 3.90 || (Tib. 3.91)[2]

The question of the first line likely sounds familiar. As we have seen, Māra is asked similar questions in the sūtra's first chapter by Vidyudvalgusvarā (on behalf of his courtesans) and by Jayamati (on behalf of his children). But the context surrounding Ghoṣavati's question is different, which suggests we ought to read it differently in light of our aims. In the first chapter, Vidyudvalgusvarā and Jayamati express some confusion about Māra's sadness and are ignorant of what is going on. His courtesans and children are doing their own things when they notice that Māra is in his lamentation room. None of them has any clue why Māra is in there. Ghoṣavati, by

[1] Skt. (K): bhūyasyā mātrayā kupitas trasta uccasvareṇa prarudann evam āha | hā priyaputrabāndhavajanā na bhūyo drakṣyāma iti || (83.14–83.15); Tib. (K): rab tu khros shing skrag ste | skad chen por ngu zhing 'di skad ces smras so || kyi hud bu dang gnyen bshes sdug pa khyed rnams phyis mi mthong ngo zhes zer ro || (94.16–94.18).

[2] Skt. (K): kiṃ bho śokamanās tvam adya rudiṣi vyākrośavaktrasvaraḥ kṣipraṃ sarvajagadvaraṃ munivaraṃ nirbhī śaraṇyaṃ vraja | trāṇaṃ lokagatiś ca dīpaśaraṇaṃ nāthas triduḥkhāpaho nanv etaṃ samupāsya . . . śamaṃ saukhyaṃ ca saṃprāpsyasi || 3.90 || (84.1–84.5, fragmentary); Tib. (K): ci phyir khyod deng mya ngan yid kyis ngu gdong sgra chen 'bod || 'gro ba kun gtso thub mchog skyabs su ma 'jigs myur du song || 'jig rten rnams kyi mgon skyabs dpung gnyen sdug bsngal gsum sel ba || 'di la bsnyen bkur zhi 'gro bde ba thob par 'gyur yang dag || 3.91 || (94.21–94.24).

contrast, stands on the other side of a series of significant events and thus speaks from a place of knowledge and experience. When we appreciate the difference in context, we can almost catch a tone of impatient disbelief in Ghoṣavati's question—*seriously, Māra, how can you be upset?!*

Even though this would be a stretch as a translation, we can still easily sense a tone of normativity—one clearly different from any we might have sensed in the questions posed by Vidyudvalgusvarā and Jayamati. What we see here, in terms more germane to the present study, is a feeling rule given in interrogative form. In its narrow context, it is delivered to Māra alone. But it is also able to impinge upon readers, I submit, through homologizing them with Māra in certain limited but important ways.[3] Readers are not Lords of Desire, of course, but they do find themselves in saṃsāra. Māra is thus *prima facie* more relatable as an actant than buddhas and bodhisattvas are, who conduct their wise and compassionate business spontaneously. Moreover, readers are privy to the events narrated in the sūtra in much the same way that Māra is—that is, the narrator's use of Māra as focalizer allows readers to look over his shoulder, as it were, as they read. And insofar as the events narrated in the sūtra are constitutive of the sūtra—something the sūtra itself underscores in a striking moment of metatextuality—we can say that when readers encounter the sūtra in the reading present, their relationship to the sūtra is structurally similar to Māra's relationship to the events narrated therein. An implication of this, as we will begin to develop at the end of this chapter, is that a similar prospect hangs over both Māra and readers. Just as Māra would be delivered from his woeful condition if only he would *feel properly* with respect to his experiences, so too do the promises of salvation (and the threats of anguish) loom over readers such that they are subtly encouraged to respond properly to the norms the sūtra delivers within and through its narrative.

[3] Here I have in mind Alan Cole's reading of the disciples in the Gospel of Mark in *Fetishizing Tradition*, 81–128, esp. 102–4.

The aim of this chapter is twofold. First, we want to get to a place where we can fully appreciate the reading proposed above. What this requires, of course, is that we become familiar with the context leading up to Ghoṣavati's words. To do this, we will continue to follow Māra closely through the text with an eye toward his affective orientation. In the sūtra's first chapter Māra grows increasingly upset and eventually retreats to his lamentation room. In the third, by contrast, he becomes desperate and reckless. But the general thrust of the narrative remains the same. Māra continues to experience the wrong kinds of emotions on account of his experiences. He progressively loses his capacity to affect others. And though surrounded by living beings of all sorts, he is increasingly isolated. It is in this sense, following Sara Ahmed, that we will use the language of *affective misalignment* to describe Māra in the coming pages. The second aim of the chapter is to show, with reference to a past life story narrated by Śākyamuni in the second chapter, that at this point in the sūtra it is not clear whether Māra's affective misalignment is to be taken as permanent or impermanent. Given the centrality of impermanence to the Buddhist tradition, this argument might seem wrongheaded at first. But when we realize that the sūtra insinuates but never properly narrates certain details of Māra's story, we can begin to see how leaving Māra in a liminal state allows the sūtra's affective regime to do its work on audiences.

II

In this section of the chapter, we will work toward accomplishing our first aim. That is to say, we will continue to follow Māra through the sūtra—jumping from where we left him at the end of the sūtra's first chapter to the beginning of the third, at which point he again takes center stage—in order to appreciate the tone of borderline incredulity and earnest concern underlying the words of Ghoṣavati with which the chapter opened. As in the previous chapter, the organizational logic will come largely from the sūtra itself. We begin with an analysis of Māra's interaction with a

host of cosmic māras, after which we address his brief interaction with an astral scientist and Śiva-devotee named Jyotīrasa and the latter's role in a two-pronged diversion tactic. We then treat his encounter with an enormous preaching lotus and its audience—truly an exhilarating episode—and conclude with the advice of Ghoṣavati. This exploration further strengthens my argument that Māra's affective orientation is central to his narrative (itself central to the sūtra). And at the same time, it begins to further darken the lines we have been sketching between affective orientation and community.

Māra and the Cosmic Māras

As we know, readers leave Māra at the end of the first chapter and do not find out about his next moves until the beginning of the third. We will have occasion to visit some of the events of chapter two below in more detail. All we need to know to start following Māra again is (1) that Śākyamuni's narrative representation of a former Buddha's recitation of the Precious Banner *dhāraṇī* causes (among other things) the entire Sahā world to be pervaded by illustrious light, and (2) that this light gets the attention of myriad māras throughout the cosmos.[4] Upon seeing the illustrious light pervade their myriad worlds and localizing the source as being somewhere in Sahā, the cosmic māras think to themselves:

> "Where did this great light come from? It must be the power of Wicked Māra who lives in that four-continent world called Sahā. He is the most mighty, sovereign, and powerful among us."[5]

[4] What this entails is that the status of *māra* is an office occupied by individuals who are worthy of it in one way or another. This is what we might expect in a sūtra where not only are there myriad buddhas throughout the cosmos but they can also be present in the same world. Not all māras are created equal, however. Just as Śākyamuni, the buddha of Sahā, is believed to be the chief among buddhas in cosmologies allowing for multiple buddhas to exist at one and the same time, Māra Pāpīmān is the chief among māras.

[5] Skt. (K): kuto 'yam avabhāsa utpannaḥ | nūnaṃ pāpīmān nāma māro yas tatra cāturdvīpikāyāṃ prativasati tasyaiva prabhāvaḥ so 'smatto balavattara īśvarataro mahaujaskataraś ca | (52.5–52.7); Tib. (K): snang ba chen po 'di gang nas byung zhes gling bzhi pa'i 'jig rten gyi khams 'di la blta zhing bdud sdig can zhes bya ba gang gling bzhi pa'i 'jig rten gyi khams de na gnas pa de bdag cag pas stobs che zhing dbang che ba mthu che na | 'di de'i mthu 'am snyam nas | (65.7–65.10).

Then, through some kind of collectively shared supernormal sight, they notice something strange. Māra is sitting in his lamentation room. Given their assumption that the light must have come from Māra, this doesn't quite add up. So, they all go to see him and ask why he is so dispirited:

> "Lord of Desire, why is the entire world system illuminated yet you have entered your lamentation room and sat down?"[6]

Māra proceeds to explain himself in a long diatribe.[7] He first identifies the source of his problem as an ascetic of the Śākya clan, then continues to describe him, his actions, and their prior interactions. When Śākyamuni was born, the universe filled with light and the earth trembled. When he was engaged in solitary meditation, myriad beings offered him obeisance. When he was close to attaining his goal, nothing could be done to derail him. When he began to teach after attaining his goal, nothing could be done to stop beings from taking refuge in him. And this last problem is only getting worse, Māra finally laments, mentioning that his courtesans and children have just gone to Gautama for refuge. He then seeks to enlist the cosmic māras in his plan to eliminate Śākyamuni for good.

It is worth attending to some of Māra's language here as it begins to develop our picture of Māra as affectively misaligned. Considering his recent failures—to bend Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, and the Buddha to his will (in various disguises), to gain the sympathy of his courtesans, and to secure full-throated support from his children—readers might well expect Māra to have done a fair bit of strategizing in his lamentation room. And this is largely what we

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[6] Skt. (K): kiṃ bho kāmeśvara sarvāvatīyaṃ lokadhātur avabhāsitā tvaṃ ca śokāgāraṃ praviśya niṣaṇṇaḥ | (52.11–52.13); Tib. (K): kye 'dod pa'i dbang phyug ci'i phyir thams cad dang ldan pa'i gling bzhi pa'i 'jig rten gyi khams 'di snang bar byas nas khyod mya ngan gyi khang par zhugs te 'dug || (65.15–65.17).

[7] Skt. (K): 53.1–55.2; Tib. (K): 65.17–67.17. Passages of relevance will be provided in subsequent notes.

see, though it would not be quite accurate to call his monologue a rhetorical *tour de force* given the subsequent pushback. More on that in a moment. In Māra's appeal to the cosmic māras, two broad features stand out, both of which will be explored and framed in terms of affect below. First, Māra seeks to affect his audience by ramping up the rhetoric. Second, he reveals his own recent shortcomings and inabilities—his own incapacities to affect.

Assuming that the cosmic māras will default to his side given their shared status, Māra peppers his speech—itself a rendition of what normative Buddhist discourse would have us recognize as the truth with a hefty dose of spin—with derisive and pathetic remarks in the hopes of stoking just the right kind of fire in his audience. When Māra first introduces Śākyamuni, he describes him as a deceptive magician (Skt. *paramaśaṭhaḥ māyāvī*; Tib. *shin tu g.yo dang sgyur ldan pa*).[8] He later characterizes his magic (Skt. *māyā*; Tib. *sgyu ma*) as inauspicious or ominous (Skt. *alakṣaṇā*; Tib. *mtshan nyid med pa*)[9] and fleshes out this claim by narrating events past and present. And on three occasions, Māra denigrates Śākyamuni as a contemptible person (Skt. *vṛṣala*; Tib. *dmangs*).[10] In other words, Māra frames Śākyamuni as a dangerous but inferior

[8] Skt. (K): atha kāmeśvaro māras teṣāṃ mārakoṭīśatānāṃ vistareṇārocayati sma | yat khalu mārṣā jānīyur iha bho śramaṇa utpannaḥ śākyavaṃśāt paramaśaṭhaḥ māyāvī | (53.1–53.2); Tib. (K): de nas 'dod pa'i dbang phyug gis bdud bye ba phrag brgya po de dag la rgyas par smras pa | kye grogs po dag shes par gyis shig | śākya'i rigs las shin tu g.yo dang sgyur ldan pa'i dge sbyong zhig 'dir skyes te | (65.17–66.3). The word *māyā* and derivatives like *māyāvin* are often (if not always) pejorative in this sūtra. The translations *magic* and *magician* are thus apt in this context insofar as both often carry negative connotations and insofar as Māra is clearly not pleased with what is going on. For more on this theme, see David V. Fiordalis, "Miracles in Indian Buddhist Narrative and Doctrine," *JIABS* 33, nos. 1–2 (2010 [2011]): 381–408, esp. 381–84.

[9] Skt. (K): alakṣaṇā māyā (53.7–53.8, 54.1); Tib. (K): mtshan nyid med pa'i sgyu ma (66.11–66.12, 66.20). In his chapter summaries, Dutt renders this "signless magic" (*GM*, 4:viii) which is no doubt technically correct, but I think the alpha privative here carries evaluative weight.

[10] Skt. (K): 53.16, 54.8, 54.11; Tib. (K): 66.18, 67.9, 67.13. In its most generic sense, this word denotes a common, vulgar person. It is not to clear to me whether readers are to make an association with the śūdra varṇa, which is a connotation the word can carry. It would make a certain amount of sense though, given that (on the Buddhist analysis of things, at least) the Brāhmaṇical way of doing things perpetuates the cycle over which Māra predominates, thus denigrating Śākyamuni as a śūdra would code him as a kṣatriya who had not fulfilled his duties (and thus perpetuated the cycle).

scoundrel. And at the same time, he frames himself as having been wronged, as vulnerable to continued harm, and as up to now unable to do much of anything about it. In many respects, Māra speaks from a place of *ressentiment*.[11]

As part of his attempt to affect his audience, Māra describes his own inability to affect Śākyamuni and his would-be followers. With respect to his inability to derail Śākyamuni at the bodhi tree, Māra says that despite his very best efforts he was "not able to cause even a single hair on his body to tremble, or to frighten him—to say nothing therefore of shaking him from his seat or causing him any harm."[12] In just the same way, with respect to Śākyamuni's would-be followers, Māra says that he was "not able to cause a single hair on their bodies to tremble, to shake them—to say nothing of getting them to go back on their word or waver."[13] In other words, although one of Māra's chief functions in Buddhist literature is to generate fear in the hearts and minds of sentient beings (and particularly Buddhist practitioners),[14] Māra depicts himself as unable even to produce the slightest bit of fear—physical signs of which, according to South Asian literary theory, include such things as horripilation and trembling—in Śākyamuni or those on their way to take refuge in him. Here in this sūtra, in Māra's own words, his best efforts were ineffective. Śākyamuni and the rest were simply unaffected.

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[11] Max Scheler's theorization of "the man of *ressentiment*" has been glossed as "an audience who is seething with righteous anger and envy yet also suffering from the impotence to act or adequately express frustration." Though I'm here suggesting that Māra himself can be framed as speaking out of *ressentiment*, he is also trying to manufacture and mobilize this affective orientation in his audience of cosmic māras as well. Casey Ryan Kelly, "Donald J. Trump and the Rhetoric of *ressentiment*," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 106, no. 1 (2019): 1–23, at 3.

[12] Skt. (K): ekaromakūpam apy aham aśakto 'sya saṃtrāsayituṃ vā bhīṣayituṃ vā kim aṃga punas tasmād āsanāt kaṃpayituṃ kiṃ vā punar anyaṃ vighātaṃ kartum (53.10–53.12); Tib. (K): de'i spu'i khung bu gcig kyang dngangs shing 'jigs par bya ma nus na stan de las bskyod pa lta ci smos | bgegs gzhan bya bar lta ga la nus te | (66.16–66.18).

[13] Skt. (K): ekaromakūpam api na śaknomi saṃtrāsayituṃ vā saṃkṣobhayituṃ vā kim aṃga punas tasmād visaṃvādayituṃ vā kaṃpayituṃ vā śaknuyām | (54.5–54.7); Tib. (K): de dag gi spu'i khung bu gcig tsam yang dngangs pa dang | 'khrugs par kho bos byed ma nus na | de la slu ba'am bskyod par lta ga la nus te | (67.6–67.8).

[14] See Giddings, "A Structuralist Examination of the Origins of the Māra Mytheme"; Nichols, *Malleable Mara*.

The desired end of his speech, itself equal parts incendiary and pathetic, is impossible to miss—Māra wants to move his fellow māras. He wants to make them feel certain ways *about* and *with* him such that they act with him. That this is a goal of his speech is made clear at its conclusion. Buttering up his audience and situating them on the "right" side of a Manichean framework, Māra declares:

> "Therefore, my powerful, virtuous, wise, and sovereign friends—together we will deprive the contemptible son of the Śākya of life! We will annihilate all those beings who have gone to him for refuge! We will defeat the ascetic's black faction with its magic and deception! And we will cause our white faction to shine! Then, finally, we will live happily and comfortably!"[15]

We can imagine a scenario in which this powerful conclusion would have whipped his audience of cosmic māras into a bloodthirsty frenzy. We can see them standing up, looking around at one another with excitement in their eyes, feeling emboldened and powerful, ready to make Sahā great again. Indeed, this kind of scenario might have obtained for a brief moment—though the narrator does not tell us as much. In any case, whatever collective effervescence Māra had managed to stir about appears to have been short lived.

After Māra's performance, a cosmic māra named Jyotiṣprabha turns his gaze toward the object of Māra's anxious vitriol (again, presumably through some kind of supernormal sight). And the narrator tells us that "Jyotiṣprabha saw the Lord's body, heard his eloquent Dharma

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[15] Skt. (K): tena hi yūyaṃ balavantaḥ puṇyavanto jñānavantaḥ aiśvaryavantaḥ . . . bhavata | taṃ śākyaputraṃ vṛṣalaṃ jīvitād vyavaropayiṣyāmaḥ | ye ca sattvās taccharaṇagatās tāṃ sarvāṃ vidhvaṃsayiṣyāmaḥ | kṛṣṇaṃ māyāśaṭhaṃ śramaṇapakṣaṃ parājeṣyāmaḥ | śuklaṃ mārapakṣam uddyotayiṣyāmaḥ | tataḥ paścāt sukhaṃ phāṣaṃ vihariṣyāmaḥ || (54.10–55.2, fragmentary); Tib. (K): de'i phyir stobs dang ldan pa | bsod nams dang ldan pa | shes pa dang ldan pa dbang phyug dang ldan pa khyod kho bo'i grogs gyis dang | śākya'i bu dmangs de srog dang dbral lo || de la sems can gang dag skyabs su song ba de dag thams cad kyang rnam par gzhig par bya'o || dge sbyong g.yo sgyu can nag po'i phyogs pham par byas te | bdud kyi phyogs dkar po snang bar byas la | de phyin chad bde ba la reg par gnas par bya'o || (67.11–67.17).

teaching, and suddenly began to tremble, his hairs standing on end."[16] Seeing the Buddha and hearing the Dharma, in other words, fills Jyotiṣprabha with something like reverent trepidation. He then addresses Māra, saying:

> "This is the most beautiful man in this entire world. His body has been purified by the cultivation of merit and knowledge for a long time. He is freed from affliction having been dedicated to the path for a long time. For him, all mundane existence is extinguished. He is liberated from sorrow." || 3.1 ||[17]

And in a verse to be analyzed in Chapter Four below, Jyotiṣprabha then advises Māra strongly against going up against the Buddha. Jyotiṣprabha is not alone in his hesitance. Several cosmic māras—quite a bit more than several, actually—express reservations.

Given the unexpected pushback, Māra realizes that he needs to make sure his next words count. So, he gets right to the heart of the matter. It is not just his wellbeing that is at stake, he says—they are all in danger of losing everything:

> "My people are being reduced to subjection, and your people will follow suit. Before long, he will render the kingdom empty. Where will we go from here?" || 3.4 ||[18]

Māra's rhetoric here really is exquisite. He glides adroitly from the first-person singular, to the second-person plural, to the first-person plural. And he sandwiches his reference to "the kingdom"—itself in the singular and without any possessive pronouns—between the clause of direct address and the clause of inclusion and incorporation. Through this rhetorical sleight of

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[16] Skt. (K): atha jyotiṣprabho māro bhagavataḥ kāyam adrākṣīt | svaraghoṣayuktām dharmadeśanām aśrauśīt | atha tāvad eva tasya romaharṣaṇaḥ saṃtrāsa utpannaḥ | (55.4–55.6); Tib. (K): de nas bdud me 'od kyis bcom ldan 'das kyi sku mthong | sgra dbyangs dang ldan pa'i chos ston pa thos so || mthong nas de spu zhing zhes byed cing dngangs par gyur te || (68.1–68.3).

[17] Skt. (K): kṛtsne kṣetre hy eṣa viśiṣṭo vararūpaḥ puṇyajñānair āśrayaśuddhaś cirakālaṃ | kleśān mukto mārgasuyuktaś cirarātraṃ kṣīṇāḥ sarve tasya bhavā śokavimuktaḥ || 3.1 || (55.8–55.11); Tib. (K): ma lus zhing na 'di ni gzugs bzang mchog || bsod nams shes pas ring nas gnas gtsang ste || nyon mongs rnam grol lam ldan yun ring lon || srid pa kun zad mya ngan rnams las thar || 3.1 || (68.5–68.8).

[18] Skt. (K): vaśaṃ madīyā janatā kṛtā hi yuṣmajjanas tasya vaśānugo 'yaṃ | na cirāt sa śūnyaṃ viṣayaṃ kariṣyati asmadgatiḥ kutra punar bhaviṣyati || 3.4 || (56.7–56.10); Tib. (K): nga yi skye bo dag la dbang byas te || khyod kyi skye bo 'di yang de dbang 'gro || de yis ring por mi thogs yul stongs byed || 'u bu cag kyang gang du 'gro bar 'gyur || 3.4 || (68.20–68.23).

hand, Māra at once constructs and appeals to a sense of shared identity that extends over a vast cosmic geography—all while assuming that the cosmic māras will *feel* a certain way about an implicit shared enemy, that contemptible deceptive magician here reduced to a mere pronoun. But this assumption, as we will see, is unfounded.

After Māra delivers this shrewd one-liner, an exchange ensues. One or two at a time, the cosmic māras share their thoughts and concerns, to which Māra never fails to have a response. The first two contributors to this exchange are Navaraja and Khaḍgasoma, both of whom offer Māra some tough love. Navaraja says that while he may have had the resources in the past, he should strongly reconsider attacking Śākyamuni in light of his current circumstances.[19] A bit more straightforward, Khaḍgasoma tells Māra not to think of rebelling because his enemy simply cannot be killed.[20] Instead of taking any time to consider the merit in their words, or how his interlocutors might have his best interest at heart, Māra swiftly rejects not only their advice but also their basic underlying premises. He is not as weak as Navaraja thinks, Māra insists, nor is Śākyamuni as invulnerable as Khaḍgasoma thinks. Beings in his realm, addicted to the lifestyle Māra provides and oversees, are fiercely loyal servants—"how could they *not* kill Śākyamuni?," Māra probes.[21] After a few more similar exchanges, Māra doubles down on his intention to

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[19] Skt. (K): yadā tavāsīt paramā samṛddhis tadā tvayā darśitam ātmaśauryaṃ | balapranaṣṭo 'sya adhunā nirāśaḥ kiṃ spardhase sarvavidā sahādya || 3.5 || (56.12–56.15); Tib. (K): khyod ni rab tu 'byor par gyur pa'i tshe || de na khyod kyis rang gi dpa' ba bstan || da ni rab tu dpung nyams re chad na || de ring ci phyir thams cad mkhyen la sdo || 3.5 || (69.2–69.5).

[20] Skt. (K): kvacin na tasyāsti mahaḥpradoṣaṃ bhāvanena śuddho hi nirāśrayo 'sau | traidhātukān muktagatipracāro nāsau parair ghātayituṃ hi śakyam || 3.6 || (56.17–56.20; silently modified, see 56 n. 22); Tib. (K): de ni su la'ang yid kyi khro ba med || mi gnas de ni bsam pa nyid kyis gtsang || khams gsum dag las thar zhing 'gro ba rgyu || de la gzhan gyis gsad par mi nus so || 3.6 || (69.7–69.10).

[21] Skt. (K): ye santisattvā iha kāmadhātau kāmaprasaktā madamānamūrcchitāḥ | sadānuvṛttā mama kiṃkarās te kathaṃ na śakyaṃ tair . . . tuṃ samagraiḥ || 3.7 || (57.2–57.5, fragmentary); Tib. (K): 'dod khams 'di na sems can gang 'khod pa || 'dod la chags shing nga rgyal dregs pas myos || de nga phyir rtag 'brang phyag brnyan te || de dag tshogs pas ci phyir de mi sod || 3.7 || (69.12–69.15).

attack the Buddha. And in a striking reversion to first-person language, Māra claims dominion over the physical universe, outlines the means he has at his disposal, and rashly proclaims that he "will turn that lion of the Śākyas to ashes!"[22]

The cosmic māras eventually come around and agree to fight alongside Māra. But lest the reader think that it was on account of anything Māra himself said, the narrator at one point interjects with a telling remark: "And so on, until *koṭi*s of māras had recited a *koṭi* of verses."[23] Though it might not seem like it, the narrator does quite a bit here. Most notably, this mere sentence plays with the reader's sense of time. A *koṭi*, for those of us who do not read Sanskrit, is a word whose literal meaning hovers around *limit* or *end* but which is very commonly used to denote an extraordinarily high number. This word thus marks a rapid fast-forward in story time, although it is unclear just how much time elapses (or how quickly the time elapses). After all, the *limit* of cosmic māras chime in with the *limit* of cautionary verses. Yet the reader can continue reading the narrative without skipping much of a beat—nothing much seems to have changed or developed in the intervening period of time. At the end of the day, how much time is supposed to have passed in the story itself does not really matter all that much. The more important take away is what this strategy implicitly and artfully signals to the reader—namely, that the allegiance of

[22] Skt. (K): yūyaṃ mama prāptabalāḥ sahāyāḥ sadyo bhavanto bhavathāpramattāḥ | apo 'dhitiṣṭhāmi mahīm aśeṣāṃ sarvā diśaḥ parvatamālinī ca || 3.15 || gaganāt pracaṇḍaṃ ghanaśailavarṣaṃ samutsṛjāmy āyasacūrṇarāśim | nārācaśaktikṣuratomarāṃś ca kṣipāmi kāye 'sya vicūrṇanārthaṃ || 3.16 || ebhiḥ prayogair abhighātadīptais taṃ śākyasiṃhaṃ prakaromi bhasma || 3.17 || (59.9–59.18); Tib (K): stobs thob khyed cag nga yi grogs yin te || khyed rnams bag yod byos la de'u re chos || thams cad phyogs su ri yi phreng ba dang || sa 'di ma lus byin gyis chur brlab po || 3.15 || mkha' las mi bzad stug pa'i brag char dang || lcags kyi phye ma'i phung po rab tu dbab || lcags mda' mdung thung spu gri mda' bo che || de lus phye mar brlag phyir dbab par bya || 3.16 || kun nas rab tur no ba'i rdo rje dang || mdung thung ral gri tho ba rnams phab la || 'bar ba mngon 'phangs sbyor ba de dag gis || śākya'i bu de thal bar brlag par bya || 3.17 || (71.4–71.15).

[23] Skt. (K): peyālam | yāvan mārakoṭībhir gāthākoṭī bhāṣitā iti | (59.19); Tib. (K): de bzhin du bdud bye ba'i bar du thams cad kyis tshigs su bcad pa smras so || (71.16–71.17).

the cosmic māras, half-hearted at best and given begrudgingly, comes about not on account of anything Māra said but rather through his dogged persistence. They address Māra, saying:

> "Fine. We will go. After we go get our armor from our homes, we will come back with our armies[24] and display all the supernormal potency, strength, and influence we have. Then you will know for yourself the heroism which the ascetic Gautama will display at that time."[25]

While he is able to get his way in the end, it would be a mistake to say Māra is really all that successful here. We can imagine the cosmic māras grumbling and dragging their feet on their way back to their respective realms. They are not doing what they want to do, nor do they want what Māra wants them to do.[26] In other words, Māra is unable to affect anything more than reluctant and wooden compliance in those beings who typically share similar, even identical, values and goals—and thus *affective orientations*—despite some rather subtle rhetorical performances. It is almost as if we are witness to a democratic process that ends with the minority view, represented by only one voice in this case, winning the day (like a petulant child on the playground, a would-be autocrat on the world stage).

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[24] We are later told that these armies are constituted in part by a huge host of super- and non-human beings "whose minds were not pleased in the Lord, who had not come to recognize his gravity, and whose minds were not pleased in the Dharma and the Sangha" (Skt. [K]: yāvad ye cāsmiṃś cāturdvīpike devanāgayakṣagandharvāsuragaruḍa-kinnaramahoragapretapiśācakumbhāṇḍā bhagavato 'ntike aprasannacittā alabdhagauravamanaskārā dharme saṃghe cāprasannacittās te sarve māreṇa pāpīmatā bhagavto 'ntike vadhāyodyojitāḥ | [60.7–60.10]; Tib. [K]: gling bzhi pa'i 'jig rten gyi khams 'di na lha dang | klu dang | gnod sbyin dang | dri za dang | lha ma yin dang | nam mkha' lding dang | mi 'am ci dang | lto 'phye chen po dang | yi dags dang | sha za dang | grul bum gang dag bcom ldan 'das la sems ma dad cing gus par bya ba yid la byed pa med par gyur la | chos dang dge 'dun la'ang sems ma dad pa yod pa de dag thams cad bdud sdig can gyis bcom ldan 'das bgrongs su bcug nas | [72.4–72.10]).

[25] Skt. (K): evam astu | gamiṣyāmaḥ | svakasvakebhyo bhavanebhyaḥ sannāhaṃ baddhvā sasainyaparivārā āgamiṣyāmo yad asmākam ṛddhibalaviṣayaṃ tat sarvam ādarśayiṣyāmaḥ | atha tvaṃ svayam eva jñāsyase yādṛśaṃ śauryaṃ sa śramaṇo gautamas tatkaṣaṇe pradarśayiṣyati | (59.20–60.3); Tib. (K): de bzhin du 'dong bar bgyi'o || rang rang gi gnas nas go bgos la sde dang g.yog tu bcas te 'dong ngo || bdag cag gi rdzu 'phrul dang | stobs kyi yul de dag thams cad bstan par ni bya na || dge sbyong gau ta ma de rtsal ci 'dra ba de'i mod la rab tu ston te || khyod rang gis rig par 'gyur ro || (71.18–71.22).

[26] I here allude to two lines from a song penned by Tim Kinsella: "I want you to do what you want to do" and "I want you to want what I want you to do." Owls, *Two* (Champaign, IL: Polyvinyl Record Company, 2014), "Why Oh Why" (track four).

Māra and Jyotīrasa

The next episode in the sūtra centers on the interaction between Māra and a sage (*ṛṣi*) named Jyotīrasa. Though brief, it deserves its own section for a couple of reasons. As was discussed in the previous chapter, Jyotīrasa is the main subject of the sūtra's fourth chapter, so it is important to get to know him a bit (even though we will not be able to address his affective reorientation due to limitations of space). And this all the more because he is one of the key players in the episode narrated at the end of the chapter five, which I have argued above reveals continuity. But most importantly for our immediate purposes, we have until now seen Māra's efforts repeatedly fall short (to one degree or another). Even though they had just heard about the Buddha and his dharma, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana see through his disguise and rightly identify him for who he is. In talking with his courtesans, Māra accidentally provides them with a sublime conversion experience of sorts. And he is unable to secure anything much more than shallow support from his children and hollow compliance from his cosmic allies. But Māra finds a bit more success with Jyotīrasa—at least initially.

After the cosmic māras and their armies reconvene in Māra's presence prepared for battle, Māra continues to set plans in motion. As readers will soon discover, Māra has in mind a twofold strategy, both prongs of which basically amount to distraction tactics—the goal (in the end unrealized) presumably being to open up some space for a more straightforward attack. We will let Māra fill us in on the details momentarily. Let's turn now to the proper subject of this section. In order to secure Jyotīrasa's service, the narrator tells us, Māra

> went to the foothills of the Himalayas, where the sage Jyotīrasa lived. A devotee of Maheśvara, he had attained mastery in the eighteen sciences and supernormal processes, and he was surrounded by five hundred students. Appearing before him in the form of Maheśvara, Māra said:

> "An exalted sage born in the line of Gautama lives in Magadha always fixed in analytical and higher knowledge. Right now, he is going about the city of Rājagṛha for alms. You should go talk with him, exchange stories. In that way, you will surely obtain the five supernormal powers." || 3.18 || (Tib. 3.18–3.19)[27]

In this instance, Māra's attempts at deception finally find some success. Presumably under the impression that Śiva himself had just given him a piece of valuable advice, Jyotīrasa eventually travels to Rājagṛha. But the narrator does not tell us this until about midway through the fourth chapter. In fact, the narrator at this point in chapter three tells us nothing at all beyond what we have just seen Māra say to Jyotīrasa. Where readers might expect to see a gesture of reverence, a word of praise, a quick note of appreciation, or even agreement on the part of Jyotīrasa—he is, after all, talking directly to his Lord—there is nothing of the sort. Instead, the episode is narrated rapidly, and readers are left to squeeze out any details from very few words.

Readers might later reasonably wonder, once given more details of course, whether Māra is successful on account of his disguise and speech or on account of Jyotīrasa's gullibility. While the narrator might wish to leave the latter possibility open, the ensuing encounter between Jyotīrasa and the Buddha in chapter four would be substantially weakened if readers are to take Jyotīrasa as an impressionable dolt. It thus seems readers are to take the narrator's word that Jyotīrasa is a smart guy. And by implication, then, readers are also to view this as a small victory for Māra. But again, we must recognize that at this point in the narrative readers are not aware

[27] Skt. (K): māro 'pi pāpīmān anuhimavataḥ pārśvaṃ gatvā yatra jyotīraso ṛṣiḥ prativasati maheśvarabhaktiko aṣṭādaśasu vidyāsthāneṣv ṛddhiviṣayapāramiprāptaḥ paṃcaśataparivāraḥ tasya maheśvararūpeṇa purataḥ sthitvaivam āha | nityaṃ gautamagotrajo ṛṣivaro vijñān' abhijñāśrito magadhe saṃvasatīha so 'dya carate piṇḍāya rājñogṛham | tena tvaṃ saha saṃlapasva viśadaṃ nānākathābhiḥ sthiraḥ tatraiva tvam atīva paṃca niyataṃ prāpsyasy abhijñāvaśim || 3.18 || (60.11–61.2); Tib. (K): bdud sdig can ni dbang phyug chen po'i gzugs su bsgyur nas | drang srong skar ma la dga' ba zhes bya ba dbang phyug chen po la dad pa | rig pa'i gnas bco brgyad kyi pha rol tu phyin pa | rdzu 'phrul gyi yul gyi pha rol tu son pa | g.yog lnga brgya yod pa | gangs kyi ri'i ngos la gnas pa de'i mdun du 'dug ste 'di skad ces smras so || gau ta ma yi rigs las skyes pa'i drang srong mchog || mkhas shing mngon par shes pa dag la gnas || ang ga ma ga dhā na der 'dug de ring ni || rgyal po'i khab tu nges par bsod snyoms spyod || 3.18 || brtan por sna tshogs gsal ba'i gtam rnams kyis || de dang khyod du lhan cig smra bar byos || der khyod mngon shes dbang po lnga po yang || gdon mi za bar rab tu thob par 'gyur || 3.19 || (72.11–73.6).

that Jyotīrasa actually visits this "exalted sage." All readers learn about Jyotīrasa in this short episode is that he is an accomplished and powerful devotee of Śiva (thanks to our omniscient narrator) who has not yet reached all his aims (thanks to Pseudo-Maheśvara's insinuation).

But readers are not necessarily beholden to the time of narration. Given our particular interests here, it is appropriate to bring the weight of our knowledge to the brief exchange outlined above so that we can appreciate just how Māra won this small victory. The first thing to notice is that Māra appeared to Jyotīrasa in the guise of Maheśvara. This disguise did not fool Śākyamuni earlier, but it does the trick this time around given that Jyotīrasa is already a devotee of Maheśvara. The second thing to recognize is the craftiness of his speech to Jyotīrasa. The first thing he tells him is that the exalted sage belongs to the line of Gautama (*gautamagotraja*). At a quick glance, this would likely not strike Buddhist readers as unusual. After all, Gautama is Siddhārtha's family name. But this particular description stands in contrast to prior descriptions of the Buddha. Although Māra refers to the Buddha as Gautama on occasion, this is the first (and only) reference to the *line* of Gautama that we see in the narrative. Every time Māra refers to the Buddha's heritage in previous interactions—when talking with Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana (as Pseudo-Aśvajit), his courtesans, his children, and the cosmic māras—he refers to the Buddha as the *son of the Śākyas* (Skt. *śākyatanaya*, *śākyasuta*, *śākyaputra*, or *śākyātmaja*).

This shift is a subtle one, but it should give us pause, especially when considering that Māra is pretending to be Śiva and talking to a Śiva-devotee. Though this is admittedly speculative, I get the sense that Māra uses *line of Gautama* here in reference to the great *ṛṣi* Gautama. According to G. P. Malalasekera, "It has been suggested that [the Gautama line] was a brahmin clan, claiming descent from the ancient *isi* Gotama [=*ṛṣi* Gautama]. The evidence for

this suggestion is, however, very meagre."[28] Whether Śākyamuni *really* descended from this eminent sage appears to have concerned Malalasekera and others, but it is not a question of much import for us. Instead, we can appreciate Māra's claim in its narrative context. That is to say, we can appreciate Māra's claim in the form of Pseudo-Maheśvara as an appeal to a point in Śākyamuni's genealogy that might resonate with Jyotīrasa. In keeping with this representation, Pseudo-Maheśvara makes it clear that this exalted sage has something Jyotīrasa does not—the five supernormal skills (Skt. *abhijñā*; Tib. *mngon shes*) of clairvoyance, clairaudience, and so on. Though Jyotīrasa is an accomplished ascetic, having mastered the eighteen sciences and a range of supernormal abilities, he does not have it all. Pseudo-Maheśvara at once reminds Jyotīrasa of his lack and tells him from whom he can attain valuable new know-how—all while making said source seem in line with Śaiva tradition through Śiva's own blessing and through reference to Gautama.

After enlisting Jyotīrasa in the form of Maheśvara, Māra returns to his newly formed army of super- and non-human beings assembled from around Sahā and the rest of the cosmos. There, he breaks down his plan in two verses. On my reading, each verse explains one prong of a two-pronged course of action. The first appears to refer to the distraction tactic just hatched with the unwitting Jyotīrasa, while the second is addressed to his current audience. He says:

> "Listen to me, everyone. I had a great idea today. If beings endowed with supernormal potency and strength spontaneously talk with the son of the Śākyas, he will not show them his magic which suppresses our great pride and our kingdom. With sweet speech, he is always affectionate toward his students, like a mother to her children. || 3.19 || (Tib. 3.20)
>
> "His students, without passion, always wander single file in the city for alms, full of composure. When the time comes, we should grab them quickly, overwhelming them

[28] G. P. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, 2 vols. (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1938), 2:969, s.v. "Sakyā, Sakka, Sākiyā."

with sweet dance and song. Hearing that, the Bull of the Śākyas will develop a distasteful disposition." || 3.20 || (Tib. 3.21)[29]

Māra does not mention Jyotīrasa by name in the first verse—indeed, he uses plural forms—but it is difficult to read these words as having anyone else in view given the context. Though readers are not told how Māra learned that monastics were not to display supernormal powers around the laity,[30] we are being granted fascinating access into Māra's thought process. He assumes that the Buddha, when approached by a student or would-be student, will be disarmed by affection. And Jyotīrasa, primed by Pseudo-Maheśvara to be full of awe (however ill-informed) for the exalted sage, makes for an ideal candidate. Phase One of the plan, we can imagine Māra thinking, will take care of itself.

The details of Phase Two will be analyzed elsewhere, since they do not involve Jyotīrasa (or Māra, for that matter) directly. But we should briefly sketch them before moving forward. Māra tells his army that at a certain time every day, the Buddha's disciples wander into the city for alms. Their movements are calm and measured. At a basic level, the plan is to interrupt their begging routine. But there is a deeper goal—through song and dance, Māra aims to break their composure, at the very least, and hopefully even distract them such that they abandon monastic

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[29] Skt. (K): matto bho śṛṇutādya yādṛg atulā buddhir mayā cintitā svairaṃ śākyasutaṃ samālapata ye-d-ṛddhiprabhāvānvitāḥ | tāṃ māyāṃ na vidarśayet svaviṣayīṃ mārorudarpāpahāṃ nityaṃ snigdhavacāḥ sa śiṣyanirato māteva putreṣv iva || 3.19 || śiṣyās tasya hi ye prahīṇamadanāś caryāṃ caraṃti dhruvaṃ pūrvāhṇe nagaraṃ krameṇa nibhṛtāḥ svaireṇa tāvad vayaṃ | gṛhṇīmo druta nṛtyagītamadhuraprādhānyabhāvair yathā śrutvaitāṃ prakṛtiṃ manovirasatāṃ yāyāt sa śākyarṣabhaḥ || 3.20 || (61.5–61.12); Tib. (K) differs in the second verse, saying the monks are *without provisions* rather than *passionless*: ngas deng mi mtshungs blos bsam ci 'dra nga las khyod nyon cig || bdag yul bdud kyi dregs chen 'joms pa'i sgyu de mi ston par || rdzu 'phrul mthu dang ldan de śākya'i bu la rang dgar smra || de rtag tshig 'jam slob ma dag la brtse ba bu la ma byams bzhin || 3.20 || de yi slob ma rgyags spangs gdon mi za bar snga dro ni || grong khyer dag tu g.yeng ba med par mthar gyis rgyu ba na || de dag glu gar snyan mchog tshul gyis rang dgar myur du gzungs || de thos śākya khyu mchog ci nas yid spro med par bya || 3.21 || (73.10–73.18).

[30] I. B. Horner, trans., *The Book of the Discipline*, 6 vols. (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1952), 5:149–52 (story), 5:152 (prohibition). See also Fiordalis, "Miracles in Indian Buddhist Narratives and Doctrine," 384–85, 384–85 n. 9; John Strong, "The Legend of the Lion-Roarer: A Study of the Buddhist Arhat Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja," *Numen* 26, no. 1 (1979): 50–88, at 71–75.

life altogether. In other words, Māra wants to bring Good Times to the monks to remind them of some of the things they're missing out on by being disciples of the Buddha. (And who better to do this than troupes of cosmic māras, intergalactic lords of pleasure and desire?) This, he hopes, will cause the Buddha to become upset (Skt. *prakṛtiṃ manovirasatāṃ yāyāt sa śākyarṣabhaḥ*; Tib. *ci nas yid spro med par bya*).

Upon hearing this command—which, it should be noted, Māra gives in the first-person plural but is to be enacted only by his audience—two cosmic māras respond with a somewhat surprising degree of enthusiasm (surprising in light of what we saw above, at least) and offer more detail on how to execute each aspect of the plan. One māra, whose name is not specified, describes what they will do once Jyotīrasa disarms the Buddha and how they hope it will affect him. Wielding weapons alongside hosts of fierce emanated beasts, the rabble-rouser boasts, the cosmic māras will stun Śākyamuni such that he is confused, forgets about his supernormal powers, and staggers about in disarray.[31] A second unnamed māra from among the masses then chimes in with a similarly stimulating verse. Haunting the gateways of the city armed to the teeth, so he claims, they will cause all sorts of terrifying things to happen such that when Śākyamuni sees them he will be terrified and defenseless.[32] We will see later that none of this goes according to plan, but for now let us continue to track Māra.

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[31] Skt. (K): siṃhavyāghragajoṣṭracaṇḍamahoṣīṅ kṣipraṃ purasyāsya hi prāvṛṇmeghaninādinaḥ khararavān nirmāya naikāṃ bahiḥ | tiṣṭhemo vayam āyudhapraharaṇāḥ sākṣāt sa dṛṣṭvādbhutān bhrānto ṛddhim apāsya yāsyati tato nānādiśo vismṛtaḥ || 3.21 || (61.14–62.2); Tib. (K): glang chen rnga mo seng ge ma he stag gtum sgra drag dbyar dus kyi || 'brug sgra 'byin pa lta bu du ma grong de'i phyi rol myur sprul te || bdag cag lag cha mtshon thogs 'dug pa ngo mtshar mngon sum de mthong na || bslad cing mi dran rdzu 'phrul stor te de nas tha dad phyogs su 'gro || 3.22 || (74.2–74.7).

[32] Skt. (K): vīthīcatvaratoraṇeṣu bahuśaḥ sthitvā virūpair mukhair nānādyāyudhatīkṣṇatomaraśaraprāsāsikhaḍga-āśritaiḥ | ākāśād ghanarāvasupraharaṇair meghāsaniṃ muṃcata kṣipraṃ sa pralayaṃ prayāsyati tato bhūkaṃpabhīto 'vaśaḥ || 3.22 || (62.4–7); Tib. (K): lam srang bzhi mdo rta babs dag na mi sdug gdong mangs 'khod || sna tshogs mtshon rnon mda' chen mda' zhags brla dgas ral gri thogs || nam mkha' las kyang mtshon cha'i sgrag sprin las lce yang 'bebs || de nas sa g.yos 'jigs pas dbang med myur du ma rungs 'gyur || 3.23 || (74.9–74.13).

Māra, the Preaching Lotus, and the Audience

The events to be discussed in this section and the next mark the climax of the Māra narrative. By the time the third chapter of the sūtra is over, Māra's thoughts and actions are not narrated very often. But as I have mentioned, Māra remains central to the sūtra insofar as he is periodically revisited and consistently depicted in a position of heightened emotionality, diminished capacity to affect, and social (if not physical) isolation. We now turn to the interaction between Māra and the preaching lotus. First, a bit of context to orient ourselves. As discussed above, one part of Māra's plan is to send cosmic māras to distract and overwhelm Śākyamuni's disciples with song and dance. This plan is enacted at Rājagṛha's four city gates (simultaneously, we are given to think) with four disciples—Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, Pūrṇa, and Subhūti. But the plan backfires. As we will see in more detail in Chapter Five below, the cosmic māras are instead captivated by the mendicants and sit down in the middle of the road in anticipation of a Dharma talk. Śākyamuni knows all this has occurred, of course, even though he is still outside Rājagṛha. And to sate them, he causes a giant lotus to emerge in the city center. Extraordinarily tall and made of a variety of precious substances, this lotus emanates Dharma teachings unique and appropriate to a range of beings stationed at different places in the cosmos—those standing on the earth (i.e., residents of the *kāmadhātu* excluding *deva*s and *nāraka*s), those in the six heavenly realms (i.e., the *deva*s of the *kāmadhātu*), and the sixteen groupings of gods (i.e., *deva*s of the sixteen increasingly rarefied *rūpadhātu*s of *brahmaloka*).

After telling readers about this marvelous lotus and its teachings, the narrator—whose purported access to all these Dharma teachings, including the most rarefied, should give critical readers pause—returns to Māra. Presumably still in his lamentation room after having dispatched Jyotīrasa and the army of cosmic māras, Māra suddenly hears verses and begins looking all

around. His eyes land (no doubt rather quickly) on the lotus and the huge audience surrounding it.[33] This experience is deeply affecting for Māra—and in exactly the way we have come to expect.

> Then Wicked Māra—exceedingly pained, dispirited, and regretful, his hair standing on end, his body perspiring, and his frame shaking—launched into the sky and cried out loudly to the other māras.[34]

Before getting into what Māra says when he cries out to the cosmic māras, we should pause for a moment on the new words used to describe Māra's affective state. Earlier in the sūtra, when Māra learned of his children's disloyalty in the sūtra's first chapter, the narrator describes him as "exceedingly incensed, pained, dispirited, and regretful" (Skt. *bhūyasyā mātrayā caṇḍībhūto duḥkhito durmanā vipratisārī*; Tib. *rab tu khros te sdug bsngal zhing yid mi bde nas yid la gcags*). Here we lose the first of these adjectives, but the narrator provides *three* more in saying that Māra's hairs are standing on end, that his body is perspiring, and that his frame is shaking (Skt. *saṃhṛṣṭaromakūpaḥ prasvinnagātraḥ saṃprakaṃpitaśarīro*; Tib. *spu zing zhes byed par gyur cing* | *lus rngul te lus 'dar*). This is the first time the narrator has taken Māra's affective temperature since he learned that several of his own children had gone to Śākyamuni for refuge,

[33] Skt. (K): aśrauṣīn māraḥ pāpīmānn etāñ chlokān | samantataṃ ca vyavalokyādrākṣīt rājagṛhe mahānagare nīthīmadhye padmaṃ | tataś ceme ślokā nisceruḥ | tadā padmaṃ parivārya aprameyāsaṃkhyeyāni manuṣyakoṭīnayutaśatasahasrāṇi sannipaṇṇāni dharmaśravaṇāya | atha khalu māraḥ pāpīmān ūrdhvaṃ vyavalokitavān adrākṣīt ṣatṣu kāmāvacareṣu deveṣu sarvatra devabhavane tat padmaṃ | tad eva cānunparivāryāprameyāsaṃkhyeyāni devakoṭīnayutaśatasahasrāṇi sannipaṇṇāni dharmaśravaṇāya | (76.18–77.5); Tib. (K): bdud sdig can gyis tshigs su bcad pa de dag thos nas kun tu bltas te | rgyal po'i khab kyi grong khyer chen po'i srang gi dbus na pad ma de las 'di lta bu'i tshigs su bcad pa dag byung ste chos mnyan pa'i phyir mi bye ba khrag khrig brgya stong grangs med dpag tu med pa dag gis pad ma de 'khor bar 'khod pa mthong ngo || de nas bdud sdig can gyis steng du bltas na | 'dod pa na spyod pa'i lha drug gi gnas thams cad na'ang chos mnyan pa'i phyir lha bye ba khrag khrig brgya stong grangs med dpag tu med pa dag gis pad ma de 'khor bar 'khod pa mthong ngo || (88.15–88.22).

[34] Skt. (K): atha bhūyasyā mātrayā māraḥ pāpīmān duḥkhito durmanā vipratisārī saṃhṛṣṭaromakūpaḥ prasvinnagātraḥ saṃprakaṃpitaśarīro gagane pradhāvan mahatā svareṇāparān mārān prakrośann evam āha | (77.6–77.8); Tib. (K): de nas bdud sdig can rab tu sdug bsngal zhing yid mi bde nas yid la gcags te | spu zing zhes byed par gyur cing | lus rngul te lus 'dar nas nam mkha' la rgyug cing skad chen pos bos te bdud gzhan la 'di skad ces smras so || (89.1–89.3).

so it makes narrative sense to see an intensification here. That there are three new adjectives signifies a noteworthy intensification, but there meanings are worth unpacking before moving on to see what Māra does next.

The first adjective in our novel series is *saṃhṛṣṭaromakūpaḥ*. As we saw in the case of *durmanas* above, *saṃhṛṣṭaromakūpaḥ* is an exocentric compound (i.e., a *bahuvrīhi*). In this case, we have a past passive participle (*saṃhṛṣṭa*, from *sam√hṛṣ*) joined with a noun (*romakūpa*, itself a genitive *tatpuruṣa* compound). Taken as a whole, the compound literally means something like *bristled hair pores*. In its function as *bahuvrīhi*, the compound takes on an adjectival sense modifying a noun outside the compound itself—that noun being Māra's name (and therefore Māra himself). The sense of the adjective then becomes something like *one whose hair pores are bristled*; or, as translated above, *his hair standing on end*. The other two compounds are likewise *bahuvrīhi*s formed by joining a past passive participle to a noun—*prasvinna* (from *pra√svid*) with *gātra*, *saṃprakaṃpita* (from *sam+pra√kamp*) with *śarīra*. And these can be literally rendered *one whose body is perspiring* and *one whose frame is shaking.*

These three adjectives resonate with depictions of fear in South Asian literary theory (*rasa*), but they are also legible in the terms of the present study—that is, as narrative depictions of emotion that seek to carry subtle normative force for readers outside the text. By depicting Māra as reacting in fear to the dissemination of the Dharma within the narrative (a theme to be explored in more depth in Chapter Four below), which itself in part constitutes the sūtra readers have before them, the narrator gives readers the opportunity to "feel better" than Māra does. Many other Mahāyāna sūtras, especially Perfection of Wisdom texts, code fear with respect to the Dharma negatively and ascribe advanced bodhisattva status to those who can hear the

Dharma without trembling in fear.[35] By bringing the methodological framework of affective regimes to this literature, I aim to think about the social functions of this kind of language. How exactly one ought to feel with respect to any given object, particularly a religious text, is not given in nature. With the narrative of Māra, the *Precious Banner* marks certain lines of affective orientation as illegitimate. It also marks certain lines of affective orientation as appropriate in its depiction of other actants, but that is the subject of another chapter. Let us return now to the narrative.

Seeing and hearing all of this—the lotus extending high into the most rarefied realms of the Buddhist cosmos, emanating Dharma teachings appropriate to a wide range of beings, and surrounded by increasing numbers of said beings, including many of his recently deployed army of cosmic māras—and recognizing what it means for him, too, gives rise to bodily as well as mental responses we might associate with absolute terror and desolation. From this state, Māra cries out to the cosmic māras remaining in his company:

> "Listen to my unequalled speech with steady mind. I have no command over my kingdom, nor do I have power here. The power of the sage, his exceptional virtue and skill, surges into the world making people steadfast. || 3.78 || (Tib. 3.79)
>
> "The lotus arises here to gladden gods and humans. Prominent people surely approach it from all sides. Thirsting after and delighting in the desired words of the Fortunate One, those with utmost virtue proceed toward the path of tranquility. || 3.79 || (Tib. 3.80)
>
> "This lotus is an illusion brought about by the ascetic in order to deceive the triple world. The multitudes of gods and humans all stand singularly attentive around the lotus. Now, hurl a torrent of boulders at once while releasing frightening shrieks. Struck down today by the weapons of a fierce army of māras, this lotus must be destroyed." || 3.80 || (Tib. 3.81)[36]

[35] This will be addressed in more detail in Chapter Four.

[36] Skt. (K): śṛṇu girim asamāṃ samavahitamanā na me vaśo svaviṣaye na ca balam iha me | idam iha munibalam atiguṇaviśadaṃ prasarati jagati sthirajanakaraṇam || 3.78 || kamalam iha punar udayati nar'amaru dayitum upagata nikhilato sujanata niyatā | paritṛṣitasugatasuvacananiratā vrajati śamathapatham atiguṇaparamā || 3.79 || māyeyaṃ śramaṇena vartita iha trailokyasaṃmohanī sarve 'nanyamanā narāmaraganāḥ padmaṃ vitanya sthitāḥ | kṣipraṃ muṃcatha śailavṛṣṭim abhunā bhīṣmasvaraṃ rāviṇo gacchen nāśam ayaṃ yathādya nihato mārograsainyāyudaiḥ || 3.80 || (77.9–78.4); Tib. (K): mi 'gyur yid kyis nga yi tshig nyon la || nga la stobs med bdag yul 'dir dbang med ||

With these desperate words, Māra commands his remaining troops to attack the lotus. If the lotus is destroyed, he seems to be thinking, then maybe his allies will come to their senses and rejoin his army. And if *that* happens, maybe he stands a fighting chance against Śākyamuni. Maybe, just maybe, he can avoid losing his kingdom altogether.

But it's too late. As Māra himself says, he no longer has any power in his kingdom. His remaining troops have already made up their minds not to fight alongside Māra, and Māra's words are not going to change that. To put the situation in the vocabulary pertinent to this study—in his deeply affected state, characterized as one of heightened negative emotional intensity, Māra is bereft of power and community. His affective orientation, his misalignment, is such that he no longer has any capacity to affect and such that boundaries have been erected between himself and everyone else. What cosmic māras had remained in Māra's company were deeply affected, too, but with different consequences. Analysis of these māras' newfound affective orientation will have to wait until Chapter Five, but we can note here that they describe themselves as *disoriented* (Skt. *bhrānta*; Tib. *myos*) upon seeing Śākyamuni's body, as *losing their strength* (Skt. *asmadbalaṃ . . . vilayaṃ prayātaṃ*; Tib. *bdag cag stobs ni shin tu brlag par 'gyur*), as *becoming grotesque* (Skt. *vayaṃ . . . bībhatsatarāḥ prayātā*; Tib. *bdag cag rnam par 'jigs shing skrag gyur*), as possessing *malodorous bodies* (Skt. *durgandhakāyā*; Tib. *lus ni dri*), and as *weak and impotent* (Skt. *balavīryanaṣṭāḥ*; Tib. *stobs dang brtson 'grus stor*).[37] Yet they declare that Śākyamuni is the supreme refuge, that they will go to him for refuge even if it kills

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mthu stobs yon tan shin tu dri med de || skye bo brtan phyir 'jig rten 'dir 'dug go || 3.79 || lha mi dga' ba'i dam pa 'dir byung ste || 'gro mchog ma lus nges par nye bar dong || bde gshegs tshig la skom zhing rab tu dga' || yon tan rab mchog zhi ba'i lam du 'gro || 3.80 || 'di ni 'jig rten gsum po slu ba dge sbyong sgyu yin te || lha mi mang po thams cad yid gcig pad ma 'khor bar 'dug || de ni 'jigs pa'i skad phyung myur du ri yi char phab ste || ci nas bdud kyi sde btsan mtshon gyis deng bcom 'dir brlag gyis || 3.81 || (89.4–89.15).

[37] Skt. (K): 78.8, 78.16, 78.21–78.21; Tib. (K): 89.19, 90.2, 90.6–90.7.

them, and that they will approach him out of joy, excitement, gladness, and devotion.[38] Lest we veer too far from Māra's trail, suffice it to say here that the māras follow through with their declared intention to take refuge in the Buddha. They do this by descending from the sky to Rājagṛha, taking a variety of forms, and preparing to make offerings to Śākyamuni upon his arrival to the city (which itself is narrated in chapter five).

After describing the activities of the cosmic māras, the focus of the narrator shifts back to Māra. "When Māra saw that all those māras and their followers had gone to the ascetic Gautama for refuge," the narrator tells us, "he was agitated (Skt. *kṣubdha*; Tib. *rab tu 'khrugs*), frightened (Skt. *trasta*; Tib. *skrag*), and disoriented (Skt. *bhrānta*; Tib. *myos*)."[39] Again, we see three entirely new descriptions of Māra's affective state. As before, when the narrator described Māra's physical condition, these three adjectives resonate with some of the vocabulary associated with fear in South Asian literary theory. The worst-case scenario he feared since the "conversion" of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana is coming to fruition right before his eyes. Betrayed by his courtesans, his children, and his army of cosmic māras, Māra weeps but resolves not to give up:

> "I am now friendless. My glory is totally lost today. I have fallen from my former influence. I should undertake one final act of valor. || 3.87 || (Tib. 3.88)
>
> "I should cut down that lotus at the root, on account of which beings from all directions have gone forth. These beings will be stunned by the cutting down of the lotus and that will be my last show of strength." || 3.88 || (Tib. 3.89)[40]

[38] Skt. (K): 78.9, 79.1–79.2, 79.6, 79.10, 79.12; Tib. (K): 89.20, 90.8–90.9, 90.13, 90.18, 90.20.

[39] Skt. (K): atha sa māro yadādrakṣīt sarvāṃs tān mārān saparivārāṃ chramaṇaṃ gautamaṃ śaraṇaṃ gatān tadā bhūyasyā mātrayā kṣubdhas trasto bhrāntaḥ (81.16–81.18); Tib. (K): de nas bdud sdig can gyis gang gi tshe bdud de dag thams cad g.yog dang bcas te dge sbyong gauta ma la skyabs su dong bar mthong ba de'i tshe | rab tu 'khrugs te skrag cing myos (92. 21–92.23).

[40] Skt. (K): prarudann evam āha | na bhūyo me sahāyo 'sti naṣṭā śrīr me 'dya sarvataḥ | bhraṣṭo 'smi māraviṣayā kuryāṃ vīryaṃ hi paścimam || 3.87 || mūlāc chindyām ahaṃ padmaṃ sattvā yena diśo 'vrajan | chedāt padmasya saṃbhrāntā etat syāt paścimaṃ balaṃ || 3.88 || (81.18–82.4); Tib. (K): rab tu ngu zhing 'di skad ces smras so || bdag la phyin chad grogs med de || bdag gi dpal deng thams cad stor || bdag ni bdud kyi yul nas 'khams || brtson 'grus tha

Māra is frantic. He is out of options, and he well knows it. Abandoned by everyone he thought he could depend on, he must take matters into his own hands. Otherwise, it spells the end for him, his kingdom, and his way of life.

What follows is easily the most intense moment of the entire sūtra. That it is to be read as such is signaled not only by the content but also by the undulating shifts in verbal morphology used by the narrator. Up until this point, the narrator uses morphologically past verb forms to narrate events in the past. But here, the narrator begins to shift between present and past forms. (Present morphology is, of course, used when the narrator reports the direct speech of actants who are speaking about their own present. Here we are talking about the morphology of verbs used in the act of narration itself.) "Descending from the sky like the wind to the lotus on the road," our narrator begins,

> Māra wants to lift the lotus by its stem, but he was not able to touch it. He wants to cut off its petals, but he did not see them. He wants to strike down its pericarp, but he did not get a hold of it. Just like lightning is seen but not apprehended, just like a shadow is seen but not apprehended, in the same way that lotus was seen but not apprehended.[41]

Though all these verbs refer to events in the past, the use of present indicative morphology in the narration marks this series of events as different. It is not uncommon in historical writing in English to see narrators use morphologically present forms to narrate past events. I have been

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ma brtsam par bya || 3.88 || bdag gis pad ma rtsa ba bcad || pad ma bcad dang kun 'khrugs te || des na sems can phyogs phyogs 'gro || de ni tha ma'i stobs yin no || 3.89 || (92.23–93.6).

[41] Skt. (K): māraḥ pāpīmāṃ vāyuvad avatīrya gaganād yena tat padmaṃ vīthīgataṃ tena prasṛtya tat padmam ādaṇḍād icchaty uddhartuṃ sprasṭum api na śaśāka | patrāṇi cchetum icchati na ca tāni dadarśa | padmakarṇikām api pāṇinā parāhaṃtum ichati tām api naivopalebhe || tad yathā vidyud dṛsyate na copalabhyate | tad yathā vā cchāyā drśyate na copalabhyate | evem [sic; read: evam] eva tat padmaṃ dṛsyate na copalabhyate | (82.5–82.10); Tib. (K): bdud sdig can gyis … rlung lta bur nam mkha' las babs te | srang gi pad ma ga la ba der phyin nas pad ma de'i sdong po yan chad dbyung bar 'dod na reg par yang ma nus | pad ma'i 'dab ma gcad par 'dod na de dag kyang ma mthong | pad ma'i snying po lag pas brdab par 'dod na de'ang ma dmigs te | dper na glog snang yang mi dmigs pa bzhin no || 'di lta ste dper na grib ma snang yang mi dmigs pa de bzhin du pad mo de'ang snang mod kyi mi dmigs so || (93.7–93.13).

using it in these very pages, in fact, to talk about the events narrated in the *Precious Banner* even though the sūtra was composed a long while ago and depicts events that allegedly happened even further in the past. My decision to use present forms consistently is a stylistic choice aimed at creating an engaging reading experience. That the narrator of the *Precious Banner* suddenly begins to use present forms in *this* moment of narration—and nowhere else in the sūtra leading up to this point—does quite a bit more, however.[42] Through differentiation with prior narration, this strategy builds tension in a way that continuing to use past forms might not. It helps to bring the events into the reading present, one after another, and invites readers to envision Māra's attacks on the lotus unfolding before their eyes, offering brief moments of relief by punctuating the account with past forms.[43]

With some exceptions, the narrator continues to use present forms in this undulating way until the end of the third chapter. To reflect the Sanskrit's ebb and flow, then, I temporarily deviate from my consistent use of the historical present in the following summaries (while

[42] This is not to be confused with the historical present as described by Speijer, Oberlies, and others, which typically sees a present form immediately followed by the particle *sma* (a concrete example being *viharati sma*, common at the beginning of Buddhist sūtras). In the context to be discussed here, there is a pattern of present indicative forms followed by perfect forms. While *sma* appears after a finite present form at the very end of the third chapter, it is my sense that this particle cannot distribute across multiple finite verbs (some of which, it bears repeating, are in this case perfect [and thus already *past*] forms). Oberlies notes that present and past forms can occur side by side (rarely) and that in such instances the present can be taken as sharing a "general past sense" with the past forms they are near. While I am not in a position to offer a critique of Oberlies on this point from a grammatical perspective, the fact that the narrator suddenly decides to use present forms alongside past forms in this precise context strikes me as reason enough to treat these morphological shifts as significant. Even if we ought to read these verbs as having a "general past sense," which seems reasonable enough given that the events narrated are in the past, the question then becomes whether we can regard the shift between verb tense as significant. I think that we can—and, indeed, that we should, if we want to appreciate the narrative and how it works. J. S. Speijer, *Sanskrit Syntax* (Leiden: Brill, 1886), 244 (§236 [sic; read: §326); Thomas Oberlies, *A Grammar of Epic Sanskrit* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), 144–52 (§6.2.5), esp. 145–47 and 145–46 n. 6, quote at 145.

[43] That tense shifts can serve important narrative functions has been noted by Amruta Chandekar, a linguist who argues that tense shift in the *Pañcatantra* and the *Hitopadeśa*, for example, is "employed by authors of these texts as part of a complex strategy creating an intricate narrative discourse. On the textual level," she continues, "tense shift reveals hierarchical arrangement and divisions of narrative discourse through backgrounding and foreground of narrative content" (Amruta M. Chandekar, "The Pragmatics of Tense and Aspect in Narratives: A Linguistic Analysis of Indo-Aryan Texts" [PhD diss., University of Washington, 2015], esp. 148–81, quote at 179–80).

continuing to represent verb tense faithfully in any translations, of course). Māra tries to frighten the beings assembled around the lotus with a terrifying howl. He tries shake the earth. But he was simply unable to carry out any such plans.[44] He then thought to attack the many beings around the lotus, but he could not get his hands on even one of them.[45] "Wicked Māra then wept uncontrollably. And by the power of the Buddha, his entire body shook like a tree. Looking in the four directions with tears on his face, he said:

> "This illusion has been made by the ascetic to attract the entire world today. But it is making me confused like before and I am suddenly staggered. I have fallen from influence, from my merit and strength. My life is ruined. Put to flight, I rush back to my palace so that I am not destroyed." || 3.89 || (Tib. 3.90)[46]

He wants to go home, but he was not able to go there. Frightened, he wept. He then thought to disappear, yet he is not able to disappear either. Instead, "he saw himself bound at the neck by a fivefold fetter."[47]

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[44] Skt. (K): atha punaḥ sarvaparṣatsaṃtrāsanārtham uccair mahābhairavaṃ svaraṃ moktum icchati tadāpi na śaśāka | sa punar mahābalavegenobhābhyāṃ pāṇibhyām icchati mahāpṛthivīṃ parāhaṃtum kaṃpayituṃ tām api spraṣṭum api na śaśāka naivopalebhe | tad yathāpi nāma kaścid ākāśam icchet parāmarṣṭuṃ na copalebhe | evam eva māraḥ pāpīmāṃ dadarśa pṛthivīṃ na ca pasparśa nopalebhe | (82.11–82.17); Tib. (K): 'khor thams cad rab tu dngangs par bya ba'i phyir skad drag cing che la 'jigs pa'i sgra dbyung bar 'dod na de'ang ma nus so || yang stobs chen po'i drag shul gyis lag pa snyis sa chen po la brdabs te rab tu bskyod par 'dod na reg par yang ma nus te mi dmigs so || 'di lta ste dper na la la zhig nam mkha' la rdob par 'dod na mi dmigs pa de bzhin du bdud sdig can gyis mthong yang reg par mi rung zhing ma dmigs (93.14–93.20).

[45] Skt. (K): tasyaitad abhavat | yat tv ahaṃ yathā sannipatitānāṃ sattvānāṃ prahārāṃ dadyāṃ cittavikṣepaṃ vā kuryām iti dadarśa tān sattvān na caiksasattvam apy upalebhe na pasparśa | (82.17–82.19); Tib. (K): de 'di snyam du sems te | ci nas sems can 'dus pa rnams brtags te sems rnam par 'khrug par bya'o snyam na sems can de dag mthong yang mi dmigs shing reg par yang ma nus so || (93.20–94.1).

[46] Skt (K): atha bhūyasyā mātrayā māraḥ pāpīmān ruroda | buddhānubhāvena cāsya sarvaṃ śarīraṃ vṛkṣavac cakaṃpe | sāśrumukhaś caturdiśaṃ ca vyavalokayann evam āha || māyaiṣā śramaṇena sarvajagato 'dyāvarjanārthaṃ kṛtā yenāhaṃ purato vimohita iva bhrāntiṃ gato 'smi kṣaṇāt | bhraṣṭo 'haṃ viṣayāt svapuṇyabalataḥ kṣīnaṃ [sic; read: kṣīṇaṃ] ca me jīvitaṃ śīghraṃ yāmi nirākṛtaḥ svabhavanaṃ yāvan na yāmi kṣayam || 3.89 || (82.19–83.5); Tib. (K): de nas bdud sdig can rab tu ngu zhing sangs rgyas kyi mthus de'i lus shing ljon pa bzhin du 'dar te | gdong mchi ma can gyis phyogs bzhir blta zhing 'di skad ces smras so || dge sbyong gis ni 'gro kun bsdu phyir de ring sgyu 'di byas || 'di ltar bdag ni mdun 'dir bslad bzhin skad cig smyos par song || yul dang rang gi stobs las nyams shin bdag gi srog kyang zad || des bsrad brlags par ma gyur bar du bdag gnas myur du 'gro || 3.90 || (94.1–94.7).

[47] Skt. (K): tathāpi na śaknoty antardhātuṃ na digvidikṣu palāyituṃ vā | tatraiva kaṇṭhe paṃcabandhanabaddham ātmānaṃ dadarśa | (83.11–83.13); Tib. (K): 'on kyang mi snang bar bya ba'am | phyogs dang phyogs mtshams su 'bros kyang ma nus te | de nyid du mgul pa bcing ba lngas bcings par bdag gis mthong (94.14–94.16).

The exact nature of this "fivefold fetter" (Skt. *pañcabandhana*; Tib. *bcing ba lnga*) is not entirely clear. The *Concentration of Heroic Progress* (*Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*), however, gives us some clues.[48] Though Māra finds himself bound elsewhere in Buddhist literature, as Strong has ably shown, the *Precious Banner* and the *Concentration of Heroic Progress* are the only Mahāyāna sūtras (to my knowledge) that depict Māra as bound specifically by a fivefold fetter.[49] The *Concentration of Heroic Progress* is clearly an intertext for the *Precious Banner*, especially with respect to this episode. But the intertextual relationship is evidenced by more than this.[50] At one point in the *Precious Banner*, Śākyamuni approaches and enters the city of Rājagṛha while in

[48] Étienne Lamotte noted some years ago that the *Concentration of Heroic Progress* and the *Precious Banner* share some thematic features (Étienne Lamotte, trans., *Śūraṃgamasamādhisūtra, The Concentration of Heroic Progress: An Early Mahāyāna Buddhist Scripture*, trans. Sara Boin-Webb [1965 (French original), 1998 (English trans.); Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2003], 172 n. 186). He also suggested, in the same note, to compare these two with the *Instruction of Vimalakīrti*. There is some overlap to be sure. But Māra in the *Vimalakīrti* is actually a bodhisattva in disguise acting out of skillful means for the benefit of beings (Robert A. F. Thurman, trans., *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti: A Mahāyāna Scripture* [University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 1976], 54). He is a secret agent for the Buddhist project, in other words, not an antagonist. On my reading, then, the thematic overlap is a bit thin in this regard. While the *Precious Banner* and the *Teaching of Vimalakīrti* both feature Māra and his daughters (or courtesans) as characters, their representation and function in the narrative differ significantly.

[49] There are other general references to the fivefold fetter in Mahāyāna literature. For instance, the *Skill in Means Sūtra* (*Upāyakauśalyasūtra*) refers to it as one of the means available to a king for the punishment of prisoners (Strong, *The Legend and Cult of Upagupta*, 99; for a translation of the passage, see Goodman, *The Training Anthology of Śāntideva*, 162). And in the *Destroyer of the Universe* (*Mahāsāhasrapramardanī*), one of the *Five Protections* (*Pañcarakṣā*), disruptive beings are summoned by the sūtra-noose and bound by fivefold fetters. According to the Dharmachakra Translation Committee, the *ṭīka* on this text "glosses the phrase 'bound by the five fetters' (*bcings pa lnga yis bsdams pa yis*) as 'being bound by the noose of the five wisdoms' (*ye shes lnga'i zhags pas bsdams pa…*)." There is no reference to the five wisdoms in the *Precious Banner*, however, so this should not be taken as an interpretive guide here. Dharmachakra Translation Committee, trans., *Destroyer of the Great Trichiliocosm*, version 1.5.18, last accessed January 15, 2022 (84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha, 2021 [2016]), https://read.84000.co/translation/toh558.html, 1.78–1.86, 1.104, and 1.360, quote at n. 11.

There is at least one reference to fivefold fetter in the Pāli canonical materials. In the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, an asura named Vepacitti finds himself in a similar bind. When he is well-disposed toward the asuras and ill-disposed toward the devas, he is bound at the neck by a fivefold fetter (*kaṇṭhe pañcamehi bandhanehi baddho*); but when his affective compass is reversed, so to speak, he is free to move. In narrating this story, the Buddha aims to make the point that the bondage of Māra (i.e., the bondage in which human beings find themselves) is more subtle than the bondage in which Vepacitti found himself. "In conceiving," the Buddha says, "one is bound by Māra; by not conceiving, one is free from the Evil One" (Bodhi, trans., *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, 1257–59, at 1258). My gratitude to Natalie Gummer for bringing this passage to my attention.

[50] For a fuller discussion, see Adam T. Miller, "Trading Power for Authority: An Intertextual Reading of the *Śūraṃgamasamādhi* and the *Ratnaketuparivarta*" (manuscript in progress).

the concentration called Heroic Progress (Skt. *śūraṅgamasamādhi*; Tib. *dpa' bar 'gro ba zhes bya ba'i ting nge 'dzin*) and is perceived as appropriate/needed by various types of beings (e.g., devotees of Brahmā see him as Brahmā, etc.), which is one of the functions of the concentration according to the sūtra that takes its name.[51] In light of this clear connection, let us consider to what extent the *Concentration of Heroic Progress* offers us more in thinking about the *Precious Banner*.

The *Concentration of Heroic Progress* is among the first handful of sūtras translated into Chinese. Though first translated in the late second century by Lokakṣema, only Kumārajīva's early fifth-century translation and a ninth-century Tibetan translation come down to us today.[52] Roughly the first half of the sūtra outlines the virtues of the sūtra itself and the *samādhi* after which it is named. Near the middle of the text, Śāriputra notices that Māra had not come to disrupt the teaching (as the latter is wont to do). Śāriputra asks the Buddha to explain why, after which the entire assembly is granted a vision of Māra bound by a fivefold fetter. Māra himself outlines why he is in such a predicament, saying:

> "At the precise moment that I made the resolve to go there in order to disturb those who are listening attentively to the Śūraṃgamasamādhi, I was immediately bound by the five bonds. At that precise moment, I said to myself: 'The Buddhas and bodhisattvas have great might and are not easily disturbed; if I go there, I shall be overcome, so it is better to stay here in this palace'. I had scarcely finished that thought when I was delivered from the five bonds."[53]

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[51] Lamotte, trans., *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, trans. Boin-Webb, 61–63; see also, John McRae, trans., *The Śūraṅgama Samādhi Sutra, Translated by Kumārajīva* (Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1998), 37–39; Skt. (K): 101.6–101.18; Tib. (K): 111.19–112.17.

[52] Lamotte, trans., *Śūraṃgamasamādhisūtra,* English trans. Sara Boin-Webb, 1.

[53] Lamotte, trans., *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, trans. Boin-Webb, 175 (parentheses and brackets original, quotation marks mine); see also, McRae, trans., *The Śūraṅgama Samādhi Sutra*, 49.

Though Māra is free when he thinks about leaving the assembly alone, he still finds himself bound because he cannot fully get rid of his desire to disrupt the discourse. He learns that generating the intention to attain awakening will free him for good, so this is what he does.

> [Māra declares:] "I arouse the *anuttarasamyaksaṃbodhicitta* [=the intention to attain unexcelled perfect awakening]; may I through that good root (*kuśalamūla*) be delivered from the bonds!" Scarcely had he said those words than he found himself delivered from the bonds.[54]

Though he declares this intention only because he wants to be released from the fivefold fetter—and this on his own admission!—his motives do not matter. Māra is freed, and Śākyamuni in the end confers upon Māra a straightforward prediction to awakening.[55]

More details about the story could be given. Suffice it to say that the episode found in the *Concentration of Heroic Progress* differs in marked ways from subsequent episodes in Māra's narrative in the *Precious Banner*. One point of difference concerns the nature of the fivefold fetter. In the *Concentration*, Māra makes it clear that the fivefold fetter binds him at five places of his body—his wrists, ankles, and neck. In the *Precious Banner*, the fivefold fetter is said to be

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[54] Lamotte, trans., *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, trans. Boin-Webb, 177 (parentheses original, brackets and quotation marks mine); see also, McRae, trans., *The Śūraṅgama Samādhi Sutra*, 51.

[55] "The bodhisattva Dṛḍhamati said to the Buddha: "Bhagavat, today Māra Pāpīmat, after having heard the Śūraṃgamasamādhi expounded, aroused the *bodhicitta* in order to be delivered from his bonds. Will that *cittotpāda* enable him one day to obtain the perfected Buddha attributes (*paripūrṇabuddhadharma*)?" The Buddha replied: "It is indeed as you say (*evam etad yathā vadasi*). Because Māra Pāpīmat has the merit (= good roots, (*kuśalamūla*) [sic] of having heard this *samādhi* and because he aroused the *bodhicitta*, he will in the future (*anāgate 'dhvani*) come to eliminate (*vyantīkartum*) the works of Māra (*mārakarman*), the practices of Māra (*māracaryā*), the hypocrisy of Māra (*māraśāṭhya*) and the guiles of Māra (*māramāyā*). As from today (*adyāgreṇa*) he will gradually (*krameṇa*) gain the power of the Śūraṃgamasamādhi and will finally reach supreme and perfect enlightenment (*anuttarāyāṃ samyaksaṃbodhim abhisaṃbhotsyate*)." The bodhisattva Dṛḍhamati said to Māra Pāpīmat: "The Tathāgatahas just given you the prediction (*vyākaraṇa*)." Māra said: "Kulaputra, it was not with a pure intention (*adhyāśaya*) that today I aroused the *anuttarasamyaksaṃbodhicitta*. How then could the Tathāgata give me prediction? The Buddha has said: 'From thought (*citta*) arises action (*karman*) and from action arises fruition (*vipāka*)'. Since I have never had the thought [that is, the intention] of seeking Bodhi, how could the Tathāgata give me a prediction?" Lamotte, trans., *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, trans. Boin-Webb, 179 (parentheses, brackets, and single quotation marks original; double quotation marks mine); see also, McRae, trans., *The Śūraṅgama Samādhi Sutra*, 53.

only around his neck.[56] That discrepancy aside, the respective functions of the fivefold fetter in the two stories are far more interesting. In the *Concentration of Heroic Progress*, Māra is bound when he wants to disrupt the dissemination of the *Śūraṅgama Samādhi* itself. In the *Precious Banner*, by contrast, Māra is bound when he wants to get away from the preaching lotus he had just attacked. What we see, in short, is a reversal. The binding episode in the *Concentration* is ultimately meant to demonstrate the efficacy of the sūtra—hearing the sūtra and declaring a phony intention to attain awakening frees Māra from the fivefold fetter but also lays karmic groundwork for his prediction to buddhahood. In the *Precious Banner*, by stark contrast, Māra is never set free from the fivefold fetter, never genuinely aspires to attain awakening, and is never actually predicted to awakening—this even though he hears the *Precious Banner* and, out of similar self-interest, goes to the Buddha for refuge. But here we get ahead of ourselves. Let us turn back to the narrative, bearing in mind the contrast between the *Concentration* and the *Precious Banner*.

Māra and Ghoṣavati

When we left Māra earlier, he had failed to do any damage to the preaching lotus or to the audience surrounding it. Stuck in the fivefold fetter, Māra is mourning the loss of his family and allies when he is visited by Ghoṣavati (whom we met for the second time at the outset of this chapter). In the form of a wheel-turning monarch, Ghoṣavati offers Māra some advice:

> "Hey! Why, with troubled mind, do you weep and wail right now? Without fear, go right away for refuge to the best of sages, the chief of all beings. He is the defense and resort of the world, the lamp and refuge, the protector, the eliminator of threefold suffering. Venerating him, you will surely attain peace and happiness." || 3.90 || (Tib. 3.91)[57]

[56] In this, the *Precious Banner* mirrors the account of Vepacitti's binding in the *Connected Discourses*. See M. Leon Feer, ed. *Saṃyutta-Nikāya Part IV: Salāyatana-Vagga* (London: Pali Text Society, 1894), 202 passim (*kaṇṭhe pañcamehi bandhanehi bandhitvā*/*baddho*). Cf. Bodhi, trans., *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, 1258, who translates the passage as "bound by his four limbs and neck." My thanks again to Natalie Gummer for this reference.

[57] Skt. (K): kiṃ bho śokamanās tvam adya rudiṣi vyākrośavaktrasvaraḥ kṣipraṃ sarvajagadvaraṃ munivaraṃ nirbhī śaraṇyaṃ vraja | trāṇaṃ lokagatiś ca dīpaśaraṇaṃ nāthas triduḥkhāpaho nanv etaṃ samupāsya . . . śamaṃ saukhyaṃ

This, of course, is the passage with which we began. And it is hoped that we now have a sense of why I propose to read Ghoṣavati's question as carrying with it an air of amazed exasperation. From Ghoṣavati's vantage, Māra should not be affected in the way he has been. His orientation to the world, his entanglements, his values and goals, and his emotions are all wrong. With the help of Ghoṣavati, we see how Māra illustrates Sara Ahmed's point that emotions work to "shape the 'surfaces' of individual and collective bodies."[58] That Māra has felt and continues to feel the way he does about the events narrated in the sūtra constitutes a boundary between himself and others. It is what makes Māra who he is—at least at this moment in his story—and it renders him powerless and alone.[59] But peace (Skt. *śama*; Tib. *zhi*) and happiness (Skt. *saukhyam*; Tib. *bde ba*) are not out of reach. All Māra needs to do is go to the Buddha for refuge.

How does Ghoṣavati's advice land with Māra? How does he receive it, and what does he do with it? Given what we know about him, we should not be surprised to learn that Māra finds a way to twist the advice toward an end that serves his interests. His subsequent thoughts and actions illustrate clearly his affective misalignment. "Then Wicked Māra," our narrator begins, "thought to himself,

> "With satisfying words, I should go to the ascetic Gautama for refuge. Then I would be freed from these fetters." Then, Wicked Māra made a reverent gesture toward where the Buddha was and said: "Homage to you, the best person who liberates from old age, disease, and death. I myself go to you, Lord Buddha, for refuge." He then said:
>
> > "Lord, let me be free from this great fear, from distress, from the sage's fetter. I come, Leader, to the refuge of the Fortunate One from today onward. Blinded by

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ca saṃprāpsyasi || 3.90 || (84.1–84.5, fragmentary); Tib. (K): ci phyir khyod deng mya ngan yid kyis ngu gdong sgra chen 'bod || 'gro ba kun gtso thub mchog skyabs su ma 'jigs myur du song || 'jig rten rnams kyi mgon skyabs dpung gnyen sdug bsngal gsum sel ba || 'di la bsnyen bkur zhi 'gro bde ba thob par 'gyur yang dag || 3.91 || (94.21–94.24).

[58] Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotions*, 2nd ed., 1.

[59] "When the subjects are not 'in flow' they encounter the world as resistant, as blocking rather than enabling an action" (Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, 11).

> delusion, I have committed grave offenses against you. All that I confess, standing before you in the flesh." || 3.91 || (Tib. 3.92)[60]

Thanks to the omniscience of the narrator, readers are clued into Māra's private thoughts prior to his declaration to take refuge and his confession of wrongdoing. He clearly has his own motives, and he thinks he knows how to get what he wants for just long enough to steal away. But our narrator has given us many reasons by now to suspect that things will not be so simple. After insincerely taking refuge, Māra finds himself in what must be a terribly frustrating predicament. Again, note the shifts in verbal morphology.

> When Māra is gone to the Lord Buddha for refuge with satisfying words, he sees himself freed. But when he thinks, "I should leave this assembly," he once again sees himself bound at the neck by the fivefold fetter. And when he was not able to go anywhere, he thought about going for protection and refuge in the Lord's presence. Again, he sees himself freed. Seven times he saw himself bound and freed. In that very spot, he sat down.[61]

It is in this liminal (un)bound state that Māra remains for the duration of the sūtra.

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[60] Skt. (K): atha mārasya pāpīmata etad abhavat | yat tv ahaṃ santoṣavacanena śramaṇaṃ gautamaṃ śaraṇaṃ vrajeyaṃ yad aham ebhyo bandhanebhyaḥ parimucyeyam || atha māraḥ pāpīmān yasyān diśi bhagavāṃ vijahāra tenāṃjaliṃ praṇāmyaivam āha | namas tasmai varapudgalāya jarāvyādhimaraṇaparimocakāya | eṣo 'haṃ taṃ buddhaṃ bhagavantaṃ śaraṇaṃ gacchāmi | evaṃ cāha | asmān nātha mahābhayāt suviṣamāt kṣipraṃ muner bandhanān mucyeyaṃ śaraṇāgato 'smi sugatasyādya prabhṛtyāgraṇī | mohāndhena mayā tvayi prakupitenoccaiḥ pradoṣaḥ kṛtaḥ tat sarvaṃ pratideśayāmi puratas tvāṃ sākṣiṇaṃ sthāpya tu || 3.91 || (84.6–84.17); Tib. (K): de nas bdud sdig can gyis phyogs gang nab com ldan 'das bzhugs pa de logs su thal mo sbyar ba btud nas 'di skad ces gsol to || gang zag gi mchog skye ba dang | rga ba dang | na ba dang | 'chi ba las rab tut har par mdzad pa de la phyag 'tshal lo || sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das de la bdag skyabs su mchi'o || 'di skad ces kyang gsol to || thub mchog myur du 'jigs chen mi bzad bcings pa 'di las khrol || de ring slan chad bde gshegs gtso bo mchog skyabs bdag mchis te || gti mug gis ni bdag ldongs khyod la khros shing nongs chen gyis || mngon sum khyod bzhag spyan sngar de dag so sorb shags par bgyi || 3.92 || (95.1–95.9).

[61] Skt. (K): yadā ca māraḥ pāpīmāṃ saṃtoṣavacanena buddhaṃ bhagavantaṃ śaraṇaṃ gatas tadā muktam ātmānaṃ saṃjānīte | yadā punar asyaivaṃ bhavati | prakrameyam itaḥ parṣada iti | punar eva kaṇṭhe paṃcabandhanabaddham ātmānaṃ saṃjānīte | yadā punar na kvacid gantuṃ śaśāka tadā bhagavato 'ntike trāṇaśaraṇacittam utpādayām āsa | punar muktam ātmānaṃ saṃjānīte yāvat saptakṛtvo baddhamuktam ātmānaṃ saṃjānīte sma | tatraiva niṣaṇṇa iti || (84.18–85.4); Tib. (K): gang gi tshe bdud sdig can gyis tshig snyan pas sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das la skyabs su song ba de'i tshe na bdag grol ba snyam du shes so || yang gang gi tshe 'khor 'di nas bdag 'gro'o snyam du bsams pa de'i tshe'ang mgul pa bcing ba lngas bcings par bdag gis shes te | gang gi tshe gang du'ang 'gro bar ma nus pa de'i tshe bcom ldan 'das la mgon dang | skyabs su sems bskyed nas yang bdag nyid grol bar shes so || lan bdun gyi bar du bdag bcings pa dang grol bar shes te de nyid du 'dug go || (95.10–95.16).

Ghoṣavati would have us think that *if only Māra would genuinely go to the Buddha for refuge, then he would not be so terrified and angry*. But after some pause, the nature of the pickle in which Māra finds himself comes into relief. He must first affectively reorient himself in order to feel differently than he does. In other, less paradoxical words, Māra needs to do some *emotion work*. We might reasonably at this point ask whether there is any hope for Māra. In the *Concentration of Heroic Progress*, there is. And that hope is narrated in the form of a prophecy to awakening. In the *Concentration*, it does not matter that Māra takes refuge out of a motive to be freed from the fivefold fetter. The Buddha still confers upon him a prophecy. In the *Precious Banner*, by contrast, things are not so hopeful. But they are not hopeless either. Indeed, Māra is stuck in a liminal state in more ways than one. Not only is he (un)bound, but he is somewhere between intending to attain awakening under the proper affective conditions (and thus genuinely) and thereby receiving prophecy, on the one hand, and not. Let's now turn briefly to the second chapter, and more precisely to the past life narrative told therein, in order to get a fuller sense of what all this means and entails.

III

The sūtra's second chapter begins by drawing our attention away from Māra in his lamentation room and toward Śākyamuni outside the city of Rājagṛha. More specifically, the chapter opens with a depiction of Māra's children, who had recently abandoned Māra in order to take refuge in the Buddha, asking their new lord a question. This question, as it happens, is particularly apt given their paternity. They ask, in short, how to avoid falling into the hands of detrimental friends and instead quickly attain perfect awakening.[62] The Buddha replies that four qualities are

[62] Skt. (K): 24.4–24.6; Tib. (K): 34.6–34.8.

required and proceeds to outline them in some detail.[63] He then discusses omniscience at some length, characterizing it with a long list of negative adjectives, likening it to the sky, and saying that it is to be produced through the practice of various "non-yogas" (for example, the yoga of non-apprehension).[64] And to draw his answer to a close, Śākyamuni says that any practice grounded in binary thinking of any kind will turn out to be fruitless.[65] The speech of the Buddha then gives rise to something of a symposium on perfect awakening, in which a number of advanced beings take turns sharing their thoughts (often terse and abstruse) on what it is like to be a fully awakened being.[66] As a result of this heady conversation, many in the audience obtain one or another of the valorized states/skills posited by the tradition (e.g., *kṣānti*, *samādhi*, and *dhāraṇī*).[67] Then, some of the bodhisattvas in the audience point out that there are living beings who, presumably somewhere in their whereabouts, are not concerned with their roots of virtue or the accumulation of merit on account of their association with detrimental friends.[68] In agreement with this assessment, Śākyamuni then tells a story of the past (Skt. *pūrvayoga*; Tib. *sngon byung ba*) to explain the narrative present.

The reason Śākyamuni tells the story is important, of course, as are the contents of the story itself. But because only the details given toward the end require close attention, we will

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[63] Skt. (K): 24.9–25.7; Tib. (K): 34.13–35.12.

[64] Skt. (K): 25.8–26.3; Tib. (K): 35.13–36.10.

[65] Skt. (K): 26.4–27.5; Tib. (K): 36.11–37.11.

[66] Skt. (K): 27.6–32.5; Tib. (K): 37.12–43.15.

[67] Skt. (K): 32.6–32.11; Tib. (K): 43.16–44.1.

[68] Skt. (K): paśya bhagavann akalyāṇamitrasaṃsargavaśena sattvānāṃ sarvapuṇyopacayakuśalamūlāny amanasikārāṇi bhavaṃti | (32.12–33.1, at 32.15–33.1); Tib. (K): bcom ldan 'das 'di ltar mi dge ba'i grogs po dang 'grogs pa'i dbang gis sems can rnams bsod nams thams cad sogs pa'i dge ba'i rtsa ba yid la mi bgyid pa la gzigs su gsol | (44.2–44.7, at 44.5–44.7).

summarize in abridged form what leads up to the last episodes.[69] Śākyamuni's story of the past features a former Buddha named Jyotiḥsomyagandhāvabhāsaśrī (whom we will call Jyotiḥsomya for the sake of concision),[70] a universal monarch named Utpalavaktra, his chief queen named Surasundarī, a mercenary named Kumārabhṛta, and a host of unnamed actants. Roughly the first half of the *pūrvayoga* relates dialogues between Jyotiḥsomya and King Utpalavaktra, on one hand, and between Jyotiḥsomya and Queen Surasundarī, on the other. Jyotiḥsomya's conversation with Utpalavaktra is quite short, having mainly to do with how to attain a subtle or peaceful mind (Skt. *sūkṣmamati*; Tib. *blo gros zhi*).[71] His exchange with Surasundarī, by contrast, is much longer. Surasundarī asks Jyotiḥsomya how to eliminate her unfortunate birth as a woman and to become a man.[72] To this, Jyotiḥsomya responds that recitation and veneration of the Precious Banner *dhāraṇī* will not only bring about such a change but also ensure that a king pacifies or eliminates various aggressors (human or otherwise), that a woman gives birth to a son, and so on.[73] Jyotiḥsomya then proceeds to recite the *dhāraṇī* for Surasundarī.[74]

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[69] For a study of the pūrvayoga in terms of myth, see Adam T. Miller, "The Buddha Said That Buddha Said So: A Translation and Analysis of 'Pūrvayogaparivarta' from the *Ratnaketu Dhāraṇī Sūtra*" (Master's thesis, University of Missouri-Columbia, 2013). Note that the translation needs substantial revision.

[70] This buddha is also named in the *Śrīmahādevīvyākaraṇa*: namo jyotiḥsaumyagandhāvabhāsaśriye tathāgatāya | (*GM*, 4:96.6–96.7). For an English translation, see Sakya Pandita Translation Group, trans., *The Prophecy of Śrī Mahādevī*, version 2.20.12, last accessed January 15, 2022 (84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha, 2021 [2011]), https://read.84000.co/translation/toh193.html. See, however, Seishi Karashima, "Some Folios of the *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviṣayāvatāra* and *Dvādaśadaṇḍakanāmāṣṭaśatavimalīkaraṇā* in the Kurita Collection," *International Association for Buddhist Thought and Culture* 27, no. 1 (2017): 11–44, which suggests Dutt mistitled the Gilgit text (following the Tib.) and that the Skt. title was likely *Dvādaśadaṇḍakanāmāṣṭaśatavimalīkaraṇā*.

[71] Skt. (K): 34.1–36.6; Tib. (K): 44.18–46.8.

[72] Skt. (K): 36.7–37.7; Tib. (K): 46.9–47.4. The theme of sex change is relatively common in (though not at all unique to) the *Precious Banner*. In later chapters of the sūtra, a number of advanced male beings appear in the Buddha's presence in female form and vow to protect women in female form. There is an increasingly robust literature on female-to-male sex change (and on sex and gender more broadly) in Buddhist literature. For a recent example with wide ranging references, see Stephanie Balkwill, "The *Sūtra on Transforming the Female Form*: Unpacking an Early Medieval Chinese Buddhist Text," *Journal of Chinese Religions* 44, no. 2 (2016): 127–48.

[73] Skt. (K): 37.8–41.8 (missing folio); Tib. (K): 47.5–52.6.

Readers are then momentarily transported to the world of the main story, in which Śākyamuni's narrative representation of Jyotiḥsomya's recitation of the *dhāraṇī* transforms myriad human and non-human women in the former's own audience—including, it must be noted, the daughters of Māra—into men.[75] And not only this, the mere narrative representation of the *dhāraṇī* established those in Śākyamuni's audience in irreversibility and guaranteed that they would never be born with female bodies again.[76] Diving back into the past life story after this short report from our main narrator about the goings-on in the world outside the story, readers are not surprised to see that the recitation of the *dhāraṇī* has the same effect on Queen Surasundarī and her attendants.[77] Suddenly without his chief queen (or any other queens, we are led to think), King Utpalavaktra consecrates his eldest son and goes forth into homelessness.[78] As a result of all this, people in the kingdom grow suspicious. They agree that Jyotiḥsomya must be in league with Māra.[79]

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[74] Skt. (K): 41.9–42.2 (missing folio); Tib. (K): 52.7–54.10.

[75] Skt. (K): tāsām api pañcaśatamārakanyānāṃ sahaśravaṇenāsyā ratnaketudhāraṇyāḥ strīvyaṃjanam antardhāya puruṣavyaṃjanaṃ prādurabhavat | (42.3–43.6, at 42.4–42.6); Tib. (K): bdud kyi bu mo lnga brgya tsam po de dag kyang rin po che tog gi gzungs 'di thos ma thag tu mo mtshan mi snang bar gyur te pho mtshan skyes so || (54.11–55.11, at 54.12–54.14).

[76] Skt. (K): tāś ca sarvā avaivartyā abhūvann anuttarāyāṃ samyaksaṃbodhau | sarvāsāṃ cānāgatastrībhāva-pratilābhasaṃvartanīyaṃ karmāvaraṇam aśeṣaṃ nirodhaṃ ca | (42.9–42.11); Tib. (K): de dag thams cad kyang bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub las phyir mi ldog par gyur te | thams cad kyang ma 'ongs pa na bud med kyi dngos po thob par 'gyur ba'i las kyi sgrib pa ma lus par byang nas | (54.18–55.1).

[77] Skt. (K): 43.7–44.6; Tib. (K): 55.12–56.2.

[78] Skt. (K): 44.7–45.3; Tib. (K): 56.3–56.12.

[79] Skt. (K): atha tatra bahūnāṃ prāṇakoṭīnām etad abhavat | kasmād rājā cakravartī pravrajitaḥ | te parasparā evam āhuḥ | mārakarmābhiyukta eṣa tathāgataḥ śaṭho māyāvī mārakarmasamāyuktam imaṃ dharman deśayati | keṣāṃcit strīvyaṃjanam apanāyayati | keṣāṃcit puruṣavyaṃjanaṃ | keṣāṃcit keśaśmaśrūṇy avatārayati | keṣāṃcid raktāni vāsāṃsi prayacchati keṣāṃcit pāṇḍarāṇi | keṣāṃcid devopapattaye dharman deśayati | keṣāṃcin manuṣyopapattaye keṣāṃcit tiryagyonyupapattaye keṣāṃcid acyutyupapattaye dharman deśayati | mārakarmapathābhiyuktaḥ strīkaraṇamāyayā samanvāgataḥ sa śravaṇo jyotiḥsomyagandhāvabhāsaśrīḥ śramaṇarūpeṇa visaṃvādakaḥ | yan nūna vayam itaḥ prakramema | na cāsya rūpaliṃgagrahaṇaṃ paśyema | na cāsya kiṃcid vacanaṃ śṛṇuyāma || (45.4–45.14); Tib. (K): de nas de na srog chags bye ba mang po 'di snyam du sems te | ci'i phyir 'khor los sgyur ba'i rgyal po rab tu byung snyam nas | de dag phan tshun 'di skad ces smra'o || dge sbyong 'di ni bdud kyi las la brtson pa ste | g.yo can sgyu ma bdud kyi las dang ldan pas chos 'di ston cing la la ni pho mtshan med par byas | la la ni mo mtshan

It is here that we need to slow down to examine the text. After the people agree that the Buddha of their time is engaged in the work of Māra, a mercenary by the name of Kumārabhṛta comes forward to take charge of the group. "Now, at that time there was a mercenary named Kumārabhṛta," Śākyamuni tells his audience, "and he said:

> "I had a wife, courtesans, and daughters. This filthy ascetic stole all their vaginas and gave them penises. He made their heads bald and gave them red garments. And I am all alone, afflicted with sorrow and released. Joining together, let us all enter the rugged and impenetrable mountains where we do not hear so much as a sound from the filthy magician of an ascetic versed in the snares of Māra, let alone see him!" Satisfied, they all said: "So be it!"[80]

Clearly bitter about what had transpired, and sensing that others were, too, Kumārabhṛta moves to instigate a kind of secessionist movement.

With Kumārabhṛta as their leader, then, they together set out for the wilderness to escape the dangerous blathering of Jyotiḥsomya. But this isn't all they do. They also spread the "truth" and warn others about Jyotiḥsomya and his message. "There is no liberation from cyclic existence," Kumārabhṛta teaches those he comes into contact with, "nor is there any fruit of good or bad actions." He continues:

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med par byas | la la ni skra dang kha spu bregs | la la ni gos tshon can bskon | la la ni gos dkar po bskon | la la ni lhar skye bar ston | la la ni mir skye bar | la la ni dud 'gro'i skye gnas sus kye bar | la la ni ni yi dags sus kye bar | la la ni sems can dmyal bar skye bar | la la ni 'chi 'pho dang | skye ba med par bya ba'i chos ston te | bdud kyi las kyi lam la brtson zhing bud med bsgyur ba'i sgyu dang ldan pa dge sbyong 'od zhi spos snang dpal de dge sbyong gi gzugs kyis rab tu slu ba yin gyis | bdag cad 'di nas dong ste | de'i gzugs dang rtags 'dzin pa'ang mi mthong ba dang | de'i tshig kyang cung zad kyang mi thos par 'dod do || (56.13–57.3).

[80] Skt. (K): atha tatraiva kumārabhṛto nāma bhaṭaḥ | sa evam āha | yā mama bhāryāntaḥpurikā duhitaraṣ cābhuvan sarvāsām anena śramaṇakoraṇḍakena strīvyaṃjanāny apanīya puruṣendriyāṇy abhirnirmitāni | sarvāsāṃ śirāṃsi nirmuṇḍāni kṛtvā raktāni vāsāṃsy anupradattāni | ahaṃ caikākī śokārto muktaḥ | ete sarve vayaṃ samagrā bhūtvā viṣamaṃ mahāgahanaparvataṃ praviśāmaḥ | yatra vayam asya mārapāśābhiyuktasya śramaṇakoraṇḍakasya śramaṇamāyāvinaḥ svaraghoṣam api na śṛṇuyāmaḥ prāg eva paśyāma iti | te sarve tuṣṭā evam āhuḥ | evam astv iti || (45.15–46.6); Tib. (K): de nas de nyid na shor ba gzhon nu'i tshul zhes bya ba zhig yod pa des tshig 'di skad ces smras so || kho bo'i chung ma dang | g.yog mo dang | bu mo gang yin pa de dag thams cad kyang dge sbyong ma rungs pa 'dis mo mtshan med par byas te | skyes pa'i dbang por sprul nas thams cad kyi mgo bregs te gos tshon can bskon nas kho bo gcig pu mya ngan gyis non te | thar na bdag cag thams cad 'dus la gang du dge sbyong ma rungs pa | dge sbyong sgyu ma bdud kyi zhags pa la brtson pa 'di'i sgra dang | skad kyang mi thos na mthong ba lta smos kyang ci dgos pa'i ri khrod nyam nga bar 'dong gis tshur shog ces byas pa dang de dag thams cad dga' ste de bzhin no zhes zer ro || (57.4–57.13).

> "Today, there is a nihilistic ascetic engaged in the work of Māra—he is a liar. Those who go to see him, who venerate him, and who listen to his Dharma become distracted. He shaves their heads. He makes them leave home. He gives them red garments. He makes them undertake practice in cremation grounds. He makes them live by begging. He makes them eat once a day. He makes them hold wrong views. He makes them shudder on account of im/permanence.[81] He makes them content with solitary dwellings. He expels them from their places of rest. He makes them abstain from pleasure, love, dance, song, fragrance, garlands, lotions, ornaments, jewelry, sex, and intoxicating drink. He makes them speak very little. Such a person, though he appears to be an ascetic, is a nihilist devoted to the path of Māra. He is a veritable enemy to living beings. Through that ascetic Gautama's [sic!] unprecedented work, marked by magic, myriad beings have come to hold such a wicked view as this."[82]

The language used here is similar in tone to the language we have seen Māra use to disparage Śākyamuni.[83] The people of the land, suddenly met with some rather startling news about their former rulers, call Jyotiḥsomya a deceptive magician (Skt. *śaṭho māyāvī*; Tib. *g.yo can sgyu ma . . . dang ldan pa*) and a liar (Skt. *visaṃvādakaḥ*; Tib. *rab tu slu ba*). Kumārabhṛta, who finds

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[81] This line is only in the Sanskrit. Kurumiya provides *nityodvignān* while Dutt provides *'nityodvignān* (*GM*, 4:46.12–46.13). Perhaps the fact that the Tibetans omit this in their translation signals that both readings resulted in what struck them as interpretive problems.

[82] Skt. (K): nāsti saṃsārān mokṣo nāsti sukṛtaduṣkṛtānāṃ karmaṇāṃ phalavipākaḥ | ucchedavādy adya śramaṇa utpanno mārakarmābhiyukto visaṃvādakaḥ | ye ca taṃ darśanāyopasaṃkramaṃti ye ca tam abhivādayaṃti ye cāsya dharmaṃ śṛṇvaṃti te vikṣiptacittā bhavanti | śirāṃsi caiṣāṃ muṇḍayati | gṛhān nirvāpayati | raktāni vāsāṃsi prayacchati | śmaśānacaryāṃ cārayati | bhaikṣacaryāsu niveśayati | ekāhāriṇaḥ karoti | viṣamadṛṣṭimanaso nityodvignān vivekavāsābhiratāl̃ layanaprakṣiptān kāmaratinṛtyagītagandhamālyavilepanābharaṇavibhūṣaṇa-maithunadharmasurāmadyapānarahitān alpabhāṣyāṅ karoti | evaṃrūpaḥ sa śramaṇaveṣeṇocchedavādī mārapathābhiyuktaḥ sattvānāṃ śatrubhūta utpannaḥ | adṛṭāśrutapūrvam etasya śramaṇagautamasya kriyā mayopalakṣiteti tena bāhuni prāṇakoṭīnayutaśatasahasrāṇy evaṃrūpām imāṃ pāpikaṃ dṛṣṭiṃ grāhitāny abhūvan | (46.10–47.5); Tib. (K): 'khor ba las thar pa'ang med | legs par byas pa dang | nyes par byas pa'i las kyi 'bras bu rnam par smin pa'ang med na | deng chas [sic; read: chad] par smra ba'i dge sbyong bdud kyi las la brtson pa zhig byung gis | gang dag de la blta ba'i phyir 'gro ba dang | gang dag gus par smra ba dang | gang dag de'i chos nyan pa de dag sems g.yengs pa yin te | de dag mgo bregs | khyim nas phyung | gos tshon can bskon | dur khrod du spyad pa spyod du bcug | slong mo pa'i spyod pa la 'dzud | zan za gcig par byed | lta ba mi bzad pa'i yid dag ldan pa dang | rtag tu yid 'byung bar byed | dbed par gnas pa la dga' ba dang | gnas khang du bcug | 'dod pa'i dga' ba'i glu gar dang | phreng ba dang | dri dang | byug pa dang | rgyan dang | lhab lhub dang | 'khrig pa'i tshos dang | chang ra ro bar 'gyur ba'i btung ba spangs shing smra ba nyung bar byed de | de lta bu'i dge sbyong gi gzugs kyis chad par smra ba | bdud kyi las la brtson pa de sems can rnams kyi dgrar gyur pa zhig byung ste | dge sbyong gau ta ma de'i byed pa ni sngon ma thos ma mthong ba yin par kho bos rtogs so zhes des srog chags bye ba khrag khrig brgya stong mang po de lta bu'i sdig pa can gyi lta ba 'dzin du bcug go || (57.17–58.14).

[83] As a reminder—When talking to his children, Māra calls the Buddha a trickster (Skt. māyāśaṭho; Tib. sgyu ldan g.yo can), a smooth-talker (Skt. madhuravāg; Tib. ngag 'jam) and a contemptible person (Skt. vṛṣala; Tib. dmangs phal); and when talking to the cosmic māras, Māra again characterizes the Buddha as a deceptive magician (paramaśaṭhaḥ māyāvī; Tib. shin tu g.yo dang sgyur ldan pa) and as a contemptible person (Skt. vṛṣala; Tib. dmangs).

himself in a similar predicament of suddenly being without not only royal oversight but also the women in his household, calls Jyotiḥsomya a liar (Skt. *visaṃvādakaḥ*; Tib. *rab tu slu ba*), a filthy ascetic (Skt. *śramaṇakoraṇḍaka*; Tib. *dge sbyong ma rungs pa*), and a proponent of nihilism (Skt. *ucchedavādī*; Tib. *chad par smra ba*). Both the subjects of this realm and Kumārabhṛta also say of Jyotiḥsomya that he is doing Māra's work. But neither Śākyamuni's audience nor readers of the sūtra ever meet Māra as an actant in Śākyamuni's *pūrvayoga*. This is likely no accident. Those who follow Kumārabhṛta in slandering Jyotiḥsomya and spreading falsehoods, it turns out, are none other than the people in Śākyamuni's audience who are not paying attention. And Kumārabhṛta is none other than Māra. The significance of these identifications for the audience within the sūtra itself is clear enough. But in order to appreciate their significance for readers outside the sūtra, we must return to the *pūrvayoga* to see how it ends.

When Utpalavaktra, the king-turned-ascetic, eventually learns that Kumārabhṛta and his followers are pointing many others toward the wrong path and defacing the Three Jewels,[84] he vows to do something about it. "If I do not liberate beings from wrong views and establish them in the correct view," he declares, "then my asceticism will be meaningless."[85] He thus travels to all the places Kumārabhṛta and his faction had been and teaches the Dharma to the people there according to their needs, predilections, and potential.[86] The only person left in the end is

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[84] Skt. (K): yāvāpareṇa samayenotpalavaktro mahāśramaṇo 'śrauṣīt kasmiṃścit parvatagahane kecit svayaṃ kumārgasaṃprasthitāḥ parān apy etāṃ viṣamām dṛṣṭiṃ grāhayantaḥ trayāṇāṃ ratnānām avarṇām cārayantīti śrutvā cāsyaitad abhavat | (47.6–47.9); Tib. (K): de nas dus gzhan zhig na dge sbyong chen po ut pa la'i gdong gis thos pa | ga shed kyi ri khrod na kha cig bdag nyid kyang lam ngan par zhugs shing gzhan yang lta ba mi bzad pa 'dzin du bcug ste | dkon mchog gsum la mi nyan pa sgrog go zhes thos nas de 'di snyam du sems so || (58.15–58.18).

[85] Skt. (K): yady ahaṃ tāvat sattvāṃs tataḥ pāpakād dṛṣṭigatān na parimokṣayeyaṃ na ca samyagdṛṣṭau pratiṣṭhāpayeyaṃ nirarthakaṃ me śrāmaṇyaṃ bhavet | (47.9–47.11); Tib. (K): bdag gis sems can 'di dag sdig pa'i lta bar song ba las yongs su thar par ma byas shing yang dag pa'i lta ba la ma bkod na bdag dge sbyong du gyur pa don med do | (58.18–59.1).

[86] Skt. (K): athotpalavaktro mahāśramaṇo mahādṛḍhaparākramaḥ kāruṇikas taṃ jyotiḥsomyagandhāvabhāsaśriyaṃ tathāgatam avalokyānekaprāṇaśatasahasraparivṛtaḥ puraskṛtaḥ teṣu teṣu pratyantimeṣu grāmanagaranigamaparvata-

Kumārabhṛta.[87] Despite Utpalavaktra's best efforts and his otherwise clearly effective teaching strategies, Kumārabhṛta seems impossible to win over.

Kumārabhṛta, initially angry at Jyotiḥsomya, here turns his ire on Utpalavaktra and vows to make trouble for him in the future. "Since the ascetic Utpalavaktra has destroyed my assembly and led them away," he vows,

> "may I perform the role of Māra in the buddhafield belonging to the one set out toward unexcelled perfect awakening. Starting from his time in the womb, may I bring him harm. After that, when he is a newborn, when he is playing as a child, when he is working and studying, when he is enjoying the company of his women, all the way until he is seated on the seat of awakening—may I cause him to tremble. May I make obstacles for him. And may I bring about the decline of the teaching of the one who has attained awakening."[88]

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viṣamakarvaṭasthāneṣu caryāṃ caraṃs tatra tatra tebhyaḥ sattvebhyo dharman deśayām āsa | tān sattvān pāpakād dṛṣṭigatān nivārayitvā samyagdṛṣṭau niyojyānuttarāyāṃ samyaksaṃbodhau pratiṣṭhāpayām āsa | kāṃścid aparān pratyekabuddhayānapraṇidhāne kāṃścic chrāvakayāne kāṃścit phale pratiṣṭhāpayām āsa | kāṃścit pravrajayām āsa kāṃścid upāsakasaṃvare kāṃścid upavāse kāṃścit tṛśaraṇagamane pratiṣṭhāpayām āsa | strībhyaś cemāṃ ratnaketudhāraṇīn deśayām āsa | strībhāvān nivartayitvā pratiṣṭhāpayām āsa puruṣatve | yāś ca tā bahvaḥ prāṇakotyas tathāgatasyāntike vicikitsāprāptā abhūvaṃs tān sarvāṃs tataḥ pāpakād dṛṣṭigatān nivārayātyayaṃ pratideśāpayitvānuttarāyāṃ samyaksaṃbodhau pratiṣṭhāpayām āsa | (47.14–48.5); Tib. (K): de nas dge sbyong chen po ut pa la'i gdong rtul ba che zhing brtan pa | snying rje chen po dang ldan pas de bzhin gshegs pa 'od zhi spos snang dpal la zhus te | srog chags brgya stong du mas bskor cing mdun du bdar nas mtha' 'khob kyi grong dang | grong khyer dang | grong rdal dang | ri dang | ri brag nyam nga ba'i gnas de dang de dag na spyad pa spyod cing de dang de dag tu sems can de dag la ci nas sems can de dag sdig pa'i lta bar song ba las bzlog ste | yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu bkod | gzhan la la ni rang sang rgyas kyi theg par smon pa la | la la ni nyan thos kyi theg pa la | la la ni ' bras bu la bkod | la la ni rab tu phyung | la la ni dge bsnyen gyi sdom pa la | la la ni za gcig pa la | la la ni dus khrims pa la | la la ni skyabs gsum du ' gro ba la bkod pa de lta bur chos bstan to || bud med dag la ni rin po che tog gi gzungs 'di bshad de | bud med kyi dngos po las bsgyur nas skyes pa la bkod do || srog chags mang po gang de bzhin gshegs pa la the tshom du gyur pa de dag thams cad kyang sdig pa'i lta bar song ba de las bzlog ste | nyes pa 'chags su bcug nas bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub la bkod de | de bzhin gshegs pa 'od zhi spos snang dpal de nyid la phul nas rab tu phyung ngo || (59.6–60.5).

[87] Skt. (K): sthāpya kumārabhṛtaṃ bhaṭaṃ | (48.6); Tib. (K): shor ba gzhon nu'i tshul ni ma gtogs te | (60.5–60.6).

[88] Skt. (K): tena caivaṃ praṇidhānaṃ kṛtam abhūt | yathā mamānenotpalavaktreṇa sramaṇena parṣad vilopya nītā tathāham apy asyānuttarāṃ samyaksaṃbodhim abhiprasthitasya tatra buddhakṣetre māratvaṃ kārayeyaṃ yad uta garbhasthānāt prabhṛty enaṃ viheṭhayeyaṃ | tataḥ paścāj jātamātraṃ kumārakrīḍāpanaṃ śilpakarmapaṭhanasthaṃ ratikrīḍāntaḥpuragataṃ yāvad bodhimaṇḍaniṣaṇṇaṃ saṃtrāsayeyaṃ vighnāni ca kuryāṃ bodhiprāptasya ca śāsanavipralopaṃ kuryām || (48.6–48.13); Tib. (K): des 'di ltar ut pa la'i gdong 'dis bdag gi 'khor rnams bslus te khrid kyis | bdag gis kyang 'di bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa'i sangs rgyas kyi zhing der bdud byas te | 'di ltar mngal na 'dug pa tshun chad 'di la rnam par 'tshe'o || de nas phyis btsas nas kyang gzhon nu rtsed mo byed pa dang | bzo'i las kyi mtha' dang | klog cing 'dug pa dang | dga' ba'i rtsed mo'i phyir btsun mo'i 'khor gyi nang du song ba nas byang chub kyi shing drung du byang chub kyi snying po la 'dug gi bar du skrag par bya'o || bgegs bya'o || byang chub thob nas kyang bstan pa gshig par bya'o zhes smon lam btab bo || (60.6–60.14).

Kumārabhṛta, in short, vows to become Māra in order to interfere with Utpalavaktra's progress to buddhahood during his final lifetime as a bodhisattva. Readers are not yet told what Utpalavaktra's name will be when he attains buddhahood, what the name of his buddhafield will be, and so on—information typically given in such discussions of future buddhas—but they will find out soon enough that Utpalavaktra is none other than Śākyamuni. Equipped with this salient piece of information, we return to the episode one last time before rising out of the text to reflect on what all of this means for thinking about the sūtra's affective regime and the subtle narrative mechanisms by which it is able to do its work on audiences outside the sūtra.

After supplying his audience with the contents of Kumārabhṛta's vow, Śākyamuni rushes to conclude his *pūrvayoga*. The change in pace here is a bit jarring, but it is also understandable in light of the fact that Śākyamuni had done what he intended to do with the story—that is, to offer a karmic explanation of why some of the people in his audience had not been paying proper attention. Its brevity notwithstanding, the *pūrvayoga*'s conclusion is fascinating for what it does not include in its narration. With almost no detail at all regarding how it happens, how long it takes, and so on, Śākyamuni asserts that Utpalavaktra eventually gets Kumārabhṛta to have a change of heart.

> Then, the great ascetic Utpalavaktra, by means of his greatness, rigor, perseverance, and determination, gladdened the mercenary Kumārabhṛta, whose resolve had thus been settled by his vow. Utpalavaktra turned Kumārabhṛta away from the thicket of wrong views, made him confess his fault, and caused him to generate the intention to attain awakening.[89]

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[89] Skt. (K): atha sa utpalavaktro mahāśramaṇas taṃ kumārabhṛtaṃ bhaṭam evaṃ praṇidhikṛtavyavasāyaṃ mahatā kṛcchrodyogaparākramaiḥ prasādayitvā tataḥ pāpakadṛṣṭigatāt pratinivartyātyayaṃ pratideśāpayitvānuttarāyāṃ samyaksaṃbodhau cittam utpādayati sma || (48.14–49.2); de nas dge sbyong ut pa la'i gdong gis shor ba gzhon nu'i tshul gyis smon lam de ltar brtul te btab pa la mthu chen po dang 'bad pa drag pos dad par byas te sdig pa'i lta ba thibs po de las bzlog nas nyes pa 'chags su bcug ste | bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu sems bskyed du bcug go || (60.15–60.19).

And immediately after this succinct account, which does not grant any measure of insight into what must have been a fascinating exchange between the two, Śākyamuni ends his narration on a hopeful but inconclusive note.

> "Then, the mercenary Kumārabhṛta, humbled and gladdened, made another vow: 'Greatly compassionate one, when you awaken to unexcelled perfect awakening, may the one who has attained awakening predict me to unexcelled perfect awakening!'"[90]

This is where Śākyamuni ends his narrative. Immediately after this, he identifies characters in the *pūrvayoga* with members of his audience.[91] Readers are left to wonder, in other words, whether Utpalavaktra agrees to foretell Kumārabhṛta to awakening when he himself attains awakening. While we might be tempted to assume Utpalavaktra assents, we should allow the narrative to retain its silences.

Through Śākyamuni's *pūrvayoga*, which we can identify as a nested external analepsis, the outermost narrative voice lets readers know that the conflict between Śākyamuni and Māra has deep karmic roots. And through proleptic moments within this nested analepsis, readers are teased with the possibility that Māra will be foretold to unexcelled perfect awakening as the *Precious Banner*'s story progresses. But it is also equally possible that he will not be. The narrative silence thus generates tension and suspense. Only by forging ahead after reading the end of chapter two will readers learn what happens next. Unlike such readers, we know—from

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[90] Skt. (K): atha kumārabhṛto bhaṭo vinītaprasāda idaṃ praṇidhānaṃ cakāra | yadā tvaṃ mahākāruṇikānuttarāṃ samyaksaṃbodhim abhisaṃbuddho bhavet tadā bodhiprāpto māṃ vyakūryād anuttarāyāṃ samyaksaṃbodhau || (49.3–49.5); Tib. (K): de nas shor ba gzhon nu'i tshul rab tu dul zhing dad pa skyes nas 'di skad du snying rje chen po dang ldan pa khyod gang gi tshe bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa de'i tshe byang chub thob nas bdag bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu lung bstan du gsol zhes smon lam btab po || (61.1–61.5).

[91] Śākyamuni was Utpalavaktra, Maitreya was Surasundarī, Māra was Kumārabhṛta, and the audience members who were born into the house of Māra were the followers of Kumārabhṛta who were disrespectful to the Transcendent Jyotiḥsomya (Skt. [K]: 49.6–50.13; Tib. [K]: 61.6–63.7). As a result of these karmic identifications, the narrator concludes the chapter, even more members of Śākyamuni's audience are transformed from women into men, aspire to attain awakening, and are established in irreversibility (Skt. [K]: 50.13–51.5; Tib. [K]: 63.7–64.2])

the overview of the sūtra given above and the subsequent examinations of the sūtra's first and third chapters—that Māra neither gives rise to a genuine intention to attain awakening nor receives a prediction to awakening. But we know, too, that the end of Māra's story is not narrated, and that this means all hope is not lost. And we have ever more reason to suspect that Māra's affective orientation is at the heart of this drama.

IV

Before offering reflections on the implications of the foregoing for the broader questions of the dissertation, let us recap what has been covered so far. In section II, we tracked Māra through the sūtra's third chapter in order to lay bare the feeling rule implicit in Ghoṣavati's question. More specifically, we examined Māra's interactions with the cosmic māras, Jyotīrasa, and the giant preaching lotus and its audience—all with a focus on Māra's emotional reactions, the events the prompted them, and their consequences—so that we could appreciate not only the normative tone underlying Ghoṣavati's words but also the extent to which this very question, standing at the end of a long series of events, stands as evidence of Māra's affective misalignment. Throughout these episodes, Māra grows increasingly upset as he confronts the increasingly undeniable fact that his power and influence are dwindling. When he sees the gigantic preaching lotus in the center of Rājagṛha, attracting myriad other beings from around the cosmos, he has an intense visceral and physical reaction. Terrified and disoriented upon realizing that the preaching lotus had also drawn in his remaining contingent of allies, he launches a final desperate attack that ultimately fails and leaves him (un)bound by a fivefold fetter.

Stunned by what we are here identifying as Māra's obstinate affective misalignment, Ghoṣavati raises the question with which we began the chapter—*how can you be upset?!*—and advises Māra to go to Śākyamuni for refuge in order to attain peace and happiness. Translated

into a statement, the feeling rule implicit in Ghoṣavati's question is the negative statement *You should not be upset about the events that have transpired*. Though delivered narrowly to Māra in the context of the narrative, my contention is that this negative feeling rule impinges on readers, as well. (Or to adapt Arlie Russell Hochschild's insight that "Such sanctions are a clue to the rules they are meant to enforce,"[92] we can appreciate this instead as a *rule reminder*, where the rule is *to be happy*—but we're not quite there yet.) The mechanisms by which this rule, and the larger affective regime of which it is a facet, impinges on readers are structural features of the sūtra itself. Though we have yet to encounter all these strategies in our analysis, section III shed light on one of them in turning to the *pūrvayoga* told in the sūtra's second chapter, at the end of which Śākyamuni does not narrate how (or even whether) Utpalavaktra (=Śākyamuni) responded to Kumārabhṛta (=Māra) when the latter asked that the former foretell him to awakening when he reaches buddhahood in the future.

Taking the glaring narrative silence at the end of chapter two's *pūrvayoga* together with the liminal state in which Māra is left at the end of chapter three until his last appearance as an actant in chapter eleven, we can begin to appreciate how Māra's narrative enables the sūtra's affective regime to do its work. Readers of the sūtra see the events of the sūtra alongside Māra. They watch as he watches. They know how he feels about what he experiences. And they know where those feelings leave him. But they are not condemned to feel as he feels. Neither is Māra, in fact, even though it seems at times that he is irredeemably affectively misaligned. The structure of the sūtra, what it narrates and what it doesn't, leaves open the possibility for Māra to feel differently. If he continues to feel as he does, he remains (un)bound. Indeed, as the next chapter shows, he faces consequences far more dire. But if he learns to feel differently, which

[92] Hochschild, "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure," 564.

will take some work on his part, then his future begins to look rather bright. Indeed, it seems he stands to be foretold to awakening should he put in the requisite emotion work. Readers find themselves in a similar situation, I submit, insofar as they are likewise not naturally wired to feel joy on account of this or any other sūtra. It takes conditioning and work. The affective regime of the *Precious Banner*, as a conditioning mechanism, has as its aim the structuring of the affective lives of its readers through encouraging emotion work, and it seeks to realize this aim by telling a story of Māra such that readers are subtly encouraged to cultivate the feelings they know Māra needs to feel in order to have his own story (and implicitly their own) come to a satisfactory conclusion.

CHAPTER FOUR

"You Should Be Happy!"
The Consequences of Affective Misalignment

I

From atop the gigantic preaching lotus that had emerged in the center of Rājagṛha, Śākyamuni surveys the vast crowd of beings. The city buzzes with anticipation. Having imbibed the Dharma from the lotus as if an aperitif, myriad beings of all kinds and from all over the cosmos eagerly await the main course: a Dharma talk from the Buddha himself. One being stands out from the rest, however—and not in a good way. Terrified and angry, stuck in the presence of the lotus and its architect, Māra draws attention to himself through his deeply affected state, which itself betrays his unyielding affective misalignment. "You should be happy," Śākyamuni says to him, "for it is on your account that this *Dharma Discourse of the Great Assembly* [=the *Precious Banner*] is being taught here and now."[1] But the imperative goes unheeded. Māra hears it, but he refuses to take it to heart. He refuses to do any emotion work, to make any effort to affectively reorient himself, or even to acknowledge the rightness of the imperative or the framework in which it figures. As we know from Chapters Two and Three, Māra stays in this state of affective misalignment until the end of the sūtra. And although it is possible at this point that he will stay misaligned for the rest of his story, readers have reason to suspect that he is not condemned to do so. In fact, readers will soon have reason to expect an affective reorientation on Māra's part. Yet as we will see, this expectation is never met in the narrative. Māra *can* change, in other words—he just doesn't. And the consequences are dire.

[1] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): khyod kyi rkyen gyis deng 'dir 'dus pa chen po'i chos kyi rnam grangs bshad pas . . . khyod dga' bar gyis shig || (148.1–148.8; ellipsis mine).

In the foregoing chapters, we have accomplished a few things. We have outlined why the *Precious Banner* merits sustained attention as well as our reading methodology. We have seen that Māra's story lends cohesion to the sūtra, that Māra's affective orientation is central to his story, and that the end of Māra's story is never narrated. We have further seen that Māra is affectively misaligned, on account of which he grows ever more miserable, powerless, and alone; that it is possible for Māra to reorient himself such that he is no longer miserable, powerless, and alone; that it is necessary for Māra to put in emotion work for this change to occur (unlike in the *Concentration of Heroic Progress*, for example, in which Māra is foretold to awakening against his will and despite a lack of any work on his part); and last, that Māra makes no move toward putting in the requisite emotion work in the narrative. This chapter continues to follow Māra to build on and further theorize these insights. Specifically, we survey the other feeling rules delivered to Māra by other actants (who have themselves taken up a proper orientation) and his consistently inadequate responses, and we do so toward two main ends. First, we want to see in as much detail as we are able that Māra is enjoined to feel differently than he does but does not make any attempt to do so. Second, we want to frame this narrative fact in the broader terms of this project. We want, in other words, to appreciate the representation of his refusal to adopt the feeling rules as a mechanism of religious discourse by which the sūtra, together with its strategic self-reference, shows readers the consequences of refusing Buddhist imperatives to feel (and not feel) certain ways toward the sūtra in the reading present and, *in showing*, subtly extends threats of these consequences to readers.

To flesh out this second aim in still more general terms—Continuing to draw on Sara Ahmed and Arlie Hochschild, we want to begin approaching the extratextual social implications for readers who refuse the feeling rules that make up the sūtra's affective regime. In the world of

the sūtra, Māra faces dire consequences for his refusal, itself grounded in his entrenched yet still malleable affective misalignment. My contention is that the sūtra extends the threat of these consequences to its readers by means of focalization and self-reference. In other words, it is in part through the representation of Māra's mental and physical anguish on account of his refusal to feel properly with respect to the events narrated in the sūtra, which just *are* the sūtra, that the sūtra encourages readers to adopt the feeling rules articulated through the text and to do emotion work with respect to them. At the same time, the narrative makes it clear that readers, while *not* like Māra in all ways, must respond just as Māra must. As Chapter Five will show, other actants feel "in line" and thereby receive blessing and protection but also constitute a community centered on the Dharma. Taking this and the next chapter together, then, my argument is that readers constitute an empowered community transhistorical in scope through proper affective orientation to the sūtra.[2] While sharing the sūtra as a common point of reference is necessary for this community to emerge, it is not quite sufficient. After all, Māra in many ways has the sūtra right before his eyes—he is both *in it* and *living through* it—yet on account of his misalignment he is powerless and alone. The community depicted in and envisioned by the *Precious Banner* is one characterized by proper affective alignment with the sūtra—not mere access and reference thereto. And the self-referential sūtra uses its narrative to call just such a community into being.

II

This section has two aims. First, we further uncover feeling rules delivered to Māra from actants we have already met in the previous chapters. The second aim is to consider the context leading

[2] By *empowered* here (and elsewhere) I mean to say that the community depicted in and envisioned by the sūtra are recipients of Buddha's blessing and protection. What this looks like within the sūtra will become clear throughout our reading of the narrative. What this looks like outside the text is perhaps less clear, though I invite my readers to appreciate the social world called into being by the *Precious Banner* as *made real* by proper response.

up to Śākyamuni's imperative to be happy, the imperative itself, and its direct aftermath. To do this, we retread some familiar territory while foregrounding different parts of the text. Instead of narrowly tracking Māra's affective states, that is, we attend to the feeling rules given to Māra by his courtesans and the cosmic māras from their newly acquired affective orientation. These rules, as we will see, are all negative. That is, they enjoin (or remind, to use Hochschild's vocabulary of *rule reminder*) Māra *not* to feel in certain ways—be it in the form of a question, an imperative, or a general threatening maxim. Following this, we turn to Śākyamuni's imperative to be happy and Māra's first refusal of the same. This section, then, covers new ground while also harmonizing with and solidifying the argument of Chapter Three. First, the analysis moves us further into the sūtra than we heretofore have read with much critical attention. And second, we here attend to some topics that have yet to be mentioned—namely, the thematization and deployment of *sexuality* and *fear* in this sūtra and other Buddhist literature—in order to move us toward a fuller appreciation of how the narrative works. Section III takes us even further into the sūtra and our analysis. Following Māra from the aftermath of Śākyamuni's imperative to his last appearances in the sūtra, we consider the thematization and deployment of *abject bodies* (in the presence of *good bodies*) toward understanding yet another mechanism by which the sūtra manages to address audiences. As I will argue, this feature of the text opens up a space for responsiveness to norms and yet, at the same time, in its capacity as a mechanism of ideology, presents readers with only one live option: *feel* in line—*or else*.

The Courtesans and Māra

In this first subsection we return to the episode featuring Māra's courtesans. As we recall, Māra storms off to his lamentation room after failing to dissuade Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana from taking refuge in the Buddha (as Pseudo-Aśvajit) and subsequently failing to trick the Buddha

into taking refuge in Śiva and/or entering final nirvāṇa (as Pseudo-Śiva and -Brahmā). Confused and concerned, one of Māra's courtesans, Vidyudvalgusvarā, asks him why he doesn't feel like partying with them: "Why do you grieve and not pass the time joyfully?"[3] Like we saw in our above analysis of Ghoṣavati's exchange with Māra, this question constitutes a feeling rule in interrogative form. But this one differs insofar as it is asked not only from a place that assumes the norms of Sahā but also right after a party tailor-made for the Lord of Desire is cut short before it has a chance to begin. And with this context in place, we can turn our attention to the theme of sexuality.

In the foregoing analysis we have seen quite a bit of martial imagery. Engaged in a bitter war against Śākyamuni, Māra enlists allies, draws up battle plans, and launches an ultimately unsuccessful two-pronged attack. In broad strokes, then, the *Precious Banner* resembles stories of the Buddha's awakening at the bodhi tree. But the *Precious Banner* differs from these latter stories in its deployment of sexuality. In stories of the bodhi tree, sexuality is a major part of Māra's strategy: Māra sends attractive and seductive women (and sometimes also men) to the Buddha to produce in him feelings of lust, thereby blocking Śākyamuni from awakening and saving the regnant way of life in Sahā.[4] In the *Precious Banner*, however, our narrator mobilizes the theme of sexuality in a different way. Before Vidyudvalgusvarā's question, the courtesans try to lift Māra's spirits in accordance with the norms of Sahā, likely assuming that they would be successful given that Māra is its great overseer. Noticing that Māra had entered his lamentation room, the courtesans spontaneously and collectively pull out all the stops. They set the mood

[3] Skt. (K): . . . samāśrayase saśokaḥ (9.8, fragmentary); Tib. (K): ci yi slad du khyed ni dgyes par mi bzhugs thugs ngan mdzad (21.2); Cf. Dutt: kiṃ vā na nandasi samāśrayase saśokam (*GM*, 4:13.16).

[4] See, e.g., Māra's attempt to fill the Buddha with lust by "placing his sons and girls in front on him" and shooting him with an arrow designed to incite lust in Aśvaghoṣa's *Life of the Buddha* (Aśvaghoṣa, *Life of the Buddha*, trans. Patrick Olivelle [New York: New York University Press and JJC Foundation, 2008], 374–79; 13.1–13.17).

with beautiful and fragrant decorations meant to delight. They put on finery meant to charm. They fill the room with song and dance meant to please and excite. And they make themselves visually—perhaps physically, though the narrator does not go quite so far—available to Māra.[5] But none of this even begins to cheer Māra up. Clearly having had a destabilizing experience, Māra begs them to be quiet and calm down. And when the courtesans realize that Māra means business, they grow silent and still.

The silence is broken by Vidyudvalgusvarā, who asks Māra to explain what is going on. In response, Māra describes the Buddha to her and the other courtesans. And this description instantly snaps the courtesans into proper affective alignment. The details of this reorientation will be discussed in Chapter Five; suffice it to say here that while they had been predisposed to encounter Śākyamuni as a threatening object, due to what we might call their social location, they now experience him as a source of joy. For now, we jump forward to their rebuke of Māra from the standpoint of their new orientation. They turn to him and say (in unison):

> "And *you*. You have a defective mind. Realizing that your prosperity is hollow and shaky, why are you hostile to the Lord? With your entire body tormented by the suffering of birth and the rest, proud and arrogant, you are headed in a terrible direction. || 1.27 ||
>
> "So, abandon your wrath and have confidence in the Victor. Be raised up from the mire of arrogance and the faults of saṃsāra! Know this to be the nature of the world! Come quickly to the compassionate one—we are on the way!" || 1.28 ||[6]

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[5] Skt. (K): atha paṃca mārakanyāśatāni paramaprītikarāṇi puṣpamālyavilepanāni gṛhītvā paramamanojñair vastrābharaṇair ātmānam alaṃkṛtya paramamanojñaharṣakarāṇi divyāni tūryāṇi pravādayaṃtyaḥ paramamanojñasvareṇa nṛtyaṃtyo gāyaṃtyo vādayaṃtyo mahatā divyena paṃcāṃgikena tūryeṇa ratikrīḍāyuktena mārasya pāpīmataḥ purataḥ sthitāḥ | (8.8–8.12); Tib. (K): de nas bdud kyi bu mo lnga brgya tsam rab tu dga' bar byed pa'i me tog dang | bdug pa dang | spos dang | phreng ba dang | byug pa thogs te rab tu yid du 'ong ba'i gos dang | lhab lhub dag gis bdag cag brgyan nas rab tu yid du 'ong zhing mos par byed pa'i lha'i sil snyan byas te | rab tu yid du 'ong ba'i dbyangs kyis glu len gar byed cing | yan lag lnga dang ldan pa'i lha'i sil snyan dag byas nas | dga' ba'i rtsed mo dang lhan par bdud sdig can gyi mdun du 'khod pa dang | (20.6–20.11).

[6] Skt (K): tvaṃ nāma duṣkṛtamate bhagavatsakāśe duṣṭaḥ kathaṃ śṛyam avāpya calām asārām | jātyādiduḥkha-samupadrutasarvamūrtiḥ ghorāṃ daśām upagato 'si madāvaliptaḥ || 1.27 || śraddhāṃ jine kuru tathā vyapanīya roṣaṃ saṃsāradoṣamadapaṃkasamuddhṛtātmā | eṣa svayaṃ viditasarvajagasvabhāva āgaccha kāruṇikam āśu gatiṃ prayāmaḥ || 1.28 || (13.4–13.11); Tib. (K): nyes byas blo gros can khyod snying po med g.yo ba'i || dpal rnyed ci phyir bcom ldan 'das la sdang bar sems || dregs pas gos nas skye ba la sogs sdug bsngal gyis || lus kun gtses te mi

The courtesans clearly no longer operate according to the norms of Sahā. Their orientation has been fundamentally altered. Whereas before they resorted to sensual displays in their attempts to distract Māra and lift his spirits, just as other (or perhaps these same) courtesans weaponized their sexuality against the Buddha at the bodhi tree, they now see Māra rightly (from the normative perspective of the sūtra, of course) and act accordingly. They chide him for digging in his heels and proceed to deliver to him a second feeling rule in interrogative form—except this time, the feeling rule is one facet of the affective regime baked into the sūtra: *How can you be so hostile*?

In many ways, the exchange between Ghoṣavati and Māra examined in Chapter Three echoes the episode discussed here. Both Ghoṣavati and the courtesans rebuke Māra and impose upon him what we recognize as feeling rules from within the framework of norms articulated in the sūtra. The two episodes differ, however, in how their imagery compares with the imagery of stories of Māra's attacks against the Buddha at the bodhi tree. With Ghoṣavati, the imagery is primarily martial in nature. At first a cosmic ally in Māra's war against Śākyamuni, Ghoṣavati eventually undergoes an affective reorientation and subsequently urges Māra to make some changes. While the Ghoṣavati scene shares much with stories of the bodhi tree, there are some differences as well. At the bodhi tree, Māra dispatches troops, the troops are defeated, and Māra retreats with his tail between his legs. In the *Precious Banner*, by contrast, Māra is instead *stuck* with his tail between his legs, wholly unable to retreat. The exchange between the courtesans and Māra in the *Precious Banner* shares similar points of contrast with depictions of the courtesans at the bodhi tree. Both here and at the bodhi tree, the courtesans are unable to weaponize their

bzad gnas su nye bar song || 1.27 || de ltar khro ba spangs te rgyal la dad par gyis || 'khor ba'i nyes pa dregs pa'i 'dam las thar ba'i bdag || 'di ni nyid kyis 'gro ba kun gyi ngo bo mkhyen || thugs rje can gyi skyabs su 'dong gis myur du bzhud || 1.28 || (24.1–24.8).

sexuality effectively. At the bodhi tree, the Buddha is unaffected. In the *Precious Banner*, however, Māra is affected—though not how the courtesans expect—and consequently speaks the words that (quite by accident) reorient his courtesans. In both cases, sexuality is thematized and deployed in the narrative to foreground the power of the Buddha in his physical presence as well as—and this is important, given that our analysis centers on a text—in his verbal representation. But as we will see in section III below, this power is not unlimited. Though the sūtra portrays the physical presence and verbal representation of *good bodies* as powerfully and viscerally affective agents, it also carves out space for personal response to norms. This feature of the narrative, I argue, is critical for how the sūtra's affective regime reaches beyond the text, into the reading present, and into the lives of readers wherever and whenever they happen to be.

Māra and the Cosmic Māras

The next episode to be addressed briefly centers on Māra's interaction with the cosmic māras. When the cosmic māras see the entire cosmos fill up with light, they conclude that the light must have come from Māra, the māra of Sahā, because he is the most powerful among them. When they descend upon Sahā, however, they are confused by the sight of Māra sitting in his lamentation room. That they are confused suggests that the cosmic māras believed the light to signal something positive. From the perspective of the sūtra, they were right about this—the light fills the cosmos on account of the Buddha Śākyamuni's representation of the Buddha Jyotiḥsomya's recitation of the Precious Banner *dhāraṇī*—but they were not right in the way that they thought they would be. Though the narrator does not clue us into their thoughts, the cosmic māras likely expected to find Māra living his best life. But this is not the situation they encounter. So, they ask him to explain why he is downcast.

In response, Māra lays out in some detail his relationship with Śākyamuni, past and present, and concludes his diatribe with a rousing call to action. While Māra is speaking, a māra named Jyotiṣprabha catches a glimpse of the Buddha and is filled with awe. In Chapter Three, we saw only half of what he says to Māra. He first offers a reverent description of Śākyamuni:

> "This is the most beautiful man in this entire world. His body has been purified by the cultivation of merit and knowledge for a long time. He is freed from affliction having been dedicated to the path for a long time. For him, all mundane existence is extinguished. He is liberated from sorrow." || 3.1 ||[7]

The second half of his statement to Māra we have not yet seen. I withheld his second verse until this moment because it bolsters the present argument. Jyotiṣprabha continues, saying:

> "Don't become further subject to anger. It's not proper, for this excellent man is the foremost refuge in the triple world. Whoever has the slightest aversion to this man is delusional and will be utterly deprived of happiness." || 3.2 ||[8]

What we see here is an additional feeling rule—indeed, two feeling rules: one in the imperative and one in the form of a general maxim. Filled with awe at the sight of the Buddha, Jyotiṣprabha first tries to put into words Śākyamuni's beauty and virtue. He then turns to Māra and scolds him for being angry in the first place and enjoins him not to grow any angrier. To do so, he says, would be improper (Skt. *na yuktam*; Tib. *mi rigs*).[9] Feelings of anger toward the Buddha are not

[7] Skt. (K): kṛtsne kṣetre hy eṣa viśiṣṭo vararūpaḥ puṇyajñānair āśrayaśuddhaś cirakālaṃ | kleśān mukto mārgasuyuktaś cirarātraṃ kṣīṇāḥ sarve tasya bhavā śokavimuktaḥ || 3.1 || (55.8–55.11); Tib. (K): ma lus zhing na 'di ni gzugs bzang mchog || bsod nams shes pas ring nas gnas gtsang ste || nyon mongs rnam grol lam ldan yun ring lon || srid pa kun zad mya ngan rnams las thar || 3.1 || (68.5–68.8)

[8] Skt. (K): mā tvaṃ bhūyaḥ krodhavaśaṃ gaccha na yuktam agro hy eṣa śreṣṭha śaraṇyas tribhavesmiṃ | yasyāsmin vidveṣalavo 'pi pratibhāti vyāmūḍho 'sau saukhyavinaṣṭo bhavatīha || 3.2 || (55.12–55.15); Tib. (K): khyod kyang mi rigs khro ba'i dbang ma 'gro || gtso mchog 'di ni srid pa gsum na skyabs || 'di la zhe sdang cung zad su skyed pa || de ni rmongs shing bde ba nyams par 'gyur || 3.2 || (68.9–68.12).

[9] One could translate the Sanskrit and Tibetan here as *unreasonable*, *irrational*, or something to that effect. Such a translation choice, however, runs the risk of uncritically replicating the (itself not entirely reasonable) distinction between reason/rationality and emotion. An assumption of this dissertation, drawing on the history and sociology of emotions, is that emotions have an inbuilt rationality insofar as they take objects, are grounded in personal histories and values, and are malleable. In other words, emotions are *not*—or not *always*—uncontrolled and uncontrollable. Thanks to Charles Preston for bringing this to my attention.

the kinds of feelings one should cultivate. But this is not the last word. Jyotiṣprabha concludes with a threatening maxim that, while aimed here only at Māra, addresses individual readers by virtue of its use of unspecified, generic singular pronouns.[10] People who feel anger or aversion toward the Buddha, in short, are just plain stupid (Skt. *vyāmūḍha*; Tib. *rmongs*) and will never find happiness (Skt. *saukhya*; Tib. *bde ba*). Taken together, these two characterizations in many ways blur the normative and the naturalized. They mark how Māra feels toward Śākyamuni as not just wrong but ludicrous and aberrant. That such an orientation to the Buddha is unnatural is made clear enough by the apparent naturalness of the consequences that follow from it. On top of the misery, impotence, and social isolation we have already seen, Māra's affective misalignment causes him severe bodily and mental pain on account of what he experiences while trapped in the presence of the preaching lotus. We will address this in more detail below. Suffice it to say here that Māra is not incapable of improving his situation. All he must do is respond properly to the feeling rules he has been given.

Māra and Śākyamuni

With the feeling rules from the above exchanges added to our reading of the Ghoṣavati episode, we now move into new narrative material. While we have hinted at the episodes to be addressed, none has been subjected to close analysis. Until now, we have only really spent time in the first three chapters of the *Precious Banner*, which together account for about a quarter of the sūtra.[11] Here, we jump to the sūtra's fifth chapter to examine the context leading up to Śākyamuni's imperative to be happy. From this episode, we will continue to follow Māra, visiting him twice

[10] Strictly speaking, the pronouns are masculine. I say *generic* here because, as in many languages, masculine pronouns can be used in Sanskrit to refer to people in a general way—hence my translation of the *yasya . . . asau* construction as *whoever*.

[11] See Chapter One n. 5.

more in chapter five and three more times in three other chapters—chapters six, nine, and eleven. With the analysis of these episodes—one more in section II, the rest in section III—we will have followed Māra to the end of the line, so to speak. In each of these visits with Māra, readers catch an additional glimpse of his affective misalignment and the avoidable consequences thereof.

After the end of the third chapter, the first time we see Māra again is just about midway through chapter five. The fourth chapter narrates the exchange between the Buddha and Jyotīrasa (the second facet of Māra's two-pronged battle strategy, the first of which we discussed above). In other words, our narrator employs the literary strategy of analepsis—this time not through a nested story (like we saw in Śākyamuni's past life narrative in chapter two, itself an instance of nested external analepsis) but rather within the main frame. The fourth and fifth chapters, to be more specific, constitute an instance of internal analepsis. The events recounted in these chapters occur at roughly the same time as events narrated in chapter three, and their narration eventually meets up with and surpasses the point in story time to which readers have been brought—that is, Māra's desperate final attack against the giant preaching lotus. As we will see in the next chapter of the dissertation, the sūtra's fourth chapter narrates Śākyamuni's approach to Rājagṛha, during which his devotees beg him to stay out of fear that he will be harmed by the army of māras that awaits him, while the fifth chapter opens with a depiction of Śākyamuni entering the city. When he enters, he is showered with offerings by all sorts of beings (just as he said he would be when attempting to calm his fearful devotees). This devotional event gets the attention of bodhisattvas and disciples from around the cosmos, who in turn promptly appear in Sahā to join in the worship of the Buddha in Rājagṛha.

With this context in place, we can dive into the first interaction between Śākyamuni and Māra since the sūtra's first chapter (when Māra tries to trick the Buddha in the guise of Śiva and

Brahmā). After entering Rājagṛha, Śākyamuni walks up to the enormous preaching lotus. And to prove a point to Māra—who, recall, had been unable to touch the lotus, let alone harm it—the Buddha lifts the lotus with his right hand, waves it around, and sets it back down on the ground. This casual yet decisive display of strength not only establishes a clear hierarchy but also causes mountains to tremble, disturbs oceans, and terrifies the beings in Māra's children's retinue.[12] Markedly unlike Māra, however, these figures do not grow angry, hostile, or upset. Nor do they attempt to hatch any plans of escape or attack. Instead, they approach Śākyamuni reverently.[13] With that, the narrator draws our gaze back to Māra.

Now in the presence of both the giant preaching lotus *and* the Buddha, Māra tries again to steal away by insincerely taking refuge. Bowing toward Śākyamuni with hands folded in what is undoubtedly feigned deference, Māra says:

> "With gladdened mind, Lord, I go to you for refuge. Free me from this fetter at once, and I will practice the true Dharma." || 5.6 ||[14]

Māra knows the right words to say. But he has no intention of following through with any of it. Knowing as much, and in playful contradiction to his grandiose display of unlimited strength just moments prior, the Buddha responds saying:

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[12] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): bcom ldan 'das rgyal po'i khag [read: khab] kyi grong khyer chen por gshegs nas srang gi dbus na pad ma yod pa ga la ba der gshegs te byon nas | phyag g.yas pa'i mthil gyis pad ma'i snying po la reg par mdzad de drangs nas bzhugs so || pad ma de drangs te g.yos pas sangs rgyas kyi zhing 'di'i ri khor yug dang | ri khor yug chen po dang | ri'i rgyal po ri rab dang | rgya mtsho chen po dang | bdud kyi gnas thams cad kyang g.yos so || bdud kyi gnas thams cad na gzhal med khang dang | gnas dang | mal cha dang | stan rnams kyang rab tu g.yos so || de na gang bdud kyi bu rnams dang | bdud kyi bu mo rnams dang | bdud kyi tshogs kyi 'khor gnas pa de dag kyang 'jigs skrag cing skyo ba skyes nas (138.17–139.9).

[13] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): de nas de dag yang 'di snyam du sems te | bdag cag kyang de bzhin gshegs pa śākya thub pa de la blta ba dang | phyag bya ba dang | da ltar bdag cag gi jo bo dang | g.yog tu bcas pa gar dong ba'ang dri ba'i phyir der 'dong gor ma chag snyam mo || (140.7–140.10).

[14] Skt. (K): atha māraḥ pāpīmān yena bhagavāṃs tenāṃjaliṃ praṇāmyaivam āha || bhagavaṃ charaṇaṃ yāmi vipras . . . | . . . || 5.6 || (108.4–108.7, fragmentary); Tib. (K): de nas bdud sdig can gyis bcom ldan 'das ga la ba de logs su thal mo sbyar ba btud nas 'di skad ces gsol to || rab tu rnam par dad sems kyis || bcom ldan bdag ni skyabs su mchi || bdag khrol 'di nas myur du thod || chos ni yang dag spyad par bygi || 5.6 || (140.13–141.1).

> "I cannot keep anyone from coming or going. If you know the path, go wherever you want." || 5.7 ||[15]

With this elliptical, borderline dismissive verse, Śākyamuni all but washes his hands of Māra's situation. Or so it seems to Māra, who then reiterates his predicament to fill the Buddha in on the details (as if he doesn't already know):

> "Whenever I want to go happily to my own palace, Gautama, I see myself bound by five fetters." || 5.8 ||[16]

Śākyamuni's response is again short and to the point. With it, he makes it crystal clear (for Māra and readers alike) that Māra is stuck in a trap of his own making.

> "Abandoning all conceptuality, I am liberated and thus liberate living beings. I have given up harm and thus *free* living beings from fetters." || 5.9 ||[17]

The fetter is *not* Śākyamuni's doing, as Māra alleged earlier.[18] Śākyamuni does not put beings in fetters; he frees them from fetters. In other words—it's Māra's own damn fault. Giving this hard truth time to sink in, Śākyamuni turns to address the surrounding crowds.[19]

Following Śākyamuni's opening remarks, our old friend Jyotīrasa—now an advanced bodhisattva—emanates a jeweled staircase leading to the top of the giant preaching lotus.[20] He

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[15] Skt. (K): . . . vāremi gacchantaṃ vāgataṃ punaḥ | mārgaṃ tvaṃ yat prajānīṣe gaccha yena ya . . . || 5.7 || (108.9–108.10, fragmentary); Tib. (K): 'gro ba dang ni 'ong ba yang || ngas ni su la'ang bzlog pa med || gal te lam ni rab shes na || gang du dga' bar 'gro bar byos || 5.7 || (141.3–141.6).

[16] Skt. (K): . . . | . . . m ātmānaṃ baddhaṃ paśyāmi gautama || 5.8 || (108.12–108.13, fragmentary); Tib. (K): rang gi spyod yul gar dga' bar || gang tshe bdag ni mchi 'tshal te || bdag ni bcing ba lnga dag gis || bcings par mthong ngo gau ta ma || 5.8 || (141.8–141.11).

[17] Skt. (K): sarvakalpaprahī . . . | . . . || 5.9 || (109.1–109.2, fragmentary); Tib. (K): nga ni rtog pa kun spangs te || grol nas 'gro ba grol byed pa || ngas ni 'tshe ba rnam spangs nas || sems can bcings pa thar par bya || 5.9 || (141.13–141.16).

[18] When Māra nominally takes refuge in the Buddha in chapter three, Māra asks to be released from "the sage's fetter" (Skt. [K]: muner bandhanān mucyeyaṃ [84.12–84.13]). In the Tibetan, *sage* could be read as a vocative (Tib. [K]: thub mchog . . . bcings pa 'di las khrol [95.6]).

[19] Skt. (K): 109.3–112.6 (fragmentary); Tib. (K): 141.17–146.14.

[20] Skt. (K): (112.7–112.8 (fragmentary); Tib. (K): 146.15–146.17.

then invites Śākyamuni to ascend the staircase to preach.[21] The Buddha, of course, obliges. And once seated atop the lotus, the Buddha looks around as if about to address the entire assembly. This is, of course, the episode with which we began at the outset of this chapter. But instead of addressing the crowds, he speaks directly to Māra:

> "It is on your account, Māra, that this *Dharma Discourse of the Great Assembly* is being taught here and now. And through this teaching, immeasurable and incalculable sentient beings endangered by birth, aging, and death will be liberated and freed therefrom. They will completely cross over the four floods. They will be established on the path of peace. They will penetrate that wisdom which is like the sky. Because of this, Māra, the virtuous roots of living beings begin to increase. Insofar as all this has happened because of you, you should be happy! Māra, you should ask me to teach the Dharma and I will now teach the Dharma to an assembly of māras in order that they cross beyond the deep river."[22]

Śākyamuni's message is straightforward. Māra is the reason that a lot of very good things (from the normative perspective of the text) have happened, are currently happening, and will continue to happen. Because of Māra, Śākyamuni is teaching *this very discourse*, which will cause myriad beings to increase their virtuous roots, attain peace, or reach liberation. And all this, the Buddha says, *ought to make Māra happy*. Unfortunately, the Sanskrit is missing here. But the Tibetan text—*khyod dga' bar gyis shig*—suggests that the underlying Sanskrit was an imperative since we have an imperative marker with *shig*.[23] Manifestly *not happy* with what has happened and

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[21] Skt. (K): kleśahatānāṃ prajñopāyau pravidarśayāpratima | padme bhiruhya nātha pra . . . || 5.37 || (113.1–113.2, fragmentary); Tib. (K): mtshungs pa med pa'i pad ma mngon 'dzegs te || mgon po shes rab dang ni thabs rnams kyis || chos chu sprin gyis char pa rab phob la || nyon mongs gzir ba'i mi la bstan du gsol || 5.37 || (147.4–147.7).

[22] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): bdud sdig can ji ltar khyod kyi rkyen gyis deng 'dir 'dus pa chen po'i chos kyi rnam grangs bshad pas sems can grangs med dpag tu med pa dag mngal na gnas pa dang | rga shis gtses pa rnams las rnam par grol bar 'gyur rnam par thar par 'gyur || bcu bo bzhi [read: chu bo bzhi] las yang dag par rgal bar 'gyur | zhi ba'i lam la gnas par 'gyur | nam mkha' dang mtshungs pa'i ye shes khong du chud par 'gyur te | 'di la sdig can khyod ni sems can rnams kyi dge ba'i rtsa ba rnam par 'phel ba'i thog mar 'gro ba yin gyis khyod dga' bar gyis shig || sdig can khyod kyis nga la chos bshad par gsol cig dang ngas deng bdud kyi dkyil 'khor mthon po'i yul gyi chu bo'i pha rol tu 'gro bar bya ba'i phyir chos bstan to || (148.1–148.10).

[23] To use Stephan Beyer's terminology, *shig* is a *command* particle. For more on these particles and their uses, see Stephan V. Beyer, *The Classical Tibetan Language* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 363–65.

continues to happen around him—which, it bears reiteration, is the very sūtra in which Māra finds himself, to which Śākyamuni refers, and which readers have before their eyes[24]—Māra is told directly how he ought to feel about all of it. Śākyamuni gives him a direct and concrete feeling rule *to be happy*. This injunction is central to the affective regime implicit in the *Precious Banner*. And the fact that the injunction is couched in a mode both metatextual and religious, coupled with the use of Māra as a relatable focalizer, is central to our reading of how sūtra's affective regime manages to impinge upon readers outside the text. More on this momentarily.

Enjoined by Śākyamuni to be happy about all the good things he has unwittingly helped to bring about, including the teaching of the sūtra in which this very injunction and these same good things are narrated, Māra responds with the following verse:

> "If, without wickedness, there is no anger, hatred, or vanity within you, then why do you here and now teach the Dharma to cause fear? And if there *is* anger, vanity, and conceit within you, *O Lord of Sages*, what is your liberation like? Riddle me this!" || 5.42 ||[25]

With these words—the italics and my unconventional translation choice at the end are, of course, my attempts to convey a level of desperate reactionary snark appropriate to the context—Māra thinks himself to have trapped Śākyamuni. Any awakened being worth the title, Māra suggests, would not teach a Dharma that causes fear. Therefore, because Māra is frightened by the Dharma, the Buddha must not really be as faultless as he claims and is claimed to be. And on the strength of this conclusion, Māra probes, how great could his liberation possibly be? All this gets

[24] Tib. *'Dus pa chen po'i chos kyi rnam grangs* = Tib. *'Dus pa chen po rin po che tog gi gzungs* = Skt. *Mahāsaṃnipātadharmaparyāya* = Skt. *Mahāsaṃnipātaratnaketudhāraṇīsūtra*. That the *Precious Banner* is known by these (and still other) names is evidenced by the chapter colophons and the main colophons.

[25] Skt. missing; Tib. (K): ci ste sdig med khyod la tha ba zhe sdang rgyags med na || ci phyir deng 'dir kun tu skrag par bya phyir chos kyang ston || de ste khyod la tha ba rgyags dang nga rgyal yod na ni || thub dbang khyod kyi thar pa ci 'dra bdag la 'di shod cig || 5.42 || (148.12–148.15).

Māra nowhere. But it does promise to get *us* somewhere, so we would do well to spend a bit of time unpacking this short verse.

At the root of Māra's retort is fear. That Māra feels fear is implied by the first half of his words, in which he attributes fearsomeness to the Dharma. For Māra, the Dharma is something to be feared, something that causes fear, something of which he himself is afraid. But according to the Buddha himself, he should not be afraid. He should instead be happy. Similar assessments of fear and injunctions not to be afraid can be found elsewhere in Mahāyāna literature. In the *Questions of Susthitamati*, for example, a host of māras are terrified on account of Mañjuśrī's feats of supernormal power but are enjoined by the gods not to be afraid and to instead go to the Buddha for refuge.[26] Māra's fear of the Dharma, specifically, is not always portrayed negatively in Mahāyāna literature, however. In the *Lion's Roar of Queen Śrīmālā*, for example, the Buddha characterizes the fear Māra feels when someone embraces the Dharma as a good thing.[27] Why, then, does the *Precious Banner* depict Māra's fear in this context as improper? And how might this depiction figure into our reading of the sūtra as an affective regime?

Talk of fear is common in Mahāyāna literature, especially in texts of the Perfection of Wisdom genre. Commenting on one such passage from the *Diamond Sūtra*, Gregory Schopen writes that it is "one example of a very frequent, very important, and very little studied kind of

[26] In addition to being filled with fear, the māras also come to possess weak and decrepit bodies. By responding to Mañjuśrī's imperative not be afraid but to instead go joyfully to the Buddha for refuge, the māras were restored to their former physical form. Garma C. C. Chang, gen. ed., *A Treasury of Mahāyāna Sūtras: Selections from the Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra* (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 1983), 51–56, esp. 52.

[27] "A person will feel great pain or even become severely ill when one of his vulnerable spots is touched even slightly by a strong man. In the same way, Śrīmālā, [Māra] feels excruciating pain, worry, and distress, and howls and moans with woe when someone embraces even a small portion of the true Dharma. Śrīmālā, I have never seen any way to cause that demon worry and distress as effective as embracing the true Dharma, even a small portion of it" (Chang, gen. ed., *A Treasury of Mahāyāna Sūtras*, 370).

passage found throughout [Perfection of Wisdom] literature."[28] Such passages, he goes on to say, "seem to indicate that the authors of our texts were clearly aware of the fact that what they were presenting was above all else potentially terrifying and awful, and that a predictable reaction to it was fear."[29] But again, Perfection of Wisdom literature is not alone in this regard—a number of Mahāyāna sūtras share the same conceit and concern. The *Lotus Sūtra*, for example, frames itself as having the potential to terrify the entire world, even the gods.[30] And the *Instruction on the Inconceivable Scope of Buddhahood* urges Dharma preachers *not* to conceal the profundity of the Dharma out of concern that it could very well frighten novice audiences.[31]

While these texts mark themselves as eminently capable of producing fear, they also often mark fear negatively—not fear as such,[32] but rather fear of the Dharma expressed in

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[28] Gregory Schopen, ed. and trans., "The Manuscript of the Vajracchedikā Found at Gilgit," in *Studies in the Literature of the Great Vehicle: Three Mahāyāna Buddhist Texts*, ed. Luis O. Gómez and Jonathan A. Silk (Ann Arbor: Collegiate Institute for the Study of Buddhist Literature and Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, 1989), 134 n. 5.

[29] Schopen, ed. and trans., "The Manuscript of the *Vajracchedikā* Found at Gilgit," 135 n. 5.

[30] See, for example, the following passage from the beginning of the chapter on expedient means: alaṃ śāriputra kiṃ tavānenārthena bhāṣitena | tat kasya hetoḥ | uttrasiṣyati śāriputrāyaṃ sadevako loka asminn arthe vyākṛyamāṇe | (Shoko Watanabe, *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Manuscripts Found in Gilgit*, 2 vols. [Tokyo: The Reiyukai, 1975], 2:32.1–32.3).

[31] "Such is the case with a teacher of the Dharma. If, in taking care of others, he fears that [a novice audience] might be frightened, and so hides from them the profound meanings of the Dharma and instead speaks to them in irrelevant words and fancy phrases, then he is causing sentient beings to suffer (birth,) old age, disease, and death, instead of giving them health, peace, bliss, and nirvāṇa" (Chang, gen. ed., *A Treasury of Mahāyāna Sūtras*, 30 [brackets mine; parentheses in original]).

[32] As Andrea Acri (building on the work of Ananda Coomaraswamy), Torkel Brekke, and Giuliano Giustarini have suggested, feelings of fear (bhaya), anxiety (udvega, saṃvega), trembling (uttrāsa, saṃtrāsa), paralysis (stambha, chamba), and the like—when felt by the "right" people toward the "right" objects (e.g., the consequences of action in present and future lives, phenomena insofar as they are liable to give rise to feelings of desire and attachment, and so on)—play an important role in motivating the kinds of practices that lead toward the ultimate soteriological goal of the Buddhist tradition. See Ananda Coomaraswamy, "*Saṃvega*: 'Aesthetic Shock,'" *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 7, no. 3 (1943): 174–79; Andrea Acri, "Between Impetus, Fear and Disgust: 'Desire for Emancipation' (Saṃvega) from Early Buddhism to Pātañjala Yoga and Śaiva Siddhānta," in *Emotions in Indian Thought-Systems*, ed. Purushottama Bilimoria and Aleksandra Wenta (London: Routledge, 2015), 199–227; Torkel Brekke, "The Role of Fear in Indian Religious Thought With Special Reference to Buddhism," *JIP* 27, no. 5 (1999): 439–67; Giuliano Giustarini, "The Role of Fear (Bhaya) in the Nikāyas and in the Abhidhamma," *JIP* 40, no. 5 (2012): 511–31. Jonathan Geen has asked similar questions of Brāhmaṇical literature. See Jonathan Geen, "Knowledge of Brahman as a Solution to Fear in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa/Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad," *JIP* 35, no. 1 (2007): 33–102.

Mahāyāna idiom. The *Instruction of Vimalakīrti*, for example, describes fearful reaction to the Dharma as a hindrance to bodhisattvas' progress.[33] And the *Sūtra on Abiding in Good and Noble Deportment* likewise says that the good deeds of a mendicant are ruined by being "frightened when hearing the Dharma which teaches the non-existence of sentient beings, self, life, and personal identity."[34] As a corollary to this, Mahāyāna sūtras tend to make grand claims about those who do *not* react fearfully to the Dharma. The *Diamond Sūtra*, for example, maintains not only that teaching even four lines of itself to others produces more merit than a lifetime of giving away one's own body, but further that those who are *not* terrified upon hearing the *Diamond* will be thoroughly amazed (presumably at the amount of merit produced by not being afraid).[35] And *Mañjuśrī's Discourse on the Perfection of Wisdom*, to give just one more example, declares not only that a person "who is not frightened when he hears this Dharma . . . has been planting good roots in the lands of hundreds of thousands of (millions of) billions of Buddhas for a long time"[36] but also that a person "who is not afraid, horrified, confused, or regretful at hearing this profound [perfection] of wisdom sees the Buddha."[37]

What is assumed to be *fearsome* in the above Mahāyāna texts is often emptiness—that is, the idea that all phenomena *lack* substantial or permanent existence. As a Mahāyāna sūtra, the

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[33] "Hearing this profound teaching never before heard, they are terrified and doubtful, do not rejoice, and reject it, thinking 'Whence comes this teaching never before heard?'" Thurman, trans., *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti*, 101.

[34] Chang, gen. ed., *A Treasury of Mahāyāna Sūtras*, 283.

[35] "Those who, after hearing this discourse on Doctrine, will not be terrified, will not tremble, will not be overcome by dread, they will be possessed by the greatest astonishment" (paramāścaryasamanvāgatās te bhaviṣyanti ya imaṃ dharmaparyāyaṃ śrutvā nottrasiṣyanti na saṃtrasiṣyanti na saṃtrāsam āpatsyante). Schopen, ed. and trans., "The Manuscript of the *Vajracchedikā* Found at Gilgit," 100, 5b.3–5b.4 (Skt.), 124 (trans.).

[36] Chang, gen. ed., *A Treasury of Mahāyāna Sūtras*, 104 (parentheses original).

[37] Chang, gen. ed., *A Treasury of Mahāyāna Sūtras*, 104.

Precious Banner trades in this conceptual coin. With this in mind, then, it is not difficult to see why Māra would be afraid. Emptiness has direct implications for him and his way of life, just as it does for all sentient beings ensnared by desire and delusions of permanence. But this is not quite the picture the sūtra paints. When we consider that Māra's fearful riposte occurs just after the *Precious Banner* reveals its metatextual character to its readers, we see that emptiness is not actually what makes Māra afraid—rather, it is the *Precious Banner* itself. While the texts cited above (and other Mahāyāna sūtras besides) evince a certain metatextual nature, sometimes to a striking degree (e.g., the *Lotus*), the *Precious Banner* never so proudly broadcasts its capacity to produce fear, nor does it flatter its unafraid audiences so baldly. What it does is considerably more subtle. It tells a story of Māra, often (though not always) using Māra himself as a focalizer and thus granting readers access to his limited and relatable perspective on the events narrated in the sūtra. And in this narrative, Māra's affective orientation and the consequences of his misalignment are thematized. Then, at a pivotal moment, the *Precious Banner* at once reveals and leverages its metatextual character such that readers are homologized with Māra vis-à-vis the sūtra itself. Through this instance of self-reference, in other words, the sūtra creates distance between Māra and his immediate experience and at the same time collapses the distance between Māra and readers. And this homology, I argue, is what allows the sūtra's affective regime to impinge more or less directly upon readers. In this moment, the *Precious Banner* enjoins both Māra and readers to encounter the Dharma—*this* Dharma—as a source of joy, not as a source of fear. As we will see below, if Māra adopts such an affective orientation to the Dharma, he stands to be relieved of his misery, to join the empowered community that surrounds him, and to be foretold to awakening. These same promises extend to readers. But so, too, do the consequences of refusal.

III

In the moments following Śākyamuni's imperative to be happy, Māra not only refuses but also reveals his fear of the Dharma. In thinking through Māra's fear, we had occasion to read further afield in Mahāyāna literature than we heretofore have done. This led us to consider the sense it makes to name the Dharma as the source of Māra's fear, which in turn allowed us to appreciate how the *Precious Banner* deftly reveals and leverages its metatextuality to homologize Māra with readers and thereby enjoin both to feel certain ways about the Dharma before them. Here in this section, we examine the final appearances of Māra as an actant in the sūtra, attending closely to the stakes of his continued affective misalignment. Though, as we will see, Māra stands to be foretold to awakening if only he would affectively reorient himself, we know that he does not make any effort to do so—and this despite repeated injunctions. As a result, Māra continues to wallow in misery and isolation. In addition to showing the stakes of refusal, broadly speaking, I contend that Māra's worsening abjection in the presence of *good bodies* shows that work on his part is necessary. Though the *Precious Banner* claims power for itself, it relinquishes just enough to establish itself as a normative authority that requires response at the level of persons. In other words, Māra *must* respond properly to the norms even though he finds himself surrounded by powerful beings. Similarly, I contend, readers *must* respond properly to the sūtra *despite* being in its presence and are, at the same time, given the opportunity to do so *because* that is precisely where they find themselves.

Māra and Śākyamuni (continued)

After Māra responds to Śākyamuni with a verse intended to trap him in a logical tangle (but in which he actually betrays to those around him as well as to readers that he is scared), the Buddha really lets Māra have it. He lists all the reasons he has a right to be angry with Māra, to hate him,

and to wish him ill for his own exaltation and glory. There are too many verses to bear verbatim representation in the body, so summaries will have to suffice (with the available source text provided in a note for specialists who want to get a feel for their content and tone).[38] From the moment Śākyamuni entered his mother's womb, the Buddha reminds Māra, Māra has been trying to do him harm. When he was born, Māra made rocks fall from the sky and dried up his mother's milk. And while seeking liberation, Māra tried to distract him with women and hunger. It is only now that Māra is stuck that he pays lip service to the Buddha. But was it not Māra who sent cold winds, flood waters, and violent storms to disrupt his practice, who sent lions and elephant to attack him, who poisoned his food, and who sent seductive courtesans to dissuade

[38] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): nga ni sa la mngal gyi gnas na zla ba bcur gnas pa || de na yang ni bdud khyod nga la gsad par rab tu sbyar || de tshe nga la 'khon dang tha ba cung zad tsam yang med || nga ni bzod dang ldan te tha ba ma lus med pa yin || 5.43 || nga ni btsas ma thag 'dir khyod kyis sa yang g.yo bar byas || nga gsad phyir ni rdo ba'i char pa rab tu dbab par byas || de nas khyod kyis nga yi ma yi nu zho myur bskams byas || khyod kyis nga la gnod pa rnam pa du ma ci ma byas || 5.44 || nga ni bsam gtan zhugs na khyod kyis bud med khrid de 'ongs || nga ni bsod snyoms rnam par spyod tshe zas kyang bcad par byas || khyod kyis rtag tu nga la rgyal srid mngon par rab tu bstabs || nga ni 'byung ba'i nub mo 'dir yang mun pa byas par gyur || 5.45 || de tshe khyod dang skyes bu rnams kyis grong khyer kun tu bskor || rdzu 'phrul gyis ni song tshe rdzi char drag po rab tu phab || sa ni 'dom do 'phang tsam rdo ba dag gis gang bar byas || zhi ba'i gnas na gnas pa'i tshe yang sgra ni rab tu phyung || 5.46 || nga ni shin tu dka' ba spyod tshe grang ba'i rlung dang ni || 'bab chu 'gram na gnas tshe khyod kyis chu bo rab tu btang || nga ni gsad par bya phyir khyod kyis seng ge rab tu btang || de tshe khyod kyis nga yi zas la drag po'i dug kyang btab || 5.47 || nga ni byang chub shing drung nye bar yang dag song ba na || rdo rje dang ni gnam lcags spu gri mda' char khyod kyis phab || 'gro la phan phyir rdo rje'i gdan la mngon par gnas pa na || khyod kyis ngur smrig gos kyang 'jim rdzab dag gis rab tu bskus || 5.48 || de na yang ni nga gan khyod kyis bu mo rnams bkye ste || nga gsad phyir ni khyod nyid mthu dang bcas te 'ongs mod kyi || 'on kyang khyod kyis nga yi yid la gnod byas cung zad med || ngas ni khyod btul nas su byang chub mtshungs pa med pa thob || 5.49 || 'on kyang ngo tsha bor te 'dir 'ongs nas ni yang smra 'am || sdig pa'i tshul gyis 'od srung mchog la sogs pa bzlog byas te || khyod kyis sems can bye ba du ma ma rungs byas nas kyang || snying rje bor te 'dir yang nga la rgol zhing sgyu byed dam || 5.50 || nga yis zas ma zos pa de yi tshe yang khyod kyis su || nga gsad phyir ni glang chen myos pa drag shul can yang btang || sa steng nga la lhas byin gyis ni rdo ba 'phangs pa dang || kye ma ngas ni zla ba gsum du rta chas zos pa dang || 5.51 || phyar ka gtang phyir bu mo mdzes ldan rab tu gang btang dang || me mdag 'bar ba mi bzad pas ni 'obs rnams bkang ba dang || kha zas dag ni myur du gdug pa'i dug dang sbyar ba yi || de la sdig pa'i las can khyod ni rtsa bar nges pa yin || 5.52 || khyod nyid dpung bcas bu dang lhan cig sder bcas 'ongs nas su || nga gsad phyir ni mda' bo che dang ral gri mda' mang thogs || 'on kyang 'dir ni khyod kyis nga yi spu gcig ma g.yos na || ci phyir khyod ni rgyags par gyur nas da dung 'dug || 5.53 || ji snyed bdud ni stong phrag bye ba rgol du yang btsud kyang || sems can bye ba khrag khrig dag ni 'dir yang lhags nas su || zhing kun rab tu gang bar 'dug pa nga yi dpang yin te || nga ni khyod phyir mchog tu byams pa'i yid kyis gnas par bya || 5.54 || nga ni snying rje'i gnas te 'gro ba rjes su 'dzin byed pa || khyod ni shin tu gtum po nga la rtag tu bgegs byed de || thub pa'i dbang po khyu mchog 'di dag nga yi dbang yin gyi || da ltar tha ma'i dus la nga ni sangs rgyas mdzad pa bya || 5.55 || rnam thar sems kyis sems can rnams kyi don yang spyad par bya || smras par gyur kyang bzod pa yongs su btang bar mi bya'o || nga la phrag dog tha ba rab tu khro ba'i yid med de || khyed ni rjes su gzung phyir nga nyid rtag tu mngon par brtson || 5.56 || (148.17–150.22).

and distract him? And did Māra not moments ago dispatch his children and an army of cosmic allies to kill him? There are many reasons Śākyamuni could justifiably be hostile toward Māra. But he is not. And the fact that Māra expects this kind of hostility betrays just how seriously he misunderstands what the Buddha is all about: "My mind holds no malice, anger, or wrath—it is out of care for *you* that I myself always strive."[39]

The last two verses of Śākyamuni's speech to Māra merit representation here—for they give us something to mull over. In closing, the Buddha says:

> "You should ask me, for your own peace of mind, to teach the nectarlike Dharma that pacifies the three worlds. On account of that, your detrimental karma will completely disappear. Let your mind right away be glad in me, the protector of the world. || 5.57 ||
>
> "You keep thinking about causing harm in this place. Nevertheless, in order to liberate you, my heart is always kind. Abandon your faulty mind, make your mind glad, and before long you will be foretold to awakening!" || 5.58 ||[40]

These words are startlingly direct. Although the Buddha has reason to be angry with Māra, he instead aims to protect and liberate him from a place of kindness and care. But Śākyamuni cannot do *all* the heavy lifting (despite having just done some literal heavy lifting). Māra must do some work *on* and *for* himself if he ever wants to be rid of his misery, and this work is mental at base. While the Buddha advises that Māra ask the Buddha to teach the Dharma—*asking* being an action both mental and verbal—his doing so would not, at least not at present, result in anything resembling peace of mind for Māra. The Dharma is a fearsome object for him. What is at issue

[39] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): nga la phrag dog tha ba rab tu khro ba'i yid med de || khyed ni rjes su gzung phyir nga nyid rtag tu mngon par brtson || 5.56b || (150.21–150.22).

[40] Skt. (K): missing, but see fragment from Central Asia in Saerji, "More Fragments of the *Ratnaketuparivarta* (2)," 43–44; Tib. (K): nga la gsol dang khyod yid zhi phyir 'jig rten gsum dag tu || mchog tu zhi bar byed pa'i chos kyi bdud rtsi bshad par bya || de phyir khyod kyi sdig pa'i las rnams med par rab 'gyur gyi || 'jig rten mgon po nga la yid ni myur du dad par byos || 5.57 || khyod ni rtag tu 'di na gnod pa bya bar rab sems kyang || khyod dgrol phyir ni nga snying rtag tu byams par rab tu dang || sdig pa'i blo gros bor la dad bcas yid la byos shig dang || ring por mi thogs khyod ni byang chub tu yang lung bstan to || 5.58 || (150.23–151.4).

here, then, is the mental component of the action—and this component can be further specified as affective. If he were glad (Skt. **viprasanna*; Tib. *dad pa*) in the Buddha, then he could ask for a Dharma teaching without fear of getting what he asked for. But this is not how he is oriented. And knowing as much, the Buddha tells him to abandon his faulty mind and to make his mind glad. If Māra were to ask for a Dharma teaching from a place of joy, his prior detrimental karma would disappear, and the Buddha would foretell him to awakening. Māra's tendencies to feel (and not to feel) in certain ways toward his experiences thus have soteriological consequences. A proper affective orientation toward the Dharma erases bad karma and makes one worthy of a prophecy to awakening. This is a lesson Māra never learns in the narrative. But before moving forward in the sūtra, we need to consider more closely the Buddha's last words here.

"And before long," Śākyamuni says to Māra, "you will be foretold to awakening."[41] With this clause, Śākyamuni not only gives Māra a chance to properly (re)write his own past by filling in the narrative gap Śākyamuni left in his *pūrvayoga*, but also illustrates the point Ahmed makes when she writes (in a rather different context): "Through the utterance, these not-yet-but-to-be subjects are 'brought into line' by being 'given' a future [and a past, we should also add in this context] that is 'in line' with the family line."[42] In the *pūrvayoga* told in the sūtra's second

[41] See above note for the Tibetan. My rendering of *lung bstan* in the future is complicated by Kurumiya's reading of *bstand* in one manuscript from Dunhuang (Tib. [K]: 151 n. 6) as well as by Saerji's reading of *vyākari* in a Sanskrit manuscript from Central Asia ("More Fragments of the *Ratnaketuparivarta* [2]," 44.5). The Tibetan *bstand* is a past form by virtue of the final *-d*, or *da drag*, an archaic suffix sometimes used to disambiguate what would otherwise be identical future and past forms. The Sanskrit is an aorist. The context demands that *bstan* be read as a future, however, and both Chinese translations confirm this reading. Furthermore, Edgerton identifies aorists with optative or future meaning in *BHSG*, §32.119–§32.124, esp. §32.120. For more on the uses of the *da drag*, see Beyer, *The Classical Tibetan Language*, 168–69 n. 6, esp. §2 of the note on 169. My thanks to Bruce Winkelman for assistance with the Chinese.

[42] Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 83. See also Alan Cole's and Natalie Gummer's work on the reproduction of father-son lineages in Mahāyāna literature: Cole, *Text as Father*; idem, *Fathering Your Father: The Zen of Fabrication in Tang Buddhism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Gummer, "Speech Acts of the Buddha."

chapter, Kumārabhṛta (=Māra) asks Utpalavaktra (=Śākyamuni) to foretell him to awakening when the latter attains awakening. In his account, as we saw in Chapter Three above, Śākyamuni does not report whether Utpalavaktra agrees to do so. But here in the fifth chapter, after much narration of other parts of Māra's story, readers are here given reason to suspect not only that Utpalavaktra agreed to fulfill Kumārabhṛta's request all those eons ago but also that it would soon be fulfilled. But the silence weighs heavily even still over the narrative. If we follow the quote from Ahmed given above woodenly, it would seem that the Buddha's utterance ought to snap Māra into proper alignment and thus foist upon him a new genealogy. But this is not quite Ahmed's point (hence her use of scare quotes), and it is not the one I want to make either. The Buddha's utterance—itself a kind of teased prolepsis—points out to Māra the proper orientation, the proper line, in contrast to the one Māra embodies and follows at this point in the narrative. It stands above him as normative, but it does not align him automatically. This is perhaps the case because, in his lifetime as Kumārabhṛta, he requested prophecy after vowing to play the role of Māra in Utpalavaktra's (=Śākyamuni's) last life as a bodhisattva. In addition to the fetter of his own making, then, Māra finds himself in a knot of karmic proportions. He must, it seems, fulfill his aspiration to play Māra before he can fall in line.

But must he really? In the verses discussed above, Śākyamuni makes it clear that Māra has the ability to (re)write his past, to fully erase his detrimental karma—including, it is implied, his prior aspiration to occupy the post of Māra during his lifetime as Kumārabhṛta. All he must do is respond properly to the feeling rule delivered to him, to do what Arlie Hochschild calls *emotion work*. To quote Hochschild, in other words, Māra needs not only to acknowledge the rightness of the "guidelines for the assessment of fits and misfits between feeling and situation"[43]

[43] Hochschild, "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure," 566.

delivered to him, but also assess his feelings with reference to the guidelines, recognize his feelings as inappropriate, and go about the hard work of modifying his feelings through a reassessment of his assumptions, values, and goals with respect to the norms. What Māra must do, to express the matter differently still, is undergo an affective reorientation on the basis of personal effort grounded in his response to the normative framework expressed in the sūtra. Doing so would constitute him as the type of person for whom the Dharma is no longer a source of fear but rather a source of joy. Doing so, moreover, would cause him to receive a prophecy to buddhahood. Doing so would free him from the fivefold fetter and usher him into the empowered community that surrounds him.

While Śākyamuni's words to Māra could be read as constituting a reason to be hopeful for Māra, our narrator dashes any such hopes right away. "Māra then became furious with the Lord," the narration begins.

> Agitated and desperate, he thought about retreating again. Seeing himself bound at the neck by the fivefold fetter, he wanted to let out a panicked cry, but he was unable. Then, in an attempt to kill the Lord, he exhaled excessively hot breath with the force of his own rage. But the Buddha transformed that breath into beautiful flowers, and those flowers appeared as handsome parasols above the heads of all buddhas dwelling and teaching in all buddhafields in the ten directions.[44]

With this episode, the sūtra shifts attention away from Māra and onto the myriad inhabitants of the myriad buddhafields throughout the cosmos. Seeing the flower-parasols floating in the sky, the bodhisattvas of these buddhafields ask their respective buddhas where the flower-parasols

[44] Skt. (K): missing, but see fragment from Central Asia in Saerji, "More Fragments of the *Ratnaketuparivarta* (2)," 43–44; Tib. (K): de nas bdud sdig can bcom ldan 'das la rab tu khros te 'khrugs shing rngam nas de nas slar 'gro bar 'dod pa dang | bdag gi mgul pa bcing ba lngas bcings pa snyam du shes te | 'jigs skrag pa'i sgra dbyung bar 'dod kyang de ma nus nas | bcom ldan 'das bgrongs pa'i phyir rang khros pa'i mthus shin tu tsha ba'i dbugs btang ba dang | bcom ldan 'das kyis dbugs de shin tu yid du 'ong ba'i me tog tu mngon par sprul te | phyogs bcu'i sangs rgyas kyi zhing thams cad nas sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das bzhugs shing 'tsho la bzhes te chos kyang ston pa de thams cad kyi dbu'i gtsug gi drang thad kyi steng gi bar snang la shin tu yid du 'ong ba'i gdugs su byin gyis brlabs so || (151.5–151.13).

came from and who is responsible for their appearance.[45] In response, the buddhas detail the power and virtue of Śākyamuni, the buddha of Sahā, and also mention that he is making ready to preach on a celebrated *dhāraṇī* called the Body Destroyer.[46] Never having heard this *dhāraṇī*, the myriad bodhisattvas from these myriad buddhafields ask their respective buddhas whether they can go to Sahā to hear Śākyamuni preach.[47] The buddhas oblige, so they all set off for Sahā.[48] It is with this episode that chapter five turns into chapter six, which itself shows the buddhas and bodhisattvas descending on Sahā and being seated near the Buddha. And just like that, we are no longer reading about Māra. But in the moment that we are, we see him spiral further into terror and rage at the idea that he will receive prophecy to awakening. His affective misalignment continues to constitute the objects of his experience as sources of fear, continues to push him into isolation, and continues to render his increasingly defensive, desperate, and hostile reactions all but ineffective. We again leave Māra scared, alone, and impotent.

Māra and Śākyamuni in the Great Assembly

The next time our narrator checks in with Māra is toward the end of chapter six. As noted above, the narrative roots of chapter six can be found at the end of chapter five, which depicts buddhas and bodhisattvas from around the cosmos resolving to visit Sahā to hear the Buddha preach the Body Destroyer *dhāraṇī*. Upon their arrival,[49] Subhūti welcomes them with a series of verses,

[45] Skt. (K): missing, but see fragment from Central Asia in Saerji, "More Fragments of the *Ratnaketuparivarta* (2)," 45–46; Tib. (K): 151.13–151.17.

[46] Skt. (K): 113.9–115.2 (fragmentary); Tib. 151.17–154.5.

[47] Skt. (K): 115.3–115.12; Tib. 154.6–154.20.

[48] Skt. (K): 115.13–120.6 (fragmentary); Tib. 154.21–159.18.

[49] Of these beings, six buddhas are named and their direction of origin specified. Akṣobhya comes from the east, Ratnadhvaja from the south, Dundubhisvara from the north, Amitāyus from the west, Vairocana from below, and Jñānaraśmirāja from above. These buddhas (and more!) each come with an immense retinue, yet all manage to find a place to sit on emanated lotus thrones in the presence of Śākyamuni. For more on these six buddhas in relation to other Mahāyāna literature and scholarship thereon, see Gregory Schopen, "The Inscription of the Kuṣān Image of

some of which name Māra directly. Since Māra is within earshot of these verses, we would do well to give them some attention. After characterizing the assembly of buddhas and bodhisattvas before him as unprecedented,[50] Subhūti reveals the reason for their gathering. "It is not without reason," Subhūti begins,

> "that these awakened beings, these shining sages, have come today to this field afflicted by the five impurities of lowly beings. || 6.3 ||
>
> Today Māra's wickedness will soon be cut off and his dark faction will be destroyed. With this aim has this gathering of beings with pure conduct come here. || 6.4 ||
>
> Let your mind rejoice! The hordes of Māra are overcome. May you hear the peaceful nature of reality and become perfect buddhas!" || 6.5 ||[51]

Insofar as they have already taken refuge in Śākyamuni, Māra's former allies—whether from his household or some distant universe—are exempt from destruction. Māra's remaining followers, however (whatever their numbers—a never-ending stream of them seem to come out of the woodwork), are clearly not out of Dodge. And Māra—well, let's just say he too continues to find himself in compassion's crosshairs. While our text is not so bold as the *Concentration of Heroic Progress* (discussed above) in declaring Māra a prophesied buddha-to-be against his will, it does approach that line without quite crossing it. Again, as discussed above in our comparison with the *Concentration*, Māra in the *Precious Banner* has some responsibility in the matter. He is expected to respond properly to the norms delivered to him and put in some work.

Amitābha and the Character of the Early Mahāyāna in India," in *Figments and Fragments of Mahāyāna Buddhism in India: More Collected Papers* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 258–62.

[50] Skt. (K): adṛṣṭāśrutapūrveyaṃ saṃghasaṃpat pradṛsyate || 6.1b || (123.2); Tib. (K): sngon chad ma mthong ma thos pa'i || dge 'dun phun sum tshogs 'di snang || 6.1b || (162.5–162.6).

[51] Skt. (K): nāhetur adya saṃbuddhā āgatā munibhāskarāḥ | paṃcakaṣāya . . . || 6.3 || . . . adya mārāṇāṃ kṛṣṇapakṣa-prapātanaṃ | saṃgrahaḥ śubhacaryāṇām ity arthaṃ hi samāgatāḥ || 6.4 || śṛṇudhvaṃ dharmatāṃ śāntim . . . | . . . bhūtvā saṃbuddhā hi bhaviṣyata || 6.5 || (123.5–123.10, fragmentary); Tib. (K): gang na sems can smad pa yi || zhing ni snyigs ma lnga ldan 'dir || thub pa snang mdzad rgyu med par || rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas deng mi gshegs || 6.3 || de ring bdud ngan tshar gcad cing || nag po'i phyogs ni rab gzhom dang || spyod pa dge ba bsdu ba'i phyir || de yi don du kun nas gshegs || 6.4 || yid ni rab tu dang byos la || bdud sde rab tu 'joms pa yi || chos nyid zhi ba rab nyon la || rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas 'gyur bar byos || 6.5 || (162.11–162.22).

Subhūti concludes his welcome with three verses anticipating the *dhāraṇī* to come,[52] after which the bodhisattvas in the audience ask Śākyamuni to teach the same.[53] He begins to oblige,[54] but ultimately grants the privilege to the newly arrived buddhas.[55] After the audience rejoices in the Body Destroyer and declares its ability to bring about benefits and avert woes of all kinds,[56] individuals in the audience take turns speaking. First among them is Candraprabha, a bodhisattva perhaps best known in his capacity as Śākyamuni's primary interlocutor in the *King of Samādhis*, who recites a *dhāraṇī* of his own.[57] Next in line is a deity named Bhūteśvara who, in the form of a beautiful woman bedecked with all the finery and trappings of extravagant wealth, also recites a *dhāraṇī* and vows to protect sentient beings.[58] All this receives enthusiastic support from the audience. Everyone, it seems, is having a wonderful time.

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[52] Skt. (K): 123.11–123.16 (fragmentary); Tib. (K): 162.23–163.5.

[53] Skt. (K): 123.17–126.4; Tib. (K): 163.6–165.22.

[54] Skt. (K): 126.5–131.1; Tib. (K): 166.1–170.6.

[55] Skt. (K): 131.2–135.4; Tib. (K): 170.7–175.6.

[56] Skt. (K): 135.5–138.7; Tib. (K): 175.7–178.23.

[57] Skt. (K): 138.8–139.14; Tib. (K): 179.1–180.18.

[58] Skt. (K): 139.15–146.4 (fragmentary, missing); Tib. (K): 180.19–186.1. Though full treatment will have to wait for a future publication, the episode centering on Bhūteśvara merits comment here. When Bhūteśvara stands to recite a dhāraṇī and make vows in the presence of the buddhas, a śakra named Śikhindhara interrupts, reprimands, and frankly (in today's idiom) mansplains to Bhūteśvara for allegedly being immodest and speaking out of turn. But Amitāyus intervenes and informs Śikhindhara that Bhūteśvara has the right to speak because *he* had taken the form of woman as an act of worship for the Buddha. "Do not," Amitāyus sternly concludes, "address this person as 'woman'" (Skt. [K]: mā tvam enaṃ strīvādena samudācare | [141.19]; Tib. [K]: 'di la bud med ces tshig tu ma rjod cig || [183.11–183.12]). Śikhindhara then backpedals and apologizes, claiming to have spoken out of compassion. He then asks that he not receive the undesired consequences of his words—rebirth as a woman for the next 84,000 lives—and is granted his request. After this interruption, Bhūteśvara—who is now called "noble son"—is allowed to proceed. This episode smacks of sexism on the surface, but I propose that there is something more subtle, possibly even liberative (albeit unevenly so), going on insofar as it carves out a positive, valorized space for existence as a woman all while not rejecting the general framework according to which existence as a woman is an undesirable result of bad karma. On the scheme underlying this narrative episode, existence as a woman—especially a wealthy and beautiful one—can be framed as an intentional act of reverence for the Buddha. But this possibility does not necessarily extend to all women (hence the *unevenly* remark above), which permits rather easily the perpetuation of the regnant sexist etiology of women in terms of bad karma.

Everyone except Māra, that is, who is thoroughly unamused. With this, we slow down to examine the text more closely. After Candraprabha and Bhūteśvara say their piece, we meet a bodhisattva named Mahābrahmaghoṣa. (This is the same Mahābrahmaghoṣa whom we met in Chapter Two.) Like Bhūteśvara, Mahābrahmaghoṣa appears before Śākyamuni in the form of an attractive, affluent woman. Presenting a precious jewel as an offering, Mahābrahmaghoṣa gazes at the Buddha with reverent, unblinking eyes.[59] And this gaze prompts the Buddha to speak:

> "Why do you look at me with unblinking eyes, as if I am extraordinary, as if there is something here called 'Buddha', as if there existed a *dharma* somewhere called 'extraordinary'? Similarly, the concepts in the statement 'the afflictions of desire, aversion, and delusion exist' are conditional definitions. The condition of definitions is ignorance. And through the condition of ignorance everything from predispositions to cessation are developed."[60]

The Buddha, in short, takes Mahābrahmaghoṣa's facial expression as an opportunity to teach the Dharma in a distinctly Mahāyāna mode. Even the Buddha, the embodiment of buddhahood, does not exist in an unconditioned, independent kind of way—to say nothing, then, of concepts central to the path.

Mahābrahmaghoṣa, perhaps startled into blinking by now, responds to the Buddha's words with questions born out of apparent (i.e., possibly feigned) confusion. "If it is so that nothing exists," he begins,

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[59] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): yang de'i tshe tshangs pa chen po dbyangs dang ldan pa zhes bya ba byang chub sems dpa' sems dpa' chen pos . . . kha dog bzang po rgyas pa mchog dang ldan pa | rgyan dam pas legs par brgyan pa bud med kyi gzugs dang | rtags dang | spyod lam gyis de bzhin gshegs pa śākya thub pa'i spyan sngar 'dug ste | sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das rnams la mchod pa bya ba'i phyir lag pa gnyis na yid bzhin gyi nor bu rin po che thogs so || de nas byang chub sems dpa' sems dpa' chen po dbyangs dang ldan pas de bzhin gshegs pa śākya thub pa de la mig mi 'dzums par bltas te | gzhan ma yin pa'i dngos po brjod du med pa ci'ang ma yin par bltas so || (187.20–187.21, 188.3–188.11; ellipsis mine).

[60] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): kye khyod mig mi 'dzums par ci'ang ma yin pa'i bar du nga la ci zhig blta | ci 'di la sangs rgyas zhes bya ba dang | ci'ang ma yin pa zhes bya ba'i chos de gang yang yod dam | de bzhin du 'dod chags dang | zhe sdang dang | gti mug gi nyon mongs pa rnams yod do zhes bya ba'i ming gi dngos po ni rkyen gyi mtshan nyid do | mtshan nyid kyi rkyen ni ma rig pa'o || ma rig pa'i rkyen gyis 'du byed rnams nas 'gog pa'i bar du rgyas par bya'o || (188.13–188.18). My gratitude to the Dharmachakra Translation Committee's translation of the sūtra for guiding my understanding of this passage.

> "then why do you teach ignorance? If ignorance does not exist, Lord, then from what does the twelvefold chain of dependent origination arise? Could the claim be made that it arises from space even though space does not exist?"[61]

Speaking as someone unversed in the Mahāyāna (or Mādhyamika, more specifically) analysis of how things exist—that is, in dependence on other things—Mahābrahmaghoṣa probes the Buddha for more information. The Buddha obliges, saying: "That's how it is, noble son. All the *dharma*s of the Buddha are like space."[62] From there, he fleshes out this comparison at some length—just as space is not a thing, neither is buddhahood; just as space has no characteristic marks, neither does buddhahood; etc.[63] And this sustained comparison of buddhahood to space prompts Māra to speak.

Although we have not seen Māra in quite a while—not since Śākyamuni's benevolent threat to prophesy him to awakening near the end of chapter five, to be precise—we know that he has not left the scene. Bound by the fivefold fetter in the presence now of the immense preaching lotus, Śākyamuni, *and* myriad buddhas from around the cosmos—not to mention the immense and seemingly ever-increasing crowds from Sahā and elsewhere, among them several of Māra's own courtesans, children, and former allies—Māra is here in chapter six forced to endure

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[61] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): bcom ldan 'das 'di ltar ma mchis pas na de'i slad du ma rig pa zhes gsungs na | bcom ldan 'das gal te ma rig pa ma mchis na srid pa'i yan lag bcu gnyis de dag ga las skye bar 'gyur | ci nam mkha' las skye zhes bgyir ni nam mkha' nyid kyang ma mchis pa'o || (188.19–189.1). Again, my thanks to the Dharmachakra Translation Committee for guiding my translation here.

[62] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): rigs kyi bu de de bzhin te | sangs rgyas kyi chos thams cad ni nam mkha' lta bu'o || (189.1–189.2).

[63] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): ji ltar nam mkha' rdzas ma yin | mtshan nyid ma yin | mun pa ma yin | snang ba ma yin | rtog pa ma yin | rnam par rtog pa ma yin | grub pa ma yin | brjod pa ma yin | ci'ang ma yin pa cha shas med pa | dngos po thams cad spangs pa de bzhin du rigs kyi bu sangs rgyas kyi chos rnams de bzhin nyid kyi phyir sangs rgyas kyi chos rnams ni yang dag pa'i mtha' yongs su bcad pa'o || bri ba med pa dang | gang ba med pa'i phyir sangs rgyas kyi chos rnams ni pha rol dang tshu rol la reg pa med pa'o || cha shas med pa'i phyir sangs rgyas kyi chos rnams ni brjod du med pa'o || mi g.yo zhing rnam par bzhag pa med pa'i phyir sangs rgyas kyi chos rnams ni rdzas dang | dngos po dang | mtshan nyid thams cad med pa'o || tshig gi lam dang bral ba'i phyir sangs rgyas kyi chos thams cad ni sgro btags pa med pa ste | yang dag pa ma yin pa | kun tu rtog pa las srid pa'i yan lag rnams skyes so || (189.2–189.14).

Dharma talks, *dhāraṇī*s, and vows that have rather grim implications for him. "If the Dharma [sic!] of the Buddha is, like space, neither a thing nor expressible," Māra interjects,

> "then how do you harm me like this with wisdom, vigor, and courage? How do you overcome my realm? How do you lead sentient beings away from my realm? How, without going or coming, do you make them train in illusory magic? How is it that when you train sentient beings in the precepts, conduct that gives rise to the afflictions is no longer seen in them."[64]

Māra wants to know, in short, how it is that the Dharma taught and embodied by the Buddha is so damn causally efficacious if it is like space. But this is not where Māra stops. Shifting (on my reading) from the language of *how* to the language of *why*, Māra continues:

> "Why do you, for my sake, fill this buddhafield to the brim with an assembly of countless buddhas, bodhisattva-mahāsattvas, and great disciples; the great Brahmā,[65] Indra, the Four World Protectors, and Maheśvara; potent and mighty *deva*s, *nāga*s, *yakṣa*s, *gandharva*s, *asura*s, *garuḍa*s, *kinnara*s, and *mahoraga*s? Ruthlessly being made to hear them gives me a terrible headache. I experience feelings of suffering. Even my body is rotten and fetid in accordance with the utterance of those words of mantra."[66]

Apparently not yet entirely without allies, Māra is not alone in this suffering. Our narrator gives voice to thousands of māras and various other nasty creatures, who echo Māra in unison. They suffer from headaches, too, they report. And their bodies are also starting to rot and reek.[67]

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[64] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): gal te sangs rgyas kyi chos nam mkha' lta bur dngos po ma mchis shing brjod du mchis pa lags na | de ci'i slad du ye shes dang | brtson 'grus dang | thabs dang | pha rol gnon pas khyod 'di ltar bdag la 'tshe | bdag gi bdud kyi yul 'joms | bdag gi bdud kyi yul nas sems can kha 'dren | 'gro ba med pa dang | 'ong ba med pa dang | ci'ang ma yin pa'i sgyu ma la slob tu 'dzud | gang gi tshe sems can 'di dag khyod kyis bslab pa la slob pa na de dag la nyon mongs pa skye ba'i spyod pa yang dag par rjes su ma mthong ngo || (189.16–190.1).

[65] I here read Tib. *tshangs pa chen po rnams* as a singular given its place in a list of particular beings.

[66] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): gang gi slad du khyod kyis bdag gi slad du grangs med dpag tu med pa'i sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das dang | byang chub sems dpa' sems dpa' chen po rnams dang | nyan thos chen po rnams dang | tshangs pa chen po rnams dang | brgya byin dang | 'jig rten skyong ba bzhi dang | dbang phyug chen po rnams dang | rdzu 'phrul che zhing mthu che ba'i lha dang | klu dang | gnod sbyin dang | dri za dang | lha ma yin dang | nam mkha' lding dang | mi 'am ci dang | lto 'phye chen po rnams bsdus nas | sangs rgyas kyi zhing ma lus pa 'di dag gang bar bgyis | snying rje med pa 'dis kyang gang dag thos ma thag tu bdag glad pa'i nad mi bzad pas btab ste | sdug bsngal gyi tshor ba myong zhing | lus kyang rul la dri nga bar gyur pa de 'dra ba'i gsang sngags kyi tshig rnams bshad | (190.1–190.10).

[67] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): bdag cag kyang thos ma thag tu klad pa na bar gyur te | lus kyang rul zhing dri nga bar gyur nas shin tu sdug bsngal ba'i tshor ba myong ngo || (190.13–190.15).

Before seeing how Śākyamuni responds, we need to consider what these rotting bodies are doing in the narrative. In a footnote in Chapter Two, I refer to Susanne Mrozik's *Virtuous Bodies* and Jeffrey Samuels's *Attracting the Heart* for more on the capacity of monastic bodies to affect those who encounter them.[68] Though these two works treat different materials—the former premodern textual sources, the latter contemporary data gleaned from fieldwork—both shed light on the ways in which *good bodies* bring about benefit. In this episode of the *Precious Banner*, however, we do not see this. In fact, we see the opposite. Why, then, does our narrator depict Māra and his followers as experiencing severe discomfort in the presence of these *good bodies*? What exactly is at stake here? Following Liz Wilson's examination of male monastics' objectifying portrayals of decaying and/or deceased female bodies as objects of meditation for (again) male monastics, or Adeana McNicholl's reading of hungry ghost (Skt. *preta/pretī*) stories as aimed at giving rise to experiences of aesthetic shock and existential dread (Skt. *saṃvega*) in their readers, we would not be wrong to read this episode of the *Precious Banner* as seeking to instill in readers a view of the body as subject to decay and as a transient result of the workings of karma, thereby motivating readers to take up Buddhist practice.[69] Without precluding these readings, I would nevertheless like to advance a slightly different one.

The *Precious Banner*, as I see it, represents Māra and his followers as having repulsive bodies for a few reasons. First, the sūtra here advances and narratively illustrates a theory of how *dhāraṇī*s work, and this theory is itself enacted in the reading present.[70] When these episodes are

[68] See Chapter Two n. 50.

[69] Wilson, *Charming Cadavers*; Adeana McNicholl, "The Generative Power of Disgust: Aesthetics, Morality, and the Abject *Preta* Body," *JIABS* 43 (2020): 129–65.

[70] In this I follow Natalie Gummer's reading of the *Sūtra of Utmost Golden Light* (*Suvarṇabhāsottama*) as having a "presencing" effect through recitation by Dharma preachers. Natalie Gummer, "Listening to the *Dharmabhāṇaka*: The Buddhist Preacher in and of the Sūtra of Utmost Golden Radiance," *JAAR* 80, no. 1 (2012): 137–60. Thanks to Bruce Winkelman for drawing this point to my attention.

read, the malevolent beings near or among readers are viscerally affected. And this, accordingly, affects readers—or better: has the capacity to affect certain readers—by giving rise to a sense of security. Second, and in a similar vein, the recitation of *dhāraṇī*s in the reading present serves as evidence to readers that, while they are not quite like the advanced and aligned beings depicted in the sūtra, they are also (and importantly) neither identical to Māra or like him in all ways. As we have seen, our narrator often uses Māra as a lens through which readers access the events of the sūtra unfold. Through creative focalization in metatextual mode, our narrator collapses the gap between Māra's experiences and the sūtra in which Māra's experiences are narrated and, through that very same collapse, situates readers and Māra in a structurally homologous relationship with the sūtra. And in addition to the structural similarity vis-à-vis the text, Māra is the most relatable of the actants in the sūtra insofar as both he and readers find themselves in the trap of cyclic existence and living narratives that have yet to conclude. But despite all this, readers are not Māra. They can know this *a priori*, as it were, but it is a point driven home through reading. By *not rotting* in the reading present, readers know that they themselves are sufficiently *unlike* Māra and his ilk to avoid this outcome (at least in the present life).

There is still a third reason, one that builds on the two given above and the one that for our aims is the most significant. In its depiction of rotting bodies, the *Precious Banner* stresses the necessity of *response* at the level of persons. It communicates, in other words, a consequence of affective misalignment and asserts that the presence of *good bodies*—a category that includes buddhas and the sūtras that embody them in their alleged absence—is not enough to guarantee a proper affective response. Though it is common for Buddhist texts to present good bodies as both naturally and positively affecting sentient beings—the *Precious Banner* itself does as much in its

narration of Śāriputra's encounter with Aśvajit—the sūtra here sacrifices some of its claims to power to construct itself as a normative authority to which individual readers must respond. In this, my reading complements the works noted above as well as Andy Rotman's recent work on hungry ghost narratives. For Rotman, as for Wilson and McNicholl, the representation of abject bodies serves extratextual purposes. On Rotman's reading, hungry ghosts (Skt. *preta/pretī*) serve as object lessons in the consequences of miserliness and thus dissuade readers from cultivating a mean disposition.[71] In the *Precious Banner*, what is being discouraged is at once broader in scope and more specific in its object. In representing Māra in this way, the sūtra has in view the affective orientation of readers toward the sūtra. And to realize its aims, it gives readers a choice that is really no choice at all—feel properly or risk ending up like Māra.

After Māra and his remaining followers bemoan their migraines and rancid bodies, the Buddha reminds Māra yet again of their past interactions, both distant and recent, and offers some unsolicited advice. "You should generate an intention to attain awakening, Māra. In doing so, you will be relieved of your unbearable headache."[72] This advice might strike readers as odd. Hasn't Māra already done this? Strictly speaking, yes—in his past life as Kumārabhṛta. What's more, he has taken refuge twice in his current life—though, as I have argued, he does so only out of a desire to escape the fivefold fetter and return to his palace. If there were any doubts about my reading of Māra as disingenuous and self-interested, Śākyamuni's advice here settles the matter. Śākyamuni knows Māra's history in a full, karmic sense. Words are not enough to save him from the fetters, his physical degradation, or his headache, just as the mere presence of *good*

[71] Andy Rotman, *Hungry Ghosts* (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 2021).

[72] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): sdig can khyod da bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu sems skyed cig | de ltar na khyod klad pa na ba'i sdug bsngal mi bzad pa'i tshor ba 'di las thar bar 'gyur te | (191.3–191.5).

bodies is not enough to affect such a change for him. His sorry state is a result of his affective misalignment, which he lays bare in his snarled retort: "Even if my head hurts until the end of time, I will not generate the intent to attain awakening on account of such deceit!"[73]

We do not see Māra again until chapter nine. In this penultimate appearance, he repeats the same basic performance we see at the end of chapter six. But before we jump to the scene, we should get a sense of the intervening chapters. Chapter seven describes the virtuous career of a shape-shifting bodhisattva named *Suvibhaktamati (Tib. Shin tu rnam par phye ba'i blo gros) and ends with a host of bodhisattvas from various buddhafields offering words of gratitude for having had the chance to come across the Body Destroyer.[74] Chapter eight similarly spends time with a single actant—this time a māra named *Śramaṇapuṣpa (Tib. Dge sbyong me tog), who vows to uphold Unharmed by the Army of Māra *dhāraṇī* in the future and subsequently receives prophecy—and surveys a range of vows on the part of several other bodhisattvas.[75] Chapter nine is similar to these in terms of content, but it differs in how it concludes.[76] After ratifying so many vows and foretelling so many beings to awakening, Śākyamuni turns to Māra as if to see whether he's had enough. Echoing his own previous words, he again enjoins Māra to feel properly and act accordingly:

> "Generating gladness and joy in these sages who have come, today, for the sake of others, you should with joy and haste dedicate yourself to awakening. Māra, as you are friendless

[73] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): gal te bdag phyi ma'i mtha'i mu'i bar du klad pa na bar gyur kyang | bdag 'di 'dra ba'i g.yo sgyus byang chub tu sems mi bskyed do || (191.14–191.16).

[74] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 197.1–202.10.

[75] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): 203.1–222.4.

[76] Skt. (K): missing, but see fragment from Central Asia in Tudkeao, "Zentralasiatische Versionen des Ratnaketuparivarta," 132–33; Tib. (K): 223.1–228.9.

> and powerless in your own realm. You should abandon your efforts to pursue and harm the Sage! || 9.1 ||[77]

Continuing to writhe in rebellion, Māra says in response:

> "Your words do not produce in me a single thought of gladness in stainless awakening. Shut up and sit down, Sage. There are yet beings who follow me. All of them together will put together an army and fleet in my realm. Through my perfect power, they will not be subject to your authority for as long as they live!" || 9.2 ||[78]

Clearly in denial, Māra refuses to take steps in the direction made available to him. And with this bitter rejoinder, the ninth chapter turns into the tenth and eleventh, in which Śākyamuni entrusts the Body Destroyer to the Four World Protectors.[79]

Māra and Dṛḍhamati

It is in the eleventh chapter that we find Māra's final appearance in the text. It comes after the entrustment of the Body Destroyer to the Four World Protectors and their subsequent vows to protect those beings who uphold the sūtra (i.e., the Dharma discourse readers have before them) and the places in which the text circulates. After Śākyamuni and the myriad surrounding buddhas authorize these vows, a bodhisattva by the name of Kautūhalika stands to ask a question: "Have

[77] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): thub pa gshegs pa 'de [sic; read: 'di] dag la ni dad cing dga' ba'i mchog bskyed de || de ring gzhan gyi don phyir dga' bar myur du byang chub sems gzhol byos || sdig can khyod ni rang gi yul nas rab tu grogs med mthu med kyi || thub pa la ni khyod kyis sdo zhing snyog par byed pa gtang bar byos || 9.1 || (227.18–227.22).

[78] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): khyod kyi tshig gis byang chub dri med dad pa'i sems gcig bdag mi bskyed || thub pa ma gsung bzhugs shig bdag la rjes su 'gro ba rnams kyang mchis || de dag lhan cig bdag gi yul na dpung dang bzhon par gnas par bgyi || phun sum mchog 'dzin bdag mthus ji srid 'tsho ba khyod kyi dbang mi mchi || 9.2 || (228.2–228.3).

[79] Skt. (K): missing, but see fragments from Central Asia in Tudkeao, "Zentralasiatische Versionen des Ratnaketuparivarta," 134–36 and in Saerji, "More Fragments of the *Ratnaketuparivarta* (2)," 50–52; Tib. (K): 229.1–241.5.

all [these myriad māras assembled here] together with their followers found gladness in the Three Jewels?"[80] The Buddha answers in the negative and expands, saying:

> "Māra and one thousand of his servants have not found gladness. Angry and unhappy, they seek opportunities to harm and destroy the way of the true Dharma now and in the future. They strive to bring about the destruction and decline of the way of the true Dharma."[81]

This description of the typical aims of Māra and those who share his bent is noteworthy because it begins with two characterizations of an affective nature. First, they have not found gladness (Skt. *prasāda*; Tib. *dad pa*). Second, they are angry and unhappy (Skt. **kupita* and **anāttamana*; Tib. *'khrugs* and *yid mi dga'*).[82] We have already addressed adjectives of this latter sort, and we will pursue a full discussion of *prasāda* in the next chapter. Suffice it say here that again we see affective orientation being identified as the basic problem.

After describing the malcontents in their midst for a while longer, reiterating their shared hostility toward the Dharma, Śākyamuni closes with a declaration about the affective force of the presence of the great assembly of buddhas (from which the sūtra receives one of its names) and their recitation of *dhāraṇī*s. "Seeing such a great assembly of buddhas as this and hearing such a profound *dhāraṇī* as this," the Lord says, "for these very reasons, they will in the future come to

[80] Skt. (K): 160.3 (fragmentary, missing); Tib. (K): ci 'khor dang bcas pa thams cad kyis dkon mchog gsum la dad pa thob pa lags sam | (249.14–249.15). Cf. Dutt's reconstruction: kiṃ saparivārā māra triratne labdhaprasādāḥ (*GM*, 4:137.17).

[81] Skt. (K): na kulaputra ayaṃ khalu māraḥ pāpīmāṃ sahasraparivāro 'labdhaprasādaḥ . . . ti tāvad eṣo 'vatāraprekṣī avatāragaveṣī saddharmanetrīvipralopārtham . . . | (160.8–161.1, fragmentary); Tib. (K): rigs kyi bu de ni ma yin no || bdud sdig can g.yog stong yod pa 'di dad pa ma thob ste | 'khrugs shing yid mi dga' nas da ltar dang | ma 'ongs pa'i dus na'ang dam pa'i chos kyi tshul ji srid 'bar ba de srid du 'di glags lta zhing skabs tshol te | dam pa'i chos kyi tshul gzhig pa dang nub par bya ba'i phyir brtson par byed do || (249.16–249.20).

[82] Skt. (K): missing, but see 160 n. 17 and 161.1–161.2 for these adjectives applied to the same group but in a difference sentence; Tib. 249.17 (and 249.22–249.23 for the passage corresponding to Skt. [K]: 161.1–161.2).

find joy in unexcelled perfect awakening."[83] Kautūhalika rejoices in these words,[84] as we might expect, after which a māra named Agastī stands and begins to address the crowds. At the end of his speech, which largely touts the security he vows to provide virtuous Buddhists, he recites a *dhāraṇī* framed beforehand as capable of bringing about (and in this case perpetuating) the exact condition in which Māra and his remaining allies currently find themselves—bodies putrefied and bound (by a fivefold fetter, no less!), minds shaken and disoriented.[85]

In the wake of this *dhāraṇī*, the chapter closes with a brief encounter between Māra and a nearby bodhisattva named Dṛḍhamati. Māra enquires about the source of Agastī's strength and power and offers one final report on his miserable condition. "Noble son," he begins,

> "Whence the strength of the māra Agastī? Whence his power? It is such that, without mercy, my entire faction and my influence, strength, and courage are wholly overcome. My dark faction is defeated, and the faction of that inimical nihilist, the ascetic Gautama, is exalted. And I—just hearing this *dhāraṇī*—have come to possess a rotting, fetid, and incapacitated body. Everywhere around me is dark. There is no light to be seen. I burn with great scorching anguish!"[86]

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[83] Skt. (K): . . . śrutvānenaiva hetunā paścāc chraddhāṃ pratilapsyate 'nuttarāyāṃ samyaksaṃbodhau | (161.6–161.7, fragmentary); Tib. (K): sangs rgyas 'dus pa chen po 'di lta bum thong ba dang | gzungs zab mo 'di lta bu thos pas rgyu de nyid kyis phyin chad bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub la dad pa rab tu rnyed par 'gyur ro | (250.7–250.10).

[84] Skt. (K): 161.7–162.1 (fragmentary); Tib. (K): 250.10–250.14.

[85] Skt. (K): . . . hāṇyā cittasaṃkṣobho 'sya bhavet | ṣadindriyāṇi cāsya gocarāsamarthā syuḥ || tadyathā [*dhāraṇī*] svāhā || (162.4–163.2; missing, fragmentary); Tib. (K): ma rungs par bgyid par 'tshal na | bdud des de ltar sems bskyed ma thag tu bdud nas bdud kyi pho nya'i bar de dag rims nas kyis tsha bar 'gyur lus lci ba dang | rdul ba dang | lus rul ba dang | dri mi zhim pa dang | las su mi rung ba dang | ldang mi nus par 'gyur | bcing ba lngas bcings par mthong ba nas | de'i yan lag thams cad 'khums pa'i bar du 'gyur zhing | slar brgyang mi nus pa dang | de'i phyogs thams cad mun par gyur nas nyi ma snang ba'i gzugs kyang mi mthong ba dang | de'i rdzu 'phrul bri nas sems 'khrug par 'gyur | de'i dbang po drug kyang spyod yul la 'jug mi nus par 'gyur ro || 'di lta ste | [*dhāraṇī*] svā hā | (253.7–254.6).

[86] Skt. (K): kulaputra kuto 'syāgastino mārasya balaṃ | kutaḥ prabhāvaḥ | yad anekākṛpeṇa sarvaḥ svapakṣo mama ca viṣayabalaparākramaḥ sarvo vidhūta . . . nā . . . pamocchedavādinaḥ śramaṇasya gautamasya pakṣaḥ samucchrepitaḥ | ahaṃ ca sahaśravaṇād evāsyā dhāraṇyā durgandhaklinnakāyo 'karmaṇyaḥ saṃvṛttaḥ | sarvadiśo me 'ndhīkṛtāḥ adarśanābhāsā | mahāparidāghena ca dahyāmi | (163.11–163.16, fragmentary); Tib. (K): rigs kyi bu bdud ri byi 'di'i stobs ga las 'ongs | mthu ga las 'ongs na | gang snying rje med pa 'dis rang gi phyogs thams cad dang | nga'i stobs kyi yul dang | pha rol gnon pa thams cad ma lus par bcom ste | nag po'i rtsa lag ni pham par byas | mi mthun pa chad par smra ba dang | dge sbyong gau ta ma'i phyogs ni mtho bar byas | bdag kyang gzungs 'di thos ma thag tu lus dri mi zhim pa dang | lus rul ba dang | las su mi rung bar gyur | bdag gi phyogs thams cad kyang mun par gyur te snang zhing mthong ba med par byas nas | yongs su gdung ba chen pos kyang bdag gdungs so || (254.18–255.3).

In his response, Dṛḍhamati first briefly addresses Māra's question. Agastī's power and strength, he says, is due to the authorizing empowerment of buddhas.[87] He then offers Māra some stern advice on how he might get himself out of his predicament—advice the likes of which we have seen before:

> "Be glad in the presence of the Transcendent Ones, Māra. Generate the intention to attain unexcelled perfect awakening and you will accordingly be liberated from your bodily, verbal, and mental suffering."[88]

"Be glad," he says, using an imperative verb related to the words (*vi*)*prasanna* and *prasāda*, two Sanskrit words we have begun to see more frequently as of late and which we will unpack in the next chapter. Again, we see that the first and necessary step toward freedom is an internal shift in Māra's evaluative framework. But again, we see that he is unwilling to put in the work. For in his last appearance on the sūtra's stage, which at the same time marks the denouement of the sūtra's eleventh chapter, Māra grumbles: "I endure limitless, immeasurable, and intense suffering of body, speech, and mind on account of this, but I will never aspire to attain awakening!"[89] With this, the curtain begins to close. Our narrator wraps up some loose ends with chapters twelve and thirteen, mainly focusing on the protection and entrustment of the sūtra and those who uphold it

[87] Skt. (K): sarvabuddhānāṃ bhagavatāṃ adhiṣṭhānena pāpīmaṃ sarvamanuṣyāmanuṣyāṇāṃ ca balādānenāgastī māraḥ imaṃ sarvamārabalaviṣayaparākramaṃ vidhvaṃsayati | (163.16–163.18); Tib. (K): sdig can sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das thams cad kyi byin gyi rlabs dang | mi dang mi ma yin pa thams cad kyi stobs bskyed pas | bdud ri byis bdud kyi stobs kyi yul dang | pha rol gnod pa 'dir thams cad rnam par 'joms shing | (255.4–255.7).

[88] Skt. (K): prasādaya tvaṃ pāpīmaṃs tathāgatānām antike cittaṃ utpādayasva cānuttarāyāṃ samyaksaṃbodhau cittaṃ yathā tvam ebhyaḥ kāyavāṅmānasebhyo duḥkheybhyaḥ parimokṣyasi | (164.1–164.2); Tib. (K): sdig can khyod de bzhin gshegs pa rnams la dad par gyis shig || ci nas khyod lus dang | ngag dang | yid kyi sdug bsngal 'di dag las yongs su grol bar 'gyur bar bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu yang sems bskyed cig || (255.8–255.11).

[89] Skt. (K): utsahāmy aham aparāntakoṭyo 'samkhyeyāḥ ataḥ pāpiṣṭatarāṇi kāyavāṅmanoduḥkhāni na tv evāham anuttarāyāṃ samyaksaṃbodhau cittam utpādayāmi || (164.4–164.6); Tib. (K): bdag ni phyi ma'i mtha'i mu grangs med par 'di bas kyang ches sdig pa'i lus dang | ngag dang | yid kyi sdug bsngal rnams la spro'i bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu ni sems mi skyed do || (255.11–255.14).

in the future. But the narrator never returns to Māra. We leave him stuck—for who knows how long?—miserable, powerless, and alone. Such are the consequences of refusing the imperative to be happy.

IV

Over the course of Chapters Three and Four, we have seen Māra receive several feeling rules from a range of aligned actants. We here rehearse them in narrative order. Vidyudvalgusvarā, speaking on behalf of his courtesans, enjoins him not to be hostile and angry toward Śākyamuni. Jyotiṣprabha, speaking for the cosmic māras, condemns Māra for being angry and advises him not to grow any angrier by characterizing aversion to the Buddha as aberrant. Ghoṣavati, as we saw in Chapter Three, struggles to make sense of Māra's continued misalignment. Śākyamuni tells Māra bluntly to be happy on several occasions—at the outset and the conclusion of his Dharma talk from atop the lotus; after his comparison of the Dharma/*dharma*s of the Buddha to space gives Māra a splitting headache and causes his body to putrefy; and after Māra's already totalizing anguish had been exacerbated by the recitation of *dhāraṇī*s, the declaration of vows, and the reception of prophecy on the part of several advanced beings (over the span of a handful of chapters). And Dṛḍhamati rounds out our count when, upon being asked to explain the source of the māra Agastī's power, he enjoins Māra once more to feel differently than he does. In each of these cases, Māra refuses. Ignoring the courtesans and cosmic māras, Māra launches an attack against the Buddha. To the Buddha's command that he be happy about his experiences, Māra offers a remark that exposes his fear. In response to the perceived threat of prophecy, Māra tries to burn Śākyamuni with fiery hot breath. And last, in a state of fevered abjection, Māra growls that he will never fall in line—even if it spells indefinite suffering.

In relating these and other events, the narrator makes use of different perspectives. By adopting the perspective of Śākyamuni, for example, the narrator gives readers important details about Māra's karmic history that Māra himself seems to have forgotten—namely, that he had in a past life asked a former incarnation of Śākyamuni to predict him to awakening, but only after first swearing to play the role of Māra. But the most important perspective for us throughout our analysis has been that of Māra. By using Māra as a focalizer, readers experience the events of the narrative through Māra's eyes, as it were. But this is not the only technique by which the narrator addresses the reader. When Śākyamuni tells Māra that he is the reason the *Dharma Discourse of the Great Assembly*—one of the names by which the *Precious Banner* knows itself and the very sūtra readers have before them—is being taught, the narrator collapses the distinction between the sūtra and the events it narrates. Like a Möbius strip, the insides and outsides of the text fold into one another and are suddenly difficult if not impossible to distinguish. Is Māra living through events that are separate from their narration? Or is he at a Dharma talk that narrates his experiences *as he is living through them* as if in some uncanny hall of mirrors? It seems we must answer both in the affirmative. The metatextual character of the sūtra, I suggest, allows for the homology readers share with Māra to be exploited more efficiently. Through the strategies of focalization and self-reference, Māra's affective misalignment *to the sūtra* is established as that which produces in him such anguish and abjection. And taking this together with the narrative fact that the presence of *good bodies* is not enough for Māra to be released from his predicament, we can further see that what is required is *response* to the norms of the sūtra's affective regime. Until Māra is willing to do the requisite emotion work, he will suffer alone in his impotence and misery. Just so, the sūtra subtly invites us to think, will be the experience of readers whose affective orientation to the sūtra is not as it should be.

Looking ahead to Chapter Five, our next aim will be to consider more closely the actants who undergo affective reorientation or approximate alignment. Because they are numerous, we will not cover every single case. Instead, we will focus on a few select episodes—as we have done in this and prior chapters—to get a sense of how the sūtra wants readers to feel. In the most general terms, echoing the words of Śākyamuni and the title of this chapter, the main imperative readers face is to encounter the Dharma as instantiated in the *Precious Banner* as a source of joy. The words used to identify this affective state vary, but we will give full treatment to one in particular: *prasāda* and related words. The sūtra delivers the imperative to be happy to readers by means of narrative strategies similar the ones discussed above. In *showing* narrative actants responding properly (immediately or eventually) in specific contexts and on account of specific events, the sūtra casts something of a shadow-homology for readers to share with other actants. While readers may not respond to the feeling rules articulated through the text as actants other than Māra do, they are not only presented with an option to cultivate an alignment to the sūtra that Māra clearly does not yet have, but also incentivized to do so in witnessing what happens to those who do so as the narrative unfolds. If the consequences for refusing the imperative to be happy are misery, impotence, and isolation, in other words, the rewards for properly responding are their opposites. Those who work to cultivate a proper affective orientation to the sūtra, in short, stand to gain as much as they stand to lose.

CHAPTER FIVE

"With a Joyful Mind"
The Benefits of Affective Alignment

I

"Those who fill the world with gold in worship to the protectors will meet the guides," declares a buddha named Kusumadhvaja near the end of the sūtra's final chapter. "But," he goes on to say, "those who would maintain this most excellent sūtra will obtain limitless merit without fear."[1] Self-referential clauses like this one, themselves quite common in Mahāyāna sūtra literature, are scattered throughout the *Precious Banner*. Sometimes they have the whole sūtra in view (as does Kusumadhvaja's verse above, itself the first in a series of similar decrees),[2] other times a specific *dhāraṇī* (as in chapter six, for example, when myriad bodhisattvas maintain that Candraprabha's *dhāraṇī* will benefit anyone who recites it after ritualizing self and space).[3] Through passages like these, sūtras offer a *quid pro quo*: Preserve and propagate me (or part of me) however you can—be it through copying, translation, memorization, or recitation—and you will be rewarded. Among them, Kusumadhvaja's is notable for us insofar as it involves matters of affect. But at the end of the day, such passages are not the most imaginative uses of self-reference.

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[1] Skt. (K): sarvakṣetra saṃprapūrya kāṃcanena tāyiṣu prapūjanāya nāyakeṣu saṃsṛjed ya eva tad | idaṃ tu yaḥ pradhānasūtram uttamaṃ hi dhārayet sa puṇyam aprameyam evam āpnuyād viśāradaḥ || 13.1 || (176.3–176.6); Tib. (K): gang gis zhing kun gser gyis rab tu bkang nas ni || skyob pa mgon po dag la mchod pa phul ba bas || gang zhig dam pa mchog gi mdo 'di 'dzin byed na || 'jigs med des ni bsod nams dpag tu med pa 'thob || 13.1 || (268.25–268.28).

[2] In truth, the entirety of the sūtra's thirteenth and final chapter (Skt. [K]: 172.1–177.15, Tib. [K]: 265.1–270.9) is devoted to self-aggrandizement in prose. But see the following ranges for the concluding series of verses: Skt. (K): 176.7–176.9, Tib. (K): 269.1–269.4 (Ratnacchatraśrī); Skt. (K): 176.11–176.15, Tib. (K): 269.6–269.10 (Girikūṭa); Skt. (K): 176.17–176.20, Tib. (K): 269.13–269.20 (Śākyamuni); Skt. (K): 176.22–177.2, Tib. (K): 269.22–269.25 (Akṣobhya); Skt. (K): 177.4–177.8, Tib. (K): 269.28–269.31 (Virajabalavikrāmī); Skt. (K): 177.9–177.13; Tib. (K): 270.1–270.7 (myriad unnamed buddhas).

[3] Skt. (K): 137.5–139.14; Tib. (K): 178.1–180.18.

More inspiring are what we can call, following Natalie Gummer, *presencing passages*. Though not pervasive, such passages are quite easy to find in the *Precious Banner*'s second half. In chapter eight, a certain properly aligned māra named *Śramaṇapuṣpa vows to be present not only anywhere the *dhāraṇī* called Unharmed by the Army of Māra is recited but also anywhere its host Dharma discourse circulates.[4] In chapter ten, several divine beings vow to appear in the audience wherever the sūtra is being recited because hearing it gives them the power they need to protect and enrich those who maintain the Dharma.[5] And in chapter eleven, Brahmā, Śakra, the Four World Protectors, and others vow to support those who uphold the Body Destroyer *dhāraṇī* in the future on pain of deceiving all buddhas (and thus reaping rather unsavory karmic deserts).[6] These passages are more sophisticated than those noted above. With them, the sūtra extricates

[4] Skt. (K): missing in all cases; Tib. (K): grong dang | grong khyer dang | grong rdal dang | ljongs dang | ri brag gang dag na bdud kyi tshogs kyis mi thub pa'i gzungs 'di 'chang ngam | ston tam | 'chad dam | glegs bam la bris te | bsti stang bgyi ba'i grong dang | grong khyer dang | grong rdal dang | ljongs dang | ri brag de dag tu bdag gnas par bgyi'o || (206.1–206.5), gang la la zhig na chos kyi rnam grangs 'di mi spyod pa der bdag mi gnas kyi | gang la lar chos kyi rnam grangs 'di spyod pa der bdag gnas te | (208.15–208.17), yongs sus min par bgyi ba dang | byang chub kyi spyod pa yongs su rdzogs par bgyi ba'i slad du gang dang gang na chos kyi rnam grangs 'di dang | gsang sngags kyi tshig 'di dag bshad pa de dang de dag tu bdag gnas par bgyi'o || (210.14–211.3).

[5] Skt. (K): asya ca dharmaparyāyasya bhāṣyamāṇasya prakāśyamānasya vayaṃ svayam upasaṃkramiṣyāmaḥ śravaṇāya | . . . tat kasya hetoḥ | asmin vayaṃ sarvabuddhādhiṣṭhite dhāraṇīmudrādharmaparyāye prakāśyamāne dharmarasenaujovanto bhaviṣyāmaḥ | . . . evaṃ vayaṃ sarvaviṣaye sarvāṃ kalikalahavigrahavivādadurbhikṣaroga-paracakrākālavātavṛṣṭiśītoṣṇānāvṛṣṭiduḥsvapnadurnimittaduṣṭarūkṣaparuṣatiktakaṭukavirasākuśalapakṣakarān bhāvān praśamayiṣyāmaḥ | (154.12–154.13, 154.15–154.17, 154.18–155.3; ellipses mine); Tib. (K): chos kyi rnam grangs 'di 'chad pa'am | klog pa'am | ston pa'i drung du bdag cag nyid nyan pa'i slad du nye bar mchi bar bgyi'o || . . . de ci'i slad du zhe na | sangs rgyas thams cad kyis byin gyis brlabs pa'i gzungs kyi phyag rgya'i chos kyi rnam grangs 'di 'chad pa'i tshe | chos kyi bcud kyis bdag cag mdangs dang ldan par 'gyur | . . . de ltar bdag cag gis yul thams cad tu 'thab ba dang | rtsod pa dang | 'thab mo dang | 'gyed pa dang | mu ge dang | nad dang | pha rol gyi dmag tshogs dang | dus ma lags pa'i rlung dang | char dang | grang ba dang | tsha ba dang | char mi 'bab pa dang | rmi lam ngan pa dang | ltas ngan pa dang | sdang ba dang | rtsub pa dang | brlang ba dang | kha ba dang | tsha ba dang | ro ma mchis pa dang | mi dge ba'i phyogs brgyid pa'i dngos pa rnams rab tu zhi bar bgyi'o || (238.15–238.16, 238.19–238.21, 238.24–239.5; ellipses mine). For the passage in full, see Skt. (K): 153.19–156.14 and Tib. (K): 237.22–240.21.

[6] Skt. (K): missing in all cases; Tib. (K): bcom ldan 'das 'di dag ni gal te bdag chos nyan pa'am | chos smra ba bsrung ba nas | nor dang | 'bru dang | mdzod dang | bang ba mang po rnam par 'phel bas | tshim par bgyi ba'i bar gyi slad du | der ma mchis na | yi dam las 'gal bar 'gyur ba lags so || (245.4–245.7, Brahmā). The vows of Śakra and the Four World Protectors are given their own section, but each is shortened with standard clauses (zhes bya ba nas . . . zhes bya ba'i bar du). See the following ranges: Tib. (K): 245.11–245.22 (Śakra), 245.23–246.8 (Virūḍhaka), 246.9–246.17 (Virūpākṣa), 246.18–247.3 (Dhṛtarāṣṭra), and 247.4–247.9 (Kubera/Vaiśravaṇa). In its representation of the myriad yakṣas, the sūtra again returns to long form. See Tib. (K): 247.10–249.9.

itself from its own historical moment and lays claim (via a species of colonization) to whatever present in which the work finds itself read or instantiated. This is quite the narratological parlor trick. As our reading of the *Precious Banner* has shown (and will continue to show), however, there are yet other mechanisms by which the sūtra reaches into the reading present. At the risk of giving some of the sūtra's pedestrian and presencing strategies (and the chapters in which they are employed) short shrift, then, we here continue to follow the trail we have been marking out in the previous chapters.

The aim of this final body chapter is to survey two closely related phenomena: *affective reorientation* and what we will call *affective course correction*. Section II treats the first of these with an eye toward the implications of proper alignment. That is, we will examine episodes in which actants encounter the Buddha and the Dharma as sources of positive affect, having been in most cases predisposed to be negatively affected by the same, in order to show that alignment ushers actants into an empowered community. My contention is that the depiction of beings as becoming properly aligned—that is, as becoming the types of beings for whom the Buddha and the Dharma are what Ahmed calls "happy objects"[7]—carries normative force and thus stands as an additional facet of the sūtra's affective regime. Section III then addresses a set of actants who, though already properly aligned, are nevertheless enjoined to feel differently. As we will see, the actants in question fear living in a world without Śākyamuni. But this fear is improper, we learn, because the Buddha will always teach the Dharma on the earth. With this episode, I argue, the sūtra addresses readers in a way that complements how it does so through its narrative of Māra.

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[7] "I have suggested that happiness is attributed to certain objects that circulate as social goods. When we feel pleasure from such objects, we are aligned; we are facing the right way. We become alienated—out of line with an affective community—when we do not experience pleasure from proximity to objects that are attributed as being good" (Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, 41).

Though readers live in a world where the Buddha is no longer physically present, they do have the *Precious Banner*. And this sūtra, if my reading has been persuasive, establishes how readers in a buddha-less world ought to feel about the sūtra and encourages them to respond joyfully in the reading present by displaying what they stand to gain by so responding.

II

This section treats affective reorientation. As such, we turn our attention to actants other than the chronically misaligned Māra. The survey is not exhaustive. Due to limitations of space, we will leave some instances aside (e.g., that of Jyotīrasa, the astral scientist and Śiva-devotee dispatched by Māra to distract the Buddha). With those we do address, however, we will come to see that alignment entails inclusion in an empowered community.[8] Toward this end, we treat in turn the episodes centering on Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, Māra's courtesans, Māra's children, and the cosmic māras. We have seen these episodes before, of course, but our readings have focused on Māra's misalignment. Here we want to get a sense of what it looks (and feels) like to be aligned. While our argument about the entailment of alignment is based on similarities in the depictions of reoriented actants, we would do well to bear in mind Māra's recalcitrant misalignment and its consequences—for it is through contrasting aligned actants with Māra that the affective regime comes into clearest view.

Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana

The sūtra opens with a telling of the reorientation of Śāriputra and (indirectly) Maudgalyāyana through an encounter with Aśvajit. Though we are already familiar with the basics of the story, we need now to examine the language used to talk about their reorientation. Struck by Aśvajit's

[8] "To be affected in a good way by objects that are already evaluated as good is a way of belonging to an affective community" (Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, 38).

deportment while on his daily alms round, Śāriputra thinks to himself: "I have never seen a mendicant, brahmin, or anyone else for that matter with such a pleasing (Skt. **prāsādika*; Tib. *mdzes pa*) mendicancy as this monk has."[9] He then approaches Aśvajit to ask who his teacher is, what doctrine he espouses, and so on. In response, Aśvajit describes Śākyamuni in a short verse:

> "There is a son of the Śākyas whose vows and austerities are great, who is foremost among all, who is ruler of this world, who has crossed over the ocean of saṃsāra, and who is liberated from the world and thus the liberator. He is called the awakened, the wide awakened, the unexcelled, the desiccator of the ocean of suffering. Stainless, to him I have permanently gone for refuge. It is in his Dharma that I delight." || 1.1 ||[10]

Śāriputra then asks Aśvajit to share what he knows of this figure's teaching—which, it is worth pointing out, is a source of delight for Aśvajit. To this, Aśvajit expresses to Śāriputra the basic truth of dependent origination in the famous *ye dharmā* verse.

These verses establish Śāriputra on the Buddhist path and prompt him to recite a verse in praise of the Buddha and the Dharma. He asks Aśvajit where the Buddha is so that he might go learn from him directly. Equipped with this knowledge, Śāriputra then finds Maudgalyāyana, his partner in the quest for immortality. Right away, Maudgalyāyana notices a difference in him:

> "Venerable one, your senses have been gladdened, your countenance purified, your demeanor cleansed. You have found immortality!"[11]

Śāriputra then tells Maudgalyāyana the *ye dharmā* verse he heard from Aśvajit—twice, we might note—on account of which Maudgalyāyana is likewise deeply affected. And though the narrator

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[9] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): ji ltar dge sbyong 'di spyod lam mdzes pa de lta bu ni | bdag gis snong chad dge sbyong ngam | bram ze'am | mir gyur pa gzhan su la'ang gang la'ang sngon ma mthong na | (8.6–8.8).

[10] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): śākya'i sras po brtul shugs dka' thub chen po kun gyi dam pa dbang dang ldan || 'khor ba'i rgya mtsho'i pha rol phyin cing grol la de bzhin 'gro ba sgrol mdzad pa || sangs rgyas zhes bya sad mdzad mi mnyam sdug bsngal mtsho skems da ltar 'di na yod || dri ma med pa de yi skyabs su rtag par nga song de yi chos la dga' || 1.1 || (9.1–9.8).

[11] Skt. (K): missing; Tib. (K): tshe dang ldan pa khyod kyi dbang po rnams ni dangs | bzhin gyi mdangs ni yongs su dag | pags pa'i mdog ni kun tu dkar ba las na | tshe dang ldan pa khyod kyis bdud rtsi rnyed do || (11.10–11.13).

does not say so, we can reasonably assume that all this shows on Maudgalyāyana's face, just like it did for Śāriputra. Through an encounter with Aśvajit, whose body and speech are agential in their own ways, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana find themselves on a new path. In our terms, they are affectively reoriented. And this alignment, as will see, modifies their capacities to affect and be affected.

Before we move forward, however, the words *prāsādika* and (*vi*)*prasanna* require some attention and theorization—for words derived from *pra√sad*, which I have been translating with words related to *gladness* and *joy*, are central to the reorientations to be surveyed in the coming pages. Fortunately, Andy Rotman has already done some legwork for us in this regard.[12] In a recent study of the *Divine Stories* (*Divyāvadāna*), Rotman attends to how actants are shown to offer gifts to the Buddhist community out of the serene joy (*prasāda*) that arises in them upon being gladdened ([*vi*]*prasanna*) by agents of *prasāda* (*prāsādika*).[13] In particular, he is concerned to interrogate how the depiction of this series as *natural* aimed to drive donative practices in the real world. Noting that the function of *prāsādika* objects "is less to communicate than to arouse,"[14] Rotman shows how their representation works on readers by distinguishing narration that develops the plot from narration that pauses plot development. When readers encounter an actant seeing a *prāsādika* object, experiencing *prasāda*, and giving as part of the plot, they at the same time often encounter a prolonged description of a *prāsādika* object. As a verbal stand-in for the *prāsādika* object, this narration aims to affect readers in the same way the

[12] Andy Rotman, "The Erotics of Practice: Objects and Agency in Buddhist *Avadāna* Literature," *JAAR* 71, no. 3 (2003): 555–78, at 556; see also, Andrea M. Pinkney, "Prasāda, the Gracious Gift, in Contemporary and Classical South Asia," *JAAR* 81, no. 3 (2013): 734–56.

[13] On the logic of the narratives, *prasāda* is "a product of the overriding power that certain external objects exert on individuals" (Rotman, "The Erotics of Practice," 556).

[14] Rotman, "The Erotics of Practice, 572.

prāsādika objects affect actants. Taking these types of narration together, then, the *Divine Stories* present readers with a choice: give or admit to yourself and everyone else around you that you do not feel *prasāda* as these texts guarantee you will.

Without contesting Rotman's reading, I would like to suggest an additional interpretive possibility. Insofar as the *Divine Stories* insinuate that "it is only the deviant who manage to get *prasāda* wrong,"[15] we can read these narrative depictions of *prasāda* as feeling rules that display proper affective alignment and encourage readers to orient themselves properly through emotion work. While the *Divine Stories* depict affective orientations as static, such orientations in readers outside the text are plastic. This is not to say that affective orientations are easy to change. But it's not called emotion *work* for nothing. If readers do not *actually* feel how the narratives imply they should *naturally* feel, they are given the chance to cultivate the normative affective orientation implicit in the narratives themselves. This, I suggest, is what is going on in the *Precious Banner*. Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana *display* what it is to be properly aligned. While it is likely not so easy for readers, they learn from such depictions what it looks and feels like to be aligned. And moreover, they also see the benefits of cultivating alignment for themselves.

Through their affective reorientation, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana now find themselves aligned with the Buddha's power and are thereby protected from Māra's subsequent attempts to prevent them from taking refuge. One of those failed attempts we have already seen.[16] But there is a second failure, and its details have been withheld until now. In the aftermath of his failure to

[15] Rotman, "The Erotics of Practice, 567.

[16] When Māra learns of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana's intent to go see the Buddha, he assumes the guise of Aśvajit and tries to trick them into indulging their senses. But they see through his disguise, evade his slippery rhetoric, and double-down on their resolve to take refuge in the Buddha. I treated this episode in Chapter Two for two reasons. First, it was part of my argument that Māra's affective orientation is central to his narrative. And second, the episode served to foreshadow the central contention of Chapter Three—namely, that Māra is misaligned and that his misalignment entails a diminished capacity to affect and increasingly acute social isolation.

trick Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana as Pseudo-Aśvajit, Māra is pained, dispirited, and regretful. But he doesn't rest. To the contrary, he immediately enacts another plan as the aspiring disciples begin to make their way to the Buddha. Without representing Māra's thoughts, the narrator reports on his actions and their effects (or lack thereof) as follows:

> Now, seeing that the wandering ascetics Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, together with their five hundred followers, had started off toward the Lord, Māra then fashioned a great chasm outside the city of Rājagṛha so that those two could not get closer than one hundred *yojana*s to the ascetic Gautama. But the Lord likewise performed a magical feat so that the wandering mendicants Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana did not see the great chasm. They continued on a straight path. But once again, Māra fashioned before them a firm, solid, impenetrable mountain one thousand *yojana*s tall, as well as one thousand fierce, lethal, and terrifying lions. But by the glorious power and authority of the Lord, those two good men saw neither the mountain nor the lions, and neither did they hear the lions' roars. Instead, they continued on a straight path toward the Lord.[17]

As our reading of Māra's narrative throughout the previous chapters shows, Māra's failure here can be seen as a function of his misalignment. His affective orientation is such that he is not only distraught on account of the fact that the Buddha is about to gain new followers but also unable to do much of anything about it. But Māra's failure in this instance can also and equally be seen as a function of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana's proper alignment. That alignment comes with

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[17] Skt. (K): athopatiṣyakaulitau parivrājakau paṃcaśataparivārau bhagavaṃtam uddiśya pravrajyāṃ saṃprasthitau viditvātha māraḥ pāpīmān bahirājagṛhasya mahānagarasya mahāprapātam abhinirmitavān yojanaśatam adhastād yathā tau na śakṣyataḥ śravaṇasya [sic] gautamasyāntikam upasaṃkramitum iti || bhagavāṃś ca punaḥ tādṛśam ṛddhyabhisaṃskāram abhisaṃścakāra yathā tāv upatiṣyakaulitau parivrājakau taṃ mahāprapātaṃ na dadṛśatuḥ | ṛjunā mārgeṇa gacchataḥ | punar api māraḥ pāpīmāṃs tayoḥ puratah parvatam abhinirmimīte dṛ . . . suṣiraṃ yojanasahasram uccatvena sahasraṃ ca siṃhānām abhinirmimīte caṇḍānāṃ duṣṭānāṃ ghorāṇāṃ | tau ca satpuruṣau bhagavatas tejasārddhyanubhāvena ca taṃ parvatam api na dadṛśatuḥ na ca siṃhān na ca siṃhanadāñ chuśruvatuḥ | ṛjunā ca mārgeṇa yena bhagavāṃs tenopasaṃkrāmatuḥ | (3.14–4.9, fragmentary); Tib. (K): de nas kun tu rgyu nye rgyal dang | pang nas skyes g.yog lnga brgya dang bcas pa bcom ldan 'das las rab tu 'byung bar chas par bdud sdig can gyis rig nas ci nas de gnyis dge sbyong gaut ta ma'i gan du 'gro mi nus par bya ba'i phyir rgyal po'i khab kyi grong khyer chen po'i phyi logs su g.yang sa chen po zabs su dpag tshad brgya pa zhig sprul to || de nas bcom ldan 'das kyis kyang 'di 'dra ba'i rdzu 'phrul mngon par 'du bya ba mngon par 'du mdzad de | ci nas kun du rgyu nye rgyal dang | pang nas skyes gnyis g.yang sa chen po de mi mthong zhing lam drang por 'gro bar mdzad do || yang bdud sdig can gyis de gnyis kyi mdun du ri chen po brtan pa | sra ba | ma rnyil pa | sul med pa | gcig tu stug por gyur pa | mkhregs pa | 'phang du dpag tshad stong yod pa zhig mngon par sprul te | seng ge khro zhing gdug la gtum pa | sgra chen po 'byin pa stong yang mngon par sprul na | bcom ldan 'das kyis gzhi brjid dang rdzu 'phrul gyi mthus skyes bu dam pa de gnyis kyis ri de'ang ma mthong | seng ge'ang ma mthong | seng ge'i skad kyang ma thos te lam drang por bcom ldan 'das ga la ba de logs su song ngo || (16.14–17.5).

benefits is clear. And what's more, these benefits are here framed in terms of both affect and orientation—for it is through their alignment with Śākyamuni that they are unaffected by the illusions of Māra and continue on a *straight* path.[18] Empowerment is not the only result of proper alignment. As we will see, there are social implications, as well.

Māra's Courtesans

After failing to deter Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana (and subsequently to neutralize the Buddha as Pseudo-Brahmā and Pseudo-Śiva), Māra retreats to his lamentation room. His courtesans rush to his side, but ultimately defect and go to the Buddha for refuge. Here we examine the nature of that defection, grounded as it is in a new affective orientation. When asked by Vidyudvalgusvarā how she and the other courtesans might go about killing Śākyamuni, Māra responds with three verses in which he describes the Buddha, his followers, and the threat they collectively pose to Māra's kingdom and way of life.[19] Drawing on Rotman's analysis of the types of narration in the *Divine Stories*, we can appreciate this narrative moment as a pause in plot development. But it is also instrumental in the same. Māra's speech gives readers a verbal glimpse of *prāsādika* objects. Yet at the same time, the courtesans thereby automatically attain a concentration called Formless Lightning and scatter offerings toward the (absent) Buddha.[20] "Then," the narrator continues,

[18] The *straight* path is mentioned only once elsewhere in the sūtra (Skt. [K]: 156.5–156.7; Tib. [K]: 240.9–240.1), otherwise I would put more pressure on it using Ahmed's discussions in *Queer Phenomenology* of straightness and straightening devices.

[19] Skt. (K): 10.4–10.15; Tib. (K): 21.14–22.4.

[20] Skt. (K): atha taiḥ paṃcabhir mārakanyāśatair mārasya pāpīmato 'ntikād bhagavato guṇavarṇaṃ śrutvā sarvair ākāravigatavidyun nāma bodhisattvasamādhiḥ pratilabdhā | atha tāni paṃca mārakanyāśatāni divyāni tūryāni tāṃś ca divyapuṣpagandhamālyavilepanābharaṇavibhūṣaṇālaṃkārān yena bhagavāṃs tenākṣipan bhagavataḥ pūjākarmaṇe | (10.16–11.2); Tib. (K): de nas bdud kyi bu mo lnga brgya po de dag gis bdud sdig can las bcom ldan 'das kyi yon tan gyi bsngags pa thos nas thams cad kyis byang chub sems dpa'i ting nge 'dzin rnam pa dang bral ba'i glog ces bya ba thob bo || de nas bdud kyi bu mo brgya po de dag gis bcom ldan 'das la mchod pa bya ba'i phyir lha'i sil snyan dang | lha'i me tog dang | bdug pa dang | spos dang | phreng ba dang | byug pa dang | lhab lhub dang | spud pa dang | rgyan de dag bcom ldan 'das ga la ba de logs su gtor ba dang | (22.5–22.11).

> by the power and authority of the Lord, those divine instruments, ornaments, and the rest rained down in Bamboo Grove. Māra's courtesans themselves saw it, together with their attendants. And when they saw it, moreover, they became full of joy and delight.[21]

Māra's description of the Buddha snaps the courtesans into proper alignment with the Buddha and prompts them to give. Their gifts are transformed, and they are filled with joy upon seeing their transformed gifts rain down over Bamboo Grove. Their newfound alignment extends their visual capacities and constitutes the objects experienced therewith as sources of joy.

As the offerings rain down over Bamboo Grove, the students surrounding the Buddha ask him to reveal the causes and conditions of "such a marvelous, extraordinary, and unprecedented rain."[22] From their perspective, the fact that Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana just joined their ranks is a likely explanation. But the Buddha dismisses this hypothesis and identifies the real source:

> "It is not the authority of these two noble sons. Rather, five hundred attendants from Māra's house let loose this rain of great flowers, ornaments, and the rest in order to worship me. Soon, they will come here and be foretold to unexcelled perfect awakening in my presence."[23]

With these words, Śākyamuni invites his students to widen their horizons. The chain of causality extends beyond what they have visual access to, as does the scope of their community (of which they are shown here to be but one part). And at the same time, Śākyamuni further expands the

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[21] Skt. (K): tāni ca divyāni tūryāṇi te ca yāvad alaṃkārā bhagavata ṛddhyanubhāvena veṇuvane vavarṣuḥ | tāś ca mārakanyāḥ svayam adrākṣuḥ saparivārāḥ | dṛṣṭvā ca punar api tāḥ prasādajātā babhūvur (11.2–11.5); Tib. (K): lha'i me tog dang | sil snyan nas rgyan gyi bar du de dag bcom ldan 'das kyi rdzu 'phrul gyi mthus 'od ma'i tshal du bab par gyur to || bdud kyi bu mo de dag kyang g.yog dang bcas pas so so nas bcom ldan 'das mthong ngo || de dag gis mthong nas kyang rab tu dga' ba dang rangs pa skyes par gyur to || (22.11–22.15).

[22] Skt. (K): evaṃrūpaṃ mahāścaryādbhutādṛṣṭapūrvaṃ varṣaṃ (11.5–11.9, at 11.8); Tib. (K): ngo mtshar dang rmad du byung ba chen po sngon ma mthong ma thos pa'i me tog gi char chen po rab tu bab pa | (22.15–22.20, at 22.18–22.19).

[23] Skt. (K): nānayoḥ kulaputrayor anubhāvaḥ | mārasya tu pāpīmataḥ paṃcamātraiḥ paricārikāśatais tato mārabhavanād idam evaṃrūpaṃ mahāpuṣpavarṣaṃ yāvad alaṃkāravarṣam utsṛṣṭaṃ mama pūjākarmaṇe | acirāt tā atrāgatā mamāntikād vyākaraṇaṃ pratilapsyante 'nuttarāyāṃ samyaksaṃbodhau || (11.9–11.13); Tib. (K): rigs kyi bu 'di gnyis kyi mthu ma yin te | bdud sdig can gyi g.yog mo lnga brgya tsam gyis bdud kyi khang pa de nas nga la mchod pa bya ba'i phyir 'di lta bu'i me tog gi char chen po nas rgyan gyi bar gyi char phab bo || de dag ring po mi thogs par 'dir 'ongs te | nga las bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu lung bstan pa 'thob bo || (22.21–23.3).

experiential field of Māra's courtesans. Just as they are enabled to see their offerings sprinkle down over Bamboo Grove, they are also enabled to hear what Buddha says about them. And as a result, "they became even more full of joy in the Lord and, through their joy and delight, obtained a concentration called Undistracted Mind of Awakening."[24] Through their alignment, Māra's courtesans come to possess supernormal visual and auditory capacities and are filled with joy and delight (Skt. *prasādapramodya*; Tib. *rab tu dga' ba dang rangs pa*) on account of what they experience therewith. Insofar as this episode involves giving, Rotman's work on the *Divine Stories* gives us much to think with. But more can be gleaned from this episode and others like it. Again—alignment empowers. And, as we are beginning to see with Śākyamuni's prediction that the courtesans will soon join their number, alignment entails community.

After the courtesans become even more full of *prasāda* upon learning about their soon to be received prophecies, they recite three verses in the direction of the Buddha while still standing the presence of Māra. In these verses, the courtesans scatter questions and declarations of intent among their praise of Śākyamuni. They ask him how to attain awakening in this life, vow to come listen to the Dharma, and request the already promised prophesies to awakening.[25] Then, as

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[24] Skt. (K): bhagavato 'ntike prasādajātās tās tena prasādapramodyena bodhicittāsaṃpramoṣaṃ nāma samādhiṃ pratilebhire | (12.2–12.3); Tib. (K): bcom ldan 'das la de bas kyang rab tu dga' ba skyes te | de dag dga' ba dang rangs pa des byang chub kyi sems brjed pa med pa zhes bya ba'i ting nge 'dzin thob po || (23.5–23.7).

[25] Skt. (K): tṛṣṇāsarinnihilaśoṣaka sarvalokam ālokya netravikalaṃ jagad ekacakṣuḥ | tvaṃ tārako 'dya jagataḥ sanarāmarasya buddha vayaṃ katham ihāśu mune bhavema || 1.24 || naradevapūjya bhagavan paramārthavādin strītvaṃ jugupsitam apohya vayaṃ samagrāḥ | ṛddyā tavottamamate tvaritaṃ samīpe gatvā munīndravacanaṃ śruṇuyāma evaṃ || 1.25 || nairātmyavādi bhagavan paramārthadarśin bodhyaṃgaratnadhara nirmalavākpradīpa | ākramya mārabalam apratima tvam asmān bodhāya śīghram adhunā samaṃ vyākuruṣva || 1.26 || (12.7–13.1); Tib. (K): sred chu ma lus skems pa'i 'gro ba'i mig gcig pu || mig ma mchis pa'i 'jig rten kun la gzigs nas ni || khyod deng lha dang mir bcas pa yi 'gro ba sgrol || thub pa bdag cag ji ltar myur du sangs rgyas 'gyur || 1.24 || lha dang mis mchod don dam gsung ba bcom ldan 'das || bdag cag mthun par bud med smad pa nyid spangs nas || blo mchog khyod kyi 'phrul gyi drung du myur bar ni || mchis nas 'di bzhin thub pa'i dbang po'i gsung mnyan to || 1.25 || bdag med gsung ba don dam gzigs pa bcom ldan 'das || byang chub yan lag rin chen dri med nor gsung sgrong || mtshungs med bdud kyi stob btul khyod kyis bdag cag la || da ltar myur du lhan cig byang chub lung bstan gsol || 1.26 || (23.11–23.22).

we saw in Chapter Four, they reprimand Māra for his misalignment.[26] When they finally start off toward the Buddha, the narrator outlines a benefit of proper alignment that we have already seen:

> Then Māra, with an extremely hostile mind, thought to himself: "I should recall that my strength, influence, and force is such that, if my five hundred attendants were to see themselves bound by a fivefold fetter they would in that case turn around and not be able go." But he was not able to bind them. Why is that? It's because these five hundred servants were sustained by the Transcendent One.[27]

On account of their alignment with the power of the Buddha, in other words, the courtesans were simply unaffected by Māra's attempt to bind them. (Note, too, that he attempts to bind them with the very mechanism by which he will find himself bound later in the narrative.) But again, Māra does not give up. "I should again recall," he thinks,

> "that my strength, influence, and force is such that I could cover all this world with violent Vairambha winds, great dark clouds, and great dark winds. Tossing about in all directions, none of them would see the ascetic Gautama, and they would all come back to my home." Through the Awakened One's sustaining strength, however, the wind could not arise to cause anyone, from the youngest to the oldest, to tremble even slightly.[28]

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[26] Skt (K): 13.4–13.11; Tib. (K): 24.1–24.8.

[27] Skt. (K): atha khalu mārasya pāpīmataḥ paramaduṣṭamanasaḥ etad abhūt | yan nv ahaṃ tādṛśaṃ mārabalaviṣayavegaṃ samanusmareyaṃ yad etāni paṃca paricārikāśatāni paṃcapāśabandhanabaddhām ātmāna saṃpaśyeyur ihaiva nivarteran na punar gantuṃ śaknuyuḥ | sa ca māras tāni banddhuṃ na śaktaḥ | tat kutas tathā hi tāni paṃca paricārikāśatāni tathāgatādhiṣṭhānāni || (13.12–13.17); Tib. (K): de nas bdud sdig can shin tug dug pa'i yid dang ldan pa 'di snyam du sems te | bdag gis 'di 'dra ba'i bdud kyi stobs kyi yul drag po dran par byas la | gang g.yog mo lnga brgya tsam 'di dag bdag nyid bcing ba lngas bcings par mthong bar byas te | 'di nas bzlog la 'gro mi nus par bya'o snyam pa dang | bdud des de dag bcing bar ma nus so || de ci'i phyir zhe na | 'di ltar g.yog mo lnga brgya tsam po de dag de bzhin gshegs pas byin gyis brlabs pa'i phyir ro || (24.9–24.15).

[28] Skt. (K): yan nv ahaṃ punar api tādṛśaṃ mārabalaviṣayavegaṃ samanusmareyaṃ yat sarvam idam ākāśavairaṃbhasaṃghātair mahākālamedhair mahākālavāyubhiś cāvṛtaṃ yathā tā eva paricārikāḥ sarvā digvidikṣu saṃbhrāntāḥ śramaṇaṃ gautamaṃ na paśyeyuḥ | punar eva me bhavanam āgaccheyuḥ | tathāpi buddhādhiṣṭhānabalena kiyantam api vāyuṃ na śaknoty utpādayituṃ yo 'ntato bālāgram api kaṃpayet prāg eva bahutaraṃ || (14.1–14.7); Tib. (K): bdag gis yang 'di 'dra ba'i bdud kyi stobs kyi yul drag po dran par yas te | ci nas bdag gis g.yog mo de dag phyogs dang phyogs mtshams thams cad 'khrul nas dge sbyong gau ta ma mi mthong zhing slar yang bdag gi gnas su 'ong bar nam mkha' 'di dag thams cad du rnam par 'thor rlung dang | rlung nag po chen pos kun tu khyab par bya'o snyam na'ang sangs rgyas kyi byin gyis brlabs kyi stobs kyis rlung cung zad kyang langs par byed ma nus so || tha na sgra'i rtse mo gcig tsam yang bskyod ma nus na mang du lta ci smros || (24.18–25.7).

Again, through their alignment with Śākyamuni's power, the courtesans are empowered and thus protected. Despite his best efforts, Māra is unable to conjure even the slightest bit of fear in the courtesans. Instead, like Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, the courtesans see through Māra's tricks and continue on their way. And although the narrator does not say as much, we can imagine that they, too, continue along a *straight* path. This episode, taken together with that of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, begins to display the benefits of affective alignment. All affectively reoriented and thus properly aligned actants we have encountered so far are, by virtue of their alignment, invulnerable to Māra's tricks. And moreover, prompted by what they experience as sources of positive affect, they find themselves moving toward the Buddha.

Māra's Children

We here turn to the affective reorientation of Māra's children. With their alignment, they come to be the kinds of beings who feel joy on account of the Buddha and the Dharma and are thus empowered by Śākyamuni. These are precisely the kinds of subjects the sūtra aims to produce outside the text. But I wish further to argue that in producing properly aligned subjects, the sūtra *ipso facto* gives rise to a community. Although this claim is in many ways my own, it is by now hopefully becoming clear that my proposed reading is not forcing the text to say something at odds with its own narrative logic. As we have seen, for example, Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, and Māra's courtesans move toward the Buddha once aligned. This movement alone constitutes a concrete social (albeit narrative) implication of an underlying shared affective alignment. But there are clearer social implications of alignment within the narrative. As we will see, Māra's children fall in line with his courtesans. And from this shared alignment, they speak and act together as a unified social group.

After failing to stop the courtesans from abandoning him, Māra calls out to his children from inside the lamentation room. They agree to help, but they also make it clear that they will go to Śākyamuni for refuge if they cannot defeat him. With this caveat, Māra's children prepare for battle. They leave their father, spread out in a vast military formation, and launch a brutal attack against the Buddha. After filling the sky with dark clouds and violent dust storms, they hurl meteors, boulders, and a torrent of weapons toward the Buddha.[29] While the aim is to kill Śākyamuni—or at the very least to harm and terrify him—this is not what happens. The Buddha enters into a concentration called Destroying the Army of Māra, by which (despite the name) he transfigures their attack. "What was a downpour of rocks and weapons," the narrator tells us,

> all of that he transformed into a shower of divine blue lotuses, pink lotuses, red lotuses, white lotuses, coral tree flowers, and great coral tree flowers. He transformed the downpour of meteors over Aṅga and Magadha into a great shower of fragrant powder. He transformed the cries into a variety of pleasing words: the word *buddha*, the word *dharma*, the word *sangha*, the word *pāramitā* [=perfection], the word *abhijñā* [=higher knowledge], the word *avaivartika* [=irreversible], the phrase *caturmāraparājaya* [=overcoming the four māras], the phrase *bodhimaṇḍa-upasaṃkramaṇa* [=approaching the seat of awakening], and last, the words *sopādāna-nirupādāna* [=appropriation and non-appropriation]. He eliminated all the dust, darkness, and wind. And whatever grass, bushes, herbs, forest trees, lands, hills, and mountains there are in the world, he transformed it all into the seven jewels.[30]

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[29] Skt. (K): sarvacāturdvīpikāyām ākāśaṃ mahākālameghair āpūrayām āsuḥ | mahākālavāyubhiś colkāpātaiś ca sumeruṃ parvatarājānaṃ pāṇibhiḥ parājaghnuḥ | sarvāṃ cāturdvīpikāṃ prakampayām āsuḥ | paramabhairavāṃś ca śabdān samutsasarjuḥ | yato nāga mahānāgāḥ yato yakṣā mahāyakṣāḥ sarvāvantyā mahāpṛthivyāḥ sagiriśailaparvatāyāḥ sumeroś ca parvatarājñaḥ kaṃpaṃ viditvā sarasāṃ mahāsarasāṃ nadīkunadīmahānadīnāṃ mahāsamudrāṇāṃ ca saṃkṣobhaṃ jñātvā gaganatale tasthuḥ | sā ca māraparṣat sumerumūrdhani sthitvā yojanapramāṇāṃ vṛṣṭim abhinirmimīyāṃgamagadheṣu samutsasarja | cāsimusalapāṣāṇatomarabhiṇḍipāla-nārācakṣuraprakṣuramukhakṣurakalpavāsimukhavāsidhārakarālacakravikrālacakradṛḍhakharaparuṣarūkṣavarṣaṃ nirmāyotsasarja || (17.2–17.12); Tib. (K): gang gling bzhi pa'i nam mkha' thams cad sprin nag po chen po dang | rlung nag po chen po dang | skar mdas bkang nas ri'i rgyal po ri rab la'ang lag gis brdabs te | gling bzhi pa thams cad rab tu g.yos par byas nas shin tu 'jigs pa'i sgra rnams kyang 'byin to || de dag gis klu dang | klu chen po dang | gnod sbyin dang | gnod sbyin chen po dag gis sa chen po brag dang rir bcas pa thams cad dang ldan pa dang | ri'i rgyal po ri rab kyang g.yos par rig | mtsho dang | mtsho chen po dang | 'bab chu dang | chu bran dang | 'bab chu chen po dang | rgya mtsho chen po rnams kyang 'khrugs par rig nas nam mkha'i dkyil na 'khod do || bdud kyi 'khor de dag ni ri rab kyi zom la 'khod nas | dpag tshad tsam gyi rdo'i char mngon par sprul te nam mkha' las kun tu 'bebs so || ral gri dang | gtun shing dang | rdo ba dang | mtshon rtse gnyis dang | ste'u ka ma dang | lcags mda' dang | spu gri dang | spu gri lta bu dang | dgra sta dang | ste'u so lta bu dang | ste'u so dang | kha rang rong can dang | shin tu rang rong can dang | sra ba | drag pa | rtsub pa | rno ba'i char rab tu sprul te kun tu phab bo || (28.3–28.18).

[30] Skt. (K): yat sarvāṃ śilāpraharaṇavṛṣṭiṃ divyotpalapadmakumudapuṇḍarīkamāndāravamahāmāndāravapuṣpa-vṛṣṭim adhyatiṣṭhat | tāṃś ca śabdān nānāvādyān adhyatiṣṭhat | yad uta buddhaśabdam dharmaśabdaṃ

Through this concentration, in other words, Śākyamuni renders not only harmless but positively beautiful and beneficial the projectiles and weapons hurdled by Māra's children. And right after effecting this transformation, the Buddha fills the cosmos with illustrious light, which prompts myriad beings to pay homage to him, to attain recollection of their former lives, and to be reborn in divine realms.[31]

This series of events is called a *prātihārya*, a common translation for which is *miracle*, *marvel*, or *wonder*. However we render the word, *prātihārya* is a multivalent term that denotes wonders of superhuman potency (Skt. *ṛddhiprātihārya*), telepathy (Skt. *ādeśanāprātihārya*), and

saṃghaśabdaṃ pāramitāśabdam abhijñāśabdam avaivartikaśabdam abhiṣekaśabdaṃ caturmāraparājayaśabdaṃ bodhimaṇḍopasaṃkramaṇaśabdaṃ yāvat sopādānanirupādānaśabdān adhyatiṣṭhat || sarvā rajo'ndhakāravāyavaḥ praśemuḥ | ye kecid iha cāturdvīpike tṛṇagulmauṣadhivanaspatikṣitiśailaparvatās tān sarvān saptaratnamayān adhyatiṣṭhat || (17.14–18.6); Tib. (K): gang rdo dang | mtshon cha de dag thams cad ni lha'i me tog ut pa la dang | pad ma dang | ku mu da dang | pad ma dkar po dang | man dā ra ba dang | man dā ra ba chen po'i me tog gi char chen por byin gyis brlabs | yul ang ga ma ga dhār skar mda' ltung ba ni spos kyi char chen por byin gyis brlabs sgra de ni rol mo'i sgra sna tshogs su byin gyis brlabs te | 'di ltar sangs rgyas kyi sgra dang | chos kyi sgra dang | dge 'dun gyi sgra dang | pha rol tu phyin pa'i sgra dang | mngon par shes pa'i sgra dang | phyir mi ldog pa'i sgra dang | dbang bskur ba'i sgra dang | bdud bzhi pham par bya ba'i sgra dang | byang chub kyi snying por 'gro ba'i sgra dang | len pa dang bcas pa dang | len pa med pa'i sgrar byin gyis brlabs so || rdul dang | mun nag dang | rlung thams cad kyang rab tu zhi'o || gang gling bzhi pa 'di na rtswa dang | shing gel pa dang | sman dang | nags tshal dang | sa dang | brag dang | ri ci yod pa de dag thams cad ni rin po che sna bdun du byin gyis brlabs so || (28.20–29.13).

[31] Skt. (K): anavalokyamūrdhno bhagavān yāvad brahmalokaṃ kāyena vaśaṃ vartayām āsa | ekaikasmāc ca lakṣaṇād bhagavatas tādṛśī prabhā niścacāra yayā prabhayā tṛsāhasramahāsāhasrī lokadhātur udāreṇāvabhāsena sphuṭo 'bhūt | ye cāsyāṃ trisāhasramahāsāhasryāṃ lokadhātau devanāgayakṣagandharvāsuragaruḍakinnara-mahoragapretapiśācakumbhāṇḍamanuṣyāmanuṣyā nairayikā vā tairyagyonikā vā yāmalaukikā vā te sarve bhagavaṃtam adrākṣuḥ | bahūni ca devanāgayakṣamanuṣyāmanuṣyaśatasahasrāṇi gaganasthāḥ puṣpair avakīrya pradakṣiṇaṃ cakruḥ stuvaṃto namaś cakruḥ | bahūni ca nairayikatairyagyonikayāmalaukikākṣobhyakoṭīśata-sahasrāṇi smṛtiṃ pratilebhire | pūrvāvaropitakuśalamūlam anusmṛtya namo buddhāyeti kṛtvā tebhyo 'pāyebhyaś cavitvā deveṣūpapannāḥ || (18.7–19.1); Tib. (K): bcom ldan 'das gtsug tor bltar mi mthong ba dang ldan pa ni tshangs pa'i 'jig rten gyi bar du skus dbang mdzad do || bcom ldan 'das kyi mtshan re re las kyang 'di 'dra 'ba'i 'od byung ste | 'od des stong gsum gyi stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams snang ba chen pos khyab par gyur to || stong gsum gyi stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams 'di'i lha dang | klu dang | gnod sbyin dang | dri za dang | lha ma yin dang | nam mkha' lding dang | mi 'am ci dang | lto 'phye chen po dang | yi dags dang | sha za dang | grul bum dang | mi dang | mi ma yin pa dang | sems can dmyal ba dang | dud 'gro'i skye gnas pa dang | gshin rje'i 'jig rten pa de dag thams cad kyis bcom ldan 'das mthong nas lha dang | klu dang | gnod sbyin dang | dri za dang | lha ma yin dang | nam mkha' lding dang | mi 'am ci dang | lto 'phye chen po dang | mi dang | mi ma yin pas dang | nam mkha' la 'khod pa brgya stong mang pos ni me tog gtor cing bstod nas bskor ba byas so || sems can dmyal ba pa dang | dud 'gro'i skye gnas pa dang | gshin rje'i 'jig rten pa mi 'khrugs pa bye ba khrag khrig brgya stong mang po ni dran pa rnyed de | dge ba'i rtsa ba sngon bskyed pa dran nas sangs rgyas la phyag 'tshal lo zhes byas te | ngan song de dag nas shi 'phos nas lhar skyes so || (29.14–30.9).

dharma instruction (Skt. *anuśāsanī-* or *dharmaprātihārya*).[32] Though Buddhist attitudes toward these wonders vary, the tendency in Mahāyāna sūtras is to accept all three and to frame them as sharing a single soteriological aim.[33] The *Precious Banner* is no exception here insofar as this miraculous display captures the attention of audiences and catalyzes their reorientation.[34] On account of the transformation of weapons into "Dharma words," the illumination of the cosmos, and the recollection of former lives and heavenly rebirth on the part of myriad unnamed actants, Māra's children find themselves sharing the same orientation to the Buddha as the courtesans.

But framing the result of this marvelous series of events in terms of orientation alone only gets us halfway there. It is not just that Māra's children reorient themselves—we have good reason to infer, in fact, that they are already oriented toward Śākyamuni insofar as it is generally best practice to aim at one's target when hurling projectiles. What we have in mind, of course, is an *affective* reorientation—a reorientation having to do with tendencies to feel and move that are constitutive of social boundaries. And it is precisely this reading that the narrator's next words warrant:

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[32] See David Fiordalis, "Miracles in Indian Buddhist Narratives and Doctrine."

[33] "[T]he wondrous and the didactic," Luis O. Gómez writes, "fuse into a more or less integral whole, *dharma* is in itself a miracle, and miracles are themselves exemplifications of the *dharma*" ("On Buddhist Wonders and Wonder-Working," *JIABS* 33, nos. 1–2 [2010–11]: 513–54, at 531–32). See also Luis O. Gómez, "The Bodhisattva as Wonder-Worker," in *Prajñāpāramitā and Related Systems*, ed. Lewis Lancaster (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 221–62.

[34] "Vasubandhu defines *prātihārya* as 'at the outset, carrying away (*haraṇa*) people who are ready to be disciplined (*vineyamanas*).' He explains the verbal prefix *prāti-* as a combination of two prefixes, *pra* + *ati*, the former signifying 'the beginning' and the latter 'extreme intensity.' Or, Vasubandhu tells us, miracles are called *prātihārya* because they 'seize' (*pratiharanti*) people who hate or are indifferent to the *dharma*. One may doubt the philological accuracy of these etymological explanations, but there can be little doubt that they are intended to draw a clear connection between miracles and religious conversion." Fiordalis, "Miracles in Indian Buddhist Narratives and Doctrine," 390 (see also 390 nn. 20–22).

> Seeing such a great miraculous display as this from the Lord and obtaining intense joy toward him, twenty thousand from Māra's army, together with their assembly of followers, then approached the Lord.[35]

Seeing the miracle, Māra's children overflow with joy. While they had confronted Śākyamuni as an enemy, they now identify him as a joyful object. Like the courtesans, the children's affective reorientation furnishes them a new trajectory and a new tendency to move toward the Buddha. Though such wholesale shifts do not come so easily in the real world, this is the picture our narrator displays for readers. Once in his presence, Māra's children find themselves standing alongside the courtesans, sharing physical as well as affective space with them. Together, the children and courtesans then utter a series of verses in praise of Śākyamuni and take refuge in him.[36] These verses need not receive comment, as their content is standard fare for the genre. But we should note before moving forward that each verse ends with the same basic refrain: "To you do we go for refuge." In addition to lending a songlike quality to the lot of them, this refrain

[35] Skt. (K): tataś ca mārasainyā dvāviṃśatimāraputraśatasahasrāṇi saganapārṣadyāni bhagavata evaṃrūpaṃ prātihāryaṃ dṛṣṭvā bhagavato 'ntike 'tīva prasādaṃ pratilabhdvā yena bhagavāṃs tenopajagmuḥ | (19.2–19.4); Tib. (K): bdud kyi sde de'i nang nas bdud kyi bu nyi khri'i tshogs kyi 'khor dang bcas pas bcom ldan 'das kyi cho 'phrul chen po 'di lta bu mthong nas | bcom ldan 'das la rab tu dga' bar gyur te | bcom ldan 'das ga la ba der dong nas phyin pa dang | (30.10–30.13).

[36] Skt. (K): upetya sārdhaṃ taiḥ paṃcabhir mārakanyāśatair bhagavataḥ pādau śirasābhivandyāṃjalīn pragṛhyābhir gāthābhir adhibhāṣaṃte sma || viśuddhimūrte paramābhirūpa jñānodadhe kāṃcanamerutulya | vitatya lokaṃ yaśasā vibhāsi tvam eva nāthaṃ śaraṇam vrajāmaḥ || 1.34 || pranaṣṭamārge vinimīlitākṣe ulkāyase tvaṃ jagatīva sūryaḥ | aparājitaprāṇabhṛd ekabandho tvāṃ sārthavāhaṃ śaraṇaṃ vrajāmaḥ || 1.35 || susaṃbhṛtajñānasamṛddhakośa nabhaḥsvabhāvādivimuktacitta | karuṇāśaya snigdhamanojñavākya sarvārthasiddhaṃ śaraṇaṃ vrajāmaḥ || 1.36 || saṃsārakāntāravimokṣakas tvaṃ sāmagrito hetuphalapradarśakaḥ | maitrāvihārī paramavidhijña karuṇāvihārīṃś charaṇaṃ vrajāmaḥ || 1.37 || māyāmarīcidagacandrasannibhe bhave 'prasaktāviṣayāśrayeṇa | ajñānarugnāśaka lokanātha tvāṃ vaidyarājaṃ śaraṇaṃ vrajāmaḥ || 1.38 || (19.4–20.6); Tib. (K): bdud kyi bu mo lnga brgya dang lhan cig tu bcom ldan 'das kyi zhabs la mgo bos phyag 'tshal te | thal mo sbyar nas tshigs su bcad pa 'di dag smras so || rnam dag sku mnga' mchog tu gzugs bzang ba || ye shes rgya mtsho gser gyi lhun po 'dra || grags pa 'jig rten bgram nas lham me ba || mgon po khyod nyid la ni skyabs su mchi || 1.34 || rab tu lam stor rnam par mig zum la || khyod ni 'jig rten sgron ma nyi ma 'dra || gzhan gyis mi thub srog chags rtsa lag gcig || ded dpon khyod la skyabs su rab tu mchi || 1.35 || shin tu tshogs bsags ye shes 'byor pa'i mdzod || nam mkha'i rang bzhin gzod nas rnam grol thugs || thugs rje bsam pa yid 'ong 'jam pa'i gsung || don kun grub pa khyod la skyabs su mchi || 1.36 || 'khor ba'i dgon pa las ni khyod thar mdzad || tshogs pa las kyang rgyu dang 'bras bu ston || byams la gnas shing mchog gi cho ga mkhyen || thugs rje gnas pa'i skyabs su rab tu mchi || 1.37 || sgyu ma smig rgyu chu zla 'dra ba yi || srid pa la ni yul gyi gnas kyis chags || mi shes nad sel 'jig rten rnams kyi mgon || sman pa'i rgyal po khyod la skyabs su mchi || 1.38 || (30.13–31.12).

illustrates well the point for which I have been arguing here—namely, that the affective alignment shared by the Māra's courtesans and children constitute them as an entirely new *we* centered on a new *happy object*.

After taking refuge in the Buddha—by virtue of their verses' illocutionary force, itself activated by their affective alignment—the children and courtesans *together* confess their faults and offenses;[37] generate the aspiration to attain awakening through practicing the perfections;[38] and offer flowers and parasols to the buddhas of all buddhafields, which (and whom) they see for themselves and thereby experience intense joy and delight.[39] The *prātihārya* performed by the

[37] Skt. (K): tvaṃ setubhūtaś caturaughamadhyād uttārakaḥ saptadhanāryavṛttaiḥ | sanmārgasandarśaka lokabandho kṛpānvitaṃ tvām iha pūjayāmaḥ || 1.39 || . . . vayam agrabuddhim āsaṃ praduṣṭās tvayi yad vayaṃ tu | tam atyayaṃ vīra gṛhāṇa nātha tvam ekabandhur jagati pradhānaḥ || 1.40 || (20.7–20.14, fragmentary); Tib. (K): chu bo bzhi dbus zam par gyur pa khyod || nor bdun 'phags pa'i tshul gyis rab sgrol ba || yang dag lam ston 'jig rten rtsa lag po || thugs rje ldan pa khyod la 'dir mchod do || 1.39 || blo mchog khyod la bdag cag bzod par gsol || khyod la bdag cag yid kyis gnod bsams pa || mgon po dpa' bos nongs pa bzod par gsol || khyod ni 'gro ba'i rtsa lag gcig pu gtso || 1.40 || (31.13–31.20).

[38] Skt. (K): vayaṃ samutsṛjya hi mārapakṣam . . . | nimaṃtrayāmaḥ kila sarvasattvān bodhiṃ labhemo vayam uttamātu || 1.41 || nidarśayāsmākam udāracaryāṃ yathā vayaṃ pāramitāś carema | ananyavādaiḥ katibhis tu dharmaiḥ . . . bodhim avāpnuvaṃti || 1.42 || (20.15–21.5, fragmentary); Tib. (K): bdag cag bdud kyi phyogs rnams rab spangs te || byang chub mchog gi sems ni bskyed par bgyi || sems can ma lus thams cad mgron du gnyer || bdag cag gis ni byang chub mchog thob bgyi || 1.41 || ci nas bdag cag pha rol phyin spyod par || bdag cag rnams la spyod pa rgya cher ston || gzhan ma yin gsung chos ni du rnams dang || ldan na byang chub rab tu thob par 'gyur || 1.42 || (31.21–32.4).

[39] Skt. (K): puṣpāni yat te 'bhimukhaṃ kṣipāmaś chatrāṇi tāny eva tu sarvadikṣu | tiṣṭhaṃtu mūrdhni dvipadottamānāṃ kṣetreṣu sarvartusukhākareṣu || 1.43 || atha khalu . . . kanyāḥ sagaṇapārṣadyā bhagavantaṃ muktakusumair abhyavākiran | tāni ca muktakusumāni bhagavata riddhyanubhāvenānekāni koṭīniyutasahasrāṇi gaṃgānadīvālukādhikāni puṣpacchatrāṇi saṃtiṣṭhaṃte sma | tāni puṣpacchatrāṇi daśasu dikṣu sarvabuddhānāṃ tiṣṭhatāṃ yāpayatāṃ mūrdhasandhāv upary antarīkṣe tasthuḥ | svayaṃ ca tā mārakanyāḥ sagaṇapārṣadyāḥ adrākṣuḥ | daśasu dikṣu sarvabuddhakṣetreṣv asaṃkhyeyeṣu aprameyeṣu buddhānāṃ bhagavatāṃ tiṣṭhatāṃ yāpayatāṃ dharmaṃ deśayatāṃ pariṣadā parivṛtānāṃ bhāṣatāṃ tapatāṃ virocatāṃ sanniṣaṇṇānāṃ tāni puṣpacchatrāṇy upary antarīkṣe mūrdhasandhau saṃsthitāni | te ca buddha bhagavantaḥ samavarṇāḥ samaliṃgāḥ samarūpāḥ samadarśanaḥ | kevalaṃ teṣāṃ buddhānāṃ bhagavatāṃ siṃhāsananānātvaṃ pariṣadānānātvaṃ buddhakṣetraguṇavyūhanānātvaṃ dadṛśuḥ | te ca teṣāṃ buddhānāṃ bhagavatāṃ svaramaṇḍalapādavyāhāram aśrauṣuḥ | sā ca māraparṣad bhagavato 'nubhāvenaivaṃrūpaṃ prātihāryaṃ dṛṣṭvā paramaprītiprasādajātā bhagavataḥ pādau śirobhir vanditvā purato niṣaṇṇā dharmaśravaṇāya || (21.6–22.9, fragmentary); Tib. (K): me tog gang gis kyod la mngon gtor ba || phyogs kun du yang de dag gdugs gyur te || dus kun bde ba'i 'byung gnas zhing du ni || rkang gnyis mchog gi spyi bor 'dug gyur cig || 1.43 || de nas bdud kyi bu mo de dag dang | bdud kyi bu tshogs kyi 'khor dang bcas pa de dag thams cad kyis bcom ldan 'das la me tog sil ma gtor ba dang | me tog sil ma de dag bcom ldan 'das kyi rdzu 'phrul gyi mthus gang gā'i klung gi bye ba khrag khrig brgya stong gi bye ma las 'das pa'i me tog gi gdugs kun tu 'dug par gyur te | me tog gi gdugs de dag kyang phyogs bcu'i sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das bzhugs shing 'tsho la gzhes pa thams cad kyi dbu'i gtsug gi drang thad kyi steng gi bar snang la 'dug go || bdud kyi bu mo de dag dang | bdud kyi bu tshogs kyi 'khor de dag gis kyang so so nas phyogs bcu'i sangs rgyas kyi zhing grangs med dpag tu med pa thams cad na sangs rgyas

Buddha, to reiterate, prompts a wholesale affective reorientation on the part of Māra's children, and this folds them into a single community with Māra's courtesans. Previously intent on doing harm to the Buddha, Māra's courtesans and children are reoriented. And in their alignment, they speak and act together. While some of Māra's children remain misaligned and return to Māra's palace,[40] most happily stay to hear the Dharma along with the courtesans. Through following these once unified, then separated, and ultimately reunified actants, we have a clear view of the sociality the sūtra depicts in its pages and seeks to call into being in the world outside the text. Through affective reorientation, misaligned beings within the narrative come to experience the Buddha and the Dharma as joyful objects. And through their shared affective alignment, they constitute a new social body.

The Cosmic Māras

Māra still yet has allies in the cosmic māras, however, and it is to them that we now turn. As we have seen, they descend upon Sahā on account of the illustrious light that pervades the cosmos when Śākyamuni represents Jyotiḥsomya's recitation of the Ratnaketu *dhāraṇī* in his past life story. They assume that our Māra, the māra of Sahā, is responsible for the light. When they arrive, however, Māra is in his lamentation room. They ask Māra why he is there. And after

bcom ldan 'das bzhugs shing 'tsho la gzhes te | chos kyang 'chad pa 'khor gyis yongs su bskor te | lham me | lhan ne | lhang nger bzhugs pa'i dbu'i gtsug gi drang thad kyi steng gi bar snang la me tog gi gdugs de dag 'dug par gyur pa mthong zhing | sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das de dag kyang kha dog mtshungs pa | rtags mtshungs pa | gzugs 'dra ba mtshungs par snang ba sha stag la | sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das de dag seng ge'i khri tha dad cing 'khor tha dad la | sangs rgyas kyi zhing gi yon tan bkod pa'i nyi tshe tha dad par mthong ste | sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das de dag gi dbyangs kyi dkyil 'khor gyi gsung brjod pa ni thos so || bdud kyi 'khor de dag bcom ldan 'das kyi mthus 'di lta bu'i cho 'phrul mthong nas mchog tu dga' ba dang mos pa skyes te | bcom ldan 'das kyi zhabs la mgo bos phyag btsal nas chos mnyan pa'i phyir spyan sngar 'khod do || (32.5–33.7).

[40] Skt. (K): atha khalu teṣāṃ māraputrāṇāṃ sagaṇapārṣadyānāṃ daśaviṃbarāni pratinivartya mārabhavane evaṃ vṛttāntaṃ mārāya pāpīmate vistareṇāvocann iti | ekaromakūpam api vayaṃ tasya śravaṇasya [sic] gautamasya na śaktā vidhvaṃsayituṃ iti || bhūyaś ca viṃśatisahasrāṇi tam eva śaraṇaṃ jagmuḥ tasyaiva cāgrato niṣaṇṇā dharmaśravaṇāyā || (22.10–22.14); Tib. (K): de nas bdud kyi bu tshogs kyi 'khor dang bcas pa de dag las dkrigs phrag bcu phyir log nas | bdud kyi gnas su de lta bu'i ngo mtshar bdud sdig can la rgya cher bzlas te | dge sbyong gau ta ma de'i ba spu'i khung bu gcig kyang bdag cag gis gzhig par ma nus na gsad par lta ci smos | de'i steng du bdud nyi khri de'i skyabs su dong ste | chos mnyan pa'i phyir de'i mdun na 'khod do || (33.8–33.13).

explaining himself, Māra uses clever and fiery rhetoric in an effort to enlist them in his plan to neutralize the source of his problems. We have already seen and analyzed much of this episode in the chapters above, but the details regarding the cosmic māras' affective reorientation have been left aside for this chapter. Here we consider their reorientation in more depth.

The reorientation of the cosmic māras has its roots in Jyotiṣprabha's visual experience of the Buddha. As we have seen, upon Māra's initial ask, the narrator tells us that "Jyotiṣprabha saw the Lord's body, heard his eloquent Dharma teaching, and suddenly began to tremble, his hairs standing on end."[41] Earlier we characterized this affective response as one of reverence. Jyotiṣprabha, in other words, experiences the Buddha and the Dharma as sources of awe. From this point on, Jyotiṣprabha and a host of other māras attempt to persuade Māra to give up the fight. The Buddha is far too powerful and virtuous, they protest, for Māra to even come close to taking him out. Unsuccessful in their efforts, however, they ultimately (and begrudgingly) agree to lend Māra a helping hand. "Fine," they say, "we will go."[42] And with that, they set out for their respective realms to fetch weapons and prepare for battle.

Upon their return to Sahā, an elite few enact part of Māra's plan. They split up into four bands of fifty, occupy the four gates of Rājagṛha, and prepare to disrupt the Buddha's disciples as they make their way into the city for alms. In a series of protracted episodes, our narrator then details what the māras do when Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, Pūrṇa, and Subhūti enter Rājagṛha and, in turn, what happens to the māras. These events unfold in the same stretch of story time.

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[41] Skt. (K): atha jyotiṣprabho māro bhagavataḥ kāyam adrākṣīt | svaraghoṣayuktām dharmadeśanām aśrauśīt | atha tāvad eva tasya romaharṣaṇaḥ saṃtrāsa utpannaḥ | (55.4–55.6); Tib. (K): de nas bdud me 'od kyis bcom ldan 'das kyi sku mthong | sgra dbyangs dang ldan pa'i chos ston pa thos so || mthong nas de spu zhing zhes byed cing dngangs par gyur te || (68.1–68.3).

[42] Skt. (K): evam astu | gamiṣyāmaḥ | (59.20); Tib. (K): de bzhin du 'dong bar bgyi'o || (71.18–71.19).

For this reason, we will treat these four events synoptically here.[43] As the mendicants enter the city, they are each accosted by small troupes of māras. The māras rush up to them and try to drag them into their midst. "Dance, mendicant! Sing, mendicant!," they shout.[44] But in each instance the same thing happens. The mendicants respond, saying: "Listen to me, friends, and I will cause you to hear a short song you have never heard before."[45] They then perform what we might call Dharma songs—some longer than others, but each presenting a standard Buddhist analysis of things (as reducible, as impermanent, etc.)—and recite *dhāraṇī*s in conclusion.[46] Through this, the troupes of cosmic māras are affectively reoriented. While they initially intend to harm the mendicants, they now experience them (and their words) as sources of delight. "Overjoyed and with gladdened minds,"[47] the māras respond in verse and "sit down in the middle of the road in order to listen to the Dharma."[48] Soon after, Śākyamuni causes the by-now-familiar preaching lotus to emerge in the city of Rājagṛha to sate them.

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[43] Skt. (K): 62.14–64.6, Tib. (K): 75.4–76.17 (Śāriputra through the southern gate); Skt. (K): 64.7–65.15, Tib. (K): 76.18–78.7 (Maudgalyāyana through the eastern gate); Skt. (K): 65.16–68.2, Tib. (K): 78.8–80.19 (Pūrṇa through the northern gate); Skt. (K): 68.3–70.15, Tib. (K): 80.20–83.10 (Subhūti through the western gate).

[44] Skt. (K): nartasva śramaṇa gāyasva śramaṇa (63.4), yāvad (64.9, 66.1), nartasva śramaṇa gāyasva śramaṇa (68.7–68.8). Tib. (K): dge sbyong glu longs shig | dge sbyong gar byos shig | (75.12), bar du ste (76.20, 78.10), dge sbyong glu long shig | dge sbyong gar byos shig || (81.6).

[45] Skt. (K): śṛṇuta yūyaṃ mārṣāḥ svayam | aśrutapūrvaṃ gītikāṃ śrāvayiṣyāmi | (63.5), yāvad (64.9, 66.1), śṛṇuta mārṣā yūyam aśrutapūrvaṃ gītikāṃ śrāvayiṣyāmi (68.8–68.9); Tib. (K): grogs po dag khyed kyis sngon ma thos pa'i glu thos par bya yis nyon cig | (75.13–75.14), bar du ste (76.20, 78.10), grogs po dag khyed kyis sngon ma thos pa'i glu thos par bya yis nyon cig | (81.7–81.8).

[46] Skt. (K): 63.8–63.14, Tib. (K): 75.17–76.7 (Śāriputra's song and dhāraṇī); Skt. (K): 64.10–65.6, Tib. (K): 76.21–77.20 (Maudgalyāyana's song and dhāraṇī); Skt. (K): 66.2–67.17, Tib. (K): 78.12–80.8 (Pūrṇa's song and dhāraṇī); Skt. (K): 68.11–70.6, Tib. (K): 81.11–82.17 (Subhūti's song and dhāraṇī).

[47] Skt. (K): paramahṛṣṭāh suprasannamanasa (63.17, 65.9, 67.19–67.20), paramahṛṣṭāh suprasannamanasaḥ (70.8); Tib. (K): shin tu dga' ste yid rab tu dang nas (76.9, 77.23–77.24), shin tu dga' ste | yid rab tu dga' nas (80.11–80.12), shin tu dga' ste | yid rab tu dad nas (83.1–83.3).

[48] Skt. (K): vīthīmadhye . . . nyaṣedur dharmaśravaṇāya (64.5–64.6, 65.14–65.15), vīthīmadhye . . . niṣaṇṇā dharmaśravaṇāya (68.2), vīthīmadhye nyaṣedur dharmaśravaṇāya (70.15); Tib. (K): srang gi dbus der . . . chos mnyan pa'i phyir . . . 'dug go || (76.15–76.17, 78.5–78.7, 80.17–80.19, 83.8–83.10).

These are not the only cosmic māras, however. Indeed, the māras dispatched to the city gates are only a fraction of Māra's army. As we saw in Chapter Three, when Māra sees the giant preaching lotus, he orders the far more numerous cosmic māras still in his vicinity to attack the lotus. His words, however, fail to mobilize the troops. They do not, in Schaefer's words, "attach to bodies and get them to move."[49] While we should recall that the cosmic māras were less than enthusiastic about going up against the Buddha in the first place, their affective orientation here arrives at proper alignment. And this allows us to witness in "real time" the social implications of affective reorientation in their unfolding. After Māra enjoins his cosmic army to attack the lotus, four māras—three of them unnamed, the fourth our old friend Ghoṣavati—take turns speaking. The first chides Māra for his hostility, characterizes himself and his fellow cosmic māras as disoriented at the sight of Śākyamuni, and identifies Śākyamuni as the highest refuge.[50] The second cosmic māra again shames Māra for his recklessness,[51] then assesses the situation and outlines what the cosmic māras plan to do:

> "While we are losing our strength, the rest of the world is fulfilled through the power of the Buddha. They have rushed to the foot of the lotus, their bodies pure through hearing the Dharma. || 3.83 || (Tib. 3.84)
>
> "We, however, have become grotesque. Our bodies reek, and we are weak and impotent. So long as we are not destroyed instantly, we go to the Lord of Sages for refuge." || 3.84 || (Tib. 3.85)[52]

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[49] Schaefer, *Religious Affects*, 35.

[50] Skt. (K): śṛṇv asmākam idaṃ vaco hitakaraṃ vijñātadharmo 'si kiṃ yat paśyann api mārasainyavilayaṃ nāyāsi śāntin tataḥ | bhrāntāḥ smaḥ prasamīkṣya saugatam idaṃ tejovapuḥ śrīdhanaṃ rūpaṃ nānyad ihottamaṃ suśaraṇaṃ buddhād ṛte nāyakāt || 3.81 || (78.6–78.9); Tib. (K): bdag gi phan byed tshig 'di nyon cig khyod kyi chos rig na || bdag sde brlag pa mthong yang zhi bar ci yi phyir mi 'gro || bde gshegs gzi brjid sku dang dpal 'chang gzugs mthong bdag cag myos || sangs rgyas 'dren pa ma gtogs 'di na skyabs rab mchog gzhan med || 3.82 || (89.17–89.20).

[51] Skt. (K): kumārgasaṃprasthita mārgahīna prajānase na svabalaṃ na śaktiṃ | na lajjase 'patrapase na caiva yat tvaṃ saha spardhasi nāyakena || 3.82 || (78.12–78.15); Tib. (K): log pa'i lam du zhugs shing lam dman pa || bdag gi stobs mthu med pa'ang mi shes sam || 'dren pa la yang gang phyir khyod sdo ba || ngo mi tsha'am 'dzem par mi bya'am || 3.83 || (89.23–90.1).

[52] Skt. (K): asmadbalaṃ yad vilayaṃ prayātaṃ bhuddasya śaktyā tu jagat samagram | upāgamat padmasamīpam āśu dharmaśravāpyāyitaśuddhadehaṃ || 3.83 || vayaṃ tu bībhatsatarāḥ prayātā durgandhakāyā balavīryanaṣṭāḥ | yāvan na

Although the cosmic māras here suffers the same physiological reaction readers will see Māra himself experience later in the sūtra, indicating a yet imperfect affective alignment, they opt to do what is necessary to improve their situation. They opt, in our terms, to put in emotion work. This reading finds justification in what the third unnamed cosmic māras says. "Māra," he begins,

> "you eschew the performance of Dharma and delight in wicked actions. But this awakened lord is skilled in benefitting the world and is foremost in virtue among beings. We now hurry to the city with a delighted and joyful outlook. To the universally recognized panacea for living creatures do we go for refuge." || 3.85 || (Tib. 3.86)[53]

While Māra remains misaligned and therefore continues to see the Buddha as a threat, the cosmic māras now recognize Śākyamuni as a source of benefit. And with this recognition, they tell Māra that they are going to approach the Buddha happily.

The last of the four cosmic māras to speak is Ghoṣavati. While the three unnamed māras before him address Māra directly and reference themselves as a new in-group in the process of splintering, Ghoṣavati speaks only to his fellow māras who, at this point, have broken away from Māra and become a distinct group by virtue of their new shared affective orientation. Apparently leading the way, Ghoṣavati calls out saying:

> "All of you together, listen to my words, filled with delight through devotion. Turning away from wrong views, with deferential bodies you engage in mental and verbal action. You have abandoned anger. You are overjoyed. And you are suffused with devotion and

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yātā vilayaṃ kṣaṇena tāvad vrajāmaḥ śaraṇaṃ munīndram || 3.84 || (78.16–79.2); Tib. (K): bdag cag stobs ni shin tu brlag par 'gyur || sangs rgyas mthu yis 'gro ba ma lus pa || pad ma'i drung du nye bar der 'dong ste || chos thos tshim pas lus kyang shin tu dag || 3.84 || bdag cag rnam par 'jigs shing skrag gyur te || lus ni dri nga stobs dang brtson 'grus stor || ji tsam skad cig brlag par ma gyur pa || de yi bar du thub dbang skyabs su 'dong || 3.85 || (90.2–90.9).

[53] Skt. (K): pāpīmaṃs tvam apetadharmacaraṇaḥ pāpakriyāyāṃ rato nātho hy eṣa jagaddhitārthakuśalo buddhaḥ satām agraṇī | āyāmo nagaraṃ drutaṃ vayam iha prītiprasannekṣaṇāḥ gacchāmaḥ śaraṇaṃ trilokamahitaṃ sarvauṣaddhaṃ prāṇināṃ || 3.85 || (79.4–79.7); Tib. (K): sdig can khyod ni chos kyi spyod pa spangs shing sdig byed dga' || sangs rgyas mgon 'di 'gro ba'i phan don mkhas shing dge ba'i mchog || grong khyer 'dir byon bdag cag myur du dga' zhing dang bas blta || 'jig rten gsum mchod srog chags kun gyi sman la skyabs su 'dong || 3.86 || (90.11–90.15).

joy in the excellent words of the Sage. We go to the rare visible Buddha for refuge and worship him today out of devotion!" || 3.86 || (Tib. 3.87)[54]

In this episode, we see the cosmic māras remaining in Māra's vicinity reach proper alignment. We also see the social implications of alignment in the sūtra's narrative. As the cosmic māras undergo reorientation, they leave Māra, constitute a new social group characterized by alignment with the Buddha, and together worship the Buddha as he enters Rājagṛha.[55]

III

Outside Rājagṛha, there is a set of aligned actants who are nevertheless given what we will call an affective course correction. Though already properly oriented, they are on two occasions told not to fear for Śākyamuni as he enters the city—once by the gods of the pure abodes and again by the Buddha himself. By delivering a feeling rule to affectively aligned actants through gods and Śākyamuni, the sūtra shows that alignment is not a one-and-done kind of thing. Staying in line and feeling properly takes emotion work on the part of individuals—they must determine in each situation to what extent their feelings are appropriate and, if determined to be out of line, work to feel differently than they do. But a perhaps more significant reason to focus on this episode is that the circumstances surrounding the feeling rule given in the narrative mirrors those in which readers find themselves. While Śākyamuni's devotees fear living in a world without him, readers actively live in such a world. But Śākyamuni enjoins them not to be afraid, as he

[54] Skt. (K): sarve yūyaṃ samagrāḥ śṛṇuta mama vaco bhaktikaḥ prītiyuktāḥ pāpād dṛṣṭin nivārya praṇatatanu manovāksamācaraceṣṭāḥ | tyaktakrodhāḥ prahṛṣṭā munivaravacane sphītabhaktiprasādā gatvā buddhaṃ samakṣaṃ śaraṇam asulabhaṃ pūjayāmo 'dya bhaktyā || 3.86 || (79.10–79.14); Tib. (K): khyed kun tshogs pas gus shing dga' ldan nga yi tshig nyon cig || sdig pa'i lta ba kun bzlog lus btud ngag yid 'thun spyod de || khro spongs rab dga' thub pa'i gsung mchog la yang dga' dad skyed || sangs rgyas mngon sum rnyed dka' skyabs dong de ring gus par mchod || 3.87 || (90.18–90.22).

[55] Skt. (K): 79.15–81.15 (preparation), missing (enactment), but see fragment from Central Asia in Karashima, "The Sanskrit Fragments Or. 15010 in the Hoernle Collection," in *BLSF*, 2:1.335–588, at 443–46; Tib. (K): 90.23–92.20 (preparation), 130.1–131.11 (enactment).

will never stop teaching the Dharma for the benefit of sentient beings. This episode complements nicely, in many ways, the narrative of Māra we have traced. Reading this episode in light of our analyses of Māra's narrative and the instances of affective reorientation, then, we can appreciate the *Precious Banner* as constructing itself not as a token of the Buddha's absence and thus a source of sorrow, but rather as tangible proof of the truth of Śākyamuni's reassurance and thus a source of joy for readers in a buddha-less world.

A Cause for Concern

After the third chapter of the sūtra concludes with Māra insincerely taking refuge in the Buddha to escape the presence of the lotus and thereby trapping himself in a liminal (un)bound state in the presence of the same lotus, there is a scene change. Chapter four turns attention away from Māra and toward the Buddha and his devotees outside Rājagṛha. The events narrated begin prior to Māra's desperate final attack, but they eventually meet up with and move past it. The narrator here employs the technique of mixed analepsis, in other words. Where mixed analepsis is used in a narrative ought to condition how we read the events narrated therewith, as should the moment in story time a narrator takes readers back to. The former sort of detail is easy enough to glean, but the latter is not always guaranteed. We happen to know, however, where exactly in the story our narrator returns. "As was said earlier," the narrator begins,

> the four great disciples went into the great city of Rājagṛha for alms and were invited to engage in improper behavior by the young māras. "Dance, mendicant! Sing, mendicant!" But those great disciples sang songs about the path to nirvāṇa while dancing about in the middle of the road, thereupon the earth shook. And at that moment . . . [56]

[56] Skt. (K): yāvat pūrvoktaṃ te catvāro mahāśrāvakas tad rājagṛhaṃ mahānagaraṃ piṇḍāya praviśantas tair mārakumārakair anācāreṇādhiṣṭāḥ | nartasva śramaṇa gāyasva śramaṇeti | taiś ca mahāśrāvakair vīthīmadhye pradhāvadbhir nirvāṇamārgapadapratisaṃyuktena gītasvareṇa yadā gāthā bhāṣitā tadā mahāpṛthivī pracakaṃpe | tatkṣaṇaṃ . . . (86.1–86.5; ellipsis mine); Tib. (K): gong du smos pa'i bar du ste | nyan thos chen po bzhi po de dag rgyal po'i khab kyi grong khyer chen por bsod snyoms kyi phyir song pa bdud gzhon nu de dag gis dge sbyong glu longs shig | dge sbyong gar byos shig ces spyod pa ma yin pa byed du bcug nas | nyan thos chen po de dag kyang srang gi dbus na rgyug cing mya ngan las 'das pa'i lam gyi tshig dang ldan pa'i glu'i dbyangs kyis gang gi tshe tshigs su bcad pa smras pa de'i tshe sa chen po 'di rab tu g.yos so || skad cig de nyid la . . . (96.2–96.7; ellipsis mine).

With this piece of information, we know that we are being returned to the point in the story at which the affective reorientation of the four bands of cosmic māras is actively unfolding. What this further means is that we are returning to a point in the story at which the remaining cosmic māras have yet to undergo their affective reorientation. The events of chapter four are thus to be read as unfolding at roughly the same time as the events of chapter three. This is relevant to the analysis below, for it is only given this knowledge that the events narrated in chapter four make much sense at all.

As noted, the actants to be discussed are already aligned. Yet they are twice told that they ought not fear Śākyamuni's entry into Rājagṛha. Let us turn now to the event that precipitates the series of events in question and follow it where it leads.

> At that moment, many thousands of *deva*s, *nāga*s, *yakṣa*s, *gandharva*s, *asura*s, *garuḍa*s, *kinnara*s, and *mahoraga*s, glad in the Buddha's teaching, cried out with tears on their faces:
>
> > "The Supreme Master of Dharma remains free from sorrow, and this too is the condition of the Victor's excellent teaching. Seeing that shameful deed on the part of the disciples, how will people gladden their minds?" || 4.1 ||[57]

We here are given two distinct (but related) characterizations of this myriad's shared state. First, they feel *prasāda* toward Śākyamuni's teaching (Skt. *śāsana*; Tib. *bstan pa*). Second, they are weeping. And they are weeping about the affective consequences of what they perceive to be a shameful action on the part of the monastics at the city gates. With this verse, our narrator uses

[57] Skt. (K): tatkṣaṇaṃ bahūni devanāgayakṣagandharvāsuragaruḍakinnaramahoragaśatasahasrāṇi bhagavacchāsana-abhiprasannāni sāsrumukhāny evam āhuḥ || tiṣṭhaty aśoke varadharmasārathir eṣā hy avasthā jinavaraśāsanasya | tacchrāvakānāṃ janatā dya dṛṣṭvā viḍambitaṃ kena manaḥ prasādayet || 4.1 || (86.5–86.10); Tib. (K): skad cig de nyid la lha dang | klu dang | gnod sbyin dang | dri za dang | lha ma yin dang | nam mkha' lding dang mi 'am ci dang | lto 'phye chen po brgya stong mang po bcom ldan 'das kyi bstan pa la dad pa rnams gong mchi ma can gyi 'di skad ces smras so || chos kyi kha lo sgyur mchog mya ngan med bzhugs kyang || rgyal pa'i bstan pa di lta bu yi gnas gyur te || nyan thos de dag la ni kyal ka deng byas pa || 'gro ba rnams kyis mthong na dad par ga la 'gyur || 4.1 || (96.7–96.14). My thanks to Nabanjan Maitra for discussing the sense of this passage with me.

these divine beings to raise a question for the reader (like an off-stage voice). That the disciples are singing and dancing is identified as a potentially serious problem. Prohibited in monastic law, singing and dancing breaks monastic composure.[58] And when composure is broken, it is possible that monastic bodies will not properly affect those who encounter them. The concern, in short, has to do with the capacity of monastic bodies to bring about what we have been calling affective reorientation. The divine beings thus approach the Buddha and ask him to intervene. With tears still streaming down their faces, they say:

> "Behold the condition of this teaching today, Lord. For the sake of the preservation of the teaching and proper conduct, may the Omniscient One not be indifferent." || 4.2 ||[59]

They implore the Buddha, in other words, not to ignore what they perceive to be laxity on the part of monastics. To them, that the monks are singing and dancing must mean that they have lost their composure and will thus lead people astray (or at least be unable to properly affect those with whom they come into contact). To their plea, the Buddha says:

> "I will go there myself, then, subdue Māra and his fleet, and make all people enter the city of nirvāṇa." || 4.3 ||

With this response, Śākyamuni removes any blame or wrongdoing from his disciples. But he also agrees to do something to address the situation.

We might expect to see some measure of relief on the part of the whistleblowing divines. But what the Buddha plans to do instead causes great distress. In a long series of monologues, several aligned actants beg Śākyamuni not to enter the city out of fear that he will be killed. At the outset of this series, those who had just asked the Buddha to intervene together beg him to

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[58] For more on the history of the prohibition again singing and dancing, as well as interpretations thereof and exceptions thereto, see Cuilan Liu, "Regulating the Performing Arts: Buddhist Canon Law on the Performance and Consumption of Music in Tibet," *RET*, no. 40 (2017): 55–91.

[59] Skt. (K): avasthāṃ śāsanasyāsya bhagavaṃ vīkṣya sāṃprataṃ | mopekṣāṃ kuru sarvajña śāsanācāraguptaye || 4.2 || (86.14–86.15); Tib. (K): da ltar bstan pa 'di yi gnas || bcom ldan 'das kyis kun gzigs te || bstan pa'i cho ga bsrung slad du || kun mkhyen btang snyoms ma mdzad cig || 4.2 || (96.19–97.1).

stay put and to instead conquer Māra and his army from his seat outside Rājagṛha.[60] This is not an unreasonable request—assuming, that is, that the Buddha is capable of such a feat. In his response, however, the Buddha first assures his audience that he cannot be harmed, then goes on to tell them that he must enter the city because he cannot, as they think, subdue Māra and his army from a distance.[61] (Whether Śākyamuni is telling the truth or lying here is a false dilemma—it's *upāya* all the way down with this guy.) And what's more, the Buddha tells his audience that the fearsome māras will be waiting not to kill him but to worship him from a place of joy and gladness.[62] This turns out to be the case, of course. But what occurs when Śākyamuni enters the city is not our focus here—we have treated many (though not all) of these episodes in some depth above. What does concern us are the many attempts made to make the Buddha stay—themselves motivated by a combination of abject fear and sorrow—and Śākyamuni's subsequent affective course correction of narrative actants whose greatest fear shares a striking resemblance with the world of the reading present.

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[60] Skt. (K): mā bhagavaṃ gaccha || . . . śakto bhagavān ihaivāsane niṣaṇṇo mārakoṭīnayutāni parājetuṃ . . . nādya bhagavato gamanakālo yuktaḥ (87.4, 87.7–87.8, 87.9; ellipses mine); Tib. (K): bcom ldan 'das ma gshegs cig | . . . bcom ldan 'das kyis gdan 'di la bzhugs bzhin du bdud bye ba khrag khrig rab tu pham par mdzad pa dang | . . . bcom ldan 'das deng gi dus la gshegs pa'i mi rigs so || (97.7–97.8, 97.12–97.13, 97.16–97.17; ellipses mine).

[61] Skt. (K): yāvantaḥ sattvadhātau sattvās te sarve mārā bhaveyur yāvaṃti ca pṛthivīparamāṇurajāṃsi tāvanty ekaikasya mārabalādhiṣṭhānāni bhaveyuḥ | te sarve mama vadhāya parākrameyur ekaromakūpasyāpi me na śaktā vighātayituṃ | śakaś cāham ihaiva niṣaṇṇo mārakoṭīnayutāni parājetuṃ sthāpyainaṃ saparivāraṃ māraṃ | (87.11–87.15); Tib. (K): sems can gyi khams na sems can ji snyed pa de dag thams cad bdud du gyur la | de dag re re'i bdud kyi stobs dang | byin gyi rlabs kyang sa'i rdul phra rab tu rdul ji snyed pa de tsam du gyur te | de dag thams cad nga la bsad par shom yang spu'i khung bu gcig tsam la'ang gnod par mi nus so || ngas ni 'di na 'dug bzhin du bdud bye ba khrag khrig rnams rab tu pham par bya ba dang | gdul bar nus te | bdud g.yog dang bcas pa 'di ni ma gtogs so || (97.19–97.23).

[62] Skt. (K): gamiṣyāmi punar ahaṃ yan mama pūjākarmaṇa ebhir māraiḥ sarvaṃ rājagṛhaṃ mahānagaraṃ mārabalarddhivikurvaṇādhiṣṭhānavyūhair alaṃkṛtaṃ tad anukaṃpāyai paribhokṣye yat te mārāḥ paramaprītiprasādajātāḥ kuśalamūlabījam avaropayiṣyaṃty anuttarāyāṃ samyaksaṃbodhau || (87.15–87.19); Tib. (K): yang nga la mchod pa bya ba'i phyir bdud 'di dag gis rgyal po'i khab kyi grong khyer chen po thams cad bdud kyi stobs dang | rdzu 'phrul dang | rnam par 'phrul pa'i byin gyi rlabs kyi bkod pas brgyan pas | de dag la snying brtse ba'i phyir 'gro bar bya ste yongs su spyod do || de nas bdud de dag rab tu dga' zhing dad pa skyes nas bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu dge ba'i rtsa ba'i sa bon skyed par 'gyur ro || (97.23–98.6).

The Goddesses and Śākyamuni

When the Buddha declares his intent to enter Rājagṛha, readers meet several new actants. These actants are goddesses (Skt. *devatā*; Tib. *lha mo*). Each has a specific divine purview—ranging from a tree to the city of Rājagṛha, from a city gate to the whole earth. Several of the goddesses are named and speak for the group, but there are also some who speak as individuals and a few cases of myriad goddesses speaking in unison. In nearly every case, our narrator reports that they are weeping as they speak. And the content of their speech makes it clear that they are weeping because they fear that Śākyamuni will be killed when he enters the city. In many ways, they are mourning in advance what they think is the inevitable loss of the Buddha. But their apprehension is inappropriate—they ought not fear, for Śākyamuni will always teach the Dharma on the earth. Using the goddesses as relatable focalizers, then, our narrator finds a way to address readers in a way that complements and anticipates the moment when Śākyamuni tells Māra (another relatable focalizer) that he should be happy because he is the reason the sūtra is being taught. (We have, of course, already seen this injunction—but readers of the sūtra have not.) While readers live in the world that the goddesses fear, they nevertheless have in the *Precious Banner* tangible proof that Śākyamuni continues to teach the Dharma.

The first in our long line of speakers is a *devatā* named Prabhāvaśobhanā. "Right when the Lord wanted to get up from his seat," our narrator begins, "Prabhāvaśobhanā stood before the Lord and, with tears on her face, said:

> "Now is not the time, Lord, to enter the city. It is full of māras, each of them ferocious. The Lion among teachers would be totally surrounded. || 4.4 ||
>
> "Burning with rage and bearing sharp weapons, they are hell-bent on killing you. By no means should you enter, Lord, lest the kinsman of the world be destroyed." || 4.5 ||[63]

[63] Skt. (K): yadā ca bhagavān āsanād utthātukāmo 'tha tāvad eva prabhāvaśobhanā nāma veṇuvanaparipālikā devatā sā bhagavataḥ purato 'srumukhī sthitvaivam āha | naivādya kālo bhagavan praveṣṭuṃ puraṃ samaṃtād iha

What we see in this passage is a devotee in a state of abject fear at the mere thought of losing the Buddha. Thinking the city to be teeming with hostile māras—about which, we should note, she is probably correct at this moment in story time—she warns him of the danger and enjoins him not to enter. This general sentiment then gets echoed by a range of *devatā*s several times. Similar pleading words of caution and fear take up nearly nine full pages in Kurumiya's Sanskrit and Tibetan editions of the sūtra, which amounts to nearly a third of the chapter in question. The fact that the narrator spends so much time on this series of events signals that it is significant. But its importance for us is further signaled by the continued thematization of affect, the presence of feeling rules, and the similarity between the feared world and the world readers live in.

Because there are several monologues—some short like Prabhāvaśobhanā's, others quite long—we simply cannot represent and analyze them in full. We will instead summarize and quote illustrative passages, providing the primary text in notes for specialists. As we saw above, our first goddess begins to speak when Śākyamuni thinks to stand. Thoughts and actions of the Buddha serve as markers in this way throughout this series. A second goddess, Dyutimati, begs the Buddha to stay when he physically stands, crying "Don't go!"[64] A third, Siddhimati, chimes

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mārapūrṇaṃ | ekaika evaṃ paramapracaṇḍaḥ koṭīvṛtas tiṣṭhati vadisiṃhaḥ || 4.4 || dveṣapradīptā niśitāstradhāriṇo vadhāya te vyākulacetasaḥ sthitāḥ | mā sarvathādya praviśasva nātha mā saṃkṣyaṃ yāsyasi lokabandho || 4.5 || (88.1–88.11); Tib. (K): ji tsam gdan las bzhengs par bzhed pa dang | de nas 'od ma'i tshal bsrung ba'i lha mo mthu mdzes zhes bya ba des bcom ldan 'das kyi spyan sngar gdong mchi ma can du 'dug nas 'di skad ces gsol to || bcom ldan de ring gshegs pa'i dus ma lags || grong khyer 'di dag kun nas bdud kyis bltam || re re la yang shin tu ma rungs pa || bye bas smra ba'i seng ge bskor cing mchis || 4.4 || zhe sdang rab 'bar rno ba'i mtshon tshogs te || khyod dkrongs slad du 'khrugs pa'i sems kyis gnas || mgon po rnam pa kun tu deng ma gshegs || 'jig rten rtsa lag brlags par ma bzhud cig || 4.5 || (98.7–98.17).

[64] Skt. (K): yadā ca bhagavān āsanād abhyutthitas tadā dyutimatir nāma vihāradevatā sā bhagavataḥ pādau śirasābhivandyaivam āha | pāpīmatāṃ sahasrāṇi paṃca tiṣṭhanti sāyudhāḥ | tvāṃ pratīkṣaṃti nistriṃśā vraja mādya mahāmune || 4.6 || (88.12–88.15); Tib. (K): gang gi tshe bcom ldan 'das gdan las bzhegs pa de'i tshe | gtsug lag khang gi lha mo snang ba'i blo gros zhes bya ba des bcom ldan 'das kyi zhabs la mgo bos phyag 'tshal nas 'di skad ces gsol to || sdig can dag ni lnga stong po || mtshon char bcas pa mchis pa ni || btsam med de dag khyod la sdod || thub chen de ring ma gshegs shig || 4.6 || (98.18–98.24).

in when the Buddha first steps out of the monastery, calling out "Do not enter the city!"[65] A fourth goddess, Dyutindharā, echoes this sentiment as the Buddha walks through the monastery's courtyard. Wailing piteously, she pleads with Śākyamuni: "Don't go there now!"[66] And a fifth, Jotivarṇā, likewise cries out to the Buddha as he nears the city gate, saying "Don't go!"[67]

None of the first five goddesses says more than three verses. With the sixth, Tamālasārā, we get a more sustained monologue of nine verses, briefly punctuated after the fifth by a remark from our narrator. Though again there is too much to represent in translation here, we need to note a few things. First, there is a sense of urgency in the narrator's framing of her speech that is not present in what came before. While two of the previous five goddesses weep, and one weeps

[65] Skt. (K): yadā bhagavān vihārād viniścakrāma tadā siddhimatir nāmauṣadhidevatā sā bhagavataḥ pādau śirasābhivandyaivam āha | hā kaṣṭaṃ naśyate mārgo dharmanetrī pralujyate | dharmanaur yāti saṃbhedaṃ lokadīpe kṣayaṃ gate || 4.7 || dharmarasa udāro hīyate sarvaloke jagad idam atipūrṇaṃ kleśadhūrtaiḥ pracaṇḍaiḥ | nanu mama bhuvi śaktiḥ kācid asti pralopaṃ sugatasutavarāṇāṃ saṃpradhartuṃ kathaṃcit || 4.8 || atibahava ihāsmiṃ tvadvināśāya raudrā niśitaparaśukhaḍgāḥ saṃsthitāḥ pāpadharmāḥ | kuru sugata mamājñāṃ lokasaṃrakṣaṇārthaṃ praviśa daśabalādre mā puraṃ siddhayātra || 4.9 || (88.16–89.5); Tib. gang gi tshe bcom ldan 'das gtsug lag khang nas byung ba de'i tshe sman gyi lha mo grub pa'i blo gros zhes bya ba des bcom ldan 'das kyi zhabs la mgo bos phyag 'tshal nas 'di skad ces gsol to || 'jig rten sgron ma brlag gyur na || kyi hud chos kyi lam stor cing || chos kyi tshul ni rab tu 'jig || chos kyi gru yang 'jig par 'gyur || 4.7 || 'jig rten kun na rgya chen chos kyi ro ni nyams par 'gyur || 'gro ba 'dir ni nyon mongs g.yo can gdug pas shin tu gtams || sa 'di bde gshegs thub pa'i mchog ni ma rungs 'gyur ba las || ji ltar shin tu 'byung ba'i mthu ni bdag la ci ma mchis || 4.8 || khyod brlag bgyi slad 'di na rab tu mi bzad mang po dang || sdig pa'i chos can ral gri sta re mtshon rnon thogs shing mchis || bde bar gshegs pa 'jig rten bsrung slad bdag gi tshig gson te || stobs bcu grub par bzhud de de ring grong khyer ma gshegs shig || 4.9 || (98.25–99.14).

[66] Skt. (K): atha bhagavān vihārāṃganād abhipratasthe | dyutindharā ca nāma tatra vṛkṣadevatā sā karuṇakaruṇaṃ rudaṃtī bhagavataḥ pādau śirasābhivandyaivam āha | sarvan nātha bhaviṣyati tribhuvanaṃ naṣṭekṣaṇaṃ sāmprataṃ nāśaṃ pūrṇamanorathe tvayi gate sarvārthasiddhe munau | etasmin gagane bhujaṃgarasanās tīkṣṇāsivāṇāyudhās tvannāśāya caraṃti vahnivadanā mā gaccha atrādhunā || 4.10 || (89.6–89.12); Tib. (K): de nas bcom ldan 'das gtsug lag khang gi dang ra nas bzhud pa dang | de na shing gi lha mo 'od 'chang zhes bya ba de | snying rje snying brtse bar ngu zhing bcom ldan 'das kyi zhabs la mgo bos phyag 'tshal nas 'di skad ces gsol to || thams cad don grub thub pa yid bzhin rdzogs khyod ma rung gyur na ni || mgon po khams gsum 'di dag thams cad de'u re mig ni stor bar 'gyur || nam mkha' 'di la sbrul gyi rked chings rno ba'i mda' dang mtshon thogs shing || khyod dkrongs slad du kha nas me 'bar rgyu yi da ni der ma gshegs || 4.10 || (99.15–99.25).

[67] Skt. (K): yadā ca bhagavāṃ dvārakoṣṭhake-m-avatatārātha jyotivaruṇā nāma dvārakoṣṭhakadevatā sā uccasvareṇa rudaṃtī bhagavataḥ pādau śirasābhivandyaivam āha | ete brāhmaṇasaṃjñināṃ puravare viṃśatsahasrāṇy atho dīptāsikṣurasāyakapraharaṇāḥ prekṣaṃti te nirdayāḥ | anyonyāpy atiraudranirdayavatāṃ viṃśatsahasrāṇy atas tiṣṭhantīha vināśanāya tava he mā gaccha śuddhānana || 4.11 || (89.13–89.19); Tib. (K): de nas sgo khang gi lha mo 'od zer chu'i lha zhes bya ba de sgra cher ngu zhing bcom ldan 'das kyi zhabs la mgo bos phyag 'tshal nas 'di skad ces gsol to || grong khyer bzang po 'di na bram zer ming btags stong phrag nyi shu po || mda' dang spu gri mtshon cha 'bar ba thogs te snying rje med par blta || gcig pas gcig mi bzad pa snying rje med pa stong phrag nyi shu rnams || khyod dkrongs slad du 'di na mchis kyis gtsang ma'i zhal ni ma gshegs shig || 4.11 || (100.1–100.8).

loudly, Tamālasārā *hurries* to the Buddha while wailing loudly into the sky.[68] Like those before her, she warns Śākyamuni of the dangers that await him inside the city and implores him not to go.[69] Sensing that the Buddha and the Dharma are in grave danger, sentient beings human and otherwise flee in fear and strike their own heads in dread and misery.[70] She then offers a vivid poetic description the feared state of affairs—saying that the sun of right views is setting, that the torch of the Dharma is dying out, that the Lord is pressed by death, that the water of the Dharma is drying up, and that the world is soon to be overrun by swarms of māras.[71] "Not seeing the Lord turn back,"[72] our narrator tells us, Tamālasārā tries another approach. After reiterating her

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[68] Skt. (K): atha bhagavāṃ dvāraśālāṃ praviveśa | tatra ca tamālasārā nāma rājagṛhanagaraparipālikā devatā sā nabhasy uccasvareṇa rudaṃtī bhagavataḥ sakāśaṃ tvarayopajagāmopetya bhagavataḥ pādau śirasābhivandyaivam āha || (89.20–90.2); Tib. (K): 'de nas bcom ldan 'das sgo khang du byon pa dang | der rgyal po'i khyab kyi grong khyer bsrung ba'i lha mo ta ma la'i snying po zhes bya ba de nam mkha' las [read: la] sgra cher ngu zhing bcom ldang [read: ldan] 'das kyi thad du rings par song ste phyin nas bcom ldan 'das kyi zhabs la mgo bos phyag 'tshal te 'di skad ces gsol to || (100.9–100.13).

[69] Skt. (K): mārgo 'yam bhagavaṃ punaḥ parivṛtaḥ siṃhoṣṭramattadvipair bhikṣūṇāṃ ca viheṭhanāya bahudhā mārair vighātaḥ kṛtaḥ | udyuktās tava cānyatīrthacaraṇāḥ śastur vadhārtham bhuvi tvaṃ meghasvara devanāgakṛpayā mā gaccha dīptaprabha || 4.12 || (90.3–90.6); Tib. (K): bcom ldan shul 'di seng ge rnga mo glang chen smyon pas bskor || dge slong rnams la gtse slad bdud kyis rnam mang gnod pa bgyid || sa 'dir ston pa khyod dkrongs slad du mu stegs gzhan yang brtson || sprin dbyangs 'od 'bar lha klu thugs brtse'i slad du ma gshegs shig || 4.12 || (100.14–100.18).

[70] Skt. (K): dṛṣṭvā narāmarabhujaṃgamakinnarendrās tvacchāsanasya vilayaṃ vyathitāḥ sametya | bhītā dravaṃti bhagavaṃ jitamāra mārān māyākṛtān ativirūpamukhāṃś ca bhūyaḥ || 4.13 || saddharmasya vilopanāṃ ca mahatīṃ lokasya copaplavaṃ nakṣatradyutināśitaṃ ca gaganaṃ candrārkayor vibhramaṃ | saṃpaśyan vata sajjano 'dya virasaḥ proccaiḥ śiras tāḍito hā kaṣṭaṃ kathayaty atīva sugatabhraṃśaṃ samāśaṃkayan || 4.14 || (90.7–90.14); Tib. (K): bcom ldan bdud btul khyod kyis bstan pa rnam zhig dang || sgyu ma bgyis pa mi 'thun gdong can bdud mthong nas || lha mi klu dang mi 'am ci yi dbang po rnams || kun 'dus mi dga' skrag nas shin tu rnam par 'khrugs || 4.13 || dam chos cher zhig pa dang 'jig rten 'khrugs gyur dang || nam mkha' skar ma'i 'od stong nyi zla gyur mthong nas || 'gro mchog kye ma mi bzad klad pa deng drag rdob || bde gshegs ma rung 'gyur bar kun dogs kyi hud mchi || (100.19–101.3).

[71] Skt. (K): naśyate dṛṣṭisūryo 'yaṃ dharmolkā yāti saṃkṣayam | mṛdnāti mṛtyu saṃbuddhaṃ dharmatoyaṃ viśuṣyate || 4.15 || saddharmacāriṇāṃ loke vināśe pratyupasthite | prādurbhāvo 'satam eva mārāṇāṃ bhavatīha tam || 4.16 || (90.15–90.18); Tib. (K): mthong ba'i nyi ma 'di nyams shing || chos kyi sgron ma zad par 'gyur || rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas grongs pas brlag || chos kyi chu yang skam par 'gyur || 4.15 || dam chos spyod pa 'jig rten du || ma rung 'gyur ba nyer gnas tshe || mi dge ba yi bdud rnams kyang || 'di dag tu ni 'byung bar 'gyur || 4.16 || (101.4–101.11).

[72] Skt. (K): atha sā devatā bhagavataḥ pratinivartanam adṛṣṭvā sāsrumukhī bhūya evam āha | (91.1–91.2); Tib. (K): de nas lha mo des bcom ldan 'das phyir ldog par ma mthong nas gdong mchi ma can gyis yang 'di skad ces gsol to || (101.12–101.13).

plea that the Lord not enter her city lest she (as the *devatā* of Rājagṛha) be blamed for his death,[73] she reminds him of his vow to liberate sentient beings and asks him to stay.[74] The Buddha, however, continues to walk toward the city.

When Śākyamuni does not turn back, Dṛḍhā, the goddess of the earth who bore witness to his awakening at the bodhi tree, intervenes. With thousands of other goddesses standing beside her, Dṛḍhā reminds the Buddha of the eons of hard work and sacrifice he endured to attain awakening[75] so that he "could deliver beings from the great flood, teach the Dharma to the world, and totally desiccate the roots of craving, the great fears, and suffering."[76] Lest his

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[73] Skt. (K): lokan nirīkṣava mune samagraṃ mā gaccha vādipravarādya saṃkṣayaṃ | mā matpure nāśam upāgate tvayi trilokanindyā satataṃ bhaveyaṃ || 4.17 || (91.3–91.6); Tib. (K): thub pa 'jig rten kun la gzigs su gsol || smra mchog de ring brlag par ma bzhud cig || bdag gi grong du ma rung khyod gyur na || 'jig rten gsum gyis rtag smad 'gyur du mchi || 4.17 || (101.14–101.17).

[74] Skt. (K): śṛṇu me vaco nayaka sattvasāra mā matpure gaccha vināśam adya | sattvānukaṃpārtham iha pratīkṣa sattvāṃś ca janmārtibhayād vimokṣaya || 4.18 || smara pratijñāṃ hi purā tathāgata prāpyottamaṃ tārayitā bhavetaṃ | sattvān anekān bahuduḥkhataptān āśvāsaya prāṇabhṛtāṃ variṣṭha || 4.19 || tiṣṭhāgramūrte bahukalpakoṭyaḥ kāmeṣu sakto vata bālavargaḥ | tacchāntaye deśaya dharmamārgaṃ svabhāvaśūnyatāyatanendriyārtham || 4.20 || (91.7–91.18); Tib. (K): 'dren pa bdag gi tshig gson sems can mchog || bdag gi grong du brlag par deng ma bzhud || sems can thugs brtse'i slad du 'dir gzhes te || sems can skye bas gtses pa 'jigs thar mdzod || 4.18 || dam pa brnyes nas sgrol bar rab 'gyur bar || sngon gyi dam bcas de bzhin gshegs pas dgongs || sems can mang po sdug bsngal du mas gdungs || srog chags rnams kyi gtso bo dbugs phyung shig || 4.19 || sku mchog bskal pa bye ba mang por bzhugs || kye ma 'dod la chags pa'i byis pa'i sde || de rnams zhi bgyid slad du chos lam shod || skye mched dbang po don ni rang bzhin stong || 4.20 || (101.18–102.3).

[75] Skt. (K): smara pradānaṃ rudhiraprapūrṇā yat te pradattāś caturāḥ samudrāḥ | śirāṃsi cāsthīni ca cakravādavan netrāṇi gaṅgāsikatāsamāni || 4.21 || ratnāni caivaṃ vividhāni pūrvaṃ putrāś ca dārā dviradās tathāśvāḥ | āvāsavastraśayanānnapānaṃ bhaiṣajyam iṣṭaṃ ca tathāturāṇām || 4.22 || kṛtā ca pūjā pravarā svayaṃbhuvāṃ śīlaṃtvaya rakṣitam apramādinā kṣāntiśrutaṃ sevitam eva nityaṃ mātṛjñatā caiva pitṛjñatā ca || 4.23 || cīrṇāny anaṃtāni ca duṣkarāṇi sattva hy anekavyasanāt pramokṣitāḥ | yat pūrvam ādau praṇidhiḥ kṛtas te buddho bhaveyaṃ paramārthadeśakaḥ || 4.24 || (92.6–92.17); Tib. (K): rab tu sbyin la dgongs shing khyod kyis ni || rgya mtsho bzhi bltams pa yi khrag bstsal cing || dbu dang rus pa khor yug ri rab tsam || spyan yang gang gā'i bye ma rnyed stsal to || 4.21 || sngon ni rin chen rnam pa sna tshogs dang || sras dang btsun mo glang chen de bzhin rta || gnas dang gos dang mal cha zas skom dang || de bzhin nad pa dag la 'dod sman bstsal || 4.22 || rang byung mchog rab la ni mchod pa mdzad || khyod kyis bag yod par yang tshul khrims bsrungs || bzod pa dang ni thos pa rtag tu bsnyen || phar 'dzin mar 'dzin pa yang de bzhin no || 4.23 || bya ba dka' ba dag kyang mtha' yas spyad || sems can du ma nyon mongs thar bar mdzad || gang sngon khyod kyis smon lam btab pa ni || lam mchog ston pa sangs rgyas nyid gyur cig || 4.24 || (102.8–102.23).

[76] Skt. (K): uttārayeyaṃ janatāṃ mahaughāl lokāya dharmaṃ vata deśayeyaṃ | tṛṣṇāvimūlāni mahābhayāni duḥkhāny aśeṣāṇi ca śoṣayeyam || 4.25 || (92.18–92.21); Tib. (K): chu bo chen po las ni 'gro ba bgral || 'jig rten la yang shin tu chos bstan te || sdug bsngal ma lus par ni bsal bar bya || (102.24–103.2).

awakening be in vain, Dṛḍhā goes on to say, he should continue to lead living beings to liberation, "teach the Dharma for myriad eons to come," and "stay here forever and deliver the Dharma."[77] But again, despite being addressed by the *devatā* of the earth on which he walks, the Buddha continues toward the city.

And just as the Buddha continues to walk, so too do divine beings continue to plead with him. After a host of divine beings and two additional unnamed goddesses share their two cents,[78] the narrator stops reporting speech and allows readers to come up for air. But the subsequent narration is not easy going. Myriad divine beings of various kinds descend from the sky to display their grief. With tears streaming down their faces, some pull out their hair while others

[77] Skt. (K): abhaye pure sattvagaṇaṃ praveśaye niveśya tān vai varabodhimārge | vimocayeyaṃ bahuduḥkhapīḍitān tāṃ sattvadhātuṃ paripūrṇa kuryām || 4.26 || mārgacyutānām iha pāpacāriṇāṃ kṣamasva nātha śrutaśīlanāśināṃ | nistāyayaitāṃ smaraya pratijñāṃ vadasva dharmaṃ bahukalpakoṭyaḥ || 4.27 || oghāt samuttāraya nātha lokaṃ saṃsnāpayāṣṭāṃgajalena cainaṃ | nehāsti sattvaḥ sadṛśas triloke tvayā hi nātha pravaro na kaścit || 4.28 || muktaḥ svayaṃ lokam imaṃ ca mocaya pratārayasva tribhavārṇavāj jagat | tvam eva buddho jagadekabāndhavo tiṣṭhasva nityaṃ vibhajasva dharmam || 4.29 || (92.22–93.14); Tib. (K): sems can mang po 'jig med grong khyer gzud || sems can de dag dgos pa yongs rdzogs shing || byang chub dam pa la ni shin tu khod || 4.26 || 'di na lam bor sdig pa rnams || tshul khrims thos bshig mgon pos bzod par mdzod || 'di dag sgrol tshig dam bcas dgongs su gsol || bskal pa bye ba mang por chos bstan te || 4.27 || mgon po chu bu dag las 'jig rten sgrol || 'di dag yan lag brgyad kyi chu yis khrus || mgon po mchog rab khyod dang 'dra ba ni || 'jig rten gsum po 'di na 'ga' ma mchis || 4.28 || bdag grol 'jig rten 'di dag grol bar mdzad || srid gsum rgya mtsho las kyang 'gro ba sgrol || khyod ni sangs rgyas 'gro ba'i rtsa lag gcig || rtag tu bzhugs shing chos ni bshad du gsol || 4.29 || (103.3–103.17).

[78] Skt. (K): atha bhagavāṃ dvāraśālāyām avatatāra | tatkṣaṇād eva ca bahūni devanāgayakṣarākṣasakoṭīnayuta-śatasahasrāṇi gagane vicaramāṇāni sāsrumukhāny evam āhuḥ | asmābhir ādau sugatā hi dṛṣṭāḥ praśāntakāle suvinītaśiṣyāḥ | dharmopadeśaṃ vipulaṃ ca kurvatas teṣāṃ vighāto na sa īdṛśo 'bhūt || 4.30 || eṣo hi śāstātinihīnakāle prāptaḥ svayaṃbhūtvam udārabuddhiḥ | kleśāvṛte dharmam uvāca loke paripācanārthaṃ jagatāṃ munīndraḥ || 4.31 || asmiṃ punas tiṣṭhati vādisiṃhe pāpīmatāṃ naikasahasrakoṭyaḥ | kuruvaṃti dharmasya vināśam evaṃ mā buddhavīrādya pure viśavsva || 4.32 || athāparā devataivam āha | cakraṃ jinair vartitam ekadeśe taiḥ pūrvakair lokahitaprayuktaiḥ ayaṃ punar gacchati yatra tatra mā khalv avasthāṃ samavāpsyate 'dya || 4.33 || athāparāpi devataivam āha | kāruṇyahetor iha sārthavāhaś cacāra sattvārtham atīva kurvan | sa kevalaṃ tv adya pure 'tra mā vai nāśaṃ prayāyād iti me vitarkaḥ || 4.34 || (93.15–94.18); Tib. (K): de nas bcom ldan 'das sgo khang nas gshegs pa dang | skad cig de nyid la lha dang | klu dang | gnod sbyin dang | srin po bye ba khrag khrig brgya stong mang po nam mkha' la rgyu zhing gdong mchi ma can gyis 'di skad ces gsol to || bdag cag rnams kyis bde gshegs sngon mthong ba || zhi ba'i dus la shin tu slob ma dul || chos rnams rgya cher ston par mdzad pa na || de la de lta bu yi bgegs ma byung || 4.30 || ston pa 'di ni shin tu dus ngan la || rgya chen blo yis rang byung nyid brnyes te || thub dbang 'gro ba yongs smin mdzad slad du || 'jig rten nyon mongs bsgribs la chos ston cing || 4.31 || smra ba'i seng ge 'di na bzhugs bzhin du || sdig can dag ni bye ba stong mang po || de ltar chos rnams rab tu 'jig par bgyid || sangs rgyas dpa' bo grong du deng ma gshegs || 4.32 || de nas lha mo gzhan zhig gis 'di skad ces gsol to || sngon gyi rgyal ba 'jig rten phan brtson pa || de dag yul gcig 'khor lo bskor gyur pa || 'di ni gang du gshegs pa der yang bskor || de ring ma rung bar ni gyur ta re || 4.33 || de nas yang lha mo gzhan zhig gis 'di skad ces gsol to || ded dpon 'dir ni thugs rje'i slad || shin tu sems can don mdzad spyad || de ni de ring grong khyer 'dir || brlag par 'gyur snyam bdag rtog go || 4.34 || (103.18–104.17).

cast off their jewels, drop their parasols, throw themselves on the ground, grab the Buddha's feet, let out terrible cries, pound their chests with their hands, wander around in a stupor, and shower the Buddha with gifts.[79] But instead of letting Śākyamuni respond, our narrator continues to let the tension build by reporting *more* speech from myriad *deva*s speaking in unison[80] and a single unnamed *devatā*.[81] To represent even select quotes at this point would be too much. It's fair to

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[79] Skt. (K): tena khalu punaḥ samayena tāni bahūni devanāgayakṣarākṣasāsuragaruḍakinnaramahoragakoṭīnayuta-śatasahasrāṇi sāsrudurdinavadanāni gaganatalapathād avatīrya bhagavataḥ purataḥ sthitvānekaprakārān ātmano viprakārāṃś cakruḥ | kecit keśān vilumpaṃti sma | kecid ābharaṇāni mumucuḥ | kecic chatradhvajapatākān prapātayām āṣuḥ [sic; read: āsuḥ] | kecit svaśarīreṇa bhūmau nipetuḥ | kecid bhagavatas caraṇau jagṛhuḥ | kecid atikaṣṭaṃ ruruvuḥ | kecid urāṃsi pāṇibhiḥ parājaghnuḥ | kecid bhagavataḥ pādamūle sthitvā madguvat parāvartante sma | kecid bhagavataḥ puratāḥ prāṃjalayo bhūtvā stutinamaskārāṃś cakruḥ | kecid bhagavantaṃ puṣpadhūpa-gandhamālyavilepanavastrābharaṇasuvarṇasūtramuktāhāraduṣyair avakiraṃti sma | (94.19–95.6); Tib. (K): yang de'i tshe lha dang | klu dang | gnod sbyin dang | sprin po dang | nam mkha' lding dang | mi 'am ci dang | lto 'phye chen po bye ba khrag khrig brgya stong gdong la mchi ma zag cing ngom zung nag pa dag nam mkha' ngos kyi lam las babs te | bcom ldan 'das kyi spyan sngar 'khod nas bdag nyid la rnam pa mang po byed de | la la ni skra 'bal | la la ni rgyan 'grol | la la ni gdugs dang rgyal mtshan dang ba dang snyol | la la ni bdag nyid kyi lus sa la rdob | la la ni bcom ldan 'das kyi zhabs la 'dzin | la la ni shin tun yon mongs par ngu | la la ni lag pas brang rdung | la la ni bcom ldan 'das kyi zhabs drung na 'dug cing so bya bzhin du 'gre ldog | la la ni bcom 'das kyi spyan sngar thal mo sbyar te bstod cing phyag 'tshal bar byed | la la ni bcom ldan 'das la me tog dang | bdug pa dang | spos dang | phreng ba dang | gos dang phyang 'phrul dang | gser gyi skud pa dang | mu tig gi phreng ba dang | ras bcos bu dag mngon par 'thor ro (104.18–105.6).

[80] Skt. (K): athāparā bahvyo devakoṭya uccair ekakaṇṭhenaivam āhuḥ | tvayā pracīrṇāni hi duṣkarāṇi atīva lokārtham ito bahūni | kṣīṇe tvam utpanna ihādya kāle upekṣakas tiṣṭha ca mā tyajasva || 4.35 || alpaṃ kṛtaṃ te 'nagha buddhakāryaṃ sākṣīkṛtāś cālpatarā nṛdevāḥ | tvaṃ tiṣṭha dharmān suciraṃ prakāśayan uttārayāsmat tribhavārṇavāj jagat || 4.36 || sattvā hy aneke śubhakarmacāriṇaḥ paripakvabījā amṛtasya bhājanāḥ | karuṇāṃ janasva pratidarśayārtham oghebhya uttāraya lokam ārtam || 4.37 || gatyāṭavīmadhyagatā bhramaṃti saṃsārakāntāravinaṣṭamārgāḥ | teṣāṃ sumārgaṃ pratidarśayasva pramokṣayāryottamadharmavāgbhiḥ || 4.38 || etat tavāścaryataraṃ kṛpādbhutaṃ pravartitaṃ yad varadharmacakraṃ | ciraṃ hi tiṣṭha tvam udārabuddhe mā khalv anāthā janatā bhaveta || 4.39 || (95.7–96.6); Tib. (K): de nas lha gzhan bye ba mang pos mgrin gcig tu skad mthon por 'di skad ces gsol to || 'jig rten don slad 'di bas mang ba yi || bya bar dka' ba khyod kyis rab tu spyad || zad pa'i dus deng 'dir ni khyod skyes kyis || btang snyoms mdzod la mi gshegs bzhugs su gsol || 4.35 || sdig med khyod kyis sangs rgyas mdzd pa nyung ngu mdzad || lha dang mi rnams dpang du mdzad pa shin tu nyung || shin tu yun ring chos rnams ston cing khyod bzhugs la || srid pa gsum gyi rgya mtsho 'di las 'gro ba sgrol || 4.36 || dge ba'i las rnams bgyid cing sa bon yongs smin te || bdud rtsi'i snod du gyur pa'i sems cad du ma la || khyod kyi thugs rje bskyed de so sor rab ston la || chu bo las ni 'jig rten nyam thag bsgral bar mdzod || 4.37 || 'gro ba dgon pa'i dbus song 'khyams gyur cing || 'khor ba'i dgon par shin tu lam stor ba || de dag la ni lam mchog so sor ston || 'phags pa'i chos mchog tshig gis thar par mdzod || 4.38 || chos kyi 'khor lo dam pa gang bskor ba || de ni khyod kyi thugs rje ngo mtshar rmad || rlabs chen thugs mnga' ring du bzhugs su gsol || 'gro ba rnams ni mgon med ma gyur cig || 4.39 || (105.7–106.4).

[81] Skt. (K): athāparāpi devataivam āha | nāśaṃ prayāstyaty atha yad vināyako lokas tathāndho nikhilo bhaviṣyati | aṣṭāṃgamārgas trivimokṣahetuḥ sarveṇa sarvaṃ na bhaviṣyatīha || 4.40 || asmābhir asmiṃ chubhabījam uptaṃ vākkāyacetodbhavam apramattaiḥ | tato vayaṃ sarvasukhaiḥ samanvitāḥ puṇyākarasyāsya hi mā bhavet kṣayaḥ || 4.41 || (96.7–96.15); Tib. (K): de nas lha mo gzhan zhig gis 'di skad ces gsol to || rnam 'dren brgya la ma rung gyur na ni || 'jig rten 'di ltar ma lus ldongs par 'gyur || yan lag brgyad lam rnam thar gsum gyi rgyu || 'dir ni yong ye thams cad ma mchis 'gyur || 4.40 || ngag lus sems las skyes dge sa bon dag || bdag cag bag yod gyur pas 'dir btab ste || de slad bdag cag bde ba kun dang ldan || bsod nams 'byung gnas 'dir brlag ma gyur cig || 4.41 || (106.5–106.13).

say that we all get the gist. But with this exhausting deluge of pleas—which in many ways mirrors when, in chapter three, "*koṭi*s of māras recited a *koṭi* of verses"[82] to dissuade Māra from attacking the Buddha—the narrator drives home just how distressed and terrified the Buddha's devotees become at the thought of losing him. That Śākyamuni is leaving them, and possibly *for good*, is for his divine devotees a source of intensely negative affect. For them, it is as if the world is coming to an end.

They needn't fear, however, according to the gods of the pure abodes who at this point somehow manage to squeeze a word in. From their place of superior knowledge and wisdom, the divines address the terrified devotees. "Don't be afraid," they begin,

> "No misfortune will befall the sage, whose intellect is exalted. For although myriad māras have come to this earth, we have previously seen his virtue. || 4.42 ||
>
> "At the seat of awakening, Māra's terrifying army—swift and violent, spread out on all sides for thirty-six *yojana*s, bearing sharp swords and knives, and shrieking—met its end. Back then, they were terrified. How could they possibly oppose the one who has attained his goals and whose fame resounds?" || 4.43 ||[83]

Here the gods of the pure abodes encourage the Buddha's devotees to remember what happened at the bodhi tree. Śākyamuni defeated the army of Māra then, so what makes them think things would be different now? An unnamed *devatā* responds, saying:

> "The army of a single māra back then was not very strong. But this army of myriad māras is very strong! || 4.44 ||

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[82] Skt. (K): peyālam | yāvan mārakoṭībhir gāthākoṭī bhāṣitā iti | (59.19); Tib. (K): de bzhin du bdud bye ba'i bar du thams cad kyis tshigs su bcad pa smras so || (71.16–71.17).

[83] Skt. (K): mā bhaiṣṭa yūyaṃ na muner avasthā bhaviṣyate kācid udārabuddheḥ | prayakṣapūrvāvayam asya sādhor upāgatā yad bhuvi mārakoṭyaḥ || 4.42 || ṣaṭtriṃśadyojanāni drutarabhasaparā yat samantād vitatya prāsāsisphīta-khaḍgapracurakhararavā bhīṣaṇī mārasenā | saṃprāptā bodhimaṇḍe vilayam upagatā tatkṣaṇād eva bhītā prāptārthasyādya kiṃ svit prasṛtayaśaso vighnam eṣa prakuryāt || 4.43 || (96.18–96.25); Tib. (K): sa 'dir bye ba'i bdud rnams nyer lhags kyang || thub pa rlabs chen thugs mnga' nam yang ni || ma rung mi 'gyur khyed cag ma 'jigs shig || dge ba 'di la bdag cag mngon sum gyur || 4.42 || dpag tshad sum cu drug tu mgyogs shing drag shul ldan pas kun tu bskor || sna bgrang ral gri mtshon rnon rtsub pa'i sgra mang 'jigs pa bdud kyi sde || byang chub snying por lhags pa de'i tshe de dag 'jigs shing brlags gyur na || da ltar don brnyes grags pas khyab pa de la ga la bgegs shig byed || 4.43 || (106.17–107.3)

> "There is no doubt that the leader of the world will meet destruction today, on account of which the whole world will wander around in darkness!" || 4.45 ||[84]

The army of Māra at the seat of awakening, the argument goes, was nothing in comparison to the army of the myriad cosmic māras in Rājagṛha right now. Each cosmic māra—like our Māra, the māra of Sahā—oversees his own universe of suffering and desire. With their forces combined, they will surely kill Śākyamuni. And adding one final retort, Śakra, Brahmā, and the Four World Protectors command Śākyamuni once and for all to stay and teach the Dharma to the benighted and aggrieved.[85]

A stern talking-to from this last bunch is apparently what it takes to get Śākyamuni's attention. For it is only now that he gives his devotees (not to mention us readers) any indication that he has heard the pathetic and desperate pleas to not enter Rājagṛha. His first words, echoing those of the gods of the pure abodes, offer significant reassurance:

> "Don't be afraid. Be now without fear. Not even all māras with their chariots are able to shake even a single hair of mine, to say nothing of my whole body! || 4.47 ||
>
> "Today, I will console the entire world. I will always teach the Dharma on the earth. For those who are lost on wrong paths, I myself will present a clear teaching on the right path." || 4.48 ||[86]

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[84] Skt. (K): mārasyaikasya sā senā prāg āsin na mahābalā | mārakoṭīsahasrāṇām iyaṃ senā mahābalā || 4.44 || nissaṃśayam iha prāpto nāśaṃ lokavināyakaḥ | yadvināśād ayaṃ loko nirāloko bhramiṣyati || 4.45 || (97.2–97.5); Tib. (K): sngon byung ba ni bdud kyi sde gcig yin te de dag dpung mi che || 'di ni bye ba khrag khrig bdud kyi sde ste shin tu dpung ches bas || 4.44 || 'jig rten rnam par 'dren pa 'di ni brlag par 'gyur du rab tu dogs || de brlangs na ni 'jig rten 'di dag shin tu snang med 'khyam par 'ong || 4.45 || (107.5–107.9).

[85] Skt. (K): tiṣṭheha sādho kuru mandadhīnām asmadvacaḥ kāruṇikapradhāna | bahudevakotyo ghanaśokataptās tāḥ sāṃprataṃ dharmarasena siṃca || 4.46 || (97.8–97.11); Tib. blo zhan bdag cag gi ni tshig gson te || dge ba bzhugs shing gtso bo thugs rje can || lha mang bye ba mya ngan chen pos gdungs || de la chos kyi bcud kyis da gtor cig || 4.46 || (107.12–107.15).

[86] Skt. (K): mā bhaiṣṭa yūyaṃ bhavathādya nirbhayāḥ sarve 'pi māra yugapat savāhanāḥ | śaktā na me bhīṣayituṃ samagrā romāpy athaikaṃ kim u sarvadeham || 4.47 || āśvāsayāmy adya tu sarvalokaṃ dharmaṃ sadāhaṃ bhuvi deśayiṣye | mārgacyutānām aham eva samyaṅ mārgopadeśaṃ viśadaṃ kariṣye || 4.48 || (97.15–97.22); Tib. (K): deng khyod ma 'jigs khyed ni ma skrag cig || bdud rnams thams cad bzhon bcas gcig char du || tshogs kyang spu gcig skrag par mi nus na || nga yi lus kun la ni smos ci dgos || 4.47 || deng ni 'jig rten thams cad dbugs phyung ste || nga yis rtag tu sa 'dir chos bshad do || lam rnams stor ba la ni nga nyid kyis || dri ma med pa yang dag lam bstan bya || 4.48 || (107.19–108.2).

The Buddha, like the divines before him, delivers to his devotees a feeling rule. He tells them not to fear or worry on his behalf, for he cannot be harmed and will never stop teaching the Dharma. He then illustrates his point with several verses outlining the generosity he enacted and perfected during his illustrious career as the Bodhisattva,[87] each of which ends with the same basic refrain: "Who is able to harm me?" The trials he endured on his path to buddhahood and his resultant awakened state have made him invulnerable.[88] This much was evidenced at the bodhi tree, he says, and will again be evidenced when he enters Rājagṛha.[89]

Śākyamuni then concludes his speech with two verses, both of which require attention, for it is with them that I think the point of this episode can be most fully appreciated. Prefiguring

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[87] Skt. (K): kṛtāni pūrvaṃ bahuduṣkarāṇi mayānnapānaṃ vipulaṃ pradattaṃ | āvāsabhaiṣajyam analpakaṃ ca kartuṃ vighātaṃ mama ko 'dya śakyaḥ || 4.49 || tyaktā mayā hy aśvarathā gajāś ca vibhūṣaṇāny ābharaṇāni caivam | dāśāś ca dāsyo nigamāś ca rāṣṭrāḥ kartuṃ vighātaṃ mama kaḥ samarthaḥ || 4.50 || bhāryāsutāduhitṛkaḍatravargam aiśvaryam iṣṭaṃ bhuvi rājavaṃśaḥ | datto mayā sattvahitāya kasmāc charīranāśo 'dya bhaviṣyati me || 4.51 || śiraś ca netre ubhe karṇanāse hastau ca pādau tanucarmalohitaṃ | svajīvitaṃ tyaktam apīha dehināṃ kartuṃ vihiṃsāṃ mama kaḥ samarthaḥ || 4.52 || bahvyo mayātīva hi buddhakoṭyaḥ saṃpūjitā bhaktimatā svahastaṃ | śīlaśrutikṣāntiratena nityaṃ kartuṃ vilopaṃ mama kaḥ samarthaḥ || 4.53 || pūrvaṃ mayā vai bahuduṣkarāṇi kṛtāni me 'tīva samāhitena | saṃchinnagātreṇa na roṣitaṃ manaḥ kartuṃ vihiṃsāṃ mama ko 'dya śaktaḥ || 4.54 || (98.1–98.25); Tib. (K): ngas sngon bya ba dka' ba mang po byas || zas dang skom yang shin tu rgya cher byin || gnas dang sman yang mi nyung sbyin byin pas || nga la deng su gnod par byed par nus || 4.49 || ngas ri rta dang glang chen shing rta dang || lhab lhub phyang 'phrul dag gi rgyan rnams dang || brang pho bran mo grong rdal yul 'khor btang || nga la su zhig gnod par byed par nus || 4.50 || chung ma bu pho bu mo bran mang dang || yid 'ong dbang phyug sa steng rgyal po'i rigs || sems can rnams la phan phyir ngas byin rlob || nga lus de ring ci phyir 'jig par 'gyur || 4.51 || mgo dang sna dang rna ba mig gnyis dang || lus dang pags pa khrag dang rkang lag bcas || nga yi srog kyang lus can rnams la btang || su zhig nga la 'tshe bar byed par nus || 4.52 || ngas ni sangs rgyas bye bar rab mang la || gus ldan bdag gi lag nas shin tu mchod || rtag tu tshul khrims thos dang bzod la dga' || nga la su zhig rlag par byed par nus || 4.53 || ngas sngon shin tu bya dka' mang po rnams || mnyam par bzhag pas rab tu nga yis byas || lus kun bcas kyang nga la 'khrug med na || nga la rnam par 'tshe ba su zhig nus || 4.54 || (108.3–109.1).

[88] Skt. (K): kleśā jitā me niyato 'smi buddhaḥ sarveṣu sattveṣu ca maitracittaḥ | īrṣyā ca me nāsti khilaṃ ca roṣo na me samarthaḥ purato 'dya kaścit || 4.55 || (99.1–99.4); Tib. (K): nyon mongs ngas btul nges par nga sangs rgyas || sems can thams cad la ni byams sems ldan || khro med phrag dog tha ba nga la med || nga yi mdun na de ring su zhig nus || (109.2–109.5).

[89] Skt. (K): jitaṃ mayā mārabalaṃ samagraṃ parājitā me bahumārakoṭyaḥ | yuṣmadvimokṣaṃ niyataṃ kariṣye mā bhaiṣṭa kasmān na puraṃ pravekṣye || 4.56 || (99.5–99.8); Tib. (K): ngas ni bdud kyi dpung rnams tshogs pa btul || ngas ni bdud mang bye ba pham par byas || khyed kun rnam par thar par nges par bya || grong du ci phyir mi 'gro ma 'jigs shig || 4.56 || (109.6–109.9).

what he says to Māra later in the sūtra's fifth chapter, he relieves his frightened and mournful audience with the following words:

> "All the buddhas and greatly powerful bodhisattvas who now reside in the ten directions will I assemble here for the sake of sentient beings. || 4.57 ||
>
> "I will make the entire world full and invest it with knowledge and virtue. With the way established along with the buddhas, I will achieve the aim of the buddhas." || 4.58 ||[90]

Given what we know about the host of cosmic buddhas and bodhisattvas that assemble in Sahā later in the sūtra, we have reason to think that the Buddha is here looking forward to their arrival in these two proleptic verses. According to the Buddha, *he* will assemble the cosmic buddhas and bodhisattvas *for the sake of sentient beings*, a class that encompasses narrative actants—who, put quite at ease with this knowledge, proceed to worship the Buddha—as well as readers who have yet to encounter this assembly (if they are reading the text in order, that is). But according to the buddhas and bodhisattvas later in the text, *they* assemble *because they want to hear the Buddha teach*. What we see, in other words, are two explanations of a single narrative event. This is not an inconsistency. Rather, it marks a thematization of the preaching event (within the narrative), itself homologized with the reading event (outside the narrative) via the literary strategies discussed in prior chapters.[91]

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[90] These verses are somewhat difficult—particularly the third pāda of the second verse. Skt. (K): ye keci diśāsu daśasv apīha buddhā hi tiṣṭhaṃti tu sattvahetoḥ | tāṃ sarvabuddhān iha yojayiṣye maharddhikāṃś cāpy atha bodhisattvān || 4.57 || kṣetraṃ prapūrṇaṃ sakalaṃ kariṣye jñānena puṇyena ca vasayiṣye | tair eva buddhaiḥ saha netri saṃsthitā kariṣya buddhānumataṃ ca kāryam || 4.58 || (99.9–99.16); Tib. (K): sems can don phyir phyogs bcu 'di dag na || sangs rgyas la la gang dag bzhugs pa rnams || sangs rgyas kun dang byang chub sems dpa' yang || rdzu 'phrul chen po rnams ni kun na bsogs || 4.57 || zhing rnams mtha' dag rab tu gang bar bya || bsod nams ye shes dag gis gnas par bya || sangs rgyas de dag tshul bcas kun gnas pas || sangs rgyas dag gi dgongs pa'i mdzad pa bya || 4.58 || (109.10–109.17).

[91] The ambivalence in the reasons given for the arrival of the cosmic buddhas and bodhisattvas could also be read as marking a subtle invitation to readers to encounter the great assembly as being not only for the benefit of the actants within the narrative but for *their benefit* as well. In other words, though the reading is perhaps a bit strained (hence its presence in a note), this could be seen as a kind of *presencing passage*.

This reading is perhaps plausible on its own, but it becomes more so when coupled with our readings of Māra's narrative. As I have argued in prior chapters, Māra and readers occupy a structurally similar position in relation to the sūtra. This is due in part to the narrator's use of Māra as a focalizer—on account of which strategy readers are given access to Māra's private thoughts and limited perspective on events—and the sūtra's self-reference through the mouth of Śākyamuni. In one of the more intense moments in the sūtra, as we have seen, Śākyamuni tells Māra that he ought to be happy because he is the reason the sūtra—that is, the very sūtra readers have before them—is being taught. Māra refuses to heed this feeling rule, however, and readers never see him make even the slightest effort to reorient himself. And this even though they have reason to expect as much—the Buddha not only tells a story in which a previous incarnation of Māra asks a previous incarnation of the Buddha to foretell him to awakening in a future life, but also tells Māra that he will soon foretell him to awakening (shortly after telling him that he ought to be happy). As a result of his misalignment, Māra grows increasingly miserable, powerless, and isolated throughout the narrative. In order not to be powerless and alone, Māra must encounter what he experiences—those experiences again being tantamount to the sūtra in which they are narrated—as a source of joy. This imperative, I submit, extends to readers. In order to avoid the consequences of misalignment and enjoy the benefits of alignment, our analysis in this chapter suggests, readers in a buddha-less world must encounter the sūtra as a source of joy.

Though in many ways out of reach, the Gilgit community appears to have received this message, which itself coheres well with one of the more pedestrian *quid pro quo* passages noted at the outset of this chapter. Near the end of the sūtra's thirteenth and final chapter, a buddha by the name of Girikūṭa recites a verse of some interest for us. "Those who cover the sky with heaps of choice flowers and banners like gathered clouds and give them to the buddhas with a joyful

mind as an act of reverence will obtain merit," he says. "But no one could express the measure of the merit of those who would maintain this sūtra later, in a terrifying and violent degenerate age."[92] From this, it seems a certain affective orientation—one which constitutes the *Precious Banner* as a joyful object—is required for the exchange to be realized. Admittedly, this is the case only if we supply a phrase from the first meritorious act to the second. But if such a reading is permitted, then we can say that it is not *preservation* that generates more merit than can be described but rather *preservation with a joyful mind*. And this language, as we will more fully appreciate toward the end of the next and final chapter, is nearly identical to what we see in the colophon of the Gilgit manuscript of the sūtra.

IV

In the foregoing pages we have accomplished two aims. First, we have seen that proper affective orientation—alignment, as I have often called it—has implications both soteriological and social. Actants who come to be aligned with the Buddha, who come to encounter him and his teaching as a source of joy and delight, are afforded protection from Māra. We saw this in detail in our analysis of the episodes centering on Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana and on Māra's courtesans. Once aligned, neither the mendicants nor the courtesans are susceptible to Māra's illusions. They lose, in other words, a certain capacity to be affected. (We could also frame, and indeed have so framed, this in inverse terms—that Māra has lost his capacity to affect.) Their alignment affords them more than protection, however. It also grants them new capacities. The courtesans, for

[92] Skt. (K): ākāśaṃ chādayitvā varakusumacayacchatrasaṃghātameghair buddhebhyaḥ saṃpradadyāt pramuditasumanāḥ pūjanārthaṃ hi kaścit | yaḥ paścāt kṣīṇakāle pratibhayarabhase dhārayet sūtram etat puṇyasyāsya pramāṇaṃ na khalu kathayituṃ sarvasattvo 'pi śaktaḥ || 13.2 || (176.11–176.15); Tib. (K): me tog tshogs kyi gdugs mchog sprin rnams kyis ni nam mkha' khebs byas te || gang gis mchod phyir dga' mgu'i yid kyis sangs rgyas rnams la phul ba bas || gang zhig phyin chad zad 'gyur 'jigs ldan dus na mdo 'di 'dzin byed na || de yi bsod nams tshad dag sems can kun gyis brjod par mi nus so || 13.3 || (269.6–269.10).

instance, are granted supernormal visual and auditory abilities. And Māra's children, together with the courtesans, are enabled to enact miraculous displays—again, all by virtue of their proper alignment with the Buddha, whose power and authority make possible and underwrite the realization of their aspirations.

Beyond empowerment, we have seen that aligned actants constitute a social group. As we theorized in Chapter One in advance of our narrative analysis, affective orientation is the basis of social formation. Though sharing common objects of discourse and experience is necessary for the emergence and maintenance of social groups, it is not entirely sufficient. How people *feel* with respect to such objects is critical. The *Precious Banner* seems to share this understanding of how social groups work. In addition to rendering him powerless, Māra's affective misalignment renders him socially isolated. Though stuck in their midst, in other words, his former allies are far from him. Through being *in line*, Māra's former allies are no longer with him but are rather with one another and those who are aligned with Śākyamuni. We saw this in our reading of the episodes centering on the courtesans and on Māra's children. Though they are at a distance when they find alignment, Śākyamuni folds the courtesans into his company when he announces their movement toward and eventual joining with the group outside the city. And though poised to do harm to the Buddha, Māra's children undergo affective reorientation such that they fall in line with Māra's courtesans. These two groups used to share the same orientation—according to the perspective of the sūtra, this orientation was *misaligned*. The reorientation of the courtesans split them into two separate groups, but the subsequent reorientation of Māra's children brought them back together. And from this place of shared alignment, they speak and act *together* as a novel social formation characterized by a tendency to move toward the Buddha and feel joy on his account.

Our second accomplishment involves our reading of both the affective reorientations and the affective course correction. If our sustained analysis of Māra's narrative has not been enough to show that the sūtra aims to structure and activate the affective orientations of its readers, then our discussion of affective reorientation and course correction hopefully bolsters our claim. With the reorientations, our sūtra's narrator shows readers how they ought to feel and encourages them to respond properly to the norms implicit in depicting the benefits of alignment in contrast to the consequences Māra faces on account of his misalignment. And though they are already aligned, the goddesses outside Rājagṛha serve as an additional focalizer by which the narrator reaches out to readers. The goddesses fear living in a world where the Buddha is no longer present, but they should not. Just so, even though readers find themselves in a world without a physically present and available Buddha, they should not mourn. The presence of the sūtra is proof that the Buddha always teaches in the world. And this, given what has been said above, is something about which readers ought to be glad.

With this, the final body chapter of this dissertation comes to an end. In the next chapter we will first consider how our study of the *Precious Banner* contributes to two conversations in Buddhist studies—particularly the study of the *Precious Banner* and the study of Mahāyāna sūtra literature more broadly. Thereafter, we will address the facet of the foregoing work that perhaps has the broadest level of interest—namely, how the idea of *affective regimes* contributes to the history of religions, generally speaking, by rehashing how the sūtra's affective regime gives rise not just to affectively aligned individuals but communities characterized by that very alignment. Toward this end, as we did in Chapter One, we put Lincoln, Schaefer, Ahmed, and Hochschild into dialogue with one another. The aim, in brief, is to resolve a tension—or at least what shows up for me as a tension—between Lincoln and Schaefer by drawing on Ahmed and Hochschild.

Though the fruits of this labor have in many ways already been seen in the chapters above, the conclusion will shift how we look at our praxis such that theory comes to the fore. In closing, we will return to Gilgit. By situating the colophon of the sūtra with which this dissertation began in comparative frame with other colophons from Gilgit, I suggest that the donors of the Gilgit text can be appreciated as an instantiation of a transhistorical community aligned with the *Precious Banner*.

CHAPTER SIX

The *Precious Banner* as Affective Regime
Contributions and Communities

I

We can think of narrative as a form of affective conversion. Through narrative, the promise of happiness is located as well as distributed. To make a simple point: some bodies more than others will bear the promise of happiness.

—Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*[1]

We now find ourselves in the position to take a synoptic look back on the previous chapters, to reiterate some of the major themes and claims, and to reflect on the implications of our reading of the *Precious Banner* for Buddhist studies and the history of religions. At the most parochial level, this dissertation marks an advance in the study of one particular Mahāyāna sūtra. Though the *Precious Banner* has been known to scholarship for roughly a century, it has not been given much attention beyond the philological study of manuscripts. This is not to minimize the importance of such work. Indeed, it would have been difficult to pursue my own without it. Rather, what I mean to say is that the *Precious Banner* has not been given its due in terms of interpretive treatment. As I hope to have shown, the sūtra is an impressive piece of literature by any standards. In many ways, then, I agree with the anonymous buddhologist who, in reviewing my (declined) application for a fellowship, observed that the sūtra is "interesting enough" on its own to merit close study. But my hope is that by now our reading of the *Precious Banner* as an affective regime can be understood not as an attempt to "oversell" the sūtra, as the same reviewer remarked, but rather as a bid to show not only that the sūtra speaks beyond itself but also that its

[1] Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, 45.

study has the capacity to speak beyond the narrow field of Buddhist studies to the history of religions more broadly.

In the pages to come, we will take stock of how the foregoing analysis of the *Precious Banner* contributes to a number of ongoing conversations. The first two are treated in section II, which frames the present dissertation as a humble corrective to some of the scholarship that makes limited use of the sūtra and as a supplement to the recent wave of literary-critical work on Mahāyāna sūtras.[2] Section III then turns to the implications of this study for the history of religions and thus also, albeit obliquely, to the history and sociology of the Mahāyāna. While one of my aims has been to produce a piece of scholarship significant to a Buddhist studies audience, an additional and equally important aim of mine is to speak beyond this subfield and to address scholars of religion who are invested in interrogating and theorizing the relationship between religion and the social world. The way in which our reading the *Precious Banner* contributes to the history of religions is captured well in the epigraph to this chapter. Two things we see time and again in the *Precious Banner* are depictions of the consequences and benefits of affective misalignment and alignment, respectively. These depictions together paint a normative picture, a picture of what it is to be aligned. This normative picture, illustrative of what we have identified as the sūtra's affective regime, unfolds through narrative and seeks thereby to have implications

[2] Due to limitations of space, I cannot discuss how the dissertation contributes to the study of emotions in Buddhist narrative more broadly. Suffice it to say here that my thinking has benefited from engaging with several scholars off stage, so to speak. See, for example, Kevin Trainor, "Seeing, Feeling, Doing: Ethics and Emotions in South Asian Buddhism," *JAAR* 71, no. 3 (2003): 523–29; Maria Heim, "The Aesthetics of Excess," *JAAR* 71, no. 3 (2003): 531–54; Stephen C. Berkwitz, "History and Gratitude in Theravāda Buddhism," *JAAR* 71, no. 3 (2003): 579–604; Susanne Mrozik, "Astonishment: A Study of an Ethically Valorised Emotion in Buddhist Narrative Literature," *Religion* 36, no. 2 (2006): 91–106; Jeffrey Samuels, *Attracting the Heart*; Maria Heim, "Shame and Apprehension: Notes on the Moral Value of Hiri and Ottappa," in *Embedded Languages: Studies of Sri Lankan and Buddhist Cultures*, ed. Carol S. Anderson et al. (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Godage International Publishers, 2012), 237–60; Julia Cassaniti, *Living Buddhism: Mind, Self, and Emotion in a Thai Community* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015); Kristen Scheible, *Reading the Mahāvaṃsa: The Literary Aims of a Theravāda Buddhist History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016).

for readers. Though not all bodies will bear its weight, as the actant of Māra exemplifies so well within the narrative, the *Precious Banner* extends a promise of happiness—inclusion in an empowered community—to those who respond properly to its norms of feeling in the reading present. The community called into being thereby is one characterized by an affective orientation toward the *Precious Banner* that constitutes the sūtra as a source of joy to be sought after, moved toward, and—as we see in the Gilgit colophon—copied in the hope that everyone will be so fortunate as to come into contact with it.

II

In Chapter One, we surveyed roughly a century of philological work on the *Precious Banner*. As we saw, manuscripts of the sūtra were first identified in the early twentieth century and have been studied in a few successive waves since. Beyond these works, which themselves have the valuable aim of discerning the textual history of the *Precious Banner*, little attention has been paid to the work's contents. Of the work that has been produced in this regard, we have had occasion to discuss some in Chapter Two. John Strong and William Giddings, for example, note (rightly and independently) that the sūtra contains a narrative of Māra but (wrongly) suggest that his story is drawn to a close with his conversion. The Dharmachakra Translation Committee likewise points out that Māra's narrative is central to the *Precious Banner* but neglect to follow the implications of the same in their introduction to and translation of the work. These three works are valuable contributions to the study of the *Precious Banner*, to be sure—indeed, they are the most substantial interpretive contributions to have been made up to now. But as our engagement with these works has made clear, they are somewhat thin.

Contributions to the Study of the *Precious Banner*

There are still other interpretive engagements with the *Precious Banner* yet to be mentioned, all of which mirror the Buddhist compositions surveyed in Chapter One. That is, Buddhist studies scholars tend to lift passages from the sūtra and put them in service of their own agendas. Bill Mak and Jeffrey Kotyk, to begin naming a few instances, use the Chinese translations of the work as lenses into the development of Buddhist astral science as it moved from India into Central Asia and China.[3] Jens Braarvig and Ronald Davidson cite the work in their studies on the meaning of the word *dhāraṇī*.[4] David Drewes culls passages from the sūtra to bolster his claim that Dharma preachers (Skt. *dharmabhāṇaka*s) were central to the initial formation of what we now call the Mahāyāna.[5] Ronald Davidson further refers to it in his study on the pragmatics of *dhāraṇī*s.[6] And Gregory Schopen cites the sūtra in his study on the recollection of past lives and a handful of other pieces.[7]

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[3] Bill M. Mak, "The Transmission of Buddhist Astral Science from India to East Asia: The Central Asian Connection," *Historia Scientiarum* 24, no. 2 (2015): 59–75; idem, "Indian *Jyotiṣa* through the Lens of Chinese Buddhist Canon," *JOS* 48, no. 1 (2015): 1–19; Kotyk, "Buddhist Astrology and Astral Magic in the Tang Dynasty."

[4] Braarvig, "*Dhāraṇī* and *Pratibhāna*"; Davidson, "Studies in Dhāraṇī Literature I."

[5] David Drewes, "Oral Texts in Indian Mahāyāna," *IIJ* 58, no. 2 (2015): 117–41; idem, "Dharmabhāṇakas in Early Mahāyāna," *IIJ* 54 (2011): 331–72.

[6] Ronald M. Davidson, "Studies in *dhāraṇī* literature II: Pragmatics of *dhāraṇī*s," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 77, no. 1 (2014): 5–61.

[7] Gregory Schopen, "The Generalization of an Old Yogic Attainment in Medieval Mahāyāna *Sūtra* Literature: Some Notes on *Jātismara*," in *Figments and Fragments*, 190–220. Schopen also cites the sūtra in "The Inscription on the Kuṣān Image of Amitābha and the Character of the Early Mahāyāna in India," in *Figments and Fragments*, 247–77, and in "The Bhaiṣajyaguru-Sūtra and the Buddhism of Gilgit" (PhD diss., Australian National University, 1978), but we will address neither here. We will, however, address another recent article of his later—namely, "Redeeming Bugs, Birds, and Really Bad Sinners in Some Medieval Mahāyāna Sūtras and Dhāraṇīs," in *Sins and Sinners: Perspectives from Asian Religions*, ed. Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 276–94. While this piece does not cite the *Precious Banner*, our reading of the same stands to contribute to Schopen's reading of the redemptive power of sūtra and dhāraṇī texts.

To conversations regarding astral science and the semantics of *dhāraṇī*, my work cannot claim to make any contribution—questions about how astral science changed over time and how best to translate *dhāraṇī* do not concern us here.[8] Our reading of the *Precious Banner* does not depend on their answers. Likewise, although this study does not complicate Drewes's hypothesis that the Mahāyāna was initially a textual movement centered on *dharmabhāṇaka*s, it does not corroborate it either since it does not have the *early* Mahāyāna in view. Whether the Mahāyāna was *initially* a movement centered on Dharma preachers, a movement centered on physical books, or an exclusively male monastic movement of forest-dwelling ascetics, in other words, is not a debate into which our reading of the *Precious Banner* intervenes.[9] In treating this particular

[8] Braarvig's primary argument is that *dhāraṇī* and *pratibhāna*, two words that often occur together, "denote the two principal parts of rhetoric, memory and eloquence" (Braarvig, "*Dhāraṇī* and *Pratibhāna*," 24). Writing some years later, Davidson argues for a broader understanding of the word, suggesting instead that it is "a function term denoting 'coding' [and thus] capable of being applied within all the various activities so often included within the method of *dhāraṇī*: memory, recitation, protective mantras, inspiration, summary texts, and extended Mahāyānist works" (Davidson, "Studies in Dhāraṇī Literature I," 98).

[9] For a summary treatment of these (and still other) hypotheses, see David Drewes, "Early Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism I: Recent Scholarship," *RC* 4, no. 2 (2010): 55–65.

For more on the "forest hypothesis," see Paul Harrison, "Searching for the Origins of the Mahāyāna: What Are We Looking For?," *EB* 28, no. 1 (1995): 48–69; idem, "Mediums and Messages: Reflections on the Production of Mahāyāna Sūtras," *EB* 35, no. 1/2 (2006): 115–51; idem, "Who Gets to Ride in the Great Vehicle? Self-Image and Identity Among the Followers of the Early Mahāyāna," *JIABS* 10, no. 1 (1987): 67–89; Nattier, *A Few Good Men*; Daniel Boucher, *Bodhisattvas of the Forest and the Formation of the Mahāyāna: A Study and Translation of the* "*Rāṣṭrapālaparipṛcchā-sūtra*" (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008).

The *locus classicus* for the "cult of the book" hypothesis is Gregory Schopen's "The Phrase *sa pṛthivīpradeśaś caityabhūto bhavet* in the *Vajracchedikā*: Notes on the Cult of the Book in Mahāyāna," in *Figments and Fragments of Mahāyāna Buddhism in India*, 25–62, but see also the other articles collected in the volume. For a critique of the position, see David Drewes, "Revisiting the Phrase '*sa pṛthivīpradeśaś caityabhūto bhavet*' and the Mahāyāna Cult of the Book," *IIJ* 50 (2007): 101–43. And for a modified version of this position, see Gregory Schopen, "The Book as a Sacred Object in Private Homes in Early or Medieval India," in *Medieval and Early Modern Devotional Objects in Global Perspective: Translations of the Sacred*, ed. Elizabeth Robertson and Jennifer Jahner (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 37–60.

For more on the "textual movement / Dharma preacher" hypothesis, see Drewes, "The Problem of Becoming a Bodhisattva"; idem, "Early Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism II: New Perspectives," *RC* 4, no. 2 (2010): 66–74.

The most recent interventions into the study of the early Mahāyāna can be found in Paul Harrison, ed., *Setting Out on the Great Way: Essays on Early Mahāyāna Buddhism* (Sheffield, UK; Bristol, CT: Equinox, 2018).

Mahāyāna sūtra as a complex piece of literature that seeks to impact the world outside the text, regardless of whether Mahāyāna sūtras and their purveyors mark the *origin* of what we call the Mahāyāna, the present work finds itself in greater congruence with other more literary-critical scholarship on Mahāyāna sūtras, to which we will turn shortly.

Though our reading of the *Precious Banner* does not contribute to the conversations on astral science, the semantics of *dhāraṇī*, or the early Mahāyāna, it does have something to say to Davidson's work on the pragmatics of *dhāraṇī*, as well as to some of Schopen's work on similar matters. We begin with Davidson. In framing *dhāraṇī*s as "precipitating assertives," Davidson cites the episode in which Jyotiḥsomya recites the Precious Banner *dhāraṇī* (in the *pūrvayoga* told by Śākyamuni) as evidence for the claim "that the author believed the feminine condition to be emblematic of [women's] karmic defilements."[10] Davidson's reading of this episode, taken narrowly, is not an unreasonable one. If we approach the sūtra holistically, however, then the fact that the sūtra carves out valorized space for intentional rebirth as a woman in ensuing chapters[11] gives us reason to ask to what extent Davidson's inference about authorial belief is warranted. But more importantly, such an approach leads us to appreciate the single episode Davidson treats as but one episode in a larger narrative that—again, when taken holistically—subtly reveals what it aims to accomplish in the reading present. Though a full argument must be postponed to a later publication, I am inclined to think that the *Precious Banner* revalorizes existence as a woman (by undoing the link between detrimental karma and female rebirth) in part to secure patronage from wealthy women. Though, to my knowledge, there is no evidence to suggest that Indian Buddhists

[10] Davidson, "Studies in *dhāraṇī* literature II," 14.

[11] In chapters six, eight, and nine, several beings vow to be reborn as women in the future—sometimes specifically to protect and help women, but often to mature sentient beings generally (see also Chapter Three n. 72 and Chapter Four n. 58 above).

ever vowed to be reborn as women, the manuscript colophon represented at the beginning of this dissertation, which lists more women than men (most of whom are royal), tentatively suggests that this strategy may have found some success at Gilgit.

Davidson adopts a more holistic approach later in the same article, when he attends to how narrative audiences receive and respond to *dhāraṇī*s. Audiences in sūtras often respond favorably to the recitation of *dhāraṇī*s, even if not initially predisposed to do so. Some actants, however, react fearfully—particularly those at whom the *dhāraṇī*s are "aimed" in their protective function. These are the two possible reactions to the recitation of a *dhāraṇī*, and we see both in the *Precious Banner*. This binary, for Davidson, marks an attempt on the part of sūtras to show readers how to respond to the *dhāraṇī*.[12] "Such figures," he says, "act as paradigms for the reader or hearer to understand how to behave in light of the text's message."[13] This reading is, I think, apt. I suggest, however, that we can arrive at a still fuller understanding of *dhāraṇī* episodes by considering not just episodic context—e.g., what problem this *dhāraṇī* is meant to solve, what its immediate effects are, and how audiences react—but also the broader narrative contexts in which such episodes figure. (Not all sūtras have discernible narratives, of course, so these reflections are limited to those that do.) To illustrate, we can again take up Jyotiḥsomya's recitation of the Precious Banner *dhāraṇī* in Śākyamuni's *pūrvayoga*. One thing this recitation does, I argue, is

[12] "All told, we might acknowledge that *dhāraṇī* perlocutionary expressives and assertives are deceptively sophisticated. They operate as a narrative of closure to the teaching of the spell, so that it will be understood as not threatening to those who will listen. Indian Buddhist audiences within such narratives are led from consternation and confusion to affirmation of their understanding of the Buddha (now shifted somewhat) and joy in his compassion. The scriptural statements represent two possible understandings of the text – positive and negative – and in doing so they control the message of its possible reception. Indian audiences outside of the text, hearing a *dhāraṇī* narrative for the first time, will be instructed by example to follow the correct reception of the spell, for that is the pattern already established by the principal characters inscribed in the narrative" (Davidson, "Studies in *dhāraṇī* literature II," 36).

[13] Davidson, "Studies in *dhāraṇī* literature II," 34.

dissolve the boundary between the world of the *pūrvayoga* and the world in which the *pūrvayoga* is told.[14] When Śākyamuni represents Jyotiḥsomya's recitation, the *dhāraṇī* is just as efficacious in the sūtra's narrative world as it is in the *pūrvayoga*'s nested narrative world. The dissolution of the border between the frame and the *pūrvayoga*, I further argue, anticipates the dissolution of the boundary between the sūtra and the world of the reading present, itself effected when the sūtra refers to itself through a focalized Śākyamuni in chapter five. The use of *dhāraṇī*s toward broader *narrative* ends, as we see in this case, eludes Davidson insofar as he takes the *episode* as the main unit of analysis. If we treat sūtras as "whole works," as Paul Harrison (and Christian Wedemeyer after him, and myself after both) suggests we do,[15] we are bound to come to richer understandings of their parts.

We can make a similar observation about Gregory Schopen's use of the *Precious Banner* in his article on the recollection of past lives (Skt. *jātismara*). In the piece, Schopen argues that *jātismara*, initially only within reach of the elite few who managed to reach rarefied meditational states through dedicated practice, gradually became a "generalized reward for religious activity in Mahāyāna *sūtra* literature."[16] By contrast to non-Mahāyāna and some early Mahāyāna texts, to be more specific, many later Mahāyāna sūtras depict all kinds of beings obtaining *jātismara* via rituals centered on images, texts, and *dhāraṇī*s. At a certain point, Schopen tells us, the idea that *jātismara* could be obtained through such general means came to be so established as to appear

[14] See Miller, "The Buddha Said That Buddha Said So."

[15] "[A]t present," Harrison writes, "we barely understand the Mahāyāna sūtra as a literary genre, and are not likely to do so until we forego the practice of mining these texts like quarries for their occasional deposits of doctrine, and approach them rather as whole works." Paul Harrison, trans*., The Samādhi of Direct Encounter with the Buddhas of the Present: An Annotated English Translation of the Tibetan Version of the Pratyutpanna-Buddha-Saṃmukhāvasthita-Samādhi-Sūtra* (Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1990), xxxiii; quoted in Wedemeyer, "Rhetorics of Solidarity," 214.

[16] Schopen, "The Generalization of an Old Yogic Attainment," in *Figments and Fragments*, 213.

non-controversially as a fact (rather than a claim) in narratives.[17] It is in this context that he cites a passage from the *Precious Banner* that shows "countless beings born in the hells and among animals" obtaining *jātismara*, paying homage to the Buddha, and being reborn in heaven after the Buddha emits light from his body.[18] While Schopen is right to point out that in this episode the obtainment of *jātismara* brings about a soteriologically significant shift in behavior on the part of the beings so depicted,[19] this episode does not occur in a narrative vacuum. In light of our methodology, we would do well to read this episode as an instance of a trope that itself serves as a component in larger narrative strategies. As we saw in Chapter Five, Śākyamuni emits light from his body after entering a concentration called Destroying the Army of Māra and thereby transforming the weapons hurled by Māra's children into flowers, parasols, and "Dharma words." This series—the transformation of weapons, the emanation of light, and the obtainment of *jātismara* on the part of unidentified actants—snaps Māra's children into proper affective alignment when they see it. "Seeing such a miraculous display as this," our narrator tells us, "Māra's army obtained intense joy toward the Lord and approached him alongside Māra's courtesans."[20] That some beings obtain *jātismara*, in other words, is a catalyst for the affective

[17] "These and similar passages [in which actants are shown obtaining *jātismara*] are of interest because they indicate that a number of the ideas concerning the obtainment of *jātismara* that we have seen previously only as doctrinal assertions were sufficiently well established so that on occasion they could be, and were, used simply as narrative elements. The conclusion of the *Ratnajāliparipṛcchā*, for example, no longer asserts that hearing a particular text results in the obtainment of *jātismara*; instead, this idea is narratively expressed as a fact: the obtainment of *jātismara* occurs as an accepted and unquestioned part of the series of events that follow after the 'congregation' has heard a particular text, just delivered by the Buddha." Schopen, "The Generalization of an Old Yogic Attainment," in *Figments and Fragments*, 205.

[18] Schopen, "The Generalization of an Old Yogic Attainment," in *Figments and Fragments*, 211 (see also 204–5).

[19] "In the *Ratnaketu*, the obtainment of *jātismara* takes place in the hells, and its associated behavior change effects the individual's release and his progression to a more favorable state" (Schopen, "The Generalization of an Old Yogic Attainment," in *Figments and Fragments*, 212).

[20] Skt. (K): tataś ca mārasainyā . . . prātihāryaṃ dṛṣṭvā bhagavato 'ntike 'tīva prasādaṃ pratilabhdvā yena bhagavāṃs tenopajagmuḥ | upetya sārdhaṃ taiḥ . . . mārakanyāśatair . . . (19.2–19.5; ellipses mine); Tib. (K): bdud kyi sde . . . cho 'phrul chen po 'di lta bu mthong nas | bcom ldan 'das la rab tu dga' bar gyur te | bcom ldan 'das ga la ba der dong nas phyin pa dang | bdud kyi bu mo . . . dang lhan cig tu . . . (30.10–30.13; ellipses mine).

reorientation of other, more central actants in the narrative. Indeed, this narrative sequence is significant for our analysis insofar as the sūtra therewith substantiates our claim that alignment has social implications. Once Māra's children are aligned, they come to be in lockstep with Māra's courtesans. And together, as a new social group, they offer praise to the Buddha. While Schopen's reading is not *wrong* by any means,[21] I simply mean to point out that we stand to gain much in our understanding of these works when we allow the whole to inflect our reading of the parts and vice versa.

Our reading of the *Precious Banner* also speaks to Schopen's study of the concern with redeeming "bugs, birds, and really bad sinners" apparent in later Mahāyāna sūtras and *dhāraṇī* texts.[22] Schopen points out that as the Mahāyāna spread across the subcontinent, people likely became increasingly familiar with Buddhist articulations of karma, a perhaps less than inviting implication of which is that once one enters a lower station of rebirth there is "virtually no way out."[23] In an attempt to solve this "PR problem," Schopen argues, Mahāyāna sūtras and *dhāraṇī* texts began to tout themselves as capable of expunging the detrimental karma of those on whose ears a vocalization of the sūtra happens to fall. Though he does not cite the *Precious Banner*, he quite easily could have—for in the sūtra's eleventh chapter, Kautūhalika proclaims that merely hearing the sūtra will result in awakening.[24] Māra, however, who is hearing and living the sūtra

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[21] Indeed, he makes a solid point about the generalization of *jātismara* with Weberian characterizations of "the doctrine of karma as . . . one of the most complete and satisfying theodicies in the history of religions" ("The Generalization of an Old Yogic Attainment," in *Figments and Fragments*, 213) in view—namely, that the doctrine of karma can be seen as creating as many problems as it solves. More on this in the following paragraph.

[22] Schopen, "Redeeming Bugs, Birds, and Really Bad Sinners," 276–94.

[23] Schopen, "Redeeming Bugs, Birds, and Really Bad Sinners," 287.

[24] Skt. (K): . . . māyaṃ dharmaparyāyo 'navaruptakuśalamūlānām api sacet . . . anuttarāyāṃ samyaksaṃbodahu || (161.7–162.1, fragmentary); Tib. (K): chos kyi rnam grangs 'di gal te sems can dge ba'i rtsa ba ma bskrun pa rnams kyi rna lam du grag par gyur pa na'ang de nyid de dag gi bla na med pa yang dag par rdozgs pa'i byang chub kyi rgyur 'gyur ba ni | (250.11–250.13).

simultaneously, appears not only to resist but also to be harmed by the power of the sūtra until his final appearance. While Māra's condition does not exactly falsify Kautūhalika's claim—the point of *dhāraṇī*s is often to harm figures like Māra—it does, I think, entitle us to ask what such an episode, itself situated at the conclusion of a narrative in which Māra's misalignment and the consequences thereof are thematized, seeks to convey to readers. If we consider that Māra and readers outside the sūtra share certain things in common—existence in saṃsāra, a tendency to desire and impose permanence where there is none, unconcluded life stories, and a homologous relationship to the sūtra—then we can appreciate the sūtra's touting of its own power and Māra's resistance to the same as a strategy by which the sūtra constitutes readers as the types of beings for whom *response* is necessary. In other words, while the *Precious Banner* does offer its readers "mechanisms . . . to, in effect, get around [previous detrimental karma],"[25] it does not eliminate personal responsibility.[26]

Contributions to the Study of Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature

The arguments advanced above—not so much *against* episode-centric treatments of Mahāyāna sūtras as *for* more holistic treatments—are largely grounded in foundations narratological and hermeneutical. That is, my claims arise from intimately related assumptions about the nature of narrative and about the process of interpretation. As is likely clear by now, I hold that narrative episodes are best understood when they are read with attention to such matters as when their events occur in story time, when they are narrated, by whom, and perhaps most importantly, how they relate to both the narrative of which they are a part and the analytically recoverable story the

[25] Schopen, "Redeeming Bugs, Birds, and Really Bad Sinners," 291.

[26] I plan to elaborate on this argument in "Trading Power for Authority" (manuscript in progress).

latter represents. In short, like any other text, our understanding of the *Precious Banner* as a whole work is informed by our understanding of its parts, and vice versa. This process could go on indefinitely—which is to say, in a manner that should not be misconstrued as hedging, that my reading of the *Precious Banner* is in no way final. What it offers, however, is an illustration of the utility of leaning into what is an inevitable feature of good reading practice—a way of reading that recognizes and implements in practice the dialectical nature of hermeneutics.

In this, my work shares much in common with the recent upswell of studies on Mahāyāna sūtras as *literature*.[27] It was this upswell, in many ways, that years ago led me to the study of the Mahāyāna in India and, more recently, inspired me to pursue this project. I wanted to be involved in the increasingly lively conversation on what was (and is) to me a fascinating and sometimes maddening body of literature and at the same time put the study of Mahāyāna sūtras into dialogue with broader exchanges in the history of religions. Some of the scholarship alongside which the present work stands has already been mentioned. The recent special issue in *History of Religions*, for instance, for which I had the privilege of writing the introduction, treats self-referential Mahāyāna sūtras as generative of extratextual social realities (e.g., the possibility of self-identifying as a bodhisattva, individual bodhisattvas as particular kinds of socially and culturally constituted beings, and groups of bodhisattvas as imagined communities with shared roots in the deep karmic past) through strategic self-reference.[28] That the present work is cut

[27] In n. 2 above, I list scholarship on emotions in Buddhist narrative to which this study contributes but which we lack space to address. Here, I would like to add that my dissertation is also in silent dialogue with narratological analyses of Pāli Buddhist literature. See, for example, Bruno Galasek-Hul, "A Narratological Analysis of the *Aṅgulimāla-sutta* (*Majjhima-nikāya* 86)," in *The Language of the Sūtras: Essays in Honor of Luis Gómez*, ed. Natalie Gummer (Berkeley: Mangalam Press, 2021), 17–58; Eviatar Shulman, "Orality and Creativity in the Early Buddhist Discourses," in *The Language of the Sūtras*, 187–230; Richard Nance, "Second Thought, Best Thought?: On Error, Correction, and the Transmission of Tradition," in *The Language of the Sūtras*, 263–92.

[28] See "History, Performativity, and Solidarity in the Study of Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature," special issue, *HR* 61, no. 2 (2021).

from the same cloth as this special issue should be clear enough from this description alone to require no further comment. Beyond it, a number of other works could be brought to table. Gregory Schopen, Jan Nattier, Paul Harrison, Daniel Boucher, and Richard Cohen, for instance, each offer exciting glimpses into the worlds behind the sūtras, often (though not exclusively) with respect to the early Mahāyāna.[29] These works, however, will be left aside here to make room for a more thorough engagement with D. Osto, Alan Cole, Charlotte Eubanks, and Natalie Gummer, on whose work my reading of the *Precious Banner* draws and builds.

We begin with D. Osto because their study of the *Supreme Array* (*Gaṇḍavyūha*), like our study of the *Precious Banner*, trades in narratology.[30] While my understanding of narratology is largely informed by Gérard Genette (and, to a lesser extent, Michael Kearns),[31] Osto takes up the vocabulary offered by Mieke Bal.[32] Though differences no doubt obtain between Genette and Bal, they are not terribly significant for our purposes. Both, in short, offer a basic framework for thinking about what narratives are and how they work. Making use of this framework, Osto leads their readers through the sprawling *Supreme Array*, which tells the story of a young man named Sudhana on a quest for awakening. Osto's analysis proceeds in a way that will likely strike my readers as familiar. Attention is paid to narrative voice and focalization (Who tells the story at any given time?, Is the speaker external to the story world, or part of it?, What does the speaker

[29] See, for example, Gregory Schopen, "On Sending the Monks Back to Their Books: Cult and Conservatism in Early Mahāyāna Buddhism," in *Figments and Fragments*, 108–53; Nattier, *A Few Good Men*; Paul Harrison, "Who Gets to Ride in the Great Vehicle?"; idem, "Buddhānusmṛti in the Pratyutpannabuddhasaṃmukhāvasthitasamādhi-Sūtra," *JIP* 6 (1978): 35–57; Daniel Boucher, "Recruitment and Retention in Early Bodhisattva Sodalities," in *Setting Out on the Great Way*, ed. Paul Harrison, 95–118; idem, *Bodhisattvas of the Forest*; Richard S. Cohen, trans., *The Splendid Vision: Reading a Buddhist Sutra* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

[30] D. Osto, *Power, Wealth and Women in Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* (London: Routledge, 2008).

[31] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*; idem, *Paratexts*; Kearns, *Rhetorical Narratology*.

[32] Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

know?); to actants (Who is the protagonist?, Who are the helpers?, Who are the opponents?); to the order, flow, and weight of narrative depictions (When do readers learn about certain features of the story world?, When do actants learn?, From whom?, How much narrative time is devoted to given episodes?); and other structural features of the sort. Tracing Sudhana through the text with such questions in mind, Osto finds that Sudhana's path is laid out for him by a series of powerful spiritual friends—many of whom are elite, wealthy women.

Osto, in other words, uncovers themes of power, wealth, and women in the *Supreme Array*'s narrative. But they do not stop there. Assuming, quite safely in my view, that works of literature require systems of patronage and have audiences, Osto also considers the extratextual aims of the *Supreme Array*. Such considerations and the conclusions that emerge therefrom are tentative, of course, and indeed somewhat speculative—this much has been raised in reviews of Osto's book,[33] and similar points could also be made about my work here—but it is my sense that thinking through this kind of thing is neither groundless nor fruitless. Coupling what André Lefevere has termed a "systems approach" to literature[34] with Umberto Eco's insight that texts are "ideologically overcoded,"[35] Osto argues that the thematization of power, wealth, and women in the *Supreme Array* provides adequate reason to suspect that the sūtra sought audience and patronage from wealthy laywomen—a reading further supported by situating the *Supreme Array*

[33] David Fiordalis writes, for example: "Although there may be scope for the type of worldview analysis that Osto has given us, even if one could establish that the *Gaṇḍavyūha* reflects a particular social and political reality, it seems to me a leap to conclude that criteria internal to the text provide us with evidence about the actual or intended audience of the scripture. The *Gaṇḍavyūha* is such a difficult text to read that it is hard for me to believe that anyone but trained scholars would have wanted to do so. For as much as I know, however, perhaps there were such people among the wealthy lay community." David Fiordalis, Review of *Power, Wealth and Women in Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*, by D. Osto (H-Buddhism, 2009).

[34] André Lefevere, "Mother Courage's Cucumbers: Text, System and Refraction in a Theory of Literature," *Modern Language Studies* 12, no. 4 (1982): 3–20.

[35] Umberto Eco, *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979).

in its Middle Period context with reference to the findings of other scholars as well as material evidence. While Osto and I do not work with the exact same narratological toolkit, we both share a desire to think about what the structural features of sūtras might tell us about how they want to be read and what they aim to accomplish in the world. And though it is certainly not the case that all Mahāyāna sūtras have even simple narratives, Osto's study as well as my own chart a course for the narratological study of those that do.

Still others offer models for the study of Mahāyāna sūtras with an eye toward extratextual aims. Among them is Alan Cole, who is the first (to my knowledge) to take a thoroughgoing literary-critical approach to these works. While Cole has brought his distinctive analytical style to bear on a range of Buddhist literature,[36] we will discuss only his *Text as Father*, in which he offers incisive readings of four well-known Mahāyāna sūtras—the *Lotus* (*Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*), the *Diamond* (*Vajracchedikā*), the *Transcendent Matrix* (*Tathāgatagarbha*), and the *Instruction of Vimalakīrti* (*Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*). The richness of these readings far exceeds the scope of this subsection, so my remarks will remain general. At the core of Cole's interpretive project is a concern to address Mahāyāna sūtras as literary works carefully crafted to seduce their audiences into accepting new forms of authoritative tradition by means of subtle rhetorical and narrative devices. Or, to borrow some of Cole's own phrasing, he contends that these Mahāyāna sūtras seek to relocate authority within themselves and thereby re-father the sons of prior tradition.

One of the things that strikes me as particularly useful and emulable about Cole's work is his interrogation of the metatextual nature of the sūtras he studies. For him, the self-referential nature of these texts marks the best entry point into their analysis—for it is in how the sūtras talk about themselves that we get a sense of how they want readers to relate to them. And indeed, as

[36] *Fathering Your Father*, for instance, focuses on Chan lineages histories.

Cole is right to point out, the primary concern for many of these sūtras just is their reception on the part of readers. They seek to fashion a particular text-reader relationship which, once established, can through clever chains of association be exploited by the text toward its own ends. Though how they achieve their ends varies from text to text, Cole shows time and again how the sūtras seek to give readers new "truth-fathers" by seducing them into "realizing" that these new "truth-fathers" (i.e., the texts themselves) were their "real fathers" after all. Whatever the literary means, the end goal is the same. The Mahāyāna sūtras Cole studies aim to secure something like *assent* to their own individual self-portraits as *the* source of tradition. While the rhetorical means by which this assent is sought after are not argumentative—the means often amount to the bald flattery of audiences who do what the texts want them to do—the assent Cole thinks the sūtras are after is propositional in nature. And moreover, this assent is something that, presumably, happens on an individual level. While Cole and I both assume that "these texts are intent on converting readers *into* some kind of community—virtual or otherwise,"[37] I have sought to address what we might called the *social question* more directly through interrogating themes of affect and emotion in the *Precious Banner*'s narrative.

Writing after Cole, Charlotte Eubanks invites us to consider how Mahāyāna sūtras affect bodies as well as minds—and in this, her work approaches our concerns from a slightly different angle than does Cole's. In *Miracles of Book and Body*, Eubanks argues that in medieval Japan texts and bodies were seen as interpenetrating. To show in what sense this was the case, and with what bodily consequences, Eubanks reads didactic tales (Japanese: *setsuwa*) in relation to the Mahāyāna sūtras they were used to explain. The lion's share of the book is given to a discussion of the content, employment, and reception of *setsuwa*, a literary genre used in Buddhist contexts

[37] Cole, *Text as Father*, 342 (emphasis original).

(often preaching/liturgical) to translate the conceptual content of Mahāyāna sūtras, themselves in Classical Chinese, into vernacular Japanese. In another dissertation, Eubanks's analyses of these fascinating tales would receive more attention. Suffice it to say here that *setsuwa* impacted their audiences such that the Mahāyāna sūtras they served to illustrate often got what they ask(ed) for—to be memorized, copied, recited, and so on. *Setsuwa*, Eubanks argues, worked to "solicit[] emotional and physiological responses from [their] audiences" by "repeatedly turn[ing] to the twinned tropes of text and flesh."[38] And by bringing examples ranging from the use of blood for ink to Myōe's severing of his own ear so that he might find his name written in a sūtra, Eubanks shows how *setsuwa* aided Mahāyāna sūtras in their attempts to do things in the world through telling stories of "the often violent, self-sacrificial dismemberment of the human body into textual fragment"[39] and "the salvific incorporation of textual fragment into embodied being."[40]

As a preface to her analysis of these *setsuwa*, Eubanks offers what is (as I have remarked elsewhere)[41] the most systematic and theoretically sophisticated treatment of the Mahāyāna sūtra genre to date.[42] For her, the primary mechanism by which sūtras secure a "symbiotic relationship with the human body" is self-reference.[43] On one level, strategic self-reference is one of the ways the sūtras conceal their origins. Though evidence suggests that they were produced after the death of the historical Buddha, many of these texts present themselves as having originated well

[38] Eubanks, *Miracles of Book and Body*, 99.

[39] This is the focus of her Chapter Three, "Decomposing Bodies, Composing Texts," 97–132, quote at 99.

[40] This is the focus of her Chapter Four, "Textual Transubstantiation and the Place of Memory," 133–72, at 99.

[41] Miller, "The Long Arm of the Law," 143 n. 12.

[42] Eubanks, *Miracles of Book and Body*, esp. 19–61.

[43] Eubanks, *Miracles of Book and Body*, 24. Though Cole's *Text as Father* was published first, it was Eubanks who first brought my attention to the implications and interpretive possibilities made possible by the self-referentiality of these works. She uses the language of *metafiction* to talk about this, while I have opted for the language of *metatextuality*.

before his time. Some even go so far as to frame themselves as the origins of buddhas, full stop.[44] In addition to being a literary means to conceal their historical origins, self-reference allows the sūtras to "come alive."[45] In talking about themselves from a seemingly text-external point of view, Mahāyāna sūtras enable themselves to manipulate how their readers respond to and interact with them. How they go about manipulating their readers varies, and we have seen some of these means in our discussion of Cole above. Eubanks, by contrast to Cole, focuses by and large on the extratextual implications of the anxiety borne out of their acute awareness of themselves as literary artefacts. To secure their survival, the sūtras seek to literally en-corporate themselves by asking—in quite a few cases demanding—that readers memorize, copy, or recite them. And they encourage these behaviors by pairing their requests/demands with promises and threats. If the cases Eubanks surveys are any indication, it appears that the sūtras—via their own literary strategies and a little help from *setsuwa*—managed to realize their aims by cultivating a symbiotic relationship with their readers' bodies. My work draws on her approach in ways that are likely obvious by this point, but it differs insofar as it has the *social body* in view in addition to individual readers.

Likewise concerned with bodies, though in a rather different sense, Natalie Gummer has argued over the course of several publications that Mahāyāna sūtras have a *presencing* function. Reading the *Sūtra of Utmost Golden Light* (*Suvarṇabhāsottama*), for example, Gummer shows how the literary techniques of alliteration, rhythm, and repetition, call the Buddha and other

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[44] For a recent in-depth study of how the *Lotus* conceals its own origin, see Alan Cole, "The *Lotus Sūtra* and the Art of Seduction," in *The Language of the Sūtras*, 147–86, esp. 167 (for a helpful visual).

[45] Eubanks, *Miracles of Book and Body*, 23.

valorized figures of the tradition into being in the context of ritualized recitation.[46] Elsewhere, drawing on the *Suvarṇa* as well as the *Lotus* (*Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*) and the *Instruction of Vimalakīrti* (*Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*), she recovers the conceptual and ritual logics on the basis of which the sūtras theorize and exercise their own capacity not only to realize such speech-bodies but also to call into existence pasts and futures for their audiences, thereby producing Buddhist subjects with novel histories and trajectories.[47] At the heart of these readings, as we have seen with Cole and Eubanks, is self-reference. Through this important literary strategy, Mahāyāna sūtras reach into the reading present, whenever and wherever that happens to be, and address readers more or less directly. Also at the heart of Gummer's readings, though yet to be noted in this context, is affect.

In "Listening to the *Dharmabhāṇaka*," Gummer seeks to glean from the *Sūtra of Utmost Golden Light* (*Suvarṇabhāsottama*) principles of interpretation that we might apply not only to this one sūtra but to others as well. Toward this end, she focuses on how the *Suvarṇa* envisions its own delivery and reception, attending particularly to how these depictions stand as normative and potentially transformative for reciters, auditors, and readers outside the text. Analyzing several episodes in the *Suvarṇa*, Gummer shows that the sūtra claims extraordinary potency for itself when recited by a *dharmabhāṇaka* endowed with eloquence. The inspired recitation of the Dharma, the sūtra tells us, draws divine beings to the place of recitation and prompts them to ensure peace and prosperity in the region. Eloquent recitation also promises—again, in a

[46] "These elements," she writes, "lie precisely at the intersection of its form and its content and contribute mightily to its affective power and to its presencing effect." Natalie Gummer, "Translating the Buddha's Body," in *Translating Buddhism: Historical and Contextual Perspectives*, ed. Alice Collett (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2021), 49–68, quote at 65.

[47] Natalie Gummer, "Speech Acts of the Buddha"; idem, "Sūtra Time," in *The Language of the Sūtras*, 293–337; idem, "Sacrificial Sūtras: Mahāyāna Literature and the South Asian Ritual Cosmos," *JAAR* 82, no. 4 (2014): 1091–1126.

normative register—to fill its audience with joy. This joy marks a "transformative experience"[48] on the part of figures in the sūtra—an experience that transforms beings from mere vessels of the Dharma to wellsprings of the same. We could say, then, that Gummer identifies a text-internal affective calculus—eloquent performance yields joy, and joy yields transformation—which aspires to extratextual realization. The *Suvarṇa*, in other words, aims to produce *for readers* experiences of positive affect, which themselves are rich with soteriological implications both mundane and ultimate. Those who listen well to the *dharmabhāṇaka* in/of the sūtra "will not only reap copious material benefits . . . but will also make lightning-speed progress on the Buddhist path—as long as they respond appropriately to his performance."[49] While we both treat sūtras as having a normative dimension, my work departs from and develops Gummer's insofar as it interrogates the social (rather than personal soteriological) aims and implications of the norms of feeling expressed in these texts.

Let us conclude this section with some summary remarks to begin moving us toward a discussion of how this dissertation speaks to questions in the history of religions. While Osto uses narratology and a "systems approach" to uncover *patronage* as an extratextual aim of the *Supreme Array*, they do not attend to whether and to what extent the sūtra's thematization of affect might play a role in realizing this and other aims in the world outside the text.[50] Cole, though concerned to examine how Mahāyāna sūtras leverage their self-referentiality to give rise to communities with themselves as *the* authoritative centers and fonts of tradition, likewise does

[48] Gummer, "Listening to the *Dharmabhāṇaka*," 144.

[49] Gummer, "Listening to the *Dharmabhāṇaka*," 144 (emphasis mine).

[50] Xi He has recently advanced a reading of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* in these terms, though with *personal transformation* in view rather than *securing extratextual patronage*. See Xi He, "Transforming Through Words: Sudhana's Experience in the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*," in *The Language of the Sūtras*, 105–46.

not attend much to how themes of affect in the sūtras themselves play a role in the literary processes of seduction he otherwise so vividly identifies. In much the same way, though she at one point notes that joyful responses on the part of actants within the sūtras "establish what reactions they anticipate from their audiences,"[51] Eubanks does not often bring narrative depictions of emotion into her account of how sūtras seek to effect a symbiotic relationship with human bodies. And last, while the metatextual and affective facets of Mahāyāna sūtras are front and center in her work, Gummer does not address the distinctly social implications of the kinds of affective experiences the sūtras want to produce in their readers. None of the above comments are levied as critiques. Each of the above studies offers much to scholars of Buddhist traditions and of religious narrative literature more broadly. My aim here has simply been to throw into relief how my reading of the *Precious Banner* draws on and contributes to the robust and ongoing dialogue surrounding how best to make sense of Mahāyāna sūtras as agential in extratextual processes. The above works have been invaluable models for my own practice, in other words, even while asking slightly different questions of the texts.

III

The central question of this dissertation concerns the relationship between religious discourse and the social world, and more specifically, how religious narrative plays a role in the formation of social groups or communities. In Chapter One, before spending time in the *Precious Banner*'s narrative with this question in mind, I offered some initial methodological framing—starting near the *theory end* of the methodology spectrum and ending near the *method end*, making sure to note their integration in practice. Here in this chapter, I have presented things in a somewhat

[51] Eubanks, *Miracles of Book and Body*, 28.

reverse order. After offering some critical reflections on prior limited treatments of the *Precious Banner* in large part to advocate for more holistic (and less episode-centric) reading methods, we then turned to a selection of scholars whose recent work on Mahāyāna sūtras not only proceeds along more holistic lines but does so on the basis of more explicitly theorized foundations and questions. Despite their insightful and sophisticated treatment of the literature at issue, we were nevertheless able to identify a conceptual space to slot the present reading of the *Precious Banner*—one that both draws and builds on this body of work toward understanding how one particular Mahāyāna sūtra seeks to do things in the world. It is my contention, however, that the methodological framework of affective regimes deployed here also intervenes in debates in the history of religions such that some general interpretive problems and questions are thrown into new light. Toward making this case, we turn to the *theory end* of our methodological spectrum, after which we return briefly to Gilgit and point toward avenues for further research.

Contributions to the History of Religions

As intimated in Chapter One, though not fully spelled out, the methodological foundations of this project emerged out of a desire to resolve a tension between the work of Bruce Lincoln and Donovan Schaefer. Trained in the history of religions, my debt to Lincoln is no doubt obvious to many of my readers. But in *Religious Affects*, Schaefer puts his finger on an important problem, I think, when he questions the extent to which models of religion that foreground language explain how religious discourses "attach to bodies and get them to move."[52] I want to spend some time here discussing the tension I perceive between these two voices in more depth than in Chapter One above—with the benefit of having our reading of the *Precious Banner* in the rear view mirror, as it were—so that the resolution offered by the framework of *affective regimes* comes

[52] Schaefer, *Religious Affects*, 35.

into focus as sharply as possible. Indeed, it is my hope that our methodology stands as something of a synthesis of what I take to be their basically antithetical positions. But I will leave it to my readers to judge to what extent I am successful in this endeavor.

For Lincoln, discourse and force are the two main ways humans maintain and modify their social worlds. Leaving the exercise and threat of physical violence aside, Lincoln divides *discourse* into two types: ideological persuasion and sentiment evocation. The former involves reasons and norms, while the latter involves similarity and dissimilarity. Leaving the first of these aside for now to track Lincoln's thinking, the imagined boundaries constitutive of social groups are themselves made of sentiments of affinity and estrangement. And these two types of sentiment, on his reckoning, are the result of appeals to perceived similarities and difference between individuals. Put differently, sentiments of affinity and estrangement are the precipitate of loose comparative processes whereby some persons A, B, and C are constituted as similar to one another by virtue of sharing some X in common and *at the same time* different from persons D, E, and F insofar as they do not share X (but instead some Y, or perhaps nothing at all).

I do not doubt that such appeals to similarity and difference play a role in the evocation of sentiment. I have a sense, however, that things are more complicated. To clarify what I mean, let us turn to the language of *latency* that occasionally shows up in Lincoln's writing. At one point in his reflections on the role of myth in sentiment evocation, Lincoln envisions a "total social field" in which members are organized according to multiple strata and segments.[53] At a general level, we have what we can call the *tribe*. Within the tribe, we have various *clans*. And within each clan, we have several *lineages*. This view of a social field is artificial and incomplete insofar as we could nearly always find a level of generality deeper than the tribe—on the basis of

[53] Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society* 2nd ed., 17–19.

genetic analysis, for example, we could go all the way back to "mitochondrial Eve"—by virtue of which we could include ever larger numbers of contemporary tribes, clans, and lineages, not to mention units of analysis more expansive than the tribe. What Lincoln wants his readers to appreciate in this abstract discussion is that the nature of a society's structure makes possible the *evocation* of sentiments of affinity and estrangement based on the *invocation* of similarity and difference grounded in one or another stratum of the social field. The members of two usually competing lineages of the same clan, to illustrate, could be united against the members of a lineage from another clan by virtue of appeal to a shared clan ancestor. Yet the conflict between these two groups could itself be defused by strategic appeal to a shared ancestor at the level of the tribe, or at an even deeper level. Complex social organizations of this sort, in other words, contain within them several *latent* sites of similarity and difference and thus "latent sentiments of affinity and estrangement."[54] This same basic point extends beyond matters of social structure to include any point of commonality.

In using the language of *latency* to characterize sentiments of affinity and estrangement when they are not actively felt and thus doing social work, I think Lincoln misses an opportunity to further theorize the relationship between the analytically distinguished *ideological persuasion* and *sentiment evocation*. But here we get slightly ahead of ourselves. Framing some sentiments as *latent* (and others, by extension, as *active*) risks assuming a natural link between individuals, objects, and how the former will feel about the latter when experienced or otherwise brought to conscious attention. Consider, for instance, what Lincoln says toward the end of his section on stratified and segmentary social fields:

> It is when separate individuals recall their common descent from (and thus attachment to) a given ancestor that they reawaken their (latent) feelings of affinity for, and attachment

[54] Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, 2nd ed., 209.

> to, one another. In that very moment and by that very act of memory, they (re-)define themselves as kin, that is, persons who are joined together in the same familial group. In this way the past shapes the present, *invocation* of an ancestor being simultaneously the *evocation* of a correlated social group. [55]

What Lincoln seems to be saying here is that when two or more individuals are made aware of a similarity between them, they will feel affinity for one another. To *invoke* is to *evoke*, in other words. But this position strikes me as too strong—and as one which, if pressed, Lincoln would likely want to nuance. This reading is nevertheless possible, however, and it opens up a space for critical reflection.

The domain of sentiment and feeling, of affect and emotion—if the terms can be used interchangeably without too much controversy—is not so clean as the *invocation→evocation* model suggests. The workings of affect, as Donovan Schaefer points out, are quite a bit more complicated—but just as socially consequential as Lincoln makes them out to be. For Schaefer, affect has centrally to do with bodies in contact and how bodies react pre-reflectively thereto. As he notes, humans are animal bodies that use language but whose animal bodies came first. It was not until certain physical infrastructures were in place—in the speech apparatus, for example, as well as in the brain—that our hominid ancestors were able to communicate with what we today call *language*.[56] Prior to the development of language, however, it is not as though our ancestors did not *feel* and consequently *act* in such a way that had consequences we would recognize as *social*. Why is it then, Schaefer asks, that some insist that *language* determines human behavior, or otherwise exaggerate its determinative role at the expense of our biological inheritance? What

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[55] Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, 2nd ed., 18–19 (parentheses and emphases original).

[56] Language is distinct from non-human animal communication by virtue of its ability to refer to the past and the future (displacement), its ability to refer and talk about itself (metalanguage), its ability to form new words and new combinations of words (productivity), and (depending on where one stands vis-à-vis the Everett/Chomsky debate) the ability to embed clauses within clauses *ad infinitum* (recursion). My thanks to Justin Pinta for helping me find linguistically informed vocabulary to articulate this distinction.

makes some of us think human animals have somehow transcended our animal bodies? And last, he probes, why do some think that *religion*—having to do with *feelings* as much as anything else bodies do—is restricted to those animals that use language? Religion, for Schaefer, is something *animals* do—and what this means is that language is *not* central to it.

While I appreciate and, in many ways, sympathize with the approach Schaefer brings to the study of religion, it seems he is so concerned to carve out space for an approach to *religion* in terms of *affect* rather than in terms of *language* that he does not spend adequate time theorizing the relationship between these three critical terms—a relationship that, by my lights, indisputably obtains in the case of human animals. Let me explain what I mean with reference to a case from his book. The opening epigraph to *Religious Affects* comes from a speech delivered in 1863 by Benjamin Disraeli (1804–81), a former prime minister of the United Kingdom. The final lines of the quotation exemplify the approach to religion Schaefer takes to task throughout the course of his book. "The question is this," Disraeli says, "Is man an ape or an angel? (loud laughter.) My lord, I am on the side of the angels (laughter and cheering)."[57] For Schaefer, models of religion that "reduce religion to a series of cognitive appraisals of the world," on which Disraeli's claim that humans are angels is apparently based, are of "no value" in explaining "why those men laughed and cheered."[58] Again, I sympathize here. Thinking of *religion* in terms of *cognitive appraisal* does not help Schaefer engage the kinds of questions he wants to. But such models of religion are not the only ones on offer—and this is true, as Lincoln's work makes clear, even within the so-called linguistic turn in the study of religion against which Schaefer pits his work.[59]

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[57] Benjamin Disraeli, *Church Policy: A Speech Delivered by the Right Hon. B. Disraeli, M.P. at a meeting of the Oxford Diocesan Society for the Augmentation of Small Living in the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, November 25th, 1863* (London: Gilbert and Rivington, 1864), quoted in Schaefer, *Religious Affects*, 1.

[58] Schafer, *Religious Affects*, 10.

The above critique of Schaefer's work notwithstanding, there is utility in thinking about affect as "outside of, prior to, or underneath language."[60] Without necessarily following Schaefer where he goes with it, this idea allows us to take a fresh look at the question of how religious discourse moves bodies with reference to Arlie Russell Hochschild's concept of *feeling rules*. In addition to being animal bodies, human beings live in worlds always already saturated with language—worlds not of our own making but which we ourselves continually make and remake (regardless of whether we regard ourselves as doing so). A central feature of human worlds, regardless of how visible it is, is normativity. The worlds into which we are thrown, to use a Heideggerian turn of phrase, are pre-stocked with expectations and responsibilities that stand over and above us as *normative* but *not* as *determinative* in any strict sense. It seems Schaefer would agree here—provided I recognize that these norms are in competition with firmly wired ways of animal-being-in-the-world. This I do recognize. And while not in these terms, of course, so do Buddhists. It is often such patterns and tendencies—sexual desire, e.g., itself at least just as mental as (if not more so than) biological on Buddhist accounts—that Buddhist norms seek to rein in and replace with perspectives and practices to be cultivated toward the eventual escape from the cycle of birth and rebirth (or death and re-death). In other words, Buddhist traditions seek to (re)socialize human animals into what we might call (justifiably or not) a markedly *unnatural* way of being in the world—a way of being that includes not only how we think about and act in the world but also how we *feel* about our experiences, the objects we encounter, and the situations in which we find ourselves. Hochschild's theorization of *feeling rules*—unpacked

[59] Schaefer refers to Lincoln's work in passing, alongside the work of Russell McCutcheon and Tomoko Masuzawa, characterizing it as "focused on the politics of how the word *religion* is used" (*Religious Affects*, 7). While this is an apt description of what McCutcheon and Masuzawa are often up to, it is well off target with Lincoln.

[60] Schaefer, *Religious Affects*, 4.

as "guidelines for the assessment of fits and misfits between feeling and situation"[61]—gives us the tools we need to think about the dimension of normativity of interest to us here.

As we saw in Chapter One, Hochschild at one point helpfully characterizes feeling rules as "the underside of ideology."[62] It is in this sense that the utility of Schaefer's framing of affect as *underneath language* comes into view most clearly—for feeling rules are often (though not always) *implicit* in ideological discourse and the feelings they seek to shape are often felt in a way that is, phenomenologically speaking, immediate. With this, we can begin to intervene in the debate between Lincoln and Schaefer by specifying more clearly how ideological persuasion and sentiment evocation, despite their analytical separability, are integrated in practice such that how religious discourse gets bodies to move becomes a question answerable with reference to both language and affect. Bearing in mind our initial framing of the *Precious Banner* as a religious text as well as the more narrowly narratological facets of our reading, in other words, we can begin to see more clearly what my argument regarding the sūtra's thematization of affect and emotion is doing at the level of theory. Within the sūtra, feeling rules are delivered *explicitly* only to actants therein—the *Precious Banner* never directly tells readers how they should feel. Instead, the affective regime unfolds through a complex religious narrative—which is to say, a structurally sophisticated narrative with characteristics ideological and normative—that features and plays on familiar faces and moments in the Buddhist imaginary, depicts actants affecting and being affected in various ways, and valorizes some affective responses over others. While many situations are depicted throughout the narrative, the central concern of the sūtra, on my reading, is its own reception in the reading present. And although the means by which it seeks to structure

[61] Hochschild, "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure," 566.

[62] Hochschild, "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure," 557.

its own reception are discursive, the nature of the reception has to do with emotions, with how readers are affected, with phenomenologically immediate assessments of experience that entail bodily and mental movements that are in turn constitutive of the social. The *Precious Banner*, in other words, is a tool of ideological persuasion—a mode of discourse that trades in norms, including norms of feeling—that sneaks below the surface of language, as it were—even while it is itself linguistic—in an effort to prefigure the feelings it aims to evoke in the reading present.

In ideological or "top-down" terms, the *Precious Banner* aspires to constitute the very subjectivities of its readers by making use of—even as it aims, in some sense, to modify—their biological hardware through telling a good story packaged with norms for how they should feel in response, adherence to which norms is itself incentivized by promises and threats of mundane and ultimate soteriological significance. In voluntaristic or "bottom-up" terms, the sūtra tries to get readers to *adopt* the feeling rules implicit in its narrative, and at the same time *feel* (or "try to feel" or "want to try to feel")[63] in accordance with them, through various literary mechanisms. These characterizations both identify different aspects of what we have had in mind in claiming that the *Precious Banner* disseminates an *affect regime* in order to instill in its readers a *proper affective orientation*. Following Sara Ahmed, *orientation* refers to how individuals are directed toward objects in the world and how objects thus appear to consciousness. *Orientation* signifies, in short, an individual's historically and biologically enabled and en-formed perspective on and toward the world.[64] One's orientation constitutes objects of experience *as*—for example, as *more or less useful*. An amateur guitarist, to expand on this example, apprehends a piano differently than a concert pianist. To a left-handed guitarist, to adjust our example such that the instrument

[63] Hochschild, "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure," 563.

[64] "Orientations shape not only how we inhabit space, but how we apprehend this world of shared inhabitance, as well as 'who' or 'what' we direct our energy and attention toward" (Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 3).

is the same, a right-handed guitar will not show up as useful in the same way that it does to a right-handed guitarist. As a left-handed player myself, guitar shops are often mostly filled with largely useless, albeit beautiful, instruments—due to the imbalance in production and stock on account of the statistical prevalence of right-handed players. Indeed, reflecting on my browsing practices as I write, I realize just how little attention I pay to the right-handed guitars hanging on the wall. I am only on the lookout for the instruments that show up to me as *playable*.

This is a trivial example, of course, but it illustrates the phenomenological character of orientation on Ahmed's theorization. How things *seem* to any given person depends on biology as well as personal history, values, and goals—which themselves are both products of historical, social, and cultural location as well as liable to individual intervention and thus idiosyncratic to a degree. This is to say that not all orientations are the same. And with difference comes privilege. The standards according to which a given orientation is deemed "normal" or "abnormal" come from outside any single individual, and there are many competing sources of these normative foundations. It is important to note, too, that not all these standards and their sources are equal. Writing to cast light on this fact—and thereby to disrupt the processes whereby privileged orientations get passed off as natural such that there are negative implications in the world for people whose orientations are not so privileged—Ahmed provides a simple example. "Think of a tracing paper," she writes:

> when the lines on the tracing paper are aligned with the lines of the paper that has been traced, then the lines of the tracing paper disappear: you can simply see one set of lines. If lines are traces of other lines, then this alignment depends on straightening devices that keep things in line, in part by "holding" things in place. Lines disappear through such processes of alignment, so that when even one thing comes "out of line" with another thing, the "general effect," is "wonky" or even "queer."[65]

[65] Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 66.

What Ahmed is saying here is that there are concrete implications of when one's orientation is "in line" or "out of line" with the orientation deemed "normal." Sometimes, being out of line with the "normal" orientation is a function of physical bodies. Consider, for instance, how a person with a disability might experience spaces made with only able-bodied persons in mind. And conversely, consider how an able-bodied person might experience spaces made for someone with a specific disability—such an experience could cause an able-bodied person to realize the extent to which their orientation to the world has shaped the very world in which they and others live. In addition to being contingent on the type of physical body a person has and is, being "out of line" sometimes has a basis we might characterize as predominantly mental in nature—in such cases, alignment comes through a combination of social conditioning and personal intervention.

It is this latter kind of orientation—particularly the affective dimensions thereof—that we have had in view in our reading of Māra in the *Precious Banner*. While it may seem that Māra is locked into his present situation by virtue of his karmic history, Śākyamuni makes it clear that he has the capacity to eliminate his prior bad karma by modifying how he sees and feels about what is going on around him. Throughout the text, Māra is affected such that he is rendered powerless and isolated. His fear and anger seem immediate and natural to him—his affective orientation constitutes the objects of his experience as sources of fear and anger. Implicit in the injunction he receives to be happy, however, is the real possibility of reorientation as well as the necessity of response on his part to the mechanism of conditioning put before him in the form of a feeling rule. This is all *within* the sūtra, of course. Without rehearsing my argumentation, I contend that the negative feeling rules (or rule reminders) and the positive injunctions to be happy delivered to Māra *within* the narrative also extend *through* the narrative to readers. The aim of the sūtra is to *affectively align* subjects through the act of reading—to make subjects who are the kinds of

beings who are predisposed to feel joy in the Dharma, especially as it appears before them—and to give rise to that very feeling in those very subjects in the reading present. In this, ideological persuasion and sentiment evocation work hand in hand. While human animals are endowed with the biological hardware necessary to feel joy, no human animal is hardwired to feel joy on account of a Buddhist sūtra. (Indeed, as some Mahāyāna literature is keen to point out, a perfectly natural reaction to emptiness is fear.) It is possible, however, to engineer this wiring through the installation of cultural software.[66] Seemingly aware of this, the *Precious Banner* seeks to produce subjects whose affective orientations in turn constitute the sūtra itself as a source of joy. And through inculcating such an affective orientation to the sūtra and providing the opportunity to feel appropriately, the *Precious Banner* also seeks to call into being an empowered community.[67]

Let us return now to Lincoln and Schaefer, starting with the latter, to consider in a more direct fashion how the framework of affective regimes offers a synthesis of their antithetical views. Recall the epigraph with which Schaefer begins his *Religious Affects*. For Schaefer, models of religion in terms of *cognitive appraisal*—not only grounded in the linguistic turn but also, in his view, illustrative of its weaknesses—cannot explain why Disraeli's audience laughed when he asked whether humans are apes or angels, or why the audience cheered when Disraeli sided with the angels (to say nothing of the comparatively much more complicated process of social formation). As I hope to have shown, *pace* Schaefer, we have good reason to suspect that language is intimately involved. While Disraeli and the people in his audience are human animal

[66] "It is possible that the evocation of an object can be pleasurable even if we have not yet experienced an object as pleasing: this is the power after all of the human imagination as well as the social world to bestow things that have yet to be encountered with an affective life" (Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, 27).

[67] "Emotions involve different movements towards and away from others, such that they shape the contours of social as well as bodily space" (Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 2nd ed., 209).

bodies, none of them was raised in a sociocultural vacuum. Nor did Disraeli's speech occur in one. While the biological hardware for laughter and cheering was necessary for Disraeli's words to prompt laughter and cheers on the part of his audience, so too was the prior conditioning that made the semantic content of Disraeli's speech conducive to such reactions for those particular animal bodies at that particular time.[68] This necessary conditioning is multifaceted, of course, but central to it is an ideological framework in which asking whether humans are either apes or angels—with the implication clearly being that it must be one or the other, not both—is not only meaningful but also, by virtue of the feeling rules on this ideology's underside, so ridiculous as to elicit laughter in a phenomenologically immediate way. Likewise, this ideological framework and its implicit rules of feeling constitute Disraeli's answer to his own rhetorical question as so important and resoundingly true as to elicit cheers—again, *immediately* at the phenomenological level—upon its utterance and affirmation. This framework, which has a certain anti-Darwinian, Victorian-era Judeo-Christian flavor, is not merely a set of cognitive appraisals, a descriptive worldview. It is this, of course, but it is at the same time *normative*. And insofar as these norms have been successfully inculcated—insofar as individual orientations are made to be "in line" with the lines on the tracing paper, to return to Ahmed's metaphor—the status of the norms *as norms* recedes into the background as does the mediated nature of the ways these individuals were affected by Disraeli's words. It seems that in this case, as Ahmed writes, "there is nothing more mediated than immediacy."[69]

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[68] If Disraeli's audience were from elsewhere in the world, in other words, or from some other time, his words might not have been received and responded to as they were by his actual audience.

[69] Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 2nd ed., 212.

If the framework of affective regimes supplements Schaefer in a kind of Lincolnian vein, let us now attempt a converse procedure with Lincoln. In analytically distinguishing *ideological persuasion* and *sentiment evocation*, Lincoln predisposes himself to treat these two modes of discourse as distinct rather than integrated *in practice*. Let us take as an example his treatment of the years leading up to the Iranian revolution.[70] At the end of his characteristically insightful study of the deployment of myth and countermyth toward the modification of Iranian society, Lincoln maintains that the shah's appeals to Achaemenian heritage failed to realize "the imperial society he hoped to create"[71] thereby—unlike the Islamic clergy's appeals to the martyrdom of Husayn at Karbala, which played a role in mobilizing Iranians to overhaul their society—because "the Achaemenians remained ancestors to whom few Iranians felt deeply attached."[72] According to the *invocation→evocation* model discussed above—on which similarity entails attachment and thus an appeal to similarity activates previously latent sentiments of affinity—the shah's failure and the clergy's success call out for more explanation. This example shows that appealing to a shared object is not sufficient to mobilize the sentiments that are conducive to social formation. Interrogation of the *interplay* of ideological persuasion and sentiment evocation, a practice invited by the framework of affective regimes, promises to yield a more nuanced interpretation. From this vantage, the shah's appeals to Achaemenian heritage show up for us as grounded in an ideology that presented the ancient empire as something toward which Iranians, as its would-be inheritors, ought to feel sentiments such as reverence and pride. By contrast, the Islamic clergy's appeals to Karbala appear for us as grounded in an ideology that presented

[70] Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, 2nd ed., 30–35.

[71] Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, 2nd ed., 30.

[72] Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, 2nd ed., 35.

Husayn's martyrdom at the hands of Yazid—the word *martyrdom* does some heavy lifting all on its own—as an event toward which Iranians ought to be indignant. Though Iran has a rich Zoroastrian heritage, most Iranians were Shīʿa Muslims by this time. It therefore makes a certain degree of sense that appeals to the murder of Husayn, who was on their view the rightful heir to the prophetic lineage, would produce strong (and socially consequential) emotional responses—especially given that the clergy more and more openly associated the shah with Yazid. But this does not stand in the way of the point I wish to make here. While it is undeniably the case that "discourses on the mythic past served as a primary instrument"[73] in the shah's and the clergy's competing attempts to mobilize sentiments of affinity and estrangement on the part of the Iranian people, it was the implicit norms of feeling smuggled in on the underside of Shīʿa ideology—which to one extent or another constituted their subjectivities and, as such, instilled within them a particular affective orientation to the world—that facilitated the Islamic clergy's successful evocation of phenomenologically immediate and socially consequential sentiments by means of discourse.[74]

"I am aware," Lincoln writes in an endnote, "that use of the term *sentiment* is likely to cause some problems, given the almost insuperable difficulty of speaking with precision about the affective dimensions of social life; at times," he continues,

> I have considered coining a neologism to avoid talk of sentiment, for example, speaking of the sociogravitational forces of attraction and repulsion that can be stimulated by discourse. Always, however, the cure has seemed worse than the disease.[75]

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[73] Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, 2nd ed., 35.

[74] "When history becomes second nature, the affect seems obvious or even literal, as if it follows directly from what has already been given. We assume that we experience delight [e.g.] because 'it' is delightful" (Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, 37).

[75] Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, 2nd ed., 216 n. 9 (italics original).

This note, for whatever reason, has stuck with me since I first read it—and even more so after reading Schaefer's *Religious Affects*. With these words, I think, Lincoln anticipates the problem Schaefer identifies and seeks to solve. In some ways, then, my work is an extended commentary on Lincoln's note and Schaefer's "response" (in quotes here because whatever dialogue obtains between them is largely my construction), in which I attempt to reach a synthesis of their views by bringing Hochschild's theorization of *feeling rules as the underside of ideology* into the mix alongside Ahmed's theorization of *emotions as constitutive of social boundaries*. In the end, what I hope to have offered with my reading of the *Precious Banner* in the light cast by the methodological framework of affective regimes is a provocation. While I agree that it is difficult to speak "with precision about the affective dimensions of social life,"[76] it is less difficult to speak about the normative facets of religious discourse that seek to shape how people tend to feel. Attention to these (often implicit) norms and the means by which religious discourse seeks to inculcate them in subjects, coupled with interrogation of the means by which the emotions framed as normative are evoked, promises to enrich our understanding of how religious discourse goes about getting bodies to move such that they form communities. It is to one such community that we now turn before drawing things to a close by gesturing toward avenues for further investigation.

The Gilgit Community

This dissertation opened with the colophon of the early-seventh century Sanskrit manuscript of the *Precious Banner* found at Gilgit, the most complete extant Sanskrit manuscript of the work known to contemporary scholarship. And now that we have revisited some of the larger themes of the dissertation in relation to the more theoretical facets of the methodology deployed in these

[76] Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, 2nd ed., 216 n. 9.

pages, we have a chance to return to the Gilgit context. In discussing the epigraph at the outset of Chapter One and a few other places, I have noted that the community at Gilgit stands as a single historical instantiation of the transhistorical community envisioned and called into being by the sūtra. Let us here represent the colophon again, so that we might contend more strongly for this claim by considering it in comparative frame with other available colophons from Gilgit. The colophon reads:

> Having prepared the *Precious Banner Dhāraṇī Sūtra*, which removes many fears, through the firstfruits of whatever merit I have generated with a joyful mind ever zealous in devotion, may this whole world always meet with this very *Precious Banner*, the ornamented teaching of the Sage, the meaning of which is clear, and which shines with excellent qualities.
>
> — The Assembly of the Fine Dharma: the glorious Paṭola King Vikramādityanandin,the glorious Queen Surendramāla, the Uvakhī(?) glorious Queen Dilnitapuṇyā, the donor who had this book written, Metalagornikṣiṇa, his wife, Āysātikasumonviltā, and [his/her?] mother, Aspinaśūlā.[77]

What we see here may not seem exceptional at first. With its description of the donative activity, dedication of merit, and list of donors, it certainly seems like standard fare for the genre. When we situate this colophon next to other colophons from Gilgit, however, what makes this colophon unique and noteworthy comes into relief.

Not all the Gilgit manuscripts come down to us with colophons clear and intact. As Oskar von Hinüber remarks, this is in large part because colophons are often written in a messier hand

[77] Skt. (K): saṃskṛtvā ratnaketum pracurabhayaharān dhāraṇīm yan mayāgryam puṇyaṃ kiṃcit prasūtaṃ pramuditamanasā sarvabhaktyādṛtena | sarvo 'yaṃ tena loko munivacanakathālaṃkṛtāṃ ratnaketum hy etām eva sphuṭārthām atiguṇaviśadāṃ prāpnuyāt sadya eva || || saddharmasaṃgraho śrīpaṭolaṣāhi vikramādityanandasya śrīmahādevyāṃ surendramālāyāṃ tathā sārdhaṃ uvakhī śrīmahādevyāṃ dilnitapuṇyāṃ || tathā sārdhaṃ pustakalikhāpitaṃm idaṃ mahādānapati metalagornikṣiṇasya tathā sārdhaṃ bhāryā āysātikasumonviltāyāṃ tathā sārdhaṃ mātā aspinaśūlāyāṃ || (178.1–178.8). The second half of Kurumiya's reading has been silently modified to accord with Oskar von Hinüber, "Die Kolophone der Gilgit-Handschriften," *SII* 5–6 (1980): 49–82, at 58–59.

and appear on the last folios of a manuscript, which are more likely to be damaged or lost.[78] That said, however, we do have several to compare with that of the *Precious Banner* thanks to (among others) von Hinüber, whose work provides the basis for the following comparative survey. As a first case, let us consider the Gilgit manuscript of the *Perfection of Wisdom in 18,000 Lines* (*Aṣṭādaśasāhasrikā*). The first line of its colophon identifies the manuscript as the "pious gift of the faithful lay professional and great *gakhravida*(?) Nāśasiṃha" alongside several other donors (including the same king named in the *Precious Banner*'s colophon).[79] After the names, we see the following dedication of merit: "May whatever merit there is in this gift lead to the attainment of unexcelled knowledge on the part of all sentient beings."[80] This basic dedication is common enough—it is the one witnessed in the colophon of the Sanskrit manuscript of the *Instruction of Vimalakīrti* recently found at the Potala Palace in Lhasa,[81] for instance—and it is also the pattern we see in many of the Gilgit colophons. A manuscript of the *Medicine Master* (*Bhaiṣajyaguru*), to begin naming a few more instances, reads: "Through whatever merit there is in this gift, may unexcelled knowledge be attained."[82] The *Prophecy of Ajitasena* (*Ajitasenavyākaraṇa*) provides nearly the exact same formula in its colophon: "May whatever merit there is in this gift lead to

[78] "Da die Kolophone auf den letzten, oft beschädigten Blättern der Handschriften stehen, und da sie nicht in der Buchschrift, sondern in einer Art 'Umgangsschrift' meist recht nachlässig geschrieben sind, bleiben einige Lesungen unsicher" (von Hinüber, "Die Kolophone der Gilgit-Handschriften, 49).

[79] deyadharmo yaṃ mahāśraddhopāsaka mahāgakhravida nāśasiṃhasya (von Hinüber, "Die Kolophone," 53).

[80] yad atra puṇyaṃ tad bhavatu sarvasatvanām anuttarajñānavāptaye stu (von Hinüber, "Die Kolophone," 54).

[81] The colophon reads: "This is the religious donation of the monk Śīladhvaja, follower of the excellent Mahāyāna. May whatever merit there is in it lead to the attainment of the fruit of that cognition which cannot be surpassed on the part of the entire mass of living beings, beginning with my teacher, preceptor, mother, and father. This was copied by the attendant Cāṇḍoka on the 29th day of the month Bhādra in the year 12 of the reign of His Majesty Gopāladeva." Luis Gómez, Paul Harrison, et al., trans., *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa—The Teaching of Vimalakīrti: An English Translation of the Sanskrit Text Found in the Potala Palace, Lhasa* (Berkeley: Mangalam Press, 2022), 139.

[82] yad atra puṇyaṃ tad bhavatu-m-anuttarajñānavāpnuyāstu (von Hinüber, "Die Kolophone," 60–61).

the attainment of unexcelled knowledge on the part of all sentient beings."[83] And the same can be said of a fragmentary colophon of a manuscript of the *Lotus* (*Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*), albeit tentatively.[84]

There are exceptions to this general rule, however. Some colophons list only names,[85] likely due to damage rather than omission. Others provide more information. A manuscript of the *Lotus* (*Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*) and a manuscript of the *Conjunction Sūtra* (*Saṃghāṭa*) are two examples. The colophon of the *Lotus* manuscript in question, following the conclusion typical of sūtras,[86] praises the *Lotus* with prose descriptions (e.g., "the elucidation bringing the highest goal within reach")[87] and with the following verse:

> If a son of good family falls into a pit full of burning coals or lies down on a bed of razors, he should go [to] a place, where this Sūtra is.[88]

The colophon then proceeds, in accordance with what we would expect, to name the main donor along with those who stand to receive merit through the donation.[89] While the colophon of the

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[83] yad atra puṇya tad bhavatu sarvasatvānāṃm anuttarajñānavāpnuyā (von Hinüber, "Die Kolophone," 63).

[84] . . . sarvesāṃ satvānāṃ anuttarajñānavāpunāyā bhavati (von Hinüber, "Die Kolophone," 64).

[85] Such is the case in the *Cleansing One Hundred and Eight Names in Twelve Stanzas*, also called the *Prophecy of the Glorious Mahādevī* (*Dvādaśadaṇḍakanāmāṣṭaśatavimalīkaraṇā*, or *Śrīmahādevīvyākaraṇa*), one manuscript of the *Medicine Master* (*Bhaiṣajyaguru*), one manuscript of an unknown work, and one manuscript of the *Lotus* (*Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*). For these, see von Hinüber, "Die Kolophone," 60, 62–63, 66, and 66–67. According to Karashima, Dutt's identification of the text (following the Tibetan) as the *Śrīmahādevīvyākaraṇa* is not accurate because the text calls itself *Dvādaśadaṇḍakanāmāṣṭaśatavimalīkaraṇā* in the colophon. Karashima, "Some Folios of the *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviṣayāvatāra* and *Dvādaśadaṇḍakanāmāṣṭaśatavimalīkaraṇā*."

[86] . . . abhyanandam iti. samāptam ca saddharmapuṇḍarīkaṃ dharmaparyāyaṃ . . . (Oskar von Hinüber, "On the Early History of Indic Buddhist Colophons," *International Journal of Buddhist Thought and Culture* 27, no. 1 [2017]: 45–72, at 55).

[87] paramārthanirhāranirdeśam (von Hinüber, "On the Early History," 55; translation von Hinüber's). Such praise of the *Lotus* is found in other manuscripts colophons of the work. See, e.g., Cecil Bendall, *Catalogue of Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1883), 24.

[88] aṅgārakarṣūṅ gāhitvā ākramya kṣurasaṃstaraṃ gantavyaṃ kulaputreṇa yatra sūtram idaṃ bhavet (von Hinüber, "On the Early History," 55; translation von Hinüber's). This verse came to be common among colophons of the *Lotus*. For more on colophons of the *Lotus* beyond Gilgit, see von Hinüber, "On the Early History," 55–58.

[89] devadharme ya mahāsraddhopāsaka lerakṣiṇena tathā sārdhaṃ . . . (von Hinüber, "On the Early History," 55).

Lotus puffs up even further the already self-impressed sūtra, the *Conjunction* has what we might call a more outward-facing colophon. Like the handful mentioned above, the *Conjunction*'s colophon dedicates the merit to all sentient beings.[90] This altruistic dedication, however, is almost an afterthought. Prior to this line, there is quite a bit more material. The manuscript, it turns out, is the pious gift of a lay professional named Devaśririkā, who also happens to be the Queen.[91] And she commissioned this sūtra to be copied so that she might, through the merit generated thereby, "reach in her body (i.e. while alive) a long life, strength, beauty, and prosperity, (and) later the highest spotless, faultless, pure enlightenment as a Buddha."[92]

What these two examples show us is that colophons were not restricted to predictable formulas. While many Gilgit colophons dedicate the merit generated through the manuscript's production to the attainment of unexcelled knowledge on the part of all beings, such dedications are not the extent of what we find in these paratexts. Those responsible for the manuscript of the *Lotus* were free to echo and affirm the *Lotus*'s own claims to power. And Queen Devaśririkā did not have any problem first dedicating the merit generated by the *Conjunction*'s production to her own longevity, prosperity, and beauty before sharing the merit with all sentient beings. Like these two colophons, the *Precious Banner*'s stands out when compared to the other, thinner colophons found at Gilgit. But it stands out among even these two more robust ones—and this for a few reasons. First, modifiers having to do with affect appear twice in the verse that

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[90] yad atra puṇyaṃ tad bahavatu sarvasatvānāṃ (von Hinüber, "On the Early History," 54; see also von Hinüber, "Die Kolophone," 69–72, at 70).

[91] devaddharmmo yaṃ likhāpitaṃ mahāśrāddhopāsikāyā mahādānapatyā rājñī devaśirikāya (von Hinüber, "On the Early History," 54; see also von Hinüber, "Die Kolophone," 69–72, at 69).

[92] sve śarīre āyurvalavarṇavṛddhiṣṭhām paścā anuttarāṃ vimalavirajanirmmalavuddhavodhim spṛśatu (von Hinüber, "On the Early History," 54; translation and parentheses von Hinüber's; see also von Hinüber, "Die Kolophone," 69–72, at 69).

precedes the list of donor names. The sūtra is characterized as eliminating fear, and the principal donor describes himself as preparing the sūtra with a joyful mind. Second, the merit from the production of the manuscript is not dedicated to the attainment of unexcelled knowledge on the part of sentient beings. Rather, it is dedicated specifically to the eventual encounter with the *Precious Banner* itself on the part of sentient beings. And last, the principal donor gives alongside others who appear to call themselves by the collective singular "Assembly of the Fine Dharma."[93] What we have, in short, is a colophon that not only appears to draw on the themes of the sūtra we have been interrogating in this dissertation but also to furnish some evidence for my contention that the *Precious Banner* seeks to call into being a community characterized by joyful affective alignment with the sūtra itself.

As Fabio Rambelli, Gregory Schopen, Jinah Kim, and others have made clear, sūtras are as much cult objects as they are containers of discourse.[94] Scholars would therefore do well to attend as much to the physicality of Buddhist sūtras as to their contents. This practice is no doubt an advisable one in this and other contexts. Following Bryan Lowe, however, and more recently Ruifeng Chen, my reading seeks to strike a balance between these two options.[95] That is to say,

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[93] According to von Hinüber, the meaning of the Sanskrit underlying my translation (saddharmasaṃgraha) is not clear. Aside from a Pāli text, the compound is not attested elsewhere. Plus, that it is positioned between the verse and the list of names leaves open the possibility that the compound's referent is the sūtra itself. In his words: "Die Bedeutung des Wortes saddharmasaṃgraha, das nur in diesem Gilgit-Kolophon steht, läßt sich nicht mit Sicherheit ermitteln. Nach BHSD kommt es sonst im BHS nicht vor, auch im Pāli ist es außer als Buchtitel nicht nachzuweisen. . . . Zwei Erklärungen sind denkbar: entweder bezieht sich die 'Zusammenfassung der rechten Lehre' allein auf den vorhergehenden Vers . . ., oder es ist eine gemeinsame Stiftung des Paṭola Ṣāhi und des dānapati gemeint" (von Hinüber, "Die Kolophone," 58–59, ellipses mine). From my translation choice, my take on the issue is unambiguous. But I must admit that my decision is guided by my reading of the text and the argument I want to make about it.

[94] Fabio Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality: A Cultural History of Objects in Japanese Buddhism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007); Schopen, "The Book as a Sacred Object in Private Homes in Early or Medieval India"; Jinah Kim, *Receptacle of the Sacred: Illustrated Manuscripts and the Buddhist Book Cult* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013).

[95] "In this way," to quote Lowe, "while my study details what Rambelli termed non-hermeneutic aspects of texts, it also underscores the limits of this category by highlighting the connection between the content of the texts and the practices directed toward them." And to quote Chen, "it seems that the majority of the common patrons and users of

without advancing the untenable claim that *all* people at Gilgit read the *Precious Banner* in the way that we think of reading today, I do want to suggest that the donors at Gilgit did have a basic sense of what the *Precious Banner* was about, perhaps on account of public recitation or teaching activities on the part of local monastics. For in this case, to reiterate, the colophon specifies that main donor and his co-donors—the Assembly of the Fine Dharma, as they seem to have named themselves—prepared the sūtra (or had it prepared) with a joyful mind, which is to say that they apprehended the sūtra as a joyful object. Although my principal aim has been broader in scope, it is my hope that this dissertation helps us understand how the *Precious Banner* played a role in constituting the community at Gilgit through the dissemination and realization of an affective regime—a set of feeling rules expressed within and through religious narrative that enjoins and encourages the cultivation of a positive affective orientation toward the *Precious Banner* itself.

IV

By way of closing, I would like to gesture toward a couple of loose ends that need tying up as the project develops as well as to indicate a few avenues for further research. First, specialist readers will likely have noticed in reading the first half of Chapter Five that the *Precious Banner* clearly valorizes more emotions than those denoted by words derived from *pra√sad*. As a first example, we can return to Māra's courtesans. After Māra provides his courtesans with a verbal image of the Buddha, they snap into alignment with Śākyamuni, make offerings to him from where they stand in Māra's palace, and are enabled (by virtue of their proper affective alignment) to see their

these scriptures from medieval Dunhuang understood their contents to some extent." Thanks to Bruce Winkelman for bringing this point (and this section of Lowe's book) to my attention. Thanks, too, to H. S. Sum Cheuk Shing for sharing Ruifeng Chen's dissertation with me. Bryan Lowe, *Ritualized Writing: Buddhist Practice and Scriptural Cultures in Ancient Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017), 3–8 (for discussion of the cult of the book with reference to Jinah Kim, Gregory Schopen, and Fabio Rambelli), quote at 7. Ruifeng Chen, "Informed Textual Practices?: A Study of Dunhuang Manuscripts of Chinese Buddhist Apocryphal Scriptures with Colophons" (PhD diss., McMaster University, 2020), quote at 258.

shower of offerings rain down over Bamboo Grove. In addition to being able to see their shower of offerings, the courtesans hear the Buddha tell his disciples that the courtesans will soon arrive in his presence and be foretold to awakening. These visual and auditory experiences give rise to *prasāda* in the courtesans. But they also produce in them *pramodya*/*prāmodya*. While the sense of words derived from *pra√sad* hovers around *tranquil satisfaction*, words from *pra√mud*, like *prāmodya*, involve more positive charge, more overt joy and delight. And it is through these two together—the Sanskrit gives them as a *dvandva* (*prasādapramodyena*), a compound in Sanskrit that subordinates neither member to the other—that the courtesans are unaffected by the tricks Māra tries to pull as they make their way to the Buddha.

The episode centering on the cosmic māras at the city gates provides yet another example of the variety of positive emotion words. When the cosmic māras descend upon Sahā, they find Māra in his lamentation room. While Māra is venting to them about Śākyamuni, a cosmic māra named Jyotiṣprabha sees the Buddha, hears the Dharma, and trembles with reverence.[96] And as a result, he and the other cosmic māras attempt to dissuade Māra from attacking the Buddha. After Māra stubbornly refuses to heed their advice, the cosmic māras reluctantly agree to fight. Four small bands are sent to the gates of Rājagṛha to disrupt Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, Pūrṇa, and Subhūti as they enter the city for alms. The plan backfires, however, and the cosmic māras are instead "overjoyed" by the mendicants' Dharma songs and sit down in the middle of the road to listen to the Dharma "with gladdened minds."[97] As we have seen, the Sanskrit behind one of

[96] Skt. (K): atha jyotiṣprabho māro bhagavataḥ kāyam adrākṣīt | svaraghoṣayuktām dharmadeśanām aśrauśīt | atha tāvad eva tasya romaharṣaṇaḥ saṃtrāsa utpannaḥ | (55.4–55.6); Tib. (K): de nas bdud me 'od kyis bcom ldan 'das kyi sku mthong | sgra dbyangs dang ldan pa'i chos ston pa thos so || mthong nas de spu zhing zhes byed cing dngangs par gyur te || (68.1–68.3).

[97] Skt. (K): paramahṛṣṭāh suprasannamanasa (63.17, 65.9, 67.19–67.20), paramahṛṣṭāh suprasannamanasaḥ (70.8); Tib. (K): shin tu dga' ste yid rab tu dang nas (76.9, 77.23–77.24), shin tu dga' ste | yid rab tu dga' nas (80.11–80.12), shin tu dga' ste | yid rab tu dad nas (83.1–83.3).

these modifiers comes from *pra√sad* (Skt. *suprasannamanasa*[*ḥ*]; Tib. *yid rab tu dang*/*dga'*/*dad*). The Sanskrit underlying the other, however, is a superlative adjective from the semantic domain of the root √*hṛṣ* (Skt. *paramahṛṣṭa*; Tib. *shin tu dga'*). Like *pra√mud*, and in contrast to the more serene *pra√sad*, words derived from √*hṛṣ* convey a sense of *excitement*—√*hṛṣ* is the root of the final noun of *romaharṣaṇa*, e.g., which denotes *horripilation*—and perhaps especially so when accompanied by the superlative prefix (*parama-*).

The sūtra's depiction of the cosmic māras peeling away from Māra at the preaching lotus further solidifies that the spectrum of valorized emotions deserves much more attention than we were able to give it in Chapter Five. After Māra fails to mobilize his remaining forces to attack the lotus, two cosmic māras take turns reprimanding Māra for being so rash as to think he could best the Buddha in combat. A third cosmic māra then tells Māra that the cosmic māras together now intend to go to the Buddha "with a delighted and joyful outlook" (Skt. *prītiprasannekṣaṇāḥ*; Tib. *dga' zhing dang bas blta*).[98] This phrase, itself a *bahuvrīhi* (i.e., a nominal compound that modifies another noun outside itself), has as its head noun *īkṣaṇa* (outlook, view) modified by the familiar *prasanna* (gladdened, joyful). But there is another word in the compound—*prīti*, which carries a sense of delight and pleasure. This word appears again in the words of the fourth and final cosmic māra to speak in this episode, Ghoṣavati. Unlike the three cosmic māras before him, Ghoṣavati addresses not Māra but rather his comrades, whom he characterizes as "filled with delight through devotion" (Skt. *bhaktikaḥ prītiyuktāḥ*; Tib. *gus shing dga' ldan*), as

[98] Skt. (K): pāpīmaṃs tvam apetadharmacaraṇaḥ pāpakriyāyāṃ rato nātho hy eṣa jagaddhitārthakuśalo buddhaḥ satām agraṇī | āyāmo nagaraṃ drutaṃ vayam iha prītiprasannekṣaṇāḥ gacchāmaḥ śaraṇaṃ trilokamahitaṃ sarvauṣaddhaṃ prāṇināṃ || 3.85 || (79.4–79.7); Tib. (K): sdig can khyod ni chos kyi spyod pa spangs shing sdig byed dga' || sangs rgyas mgon 'di 'gro ba'i phan don mkhas shing dge ba'i mchog || grong khyer 'dir byon bdag cag myur du dga' zhing dang bas blta || 'jig rten gsum mchod srog chags kun gyi sman la skyabs su 'dong || 3.86 || (90.11–90.15).

"overjoyed" (Skt. *prahṛṣṭā*; Tib. *rab dga'*), and as "suffused with devotion and joy in the excellent words of the Sage" (Skt. *munivaravacane sphītabhaktiprasādā*; Tib. *thub pa'i gsung mchog la yang dga' dad skyed*). Here we again see *prīti*, an adjective formed from √*hṛṣ* (with the prefix *pra-* rather than the superlative *parama-*), and *prasāda*. New here is the word *bhakti* (devotion), about which we could certainly spill much ink in conversation with scholarship on *bhakti* in the broader South Asian cultural sphere. For better or worse, however, we will have to leave that for another time.

As a final example, let us consider an episode we were not able to treat in any depth: the affective reorientation of Jyotīrasa, the astral scientist and Śiva-devotee sent by Māra to distract the Buddha. Primed by Pseudo-Maheśvara to apprehend Śākyamuni as an accomplished sage in the line of Gautama,[99] Jyotīrasa saw Śākyamuni in these terms—this not due to anything Māra said, however, but rather because Śākyamuni approaches and enters the city of Rājagṛha while in the concentration called Heroic Progress, which causes sentient beings to see him in accordance with their needs and predilections.[100] After discussing astral science for some time,[101] Śākyamuni proceeds to slowly unveil the Dharma.[102] At the conclusion of this protracted exchange, Jyotīrasa comes to see Śākyamuni rightly (i.e., as the Buddha), obtains a concentration called Precious Banner,[103] and praises the Buddha in verse.[104] He then offers flowers to the Buddha, which turn into parasols and float over the Buddha's head. Seeing this—and this is the part of the episode

[99] Skt. (K): 60.11–61.2; Tib. (K): 72.11–73.6.

[100] Skt. (K): 101.6–101.18; Tib. (K): 111.19–112.17.

[101] Skt. (K): 101.19–102.5 (fragmentary, missing); Tib. (K): 112.18–119.12.

[102] Skt. (K): 102.6–102.8 (fragmentary, missing); Tib. (K): 119.13–121.27.

[103] Skt. (K): 102.9–102.12 (fragmentary): Tib. (K): 122.1–122.9.

[104] Skt. (K): 102.13–105.16 (fragmentary): Tib. (K): 122.10–126.1.

that is of interest to us here—Jyotīrasa is "filled with the utmost immaterial delight, joy, and pleasure."[105] Śākyamuni then emerges from the Heroic Progress concentration, after which his disciples are "filled with immaterial *prīti* and *prāmodya*."[106] What is perhaps most noteworthy here is the language of *immateriality* (Skt. *nirāmiṣa*; Tib. *zang zing med*), which shows up again in the sūtra's thirteenth chapter,[107] but I am not yet sure what to make of it beyond its apparently being an attempt to distinguish the pleasure experienced by virtue of proper alignment from the kind of physical pleasure one might experience by virtue of an affective orientation in line with the norms of Sahā.[108] But again, for lack of space we will have to leave this investigation for the future.

In addition to a more sustained investigation of the range of valorized emotions in their narrative contexts, a more systematic comparative study of Sanskrit manuscript colophons is also a significant *desideratum*. The Gilgit manuscripts, as noted, do not always have intact colophons due to loss and/or damage. Comparing the colophon of the *Precious Banner* found at Gilgit with Sanskrit manuscripts from elsewhere in South Asia would therefore give us a clearer sense of the extent to which the *Precious Banner*'s colophon is in fact noteworthy. I have begun to take steps toward this end, making use of Cecil Bendall's *Catalogue of Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts*, but limitations of time have prohibited the engagement necessary to bring Bendall's work into my

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[105] Skt. (K): bhūyasyā matrayā nirāmiṣena prītisaumansyenodvilya . . . (106.1–106.10, at 106.3, fragmentary); Tib. rab tu zang zing med cing mchog tu dga' ba dang | yid bde bas tshim par skyes par gyur te (126.2–127.3, at 126.5–126.6).

[106] Skt. (K): . . . prītiprāmodyajātā (106.11–106.14, at 106.12, fragmentary); Tib. (K): zang zing med cing mchog tu dga' ba dang mgu ba skyes te (127.4–127.8, at 127.6).

[107] Skt. (K): 173.16; Tib. (K): 266.26–27.

[108] According to Edgerton, *āmiṣa* refers to "(the) *flesh* (contrasting with dharma . . . *the spirit*); *worldly things, possessions*, or *enjoyments*, as contrasted with religious or spiritual ones (dharma)" (BHSD, s.v. āmiṣa). The word *nirāmiṣa*, formed by adding the privative prefix *nis-* (*nir-* here due to euphony rules) to *āmiṣa*, accordingly means "*free from worldliness . . . spiritual*, *non-physical*" (BHSD, s.v. nirāmiṣa).

dissertation in any concrete manner. In a similar vein, the present reading of the *Precious Banner* would doubtless be enriched by a comparative engagement with the other texts found at Gilgit. Such a project, grounded in what we might call a local canon, would widen our scope enough to consider the possibility of a broadly Buddhist affective regime, but in a way limited to the Gilgit context. To what extent such an investigation would pay any dividends is an open question, and it is one that I hope to begin answering in the coming years.

Less delimited, though just as worthwhile, would be to approach the *Precious Banner* in comparative frame with other Mahāyāna sūtras with a high degree of narrative sophistication or that treat similar themes—regardless of whether they are witnessed at Gilgit. Three initial (and perhaps obvious) candidates are the *Lotus*, the *Sūtra of Golden Light*, and the *Supreme Array*. As Cole, Gummer, and Osto have demonstrated with verve and clarity, these sūtras are structurally sophisticated pieces of literature. They also trade to one degree or another in matters of affect to the extent that reading any or all of these in relation to the *Precious Banner* would, I think, shed new light on the texts' respective aims and literary strategies toward a more robust theorization of affective regimes. Toward the same end, and less delimited further still, would be to read the *Precious Banner* in conjunction not only with other self-referential Mahāyāna sūtras that thematize affect to one degree or another but also with self-referential religious literature more broadly. This possibility was hinted at in a footnote above where I mention the Book of Mormon, the Qur'ān, and some Brāhmaṇical/Hindu literature (*itihāsa-purāṇa*s, e.g.) as potential comparative cases.[109] Needless to say, such a project is likely beyond the scope even of a single monograph by a much more established scholar (or future version of myself), to say nothing of the final section of this dissertation. But over time, I hope to chip away at a limited version of

[109] See Chapter One n. 93.

this project toward a cross-cultural understanding of the ways in which self-referential religious texts seek to inculcate norms of feelings in their readers such that they form communities with themselves at the center, like the one we find at Gilgit.

Although the accidents of history undoubtedly have much to do with it, from another perspective we have the shared alignment of these historical donors to thank for our encounter of the *Precious Banner* in this life. And insofar as you, my dear reader, have found some joy in reading about the sūtra's narrative strategies, as have I, then in some ways we, too, are part of the community envisioned by the *Precious Banner*.

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