

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Mahākoṭṭhika

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[534. {537.}¹ Mahākoṭṭhika²]

The Victor, Padumuttara,
the Sage, Knower of Every World,
the One who had [Five] Eyes, arose
a hundred thousand aeons hence. (1) [5881]³
The Admonisher,⁴ Instructor,⁵
Crosser-Over⁶ of all that breathe,
Skilled at Preaching,⁷ [he], the Buddha,
caused many folks to cross [the flood]. (2) [5882]

Merciful,⁸ Compassionate One,⁹
Well-Wisher¹⁰ of all that breathe, he
established in the five precepts
all the rivals who had arrived. (3) [5883]

In this way he was Unconfused¹¹
and Very Well-Known¹² by rivals,
Ornamented¹³ by arahants
who were masters [and] neutral ones. (4) [5884]

The [body of the] Sage So Great
rose up fifty-eight cubits¹⁴ [tall];

¹Apadāna numbers provided in {fancy brackets} correspond to the BJTS edition, which contains more individual poems than does the PTS edition dictating the main numbering of this translation.

²BJTS reads *Koṭṭhita*

³this and the following five verses also appear, verbatim, as the first six verses of Dabbamalla's *apadāna* (#531 {534}, above; [5769]-[5774])

⁴*ovādako*

⁵*viññāpako*

⁶*tārako*

⁷*desanākusalo*

⁸*anukampako*

⁹*kāruṇiko*

¹⁰*hitesi*

¹¹*nirākulaṇ*

¹²*suññātaṇ*, or “empty [of ill-will],” which is BJTS Sinhala gloss reading; I construe the epithet as *su* + *ñāta*

¹³*vicchittaṇ*

¹⁴*ratanāna-aṭṭha-paññāsaṇ uggato*. A *ratana* (Sinh. *riyan*) is figured as twelve-fingers (*aṅgula*), according to Sinh-Eng Dictionary about eighteen inches. The claim here then is that Padumuttara Buddha was 1044 inches (or 87 feet) tall.

¹⁵*kañcchanagghiyasaṅkāso*, lit., “like a gold valuable thing” or “like a gold festoon work”

he was Valuable Like Gold,¹⁵
Bearing the Thirty-Two Great Marks. (5) [5885]

[People's] lifespan at that time was
[fully] one hundred thousand years.
Remaining [in the world] so long,
he ferried many folks across. (6) [5886]

I then [lived] in Hamsavatī,
brahmin master of the Vedas.
Approaching Beings' Best Hardwood,¹⁶
I heard the preaching of *Dhamma*. (7) [5887]

Then [Buddha] placed a follower,
who pastured in developed thought,¹⁷
skilled in meaning and the Teaching,
etymology and preaching,
a hero, in that foremost place.
After hearing that, I was thrilled;
then for a week I fed [him], the
Best Victor,¹⁸ with [his] followers. (8-9) [5888-5889]

Having covered with [new] cloth [robes]
the Wisdom-Sea¹⁹ with [his] students,
bowing down in front of [his] feet,
I aspired [to attain] that place. (10) [5890]

Afterward the World-Chief said [this]:
“Look at that excellent brahmin,
[now] bent down in front of my feet,
with lotus-belly radiance.”²⁰ (11) [5891]

This one's aspiring to the place
of the monk of the Best Buddha.
Through that faith, generosity,
and [his] hearing of the Teaching,
he'll transmigrate from birth to birth,

¹⁶reading *sattasāraggaṃ* with BJTS for PTS *sattapāraṇaṇaṃ* (“going beyond [or cross-
ing, surmounting] beings”)

¹⁷*pabhinnaṃmatigoccharaṇaṃ*, lit., “he whose pasturage was developed thought”

¹⁸*jinavaraṇaṃ*

¹⁹reading *buddhisāgaraṃ* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *buddhasāgaraṇaṃ* (“Ocean of
Buddhas” or “Buddha-Ocean”)

²⁰*kamalodarasappabhaṇaṃ*

being happy in every place;
very far into the future,
he'll receive that delightful [place]. (12-13) [5892-5893]

In one hundred thousand aeons,
arising in Okkāka's clan,
the one whose name is Gotama
will be the Teacher in the world. (14) [5894]

Worthy heir to that one's *Dhamma*,
Dhamma's legitimate offspring,
the one whose name is Koṭṭhita
will be the Teacher's follower." (15) [5895]

After hearing that I was thrilled,
[and] then for as long as [I] lived,
mindful, loving-hearted [and] wise,
I waited on²¹ [him], the Victor. (16) [5896]

Due to that karma done very well,
with intention and [firm] resolve,
discarding [my] human body,
I went to Tāvātimsa [then]. (17) [5897]

Three hundred times [the lord of gods,]
I exercised divine rule [there],
and [then] five hundred times I was
a king who turns the wheel [of law]. (18) [5898]

[There was also] much local rule,
innumerable by counting.
Through the power of that karma,
I was happy in every place. (19) [5899]

I transmigrate in [just] two states:
that of a god, or of a man.
I don't go to other rebirths:
that's the fruit of good practice.²² (20) [5900]

I am born in the two [high] clans,
kṣatriyan and also brahmin.

²¹*paricchariṇ*, "waited on" "attended to"

²²*succhiṇṇassa idaṇ phalaṇ*

I don't get born in lesser clans:
that's the fruit of good practice. (21) [5901]

When [my] last rebirth was attained
I was a kinsman of Brahmā,²³
reborn [then] in a brahmin clan²⁴
in Śrāvastī, very wealthy. (22) [5902]

Mother was named CChandavatī;
my father Assalāyana.
When with all intelligence the
Buddha instructed my father,
being pleased with²⁵ the Well-Gone-One,
I went forth into homelessness.
Moggallāna²⁶ was my teacher;
Sāri's child²⁷ was my preceptor. (23-24) [5903-5904]

When my hair was being cut off,
views were cut off [too], with their roots.
[While] living in the saffron robes,
I attained [my] arahantship. (25) [5905]

Because my thought was developed
[well] in meaning and the Teaching,
etymology and preaching,
the World-Chief placed me in that place.²⁸ (26) [5906]

Questioned by Upatissa,²⁹ I
explained³⁰ with no[thing] indistinct.
Thus in analytical modes,
I'm foremost in the religion.³¹ (27) [5907]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.

²³i.e., a brahmin

²⁴vippakule

²⁵lit., in

²⁶i.e., Mahāmoggallāna (*Therāpadāna* #2)

²⁷i.e., Sāriputta (*Therāpadāna* #1), reading *sārisambhavo* with BJTS for PTS *Sari*^o

²⁸lit., "in that foremost place"

²⁹i.e., Sāriputta (*Thera-apadāna* #1)

³⁰*viyākāsiṃ*, elsewhere "prophesied"

³¹lit., "in the dispensation of the Sambuddha"

Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. (28) [5908]

Being in Best Buddha's presence
was a very good thing for me.
The three knowledges are attained;
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (29) [5909]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (30) [5910]

Thus indeed Venerable Mahākoṭṭhika Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Mahākoṭṭhika Thera is finished.