

Legends of the Buddhist Saints

Apadānapāli

TRANSLATED BY
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Yasa

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Yasa Chapter, the Fifty-Sixth¹

[{551.}² Yasa³]

Floating in⁴ the great ocean, my
palace [then] was very well-made.
There was a pond, [also] well made,
[full of] the cries of ruddy geese,⁵ [6331]

covered with *mandālaka*⁶ blooms
and with pink and blue lotuses.
And a river was flowing there,
beautiful, with excellent banks, [6332]

covered with fish and tortoises,⁷
with various birds spread about,⁸

¹PTS ends with its #547 (BJTS {550}), and contains only fifty-five chapters. BJTS concludes with an additional nine *apadānas*, numbered {551} - {559}, and comprising this fifty-sixth chapter.

²*Apadāna* 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.

³“Famous,” a historical monk, who was truly famous for being among the first sixty arahant monks with the Buddha at the first *pavāraṇā* ceremony when the Buddha sent them wandering with his so-called “Great Commission” (which I call “the Great Dismissal”). On Yasa, see DPPN II: 685-687. This same *apadāna* appears above as #396 {399}, ascribed to a monk named “Sabbadāyaka” (in keeping with v. [6355] = [3852]), verbatim except for a slight change in the first verse of the three-verse concluding refrain, a minor variation in the epithet “Sacrificial Recipient” at [6347] (cf. [3844]), and consistency with BJTS rather than PTS readings in #396. This and the following eight *apadānas* are all ascribed to historical monks seemingly not included in the earlier parts of the text, who thereby are revealed to be in the earlier parts of the text after all, named for their original pious deeds rather than by their own names.

⁴*ogayha*, “submerged in” “plunged into.” BJTS normalizes this by glossing “in the vicinity of the great ocean,” but I take it more literally, and assume that the protagonist is a supernatural being for whom this is normal.

⁵PTS *cchakkavākā pakūjitā*; BJTS *cchakkavākūpakūjitā*

⁶RD says this is a water-plant, a kind of lotus, referencing J iv.539; vi.47, 279, 564. Here BJTS gloss is *helmällen*, *helmäli* = edible white water-lily, *Nymphaea Lotus*, also the (or a) gloss at [4231], [4233], [4313]. But elsewhere BJTS gives different glosses: at [4007] BJTS glosses it as *madāra* tree [mountain-ebony, *Bauhinia purpurea* (*Legum.*)] and says the blossoms fell into the water from overhanging trees. BJTS gloss at [324] is “a water-born plant named *Mandālā*”. At [171] BJTS Sinh. gloss is *taḍāgayangen*, “from the moss,” following its reading of [170] “well fixed [in the mosses]”. Bot. Dict. *taḍāga* = *sevela*.

⁷*macchcha-kacchchapa-saṇcchhannā*

⁸*samotthatā*, lit., “strewn about,” “spread out over”

⁹*mayura*^o

noisy with peacocks⁹ [and] herons,¹⁰
[and] the [calls of birds] like cuckoos.¹¹ [6333]

Pigeons¹² [and] ravi-swans¹³ [as well],
ruddy geese¹⁴ and *nadīccharas*,
lapwings¹⁵ [and] mynah birds¹⁶ are here,
small monkeys,¹⁷ *jīvajīvakas*.¹⁸ [6334]

[It] resounds with swans and herons,
owls and many *piṅgalas*.
The sand contains the seven gems,
[strewn with] jewels [and costly] pearls. [6335]

All of the trees, made out¹⁹ of gold,
pervaded by various scents,
are lighting up my palace [there],
by day and night, all of the time. [6336]

Sixty thousand instruments are
being played morning and evening.
Sixteen thousand women [as well]
are waiting on me constantly. [6337]

Happy, with pleasure in [my] heart,
having departed [my] palace,
I worshipped that Greatly Famed One,
Sumedha, Leader of the World. [6338]

Having greeted the Sambuddha,
inviting him [and] Assembly,
that Wise One then agreed [to come],
Sumedha, Leader of the World. [6339]

¹⁰°*koñccha*°

¹¹*kokilādīhi vaggūhi*, lit., “and with the lovely [cries] of cuckoos, etc.”

¹²*parevatā*

¹³*ravihaṇṣā*

¹⁴*cchakkavākā*

¹⁵*dindibhā*, Sinh. gloss *kirallu*, *kiraḷā* = red-wattled or yellow-wattled lapwing. PSI dictionary gives “bluejay”

¹⁶*sālīkā*, RD: maina (= mynah) birds

¹⁷*pampakā*, Sinh. gloss *huṇapupulō* (Sorata = *uṇahapuḷuvā*), a small, tailless monkey. Its high-pitched cry, which famously (and frighteningly) resembles that of a cobra, is apparently the reason these have been included in the present list of (mostly) birds known for their cries.

¹⁸a type of pheasant

¹⁹reading *sabbasovaṇṇamayā* with BJTS for PTS *sabbe sovaṇṇayā*

Having preached the *Dhamma* to me,²⁰
the Great Sage [later] took his leave.
Having greeted the Sambuddha,
I returned to my palace [then]. [6340]

I summoned [all] the people²¹ there:
“All of you gather together.
In the first part of the day,
the Buddha will come to the palace.” [6341]

“We dwelling near you have received
something that’s well-gotten for us.
We too will do a *pūjā* for
the Teacher, the Best of Buddhas.” [6342]

After putting up food [and] drink,
I announced that it was the time.
The Leader of the World arrived
with one hundred thousand masters.²² [6343]

I went to meet [him] with the five
musical instruments [sounding].
The Supreme Person²³ sat down on
a chair made out of solid gold. [6344]

I placed²⁴ a canopy above,
which was made out of solid gold;
fans are then diffusing [perfumes]
within the Assembly of monks. [6345]

I regaled the monks’ Assembly
with large amounts of food [and] drink;
I gave individual pairs
of cloth²⁵ to the monks’ Assembly. [6346]

The one whom they called Sumedha,
Sacrificial Recipient,²⁶

²⁰lit., “having done a *dhamma*-talk for me”

²¹*parijana* (for *parijjanam*), “the people around there,” “retinue”

²²*vasīsatasaḥassehi*, that is, masters of the Teaching, arahants.

²³*purisuttamo*

²⁴lit., “I made” “I did”

²⁵*paccchcheka-dussa-yugale*

²⁶*āhutinam paṭiggaho*

sitting in the monks' Assembly,
spoke these [six] verses [at that time]: [6347]

“This one who [gave] me food and drink
and fed²⁷ all of these [monks] with it,
I shall relate details of him;
[all of] you listen to my words: [6348]

For eighteen hundred aeons he
will delight in the world of gods.
A thousand times he'll be a king,
a king who turns the wheel [of law]. [6349]

In whichever womb he's reborn,
[whether] it's human or divine,
a canopy of solid gold
will always²⁸ be carried [for him]. [6350]

In thirty thousand aeons [hence],
arising in Okkāka's clan,
the one whose name is Gotama
will be the Teacher in the world. [6351]

Worthy heir to that one's *Dhamma*,
Dhamma's legitimate offspring,
knowing well all the defilements,
he'll reach nirvana, undefiled. [6352]

Sitting in the monks' Assembly
he will [then] roar the lion's roar.²⁹
On [his] pyre an umbrella's borne;³⁰
beneath it³¹ he is cremated.“ [6353]

Monkhood has been attained by me;
my defilements are [now] burnt up.
In a pavilion or tree-root,
burning heat is not known by me. [6354]

²⁷*tappayi*, lit., “satisfied,” “regaled,” “entertained.” BJTS reads *sabbe ime ccha* (“and all of these [monks]”) for PTS *saṅgham etena*

²⁸lit., “every day”

²⁹i.e., announce his arahantship

³⁰i.e., to honor his lofty status

³¹lit., “beneath the umbrella”

In the thirty thousand aeons
since I gave that gift at that time,
I've come to know no bad rebirth:
the fruit of giving everything. [6355]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. [6356]

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! [6357]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! [6358]

Thus indeed Venerable Yasa Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Yasa Thera, the first.