

Sela

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*Printed August 2022*

[389. {392.}<sup>1</sup> Sela<sup>2</sup>]

In the city, Haṃsavatī,  
I was in charge of the roadways.<sup>3</sup>  
Calling my kinsfolk together,  
I spoke these words [to them back then]: (1) [3581]

“The Buddha’s<sup>4</sup> been born in the world,  
the Unsurpassed Field of Merit,  
the Foundation for Every World,<sup>5</sup>  
Sacrificial Recipient. (2) [3582]

The kṣatriyans and city folk,  
the rich people and the brahmins,  
happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts,  
have<sup>6</sup> formed themselves into a guild.<sup>7</sup> (3) [3583]

Those on elephants,<sup>8</sup> royal guards,<sup>9</sup>  
charioteers<sup>10</sup> and foot-soldiers<sup>11</sup>  
happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts,  
have<sup>12</sup> formed themselves into a guild.<sup>13</sup> (4) [3584]

The mighty lords<sup>14</sup> and the princes,<sup>15</sup>  
Vaiśyas as well as the brahmins,  
happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts,  
have<sup>16</sup> formed themselves into a guild.<sup>17</sup> (5) [3585]

<sup>1</sup> *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. Here BJTS reads 391, a typo.

<sup>2</sup> “Stone,” a historical monk much-mentioned in the canon and commentaries.

<sup>3</sup> *vīthisāmi*, could also be imagined as an “owner” of roads, or “master” of roads; BJTS seems to prefer the latter, glossing, “I was the foremost person on a particular road.”

<sup>4</sup> as v. 91 [3673], below, specifies that this occurred 100,000 aeons ago, the Buddha in question presumably would be Padumuttara Buddha.

<sup>5</sup> *ādhāro sabbalokassa*

<sup>6</sup> lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

<sup>7</sup> *pūgadhammaṇ akaṅsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

<sup>8</sup> *hatth’ārūḥā*, those mounted on elephants

<sup>9</sup> *anikaṭṭha*

<sup>10</sup> *rathikā*

<sup>11</sup> *pattikārakā*

<sup>12</sup> lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

<sup>13</sup> *pūgadhammaṇ akaṅsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

<sup>14</sup> *uggā*

<sup>15</sup> *rājaputtā*

<sup>16</sup> lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

<sup>17</sup> *pūgadhammaṇ akaṅsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

The cooks<sup>18</sup> [and] those who dress the hair,<sup>19</sup>  
 the bath boys,<sup>20</sup> the garland-makers,<sup>21</sup>  
 happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts,  
 have<sup>22</sup> formed themselves into a guild.<sup>23</sup> (6) [3586]

The dyers,<sup>24</sup> also the weavers,<sup>25</sup>  
 the tanners,<sup>26</sup> also the bath girls,<sup>27</sup>  
 happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts,  
 have<sup>28</sup> formed themselves into a guild.<sup>29</sup> (7) [3587]

The fletchers,<sup>30</sup> the leather workers,<sup>31</sup>  
 carpenters<sup>32</sup> and workers in gold,<sup>33</sup>  
 tinsmiths,<sup>34</sup> also [makers of] mats,<sup>35</sup>  
 have<sup>36</sup> formed themselves into a guild.<sup>37</sup> (8) [3588-3589]<sup>38</sup>  
 Hired servants<sup>39</sup> [and] musicians,<sup>40</sup>  
 and numerous slaves and servants,<sup>41</sup>  
 to the extent of their own strength,<sup>42</sup>

<sup>18</sup>*ālārikā*

<sup>19</sup>*kappakā*

<sup>20</sup>*nahāpakā*

<sup>21</sup>*mālakārakā*

<sup>22</sup>*te*, lit., “they” “they [have]”

<sup>23</sup>*pūgadhammaṅ akaṅsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

<sup>24</sup>*rajakā*

<sup>25</sup>*pesakārā*

<sup>26</sup>*cammakārā*

<sup>27</sup>*nhāpikā*

<sup>28</sup>lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

<sup>29</sup>*pūgadhammaṅ akaṅsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

<sup>30</sup>*usukārā*, arrow-makers

<sup>31</sup>*cammikā*

<sup>32</sup>*tacchakārā*

<sup>33</sup>*soṇṇakārā*

<sup>34</sup>*tipulopā*

<sup>35</sup>*kaṭṭā*

<sup>36</sup>lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

<sup>37</sup>*pūgadhammaṅ akaṅsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

<sup>38</sup>here, PTS and BJTS diverge. The latter presents in two verses all the material, plus some more, that appears in this one verse in PTS. BJTS [3588] reads: The fletchers, the *bhamakāras* (?)/leather workers and carpenters/happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts/have formed themselves into a guild.// BJTS [3589] reads: “The metal-smiths (*kammāro*), workers in gold/and likewise those who work in tin/happy, with pleasure in [their] hearts, have formed themselves into a guild.//” I prefer the BJTS reading here, but stick the PTS as my base text.

<sup>39</sup>*bhatakā*

<sup>40</sup>*gītakā* <*gītakārā*. BJTS reads *cetaka*, “boy servants,” “waifs”

<sup>41</sup>*dāsa-kammakārā bahū*

<sup>42</sup>*yathā sakena thāmena*, “as far as their own power”

have<sup>43</sup> formed themselves into a guild.<sup>44</sup> (9) [3590]

Water-bringers,<sup>45</sup> wood-gatherers,<sup>46</sup>  
tillers,<sup>47</sup> also grass-carriers,<sup>48</sup>  
to the extent of their own strength,<sup>49</sup>  
have<sup>50</sup> formed themselves into a guild.<sup>51</sup> (10) [3591]

Florists<sup>52</sup> and gardeners<sup>53</sup> as well,  
green-grocers<sup>54</sup> [and] fruit-carriers,<sup>55</sup>  
to the extent of their own strength<sup>56</sup>  
have<sup>57</sup> formed themselves into a guild.<sup>58</sup> (11) [3592]

Harlots,<sup>59</sup> slave-girls who bring water,<sup>60</sup>  
women who sell cakes [or] sell fish,<sup>61</sup>  
to the extent of their own strength,<sup>62</sup>  
have<sup>63</sup> formed themselves into a guild.<sup>64</sup> (12) [3593]

Come<sup>65</sup> you all, gathered together,  
let us [too] form, as one, a group;<sup>66</sup>  
let us [now] perform service<sup>67</sup> for  
the Unsurpassed Field of Merit.” (13) [3594]

They, having listened to my words,  
formed a group [to last] for all time

<sup>43</sup>lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

<sup>44</sup>*pūgadhammaṇ akaṅsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

<sup>45</sup>*udahārā*

<sup>46</sup>*kaṭṭhahārā*

<sup>47</sup>*kasikā*, BJTS reads *kassakā*, “cultivators”

<sup>48</sup>*tiṇahārā*

<sup>49</sup>*yathā sakena thāmena*, “as far as their own power”

<sup>50</sup>lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

<sup>51</sup>*pūgadhammaṇ akaṅsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

<sup>52</sup>*pupphikā*

<sup>53</sup>*mālikā*

<sup>54</sup>*paṇṇikā*, dealers in leaves

<sup>55</sup>*phalahārikā* (= females?); BJTS read *phalahārakā* (= males?)

<sup>56</sup>*yathā sakena thāmena*, “as far as their own power”

<sup>57</sup>lit., “they”, *te*, “they [have]”

<sup>58</sup>*pūgadhammaṇ akaṅsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

<sup>59</sup>*gaṇikā*, “those who belong to the crowd”

<sup>60</sup>*kumbhadāsī*, lit., “slave-girls with water pots”

<sup>61</sup>reading *pūvikā macchakā pi ca* (lit., “women who sell cakes and also women who sell fish”) with BJTS for PTS *pūvikā macchakāyikā* (“women who sell cakes and women with bodies of fish”)

<sup>62</sup>*yathā sakena thāmena*, “as far as their own power”

<sup>63</sup>*te*, lit., “they” “they [have]”

<sup>64</sup>*pūgadhammaṇ akaṅsu te*, lit., “they did an act incorporating a guild”

<sup>65</sup>reading *etha* with BJTS for PTS *ete*, “they”

<sup>66</sup>*gaṇaṇ*

<sup>67</sup>*adhikāraṇ karissāma*

[and] built<sup>68</sup> a well-built meeting-hall<sup>69</sup>  
for [those in] the monks' Assembly.<sup>70</sup> (14) [3595]

After dedicating that hall,  
elated<sup>71</sup> with a happy mind,<sup>72</sup>  
surrounded by all of those [folks,]  
I went up to the Sambuddha. (15) [3596]

Having approached the Sambuddha,  
the Lord of the World, Bull of Men,  
[and] worshipping the Teacher's feet,  
I spoke these words [to him back then]: (16) [3597]

“These three hundred people, Hero,  
[together] as one [in] a group,  
have appointed for you, O Sage,  
this well-constructed meeting-hall.” (17) [3598]

The Eyeful One, accepting [it]  
in front of the monks' Assembly,<sup>73</sup>  
[the Buddha] spoke these verses [then],  
in front of my three hundred [folks]: (18) [3599]

“Three hundred and this best one<sup>74</sup> too,  
conforming<sup>75</sup> [together] as one,  
having made this [great] achievement,<sup>76</sup>  
you all are going to enjoy [it]. (19) [3600]

When [your] last rebirth is attained,  
you all will achieve nirvana,  
the state of coolness, unsurpassed,<sup>77</sup>  
unborn, undying peacefulness.” (20) [3601]

The Buddha prophesied like that,<sup>78</sup>  
the Omniscient One,<sup>79</sup> Best of Monks,<sup>80</sup>

<sup>68</sup>*kārayun*, lit., “they caused to be built”

<sup>69</sup>*upatthāna-sālā*, a hall for meetings, assemblies, services of attendance on the monks.

<sup>70</sup>*bhikkhusaṅghassa*

<sup>71</sup>*udaggo*

<sup>72</sup>*tuṭṭhamānaso*

<sup>73</sup>*bhikkhusaṅghassa purato*

<sup>74</sup>i.e., the protagonist, acting as the *ādikammika* (“instigator”) of the offering; cf. *Pilindavaccha-  
apadāna* (#388 {391}), vv. 6, 8 [3379, 3381]

<sup>75</sup>*anuvattiṅsu*

<sup>76</sup>*sampattiṅ hi karitvāna*

<sup>77</sup>*sītibhāvam anuttaraṅ*

<sup>78</sup>*evaṅ*, lit., “thusly”

<sup>79</sup>*sabbaññu*

<sup>80</sup>*samaṇuttaro*

[and] having heard the Buddha's words,  
I declared [my own] mental bliss.<sup>81</sup> (21) [3602]

For thirty thousand aeons I  
delighted in the world of gods.  
Five hundred times the lord of gods,  
I exercised divine rule [there]. (22) [3603]

One thousand times I [also] was  
a king who turns the wheel [of law].  
While exercising divine rule  
the great gods [all then] worshipped [me]. (23) [3604]

Here, in this human kingdom,<sup>82</sup> [my]  
relatives are my retinue.<sup>83</sup>  
When [my] last rebirth was attained  
there was a brahmin, Vāseṭṭha,<sup>84</sup>  
with eight hundred million in wealth;<sup>85</sup>  
I was [born as] the son of him.  
My [given] name [at birth] was "Sela,"  
a master of Vedic science.<sup>86</sup> (24-25) [3605-3606]

I, wandering about on foot,<sup>87</sup>  
waited on<sup>88</sup> by [my] own students,  
saw<sup>89</sup> Keniya<sup>90</sup> the ascetic  
with matted hair, wearing ashes,<sup>91</sup>

<sup>81</sup>*somanassaṃ pavedayin*

<sup>82</sup>*raḷḷe*

<sup>83</sup>*parisā honti bandhavā*. This presumably refers to the relatives in the previous existence, reborn with him as his political retinue.

<sup>84</sup>lit., "there was a brahmin named Vāseṭṭha"

<sup>85</sup>lit., "with eighty ten-millions (*asīti-koṭi*) in wealth (*nicayo*, "heaped up")"

<sup>86</sup>*chalaṅge pāramiṅgato*, lit., "one who has reached perfection in the six branches." RD: "the set of six Vedāṅgas, disciplines of Vedic science, viz. 1. kappa, 2. vyākaraṇā, 3. nirutti, 4. sikkhā, 5. chando (viciti), 6. joti-sattha (thus enumd at VvA 265; at PvA 97 in sequence 4, 1, 3, 2, 6, 5): D iii.269; Vv 6316; Pv ii.613; Miln 178, 236."

<sup>87</sup>*jaṅghāvihāraṇ vicarantaṇ*, lit., "wandering while living on the legs". BJTS understands this to refer to walking back and forth (Sinh. *sakman*), as in walking meditation, but these terms do not necessarily imply that.

<sup>88</sup>or "honored"

<sup>89</sup>lit., "having seen," *disvā*

<sup>90</sup>BJTS: Keniya. He is known in the canonical and commentarial texts, as is this meeting with Sela which resulted in the latter discovering the Buddha's presence in Āpaṇa and subsequently converting along with the 300 who had been his relatives at the time of the original act, co-transmigrating up to and including the final result of that act, namely arahantship. See DPPN I:663-664

<sup>91</sup>reading *jaṭā-khārika-bharitam* (lit., "hair-braided [and] filled with ashes") with BJTS for PTS *jaṭābhābhārabharitaṇ*, "heavy with the weight of the light of dread-locks," but both are probably mistakes for the recurring *jaṭābhārabharitaṇ* (PTS) or *jaṭābhārena bharitaṃ* (BJTS) elsewhere in

prepared to do a sacrifice.<sup>92</sup>

[Having seen him] I spoke these words:

[Sela:]

“Bringing a wife? Going to one?<sup>93</sup>

Or have you invited the king?<sup>94</sup> (26-27) [3607-3608]

I want to do sacrifices<sup>95</sup>

for brahmins who think like the gods,<sup>96</sup>

[but] I’m not invited by kings

[and] have not found a sacrifice.” (28) [3609]

[Keniya:]

“There is no bringing brides for me;

I do not go to brides [either].

The one I’ve invited today

is Best in the world with [its] gods,

the Delighter of the Śākyans

who Brings Happiness to Beings<sup>97</sup>

out of Friendship for All Creatures;<sup>98</sup>

these preparations are for him. (29-30) [3610-3611]

The Bright Hue of Wild Mangosteen,<sup>99</sup>

Incomparable, Unmeasurable,

the Buddha, Unrivalled in Form,

is invited for tomorrow. (31) [3612]

Like beaten<sup>100</sup> [gold] atop a forge<sup>101</sup>

[burning bright] like cedar charcoal,<sup>102</sup>

the text, translated as “bearing a weight of matted hair”

<sup>92</sup>*paṭiyattāhutaṇ*

<sup>93</sup>Sela asks the ascetic whether his sacrifice is being performed for a wedding, whether because he is bringing a bride to live in his own house (*āvāho*) or going to live in the house of a bride (*vivāho*).

<sup>94</sup>lit., “has the king been invited by you?”. The brahmin wonders whether the sacrifice is being performed for the king, as an alternative to performing it for a wedding.

<sup>95</sup>*āhuti-yiṭṭhu-kāmo*, lit., “I am one with the desire to sacrifice (*yiṭṭhu[m]* = infinitive of *yajati*) sacrifices (or oblations: *āhuti*)” or “to sacrifice oblations.”

<sup>96</sup>*brāhmaṇe deva-sammate*, lit., “brahmins who have the same opinions as the gods”

<sup>97</sup>*sattasukhāvaho*

<sup>98</sup>*sabbasattahitāvaho*

<sup>99</sup>lit., “radiant with the color of a *Timbarūsaka* [tree]”. The tree is *diospyros embryopteris*, Sinh. *timbiri*. The cty. specifies that the color is that of gold.

<sup>100</sup>*pahaṭo*, BJTS reads *pahaṭṭho*, with the same meaning.

<sup>101</sup>*ukkāmukha*°, the “mouth” (receiving or discharging end) of a furnace or forge, a goldsmith’s smelting pot.

<sup>102</sup>*khadirāṅgārasannibha*. *Khadira* is Sinh. *kihiri*, Acacia Sundra, English “red cutch” or “khayer.” The tree produces impressive spikes of yellow flowers but is known primarily for its timber and use in making charcoal.



the Great Hero's like lightning bolts<sup>103</sup> —  
I've invited him, the Buddha.<sup>104</sup> (32) [3613]

Like fire [burning] on a mountain,  
like the moon on the fifteenth day,<sup>105</sup>  
the same color as burning reeds —  
I've invited him, the Buddha. (33) [3614]

Fearless, Overcomer of Fear,<sup>106</sup>  
the Existence-Enders,<sup>107</sup> the Sage,  
The Great Hero's like a lion —  
I've invited him, the Buddha. (34) [3615]

Skillful in the Buddha's Teaching,  
little to endure from others,  
Great Hero's like an elephant —  
I've invited him, the Buddha. (35) [3616]

Skilled in doing the Great Teaching,<sup>108</sup>  
the Unmatched,<sup>109</sup> Buddha-elephant,  
the Great Hero is like a bull —  
I've invited him, the Buddha. (36) [3617]

Of Endless Beauty,<sup>110</sup> Boundless Fame,  
Bearing all the Various Marks,  
the Great Hero is like Indra<sup>111</sup> —  
I've invited him, the Buddha. (37) [3618]

Strong One,<sup>112</sup> Whose Group is Powerful,<sup>113</sup>  
Majestic One,<sup>114</sup> Hard to Approach,<sup>115</sup>  
The Great Hero is like Brahmā<sup>116</sup> —  
I've invited him, the Buddha. (38) [3619]

<sup>103</sup>*vijjūpamo*

<sup>104</sup>lit., “he, the Buddha, is the one invited by me”

<sup>105</sup>i.e., when it is full, *puṇṇamāse va candimā*

<sup>106</sup>*bhayātīto* = *bhaya* + *ātīta*, lit., “he in whom fear is overcome/surpassed/int he past” or “the one free of fear”

<sup>107</sup>*bhavantakaraṇo*, “he who makes an end of existence”

<sup>108</sup>*Saddhammācāraṅkusalo*

<sup>109</sup>*asādiso*

<sup>110</sup>*anantavaṇṇo*, could also be “unending color”

<sup>111</sup>*sakkūpamo*, “like Śakra [Indra, the king of the gods]”

<sup>112</sup>*patāpī*

<sup>113</sup>*vasigaṇī*

<sup>114</sup>*tejasī* (BJTS reads *tejassī*)

<sup>115</sup>*durāsado*

<sup>116</sup>“God,” the creator deity, the lord of all (*sahampatī*)

Teaching-Reacher,<sup>117</sup> Ten-Powered One,<sup>118</sup>  
 Master of Surpassing Power,<sup>119</sup>  
 the Great Hero is like the earth —  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. (39) [3620]

Full of waves [called] morality,  
 churning knowledge of the Teaching,  
 the Great Hero is like the sea —  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. (40) [3621]

Hard to Approach,<sup>120</sup> Hard to Subdue,<sup>121</sup>  
 Unshaken,<sup>122</sup> Risen Up,<sup>123</sup> Lofty,<sup>124</sup>  
 the Great Hero's like Mt. Meru<sup>125</sup> —  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. (41) [3622]

Of Endless Knowledge, Impartial,<sup>126</sup>  
 Unmeasurable,<sup>127</sup> Gone to the Top,<sup>128</sup>  
 the Great Hero is like the sky —  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. (42) [3623]

Support<sup>129</sup> for Those with Fears [and] Frights,  
 Protection<sup>130</sup> for Refuge-Seekers,<sup>131</sup>  
 the Great Hero Provides Comfort<sup>132</sup> —  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. (43) [3624]

<sup>117</sup> reading *pattadhammo* with BJTS for PTS *mahantadhammo*, “he who had a big Teaching”

<sup>118</sup> *dasabalo*

<sup>119</sup> *balātibalapārago* (BJTS reads °*pāragū*), lit., “one who has gone beyond the power-surpassing power”

<sup>120</sup> *durāsado*

<sup>121</sup> *duppasaho*

<sup>122</sup> *acalo*

<sup>123</sup> *uggato*

<sup>124</sup> *brahā*

<sup>125</sup> *nerūpamo*, i.e., “is like the cosmic mountain.”

<sup>126</sup> *asamasamo*, “the same [even] in difference.” This epithet could be read as the grammatical negative of the compound *samasama*, lit., “exactly the same” or “evenly even” (or, according to Sinhala usage of the same term, “Equal”), which is also used as a Buddha-epithet above, v. 57 of #388 {391} (*Pilindavaccha-apadāna*) = [3430]. *Asama* also means “stone,” a synonym for Sela’s own name, so we could read this as meaning “The Same as Stone,” though the relationship of that quality to the nature of the sky would then prove problematic. A better alt. reading, suggested to me by H.M. Wijerathna, is “the Same as the Unmatched Ones,” (“the same as those of whom no one is an equal”), i.e., the previous Buddhas.

<sup>127</sup> *atulo*. Pronounce as contraction “unmeas’rable to preserve meter

<sup>128</sup> *aggataṅ gato*

<sup>129</sup> *patiṭṭhā*, support, resting place

<sup>130</sup> *tāṇo*

<sup>131</sup> *saraṇagāminaṅ*, of those going for refuge

<sup>132</sup> *assāssako*

The Abode<sup>133</sup> of Wisdom and Spells,<sup>134</sup>  
 Merit-Field for happiness-Seekers<sup>135</sup>  
 the Great Hero, the Mine of Gems —  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. (44) [3625]

Comforter,<sup>136</sup> the Awe-Inspirer,<sup>137</sup>  
 Giver of the Fruit of Monkhood,  
 the Great Hero is like a cloud<sup>138</sup> —  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. (45) [3626]

The Eye of the World,<sup>139</sup> the Hero,<sup>140</sup>  
 Dispeller of Every Darkness,<sup>141</sup>  
 the Great Hero is like the sun —  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. (46) [3627]

Sage, Seer of the Nature<sup>142</sup> of  
 Emancipations from Objects,<sup>143</sup>  
 the Great Hero is like the moon —  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. (47) [3628]

Venerable,<sup>144</sup> Raised up in the World,  
 Adorned with the Auspicious Marks,  
 Unmeasurable, the Great Sage —  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. [3629]<sup>145</sup>

The One Whose Knowledge is Boundless,<sup>146</sup>

<sup>133</sup> *āsāyo*

<sup>134</sup> *buddhi-mantānaṅ* (intelligence and mantras)

<sup>135</sup> happiness need to be contracted “happ’ness” in recitation, to preserve meter.

<sup>136</sup> *assāsaka*, “breathing,” “having breath,” by extension “breathing easily,” or “he who makes others breath easily”. I follow BJTS Sinhala gloss in thus translating the epithet (Sinh. *āsvāsillak*

<sup>137</sup> *veda-kara*, “the one who makes religious feeling, religious joy, enthusiasm, emotion.” *Veda* is a wide-ranging term derived from \*vid (hence also “knowledge,” “science,” cf. *vijjā*), and of course designates the revealed poetry of the brahmins. In that latter context (whereby we could read the term, “Doer of the Veda” or even Maker of the Veda,” another possible meaning), the literal meaning of *assāsaka* (see previous note) is especially interesting, for “Breathing” or even “the Breath” similarly evokes a theme very dear to Brahmanical thought and scripture.

<sup>138</sup> *meghūpamo*, especially a storm-cloud

<sup>139</sup> reading *lokacakkhu* with BJTS for PTS *loke samussito* (“elevated in the world,” also a reasonable epithet for both the Buddha and the sun)

<sup>140</sup> *vīro*

<sup>141</sup> reading *sabbatamavinodano* with BJTS for PTS *sabbantamavinodano*

<sup>142</sup> reading *sabhāva-dassano* with BJTS for PTS *sabhāva rasako*, “the Original Taste”

<sup>143</sup> *ārammaṇa-vimuttīsu*, the (multiple) forms of release from the objects of the world and of the senses, including mental objects

<sup>144</sup> contract to “ven’rable” for recitation, to keep the meter

<sup>145</sup> this verse does not appear in PTS. BJTS reads: *Vuddho samussito loke/lakkhaṇehi alaṅkato/appameyyo mahāvīro/\*so me Buddho nimantito//*

<sup>146</sup> *Yassa nāṇam appameyyaṅ*, lit., “of whom knowledge is without end/limit/measure”

Morality beyond Compare,<sup>147</sup>  
 whose freedom has no parallel,<sup>148</sup>  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. (48) [3630]

Whose courage<sup>149</sup> has no parallel,  
 whose firmness is unthinkable,<sup>150</sup>  
 he whose exertion is the best —  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. (49) [3631]

Passion, hatred, stupidity  
 and every poison is destroyed;  
 the Great Hero is like a drug<sup>151</sup> —  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. (50) [3632]

There's removal of the darkness  
 of all pain, defilement, disease;  
 the Great Hero's like a doctor —  
 I've invited him, the Buddha. (51) [3633]

“Friend, this sound is hard to obtain,  
 which has been said [here], “the Buddha”.  
 Hearing “the Buddha,” “the Buddha,”  
 you all should be joyful like me.”<sup>152</sup> (52) [3634]

[Sela:]  
 Not keeping my joy inside [me]  
 it poured forth [to those] outside [me].  
 I, being [full of] joyful thoughts,<sup>153</sup>  
 spoke these words [to him at that time]: (53) [3635]

“Well then where is that Blessed One,  
 the World's Best One, the Bull of Men?  
 Having gone where will I see [this]  
 Giver of the Fruit of Monkhood?” (54) [3636]

<sup>147</sup>*śīlaṃ yassa anūpamaṃ*, lit., “the morality of whom is without comparison/metaphor”

<sup>148</sup>*vimutti asadisā*

<sup>149</sup>BJTS (and PTS alt., *diti* [sic?]) reading *yassa dhiti* (“whose energy/steadfastness/courage”) for PTS *yassa pīti* (“whose joy”), also a likable epithet for both the Buddha

<sup>150</sup>*thāmo yas"sa acintiyo*

<sup>151</sup>reading *agadūpama*, “like a medicine” with BJTS for PTS *agarūpama* (“like [something which is] not heavy”?)

<sup>152</sup>lit., “you all should produce joy with me: BJTS gloss prefers to read the *me* as modifying the saying of “Buddha,” i.e., “my saying of...” I take it, instead, as an instrumental connected with the second person plural imperative, a subtle reminder that though Sela is addressed as a singular “you” in the first two feet of this verse, he is surrounded by a large group of three hundred followers. The meaning could also be “you all should produce joy for me”.

<sup>153</sup>*pītimato santo*

[He,] taking hold of [my] right arm,<sup>154</sup>  
 thrilled, with [his] hands pressed together,  
 showed to me the King of Teachings,<sup>155</sup>  
 who Removes the Arrows of Grief. (55) [3637]

[Keniya:]  
 “Do you see<sup>156</sup> this massive forest,  
 risen up like a great storm cloud,  
 dark blue just like collyrium,  
 as visible as the ocean?<sup>157</sup> (56) [3638]

The Buddha [now] is dwelling there,  
 the Untamed-Tamer,<sup>158</sup> the [Great] Sage,  
 instructing those who can be trained,  
 making known Awakening’s parts.”<sup>159</sup> (57) [3639]

[Sela:]  
 Like the thirsty [seeking] water,  
 like the hungry [looking for] food,  
 like a cow greedy for [its] calf,  
 I went in search of the Victor. (58) [3640]

Knowing manners and good conduct<sup>160</sup>  
 I did teach to my own students  
 going into Buddha’s presence,  
 restraint in line with the Teaching.<sup>161</sup> (59) [3641]

‘Blessed Ones are Hard to Approach,  
 like lions wandering alone,  
 walking carefully, step by step,<sup>162</sup>  
 come [along after me], O men. (60) [3642]

As fearful as a snake’s venom,  
 like a lion, king of the beasts,

<sup>154</sup>*paggayha dakkhiṇaṇ bāhuṇ*

<sup>155</sup>*dhhamarājaṇ*

<sup>156</sup>reading *passas’ etaṇ* with BJTS for *passass’ etaṇ*

<sup>157</sup>*sāgaraṇ viya dissantaṇ*

<sup>158</sup>*adantadamako* could mean either “tamer of the untamed” or “tamer who is untamed;” I leave the ambiguity open with the hyphen, admitting here my preference for “tamer of the untamed” (which is also the BJTS reading, cf RD on *dametar*), and recommend pronunciation in chanting which through stress on the first term in the compound, and tone, can emphasize that the Buddha is one who tames those who are untamed/feral.

<sup>159</sup>*bodhento bodhapakkhiye*, which BJTS glosses as the (37) aspects or qualities of Awakening or Enlightenment (*bodha*, here = *bodhi*, see RD s.v.)

<sup>160</sup>*ācāra-upacāraññū*

<sup>161</sup>*dhammanucchavaśaraṇaraṇ* (BJTS reads *dhammanucchavi°*)

<sup>162</sup>*pade padaṇ nikkhipantā*, lit., “carefully placing [your feet] step by step”

like a rutting tusked elephant,  
thus Buddhas are Hard to Approach. (61) [3643]

O men, neglecting [any need]  
[that you may have] to cough or sneeze,  
walking carefully, step by step,<sup>163</sup>  
go into the Buddha's presence. (62) [3644]

Buddhas are Hard to Go Up To,<sup>164</sup>  
they're Ones who Relish Solitude,  
make Little Sound,<sup>165</sup> Hard to Approach,  
Revered [in the world] with its gods. (63) [3645]

When<sup>166</sup> I am asking [him] questions,  
or exchanging friendly greetings,  
then you all should make little sound;  
stand [there] as though [you were] sages.<sup>167</sup> (64) [3646]

Which Great Teaching he is preaching,<sup>168</sup>  
peaceful, leading to nirvana,  
listen to the meaning with care,<sup>169</sup>  
happily hearing the Teaching."<sup>170</sup> (65) [3647]

Having approached the Sambuddha  
I exchanged greetings with the Sage.  
[While I was] conversing with<sup>171</sup> him,  
I looked out for [Great Man's] marks.<sup>172</sup> (66) [3648]

I can see thirty of the marks,  
doubting only two of the marks:  
through his powers<sup>173</sup> the Sage showed me  
[his] penis enclosed in a sheath.<sup>174</sup> (67) [3649]

[And then the Buddha] placed his tongue  
into [his] ear<sup>175</sup> and on his nose.

<sup>163</sup>*pade padaṇ nikkhipantā*, lit., "carefully placing [your feet] step by step"

<sup>164</sup>*durūpansaṅkamā*

<sup>165</sup>*appasaddā*

<sup>166</sup>reading *yadā 'haṃ* with BJTS for PTS *yāvāhaṇ*, "as far as I..."

<sup>167</sup>*munibhūtā va*, i.e., silently

<sup>168</sup>reading *deseti* with BJTS for PTS *desesi*, "you preach"

<sup>169</sup>*nisāmetha*

<sup>170</sup>lit., "the Great Teaching," *saddhammasavanaṇ sukhaṇ*

<sup>171</sup>*kathaṇ vītisāretvā*

<sup>172</sup>i.e., the thirty-two auspicious marks on the body of a *mahāpurusa*, which signal that he will either be a Buddha or a wheel-turning monarch.

<sup>173</sup>reading *iddhiyā\** with BJTS for PTS *itthiyā* ("to a woman," sic!)\*

<sup>174</sup>*kosohitaṇ vatthaguyhaṇ*, BJTS reads *kosohitavattthaguyhaṇ*

<sup>175</sup>*kaṇṇasote*, "on his auditory organ"

The Victor touched [his] forehead's tip<sup>176</sup>  
[and] covered it all [with his tongue]. (68) [3650]

I, seeing his auspicious marks,  
fulfilling [all] the attributes,  
concluding<sup>177</sup> that, "he's a Buddha,"  
I went forth with [all] my students. (69) [3651]

I went forth into homelessness,  
together with the three hundred.  
When eight months [still] had not elapsed,  
we all realized nirvana.<sup>178</sup> (70) [3652]

Together<sup>179</sup> doing [good] karma  
for the Unsurpassed Merit-Field,  
together we transmigrated,  
together we turned [from the world]. (71) [3653]

I gave<sup>180</sup> rafters<sup>181</sup> [for that new hall],  
remaining<sup>182</sup> within the guild's rule.<sup>183</sup>  
Due to that deed, well done [by me],  
I'm receiving eight good results.<sup>184</sup> (72) [3654]

I'm worshipped<sup>185</sup> in [all] directions,  
and I have food that's ambrosial;  
I'm the support of everyone,<sup>186</sup>  
I don't experience<sup>187</sup> terror.<sup>188</sup> (73) [3655]

I don't get [any] diseases,  
and I protect [my] long life-span.  
I am one with exquisite skin,

<sup>176</sup>reading *patamasi nalāṭantaṃ* with BJTS for PTS *paṭṭimasanalāṭaṇ taṇ*

<sup>177</sup>*niṭṭhaṇ gantvā*, lit., "having gone (come) to the conclusion"

<sup>178</sup>*sabbe patt' amha nibbutiṇ*

<sup>179</sup>*ekato*, lit., "as one"

<sup>180</sup>lit., "having given"

<sup>181</sup>reading *gopānasiyo* with BJTS for PTS *gopānasi*

<sup>182</sup>reading *vasī* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *vasiṇ*

<sup>183</sup>*pūgadhamme*

<sup>184</sup>*hetu*, lit., causes; I follow BJTS gloss in understanding these as *ānisaṃsas* (Sinh. *anusas aṭak labami*). BJTS explains the use of *hetu* (which may be *metri causa*) as "making that good deed, [that is] that karma, the reason." I count the eight here as: (1) worshipped everywhere, (2) ambrosial food, (3) supported by everyone, (4) no terrors, (5) no diseases, (6) long life, (7) fine skin, (8) chosen or wished-for residences.

<sup>185</sup>*pūjito*

<sup>186</sup>reading *patiṭṭhā homi sabbesaṃ* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *patiṭṭhā bhosiṇ sabbesaṇ*

<sup>187</sup>lit., "have," "find"

<sup>188</sup>*tāso*

I live in dwellings [that I] choose.<sup>189</sup> (74) [3656]

Remaining<sup>190</sup> within the guild's rule,<sup>191</sup>  
the rafters I gave<sup>192</sup> [numbered] eight.  
Following the eighth<sup>193</sup> [I received]  
analysis<sup>194</sup> with<sup>195</sup> Arahantship. (75) [3657]

All accomplishments accomplished,<sup>196</sup>  
duties complete,<sup>197</sup> defilement-free,<sup>198</sup>  
[I] am your son [today], Great Sage,  
[and] "Eight Rafters"<sup>199</sup> is [now my] name. (76) [3658]

Remaining<sup>200</sup> within the guild's rule,<sup>201</sup>  
the pillars<sup>202</sup> I gave<sup>203</sup> [numbered] five.  
Due to that deed, well done [by me],  
I'm receiving five good results.<sup>204</sup> (77) [3659]

I remain unshaken by love,<sup>205</sup>  
I do not lack for possessions,<sup>206</sup>  
I'm one whose words are taken well,<sup>207</sup>  
[and] likewise I cause no offense.<sup>208</sup> (78) [3660]

My mind is not out of control,<sup>209</sup>

<sup>189</sup>*āvāse patthite vase*

<sup>190</sup>reading *vasī* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *vasiṅ*

<sup>191</sup>*pūgadhamme*

<sup>192</sup>lit., "having given"

<sup>193</sup>or, "in addition to those eight"

<sup>194</sup>*paṭisambhidā*, i.e., mastery of the (four) analytical modes, a mark of arahantship

<sup>195</sup>lit., "and". The *ca* here connects the two separate *ānisaṃsas* into one, referred to in the final foot with the singular pronoun *etaṅ*

<sup>196</sup>*sabbavositavosāno*, lit., "being one who has accomplished all accomplishments," "being an arahant"

<sup>197</sup>*katakicco*, i.e., "being an arahant"

<sup>198</sup>*anāsavo*, i.e., "being an arahant"

<sup>199</sup>*aṭṭhagopānasī nāma*

<sup>200</sup>reading *vasī* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *vasiṅ*

<sup>201</sup>*pūgadhamme*

<sup>202</sup>*thamhāni*

<sup>203</sup>lit., "having given"

<sup>204</sup>*hetu*, lit., causes; I follow BJTS in understanding these as *ānisaṃsas* (Sinh. *anusas pahak labami*).

I count the five here as: (1) unshaken by love, (2) wealthy, (3) one whose words are taken well, causing no offense, (4) mind not out of control, unshaken, and (5) arahantship (unstained, respectful, obedient, duties complete, undefiled follower of the Buddha).

<sup>205</sup>*acalo homi mettāya*

<sup>206</sup>*anūnabhogavā*

<sup>207</sup>*adeyyavacano homi*

<sup>208</sup>*na dhaṅsemi yathā ahaṅ*

<sup>209</sup>reading *abhantaṃ mānasaṃ mama* with BJTS (*bhanta* = swerving, wavering, unsteady, used of a cart that is out of control) for PTS *āgataṅ mānasaṅ mamaṅ* (alt. *mama*), "my mind is come". PTS



I'm not shaken by anything,  
unstained in the dispensation,<sup>210</sup>  
due to that deed, well done [by me]. (79) [3661]

I'm respectful,<sup>211</sup> obedient,<sup>212</sup>  
duties complete,<sup>213</sup> defilement-free;<sup>214</sup>  
I'm your follower, Great Hero,  
a venerated monk,<sup>215</sup> O Sage. (80) [3662]

Making a well-made palanquin,  
I [then] dedicated<sup>216</sup> that hall.  
Due to that deed, well done [by me],  
I'm receiving five good results.<sup>217</sup> (81) [3663]

I'm born in an eminent clan,<sup>218</sup>  
I become a very rich man,<sup>219</sup>  
I'm one who achieves all success,<sup>220</sup>  
I am not plagued with<sup>221</sup> avarice.<sup>222</sup> (82) [3664]

In [whichever] village [I] wish  
my palanquin comes to a rest,<sup>223</sup>  
by means of that best palanquin,  
I travel according to wish. (83) [3665]

Because of that palanquin-gift,  
I removed all of [my] darkness.  
Sage, this monk,<sup>224</sup> empowered with all  
special knowledges,<sup>225</sup> worships you. (84) [3666]

also gives *asantarā* (lacking peace, disturbed) as an alternate reading, which would be preferable to *āgatarā*

<sup>210</sup>*vimalo homi sāsane*

<sup>211</sup>*sagāravo*

<sup>212</sup>*sappaṭṭisso*

<sup>213</sup>*katakicco*, i.e., “being an arahant”

<sup>214</sup>*anāsavo*, i.e., “being an arahant”

<sup>215</sup>*bhikkhu tan vandate*, lit., “a monk who is venerated”

<sup>216</sup>*paññapes' aharā*

<sup>217</sup>*hetu*, lit., causes; I follow BJTS in understanding these as *ānisaṃsas* (Sinh. *anusas pahak labami*).

I count the five here as: (1) good birth, (2) great wealth, (3) all success, (4) lack of stinginess or greed, (5) magic palanquin.

<sup>218</sup>*ucce kule*

<sup>219</sup>*mahābhogo bhavāmi*

<sup>220</sup>reading *sabbasampattiko homi* with BJTS for PTS *sabbasampāttiko*

<sup>221</sup>lit., “not found for me” “I do not know” “I do not experience”

<sup>222</sup>*maccherarā* = *macchariyarā*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>223</sup>*upatitṭhati*, lit., “stands [there],” “comes to stand fast”

<sup>224</sup>*thero*, “elder”

<sup>225</sup>*sabbābhiññā-balapatto*

I performed all of [my] duties  
[and] the duties of others [too].<sup>226</sup>  
Because of that well-done deed, I  
entered the city of no fear.<sup>227</sup> (85) [3667]

I gave food [to the Buddha and]  
also [that] well-completed hall.  
Due to that deed, well done [by me],  
I arrived at that best of states.<sup>228</sup> (86) [3668]

Those who are tamers in the world,  
tame these elephants [and] horses.  
Employing varied punishments<sup>229</sup>  
they tame by means of cruelty.<sup>230</sup> (87) [3669]

Not like that,<sup>231</sup> O Great Hero, do  
you tame men [and] women [here].  
Not using force,<sup>232</sup> without weapons,<sup>233</sup>  
you tame in the supreme taming.<sup>234</sup> (88) [3670]

Praising the virtues<sup>235</sup> of giving,  
[you are] skilled in preaching, O Sage;  
addressing a single question<sup>236</sup>  
you freed the three hundred, O Sage. (89) [3671]

We're tamed by the charioteer,<sup>237</sup>  
well-freed,<sup>238</sup> undefiled,<sup>239</sup> empowered  
by all the special knowledges,  
quenched<sup>240</sup> in destroying the bases.<sup>241</sup> (90) [3672]

<sup>226</sup>*para-kiccatta-kiccāni*, “duties which are to be done by others”. I follow BJTS gloss in reading the compound accordingly; it could also be read to mean that he performed his own duties including duties involving service to others.

<sup>227</sup>*pāvisim abhayaṇ purañ*, that is, nirvana.

<sup>228</sup>Reading *seṭṭhattam* (lit., “bestness”) with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *seṭṭhan taṇ*

<sup>229</sup>*karetvā* (BJTS reads *karitvā*) *kāraṇā nānā*

<sup>230</sup>reading *dāruṇena damenti te* with BJTS for PTS *dārune na damenti te*, “they do not tame the cruel ones.”

<sup>231</sup>reading *na hēvaṃ* with BJTS for PTS *na heva*

<sup>232</sup>*adaṇḍena*

<sup>233</sup>*asatthena*

<sup>234</sup>*uttame dame*

<sup>235</sup>reading *vaṇṇe kittento* with BJTS for PTS *vaṇṇaṇ kittento*, “praising the virtue”

<sup>236</sup>reading *ekapañhaṃ* with BJTS for PTS *ekapañhe*, “single questions”

<sup>237</sup>*sārathinā*. *Sārathī*, coachman or charioteer, also connotes a trainer of horses, one who keeps the horses under control.

<sup>238</sup>*suvimiuttā*

<sup>239</sup>*anāsavā*

<sup>240</sup>*nibbutā*, lit., “blown out,” “cooled off,” i.e., in nirvana.

<sup>241</sup>*upadhikkhaye*, i.e., “in the destruction of the substratum of rebirth,.” *Upadhi* (clinging to re-

In the hundred thousand aeons  
 since I gave that gift at that time,  
 every fear has been overcome:  
 that's the fruit of giving a hall. (91) [3673]

My being in Buddha's presence<sup>242</sup>  
 was a very good thing for me.  
 The three knowledges are attained;  
 [I have] done what the Buddha taught! (92) [3674]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;  
 all [new] existence is destroyed.  
 Like elephants with broken chains,  
 I am living without constraint. (93) [3675]

The four analytical modes,  
 and these eight deliverances,  
 six special knowledges mastered,  
 [I have] done what the Buddha taught! (94) [3676]

Thus indeed Venerable Sela Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Sela Thera is finished.

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birth, the reason for rebirth, the obstacle to nirvana) is classified in various lists of *upadhis* (plural), such as clinging, wrong views, defilements, karma, bad conduct, etc.

<sup>242</sup>BJTS agrees with PTS here in presenting this variant on the standard refrain verse