

Dhotaka

Copyright © 2022 Jonathan S. Walters.

PUBLISHED BY JONATHAN S. WALTERS AND WHITMAN COLLEGE

<http://www.apadanatranslation.com>

Licensed under the Attribution, Non-Commercial, Share Alike (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>).

*Printed August 2022*

**[401. {404.}<sup>1</sup> Dhotaka<sup>2</sup>]**

The River named Bhāgīrathī<sup>3</sup>  
is fed by the Himalayas.  
It is always flowing along,  
past<sup>4</sup> the gate of Hamsavatī. (1) [3962]

The hermitage named Sobhita,<sup>5</sup>  
well-built, is on the river's slopes.  
The Buddha, Padumuttara,  
the World's Leader, was dwelling there. (2) [3963]

He was honored the people,  
like Indra by the thirty [gods].  
The Blessed One was seated<sup>6</sup> there  
fearlessly [just] like a lion. (3) [3964]

I was a brahmin living in  
the city of Hamsavatī.  
My name [back then] was Chalaṅga,<sup>7</sup>  
named thus [because] I was a sage. (4) [3965]

One thousand eight hundred<sup>8</sup> students  
were surrounding me at that time.  
Joined together<sup>9</sup> with those students,  
I went up to the riverbank. (5) [3966]

At that place I saw [Buddhist] monks,  
without deceit,<sup>10</sup> cleansed of evil,<sup>11</sup>  
crossing Bhāgīrathī [River].  
At that time I reflected thus: (6) [3967]

“These sons of Buddha, of great fame,  
are crossing evening and morning;

<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.

<sup>2</sup>“Wash-er”

<sup>3</sup>This is the BJTS spelling; PTS gives *Bhāgīrasī*

<sup>4</sup>or through? *dvārena*

<sup>5</sup>“beautiful”

<sup>6</sup>lit., “sat down”

<sup>7</sup>“Six Limbs” or “Six Branches,” as in the six branches of Vedic science. BJTS spells the name *Chalaṅga*

<sup>8</sup>lit., “eighteen hundred”

<sup>9</sup>*samito*, lit., “assembled” (also pacified, calmed)

<sup>10</sup>*nikkuhe*

<sup>11</sup>*dhotapāpake*

they are being troubled themselves,  
[and] their things<sup>12</sup> are getting ruined. (7) [3968]

The Buddha's said to be the Chief  
of the world including the gods.  
I have not [yet] made donations<sup>13</sup>  
that would cleanse [my] road to rebirth. (8) [3969]

Why then don't I get a bridge built  
on the river for Best Buddha?  
Causing that work to be done,<sup>14</sup> I'll  
transmigrate in this existence." (9) [3970]

Donating a hundred thousand  
I had a bridge built [for him there],  
trusting that "doing this deed<sup>15</sup> will  
be of great [advantage] to me."<sup>16</sup> (10) [3971]

Having caused [that] bridge to be built,  
I went up to the World-Leader.  
Hands pressed together on [my] head,  
I spoke these words [to him back then]: (11) [3972]

"Donating<sup>17</sup> one hundred thousand,  
I've caused this magnificent<sup>18</sup> bridge  
to be constructed for your sake;  
please accept [it], O Sage So Great." (12) [3973]

Padumuttara, World-Knower,  
Sacrificial Recipient,  
seated in the monks' Assembly,  
spoke these verses [about me then]: (13) [3974]

"He who had [this] bridge built for me,  
[feeling well-]pleased by [his] own hands,  
I shall relate details of him;  
[all of] you listen to my words: (14) [3975]

Fallen into<sup>19</sup> a cave<sup>20</sup> or from

---

<sup>12</sup>*attā*, "things in hand"

<sup>13</sup>lit., "there has not been doing of donations (*dakkhiṇe*) by me"

<sup>14</sup>*kārāpetvā imaṃ kammaṃ*

<sup>15</sup>*kāraṃ*

<sup>16</sup>I BJTS follow BJTS's treatment of *kataṃ kāraṃ vipulam me bhavissati* as a saying in which the protagonist cultivates trust.

<sup>17</sup>lit., doing, *katvā*, BJTS alt. corrects to *datvā*

<sup>18</sup>*mahā*<sup>o</sup>

<sup>19</sup>lit., "from"

<sup>20</sup>reading *darito* with BJTS for PTS *dalito* "broken off" (but cf. RD, *dari* s.v., *dal* is alt. for *dar* in

[the top of] a mountain or tree,  
even dying<sup>21</sup> he will get caught:<sup>22</sup>  
that's the fruit of giving bridges. (15) [3976]

As the wind<sup>23</sup> [does not disturb] a  
banyan<sup>24</sup> spreading [its] growing roots,<sup>25</sup>  
enemies<sup>26</sup> will not defeat<sup>27</sup> [him]:  
that's the fruit of giving bridges. (16) [3977]

No thieves are going to defeat<sup>28</sup> him<sup>29</sup>  
and the king<sup>30</sup> will not despise [him].  
He'll surpass all [his] enemies:<sup>31</sup>  
that's the fruit of giving bridges. (17) [3978]

[Even] in an unsheltered space,  
being scorched by the [sun's] harsh heat,  
conforming with [his] good karma,<sup>32</sup>  
he won't feel any discomfort.<sup>33</sup> (18) [3979]

In the world of gods or of men,  
a well-built elephant-carriage  
all of the time will come to be,  
discerning what he is thinking. (19) [3980]

A thousand fast carriages with  
Sindh horses as quick as the wind  
will come to [him] evening and morning:

derivatives of this noun.

<sup>21</sup>*cuto*, which literally means "fallen" as well, paralleling the actual "falling" (*patito*) governing the first two feet of the verse with a metaphorical one ("fallen from life") governing the third foot.

<sup>22</sup>*lacchati t̥hānaṅ*, lit., "he will receive a support/place/stand"

<sup>23</sup>*māluto*, abl. case

<sup>24</sup>*nigrodhā* = Sinh. *nuga*, RD: the banyan or Indian fig-tree, *Ficus Indica*; Bot. dict.: milky fig tree, *Ficus altissima* (*Urti.*)

<sup>25</sup>lit., "as a banyan...[is not disturbed] because of the wind." Banyan trees drop new roots from their spreading branches, the image invoked in *virūḷha-mūla-santānaṅ*

<sup>26</sup>*amittā*, "non-friends"

<sup>27</sup>PTS read *sahissanti*, BJTS (and PTS alt.) reads *pasahanti*; though the latter is in the present indicative it can also be read as a future-tense verb, hence the two readings produce the same meaning.

<sup>28</sup>PTS read *sahissanti*, BJTS (and PTS alt.) reads *pasahanti*; though the latter is in the present indicative it can also be read as a future-tense verb, hence the two readings produce the same meaning.

<sup>29</sup>lit., "of him," i.e., "bring about the defeat of him"

<sup>30</sup>*khattiyo*, lit., "the warrior (*kṣatriyan*)."  
BJTS (and PTS alt.) read this in the plural: *nāti-maññanti khattiyā*, in which case read "kings" or else "noblemen".

<sup>31</sup>*amitte*, "non-friends"

<sup>32</sup>*puññakammaṇa saṅyuttā*, lit., "with [his] meritorious karma"

<sup>33</sup>*na bhavissati vedanā*, lit., "there will not be feelings"

that's the fruit of giving bridges. (20) [3981]

Having come to the human state,  
this one is going to be happy;  
here too for [this] very man the  
elephant-carriage will appear.<sup>34</sup> (21) [3982]

In one hundred thousand aeons,  
arising in Okkāka's clan,  
the one whose name is Gotama  
will be the Teacher in the world. (22) [3983]

Worthy heir to that one's *Dhamma*,  
*Dhamma's* legitimate offspring,  
knowing well all the defilements  
he'll reach nirvana, undefiled." (23) [3984]

O! that karma well-done by me  
for him whose name is "Best Lotus."<sup>35</sup>  
Having done that deed<sup>36</sup> [for him] there,  
I attained [my] arahantship.<sup>37</sup> (24) [3985]

Having put forth exertion,<sup>38</sup> I'm  
calmed,<sup>39</sup> devoid of grounds for rebirth;<sup>40</sup>  
like elephants with broken chains,  
I am living without constraint. (25) [3986]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;  
all [new] existence is destroyed.  
All defilements are exhausted;  
now there will be no more rebirth. (26) [3988]<sup>41</sup>

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! (27) [3987]

The four analytical modes,  
and these eight deliverances,  
six special knowledges mastered,  
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (28) [3989]

<sup>34</sup>*bhavissati*, lit., "will become," "will come to be," "will exist"

<sup>35</sup>*jaladuttamanāmake*, i.e., Padmuttera (also "Best Lotus")

<sup>36</sup>*kāraṇ*

<sup>37</sup>lit., "I attained the destruction of the outflows"

<sup>38</sup>*padhānaṇ padahitvāna*, lit., "having exerted [myself] in exertion"

<sup>39</sup>*upasanto*

<sup>40</sup>*nirūpadhi*

<sup>41</sup>note that BJTS inverts the first and second verses of the three-verse concluding refrain.

Thus indeed Venerable Dhotaka Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Dhotaka Thera is finished.