

Uppaladāyikā

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Printed August 2022

[33. Uppaladāyikā¹]

In Aruṇavatī City,
[lived] the kṣatriyan Aruṇa.
I was [then] the wife of that king;
in that place² I was practicing.³ (1) [1160]

Gone off alone [and] sitting down,
I then reflected [on it] like this:
“there’s no good karma⁴ done by me
to take along on my journey.⁵ (2) [1161]

Am I not then going to hell,
burning red hot, very cruel,
with a gruesome form, and bitter?
For me there’s no doubt about that.” (3) [1162]

Having thought [it through] in that way.
bringing pleasure to [my own] mind,
after going up to the king,
I spoke these words [entreating him:] (4) [1163]

“O king,⁶ we [who are] called “women”
always follow behind [our] men.⁷
Give me a single Buddhist monk;
I shall feed [him,] O kṣatriyan.” (5) [1164]

At that time the king gave to me
a monk with senses [well-]controlled.
After picking up his alms bowl,

¹“Blue Lotus Giver”

²reading *ekajjhaṃ* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *ekaccaṃ* (“certain,” “definite”)

³reading *cārayāṃ’ ahaṃ* with BJTS (and cf. PTS alts. here) for PTS *vādayāṃ’ ahaṃ* (“I am singing”
“I am making sound” “I am causing to be said”)

⁴*kusalaṃ*, lit., “wholesome deeds”

⁵PTS *kusalaṃ me kataṃ n’atthi ādāya gamiyam mama*; BJTS *ādāya gamanīyaṃ hi kusalaṃ natthi me kataṃ*

⁶*deva*, or “Lord,” lit., “god”

⁷or “always become victims of men,” reading *purisānugatā sadā* with BJTS for PTS *purisānaṃ bharā mayaṃ* (“we are burdens on men” or “we carry the burden of men,” perhaps playing with the common word for “wife” used in v. 1, *bhāriyā*). Given the second half of the verse, in either event she is asking her husband for permission to “adopt” a monk. In the BJTS reading she does this by stating that as a woman she has not been able to do her own good deeds, always following after her men when they do their good deeds (and gain the merit; the whole question of women’s roles in the production of men’s karma peppers the *Therī-apadāna* despite its virtual absence in the corresponding *Thera-apadāna*). In the PTS reading, she sets up her request for the monk to feed either by apologizing for being a burden, or by pointing out that as one accustomed to carrying the burden of men she will be able to carry that of the monk, now requested.

I filled [it] with exquisite⁸ food. (6) [1165]

Filling it with exquisite food,
having removed a fine garment
which was valued at a thousand,
I gave it with a happy mind. (7) [1166]

Due to that karma done very well,
with intention and [firm] resolve,
discarding [my] human body,
I went to Tāvatiṃsa [then]. (8) [1167]

I was fixed in the chief queen's place
of one thousand kings of the gods.
I was fixed in the chief queen's place
of one thousand wheel-turning kings. (9) [1168]

[There was also] much local rule,
innumerable by counting,⁹
[and there was] much other,¹⁰ varied
fruit of that karma thereafter. (10) [1169]

I'm [always] blue lotus-colored,
very beautiful, good-looking,
a woman endowed in all parts,
of noble birth [and] radiant.¹¹ (11) [1170]

When [my] last rebirth was attained
I was born in the Śākya clan,
leader of one thousand women
[attached] to Siddhodana's son.¹² (12) [1171]

Becoming wearied in the home,
I went forth into homelessness.
Before the seventh night occurred¹³
I attained the Four [Noble] Truths. (13) [1172]

I cannot count [the gifts received,]
monastic robes and alms to eat,

⁸*parama*, or “supreme” “ultimate” “best” “superior”

⁹this refrain, common in *Thera-apadāna*, appears only here, and obviously lifted, in *Therī-apadāna*

¹⁰reading *aññaṃ* with BJTS (and PTS alt.) for PTS *puññaṃ* (“merit”), though the latter is presumably the “other fruit” which the former reading implies

¹¹or “effulgent,” *jutindharā*

¹²i.e., attached to (attending on) the bodhisattva Siddhartha; women of the royal harem of the becoming-Buddha.

¹³lit., “the seventh night not attained”

requisites [as well as] lodgings:
that's the fruit of [giving] alms food.¹⁴ (14) [1173]

O Sage, recall the good karma,
which formerly [was done] by me;
much of mine has been sacrificed
for the sake of you, Great Hero. (15) [1174]

In the thirty-one aeons since
I gave that alms-giving back then,
I've come to know no bad rebirth:
that's the fruit of [giving] alms food.¹⁵ (16) [1175]

I transmigrate in [just] two states:
as a goddess or a woman.
I do not know other rebirths;
that's the fruit of [giving] alms food. (17) [1176]

[When human] I'm born in high clans,
which have big¹⁶ halls, very wealthy;
I do not witness lesser clans:
that's the fruit of [giving] alms food. (18) [1177]

Transmigrating life after life,
incited by [my] wholesome roots,
I do not see what does not please:
fruit [of deeds] done with¹⁷ happy mind. (19) [1178]

I've mastered the superpowers
[like] the "divine ear" element.
I'm also a master, Great Sage,
of the knowledge in others' hearts. (20) [1179]

I remember [my] former lives;
[my] "divine eye" is purified.
All the defilements are destroyed;
[I] will not be reborn again. (21) [1180]

In meaning and in the Teaching,
etymology and preaching,
[this] knowledge of mine was produced
in your presence, O Great Hero. (22) [1181]

¹⁴*piṇḍapātass' idaṇ phalaṇ*

¹⁵*piṇḍapātass' idaṇ phalaṇ*

¹⁶reads *mahā°* with BJTS for *tayo°* ("three"). The latter is possible, but a weird departure from what is a stock phrase elsewhere in *Apadāna*

¹⁷lit., "of"

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
all [new] existence is destroyed.
Like elephants with broken chains,
I am living without constraint. (23) [1182]

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! (24) [1183]

The four analytical modes,
and these eight deliverances,
six special knowledges mastered,
[I have] done what the Buddha taught! (25) [1184]

Thus indeed the bhikkhunī Uppaladāyikā spoke these verses face to face with the Blessed One.

The legend of the bhikkhunī Uppaladāyikā is finished