

Mahākaccāna

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Kaccāna Chapter, the Fifty-Fourth

[528. {531.}¹ Mahākaccāna²]

The Victor, Padumuttara,
Lust-less,³ Unconquered Vanquisher,⁴
the Leader came into being,
one hundred thousand aeons hence. (1) [5663]

The Hero, with Lotus-Leaf Eyes,⁵
with a Mouth as Pure as the Moon,⁶
Shining like a Mountain of Gold,⁷
Bright as the Sun when it's Blazing,⁸ (2) [5664]

Transporting Beings' Eyes [and] Minds,⁹
Adorned with the Excellent Marks,¹⁰
Traveled the Roads of All Sayings,¹¹
Honored by People and the Gods,¹² (3) [5665]

Sambuddha, waking beings up,¹³
Eloquent One,¹⁴ Sweet-Sounding One,¹⁵
Compassion's Continuous Nest,¹⁶
Confident among Multitudes,
is preaching the sweet Teaching [there],

¹*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.

²“The Great Golden One” = Kaccāyana, a historical monk, one of the chief followers of the Buddha. See DPPN II: 468ff. Cf. also #33, above, another *apadāna* with varying details which is ascribed to this famous monk.

³*anejo*

⁴*ajitañjayo*

⁵*kamalapattakkho*

⁶*sasarikavimalānāno*

⁷*kanakācalasaṅkāso*, following BJTS Sinhala gloss *kanakaparvatayak men babalannā*

⁸reading *ravi-ditti-samappabho* with BJTS for PTS *avidittihiruppabho* (“with Sunlight like the Sun when it's Blazing”)

⁹*sattanettamanohārī*

¹⁰*varalakkhaṇabhūṣito*

¹¹*sabbavākyapathātīto*, lit., “he for whom the roads of all sayings are in the past”

¹²*manujāmarasakkato*

¹³*bodhayan satte*

¹⁴*vāgīso*

¹⁵*madhurassaro*

¹⁶*karuṇānidḍhasantāno*. BJTS reads *karuṇānibaddhasantāno* (“Continuously Fixed on [stable, bound down to] Compassion”), and notes alt. reading °*nibandha* for *niḍḍha*, as does PTS; BJTS Sinh.gloss *karuṇāven bāndunu sit attā vū* (“being one whose mind/heart is bound to compassion”). However, the extra syllable in these readings breaks the meter, and PTS alts. also include other attempts at making sense of *niḍḍha* (or *niddha* ?) in the received Pāli. *Niḍḍha* (nest, seat, abode, from *ni* + *sad*, “seat”) not only works best in terms of meter, it also brings out a bird-related reading of the entire birth, likening the Buddha to a song-bird.

taking up the Four Noble Truths.¹⁷
 He is lifting up those with breath,
 when they're sunk in delusion's muck. (4-5) [5666-5667]

Being an ascetic, alone,
 [my] home was Himalaya then.
 I saw the Victor, traveling¹⁸
 the world of humans through the sky. (6) [5668]

Having gone into his presence,
 I [then] heard [him] preaching *Dhamma*
 [and] praising the great virtue of
 one of that Hero's followers: (7) [5669]

"Whereby¹⁹ this [monk] Kaccāyana²⁰
 provides lengthy²¹ explanations
 of what's been said by me²² in brief,
 he gladdens multitudes, and me.
 I see no other follower
 [or] anyone [preaching] this way.
 Thus he's top, in that foremost place;²³
 so should you consider²⁴ [him], monks." (8-9) [5670-5671]

At that time, being astonished,
 having heard that lovely speaking,
 going to the Himalayas,
 bringing back a heap of flowers,
 having worshipped²⁵ the World's-Refuge,²⁶
 I aspired [to attain] that place.
 At that time, discerning my wish,
 the Refuge-less One²⁷ prophesied: (10-11) [5672-5673]

"All of you, look at this great sage,²⁸
 skin the color of polished gold,

¹⁷ *catusaccupasaṅhitaṅ*

¹⁸ lit., "going"

¹⁹ *yathā*, "just as" "to the extent that" "in the way that"

²⁰ i.e., the Kaccāyana who was a chief follower of Padumuttara Buddha's, after whom the (present protagonist) Kaccāyana models himself during a previous life.

²¹ lit., "spread out" "having length"

²² i.e., Padumuttara Buddha, the speaker of this verse

²³ *tadagge es' aggo*, lit., "he's top in the top point [of the category, "explains the Teaching at length"]

²⁴ *dhāretha*, lit., "carry" "recall" "remember" "regard"

²⁵ lit., "done *pūjā*"

²⁶ *lokasaraṇaṅ*

²⁷ *saraṇaijaho*, he by whom refuge is abandoned, playing on the epithet "World-Refuge" in the first foot: the Buddha is the refuge for others, but has (relies on, needs) no refuge himself.

²⁸ *isivaraṅ*, lit., "excellent sage"

hair growing upward, broad-shouldered,²⁹
 standing steadfast,³⁰ hands together,³¹
 with eyes which are full of laughter,
 at home in praising the Buddha,³²
 grasping the Teaching superbly,³³
 resembling sprinkled ambrosia.³⁴ (12-13) [5673-5674]³⁵

Hearing [of] Kaccāna's virtue,
 he stands [there] wishing for that place.
 When very far in the future,
 the Sage So Great is Gotama,
 Worthy heir to that one's *Dhamma*,
Dhamma's legitimate offspring,
 [this one] will be that Teacher's follower;
 his name will be Kaccāna [then]. (14-15) [5675-5676]

Very learned, with great knowledge,
 clever at conclusions,³⁶ a sage,
 he will attain that [wished-for] place,
 as this has been foretold³⁷ by me." (16) [5677]

In the hundred thousand aeons
 since I did that karma back then,
 I've come to know no bad rebirth:
 that's the fruit of Buddha-*pūjā*. (17) [5678]

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 Buddha-*pūjā*. (18) [5679]

[When human] I'm born in two clans:
 the kṣatriyan or the brahmin.
 I don't get born in lesser clans:
 that's the fruit of Buddha-*pūjā*. (19) [5680]

Now, in [my] final existence,

²⁹lit., "fat-shoulders". BJTS reads *piṇṇo* but understands the adjective in the same way: "having shoulders which are full (covered with meat)"

³⁰*acalaṇ*

³¹that is, doing *añjali*, "hands pressed together"

³²*Buddhavaṇṇagatāsayaṇ*

³³*dharmapaṭiggahavaṇṇa*, "with an excellent grasp of the *Dhamma*"

³⁴*amatāsittasannibhaṇ*

³⁵here BJTS uses [5673] to number two verses

³⁶*adhippāyavidū*

³⁷or "prophesied," *vyākato*

I was born in Ujjain city,³⁸
 sharp, a master of the Vedas,
 the son of Tiriṭivaccha,³⁹
 who was the brahmin counsellor⁴⁰
 of the [king], Pajjota Caṇḍa;⁴¹
 my mother's Candapaduma;⁴²
 [I'm] Kaccāna, with superb skin. (20-21) [5681-5682]

Dispatched by the earth's protector⁴³
 to [go and] invite the Buddha,
 having seen the Heap of Virtue,
 Leader, Door to Freedom City,⁴⁴
 and having heard his flawless speech
 which cleanses the muck of rebirth,
 I attained deathless peacefulness,
 with five hundred [associates]. (22-23) [5683-5684]

Clever at conclusions by birth,
 very wealthy and good-looking,
 I was placed in that foremost place
 of the Well-Gone-One, the Wise One.⁴⁵ (24) [5685]

My defilements are [now] burnt up;
 all [new] existence is destroyed.
 Like elephants with broken chains,
 I am living without constraint. (25) [5686]

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! (26) [5687]

The four analytical modes,
 and these eight deliverances,
 six special knowledges mastered,
 [I have] done what the Buddha taught! (27) [5688]

Thus indeed Venerable Mahākaccāna Thera spoke these verses.

The legend of Mahākaccāna Thera is finished.

³⁸*ujjeniye pure*

³⁹BJTS reads *tiriṭavacchassa*

⁴⁰*purohitadijā*^o

⁴¹"Fierce Luster." BJTS Sinh. gloss Sanskritizes the name as "Caṇḍapradhyota"

⁴²"Sandalwood [and] Pink Lotus"

⁴³*bhūmipālena*, "by the king"

⁴⁴*mokkha-pura-dvāraṇ*

⁴⁵*mahāmate* (fr. *mahāmati*)