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## The Strength of the Elephant

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*Hastikakṣya*

གླང་པོ་འི་རྩལ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་འི་མདོ།

*glang po'i rtsal zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*

The Great Vehicle Sūtra “The Strength of the Elephant”

*Hastikakṣyanāmamahāyānasūtra*

· Toh 207 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 62 (mdo sde, tsha), folios 95.a–109.b



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co.

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## SUMMARY

s.

- s.1 This sūtra contains a Dharma discourse on the profound insight into the emptiness of all phenomena, also known as transcendent insight. Following a short teaching in verse by Śāriputra, the Buddha delivers the primary discourse at the behest of Ānanda and Mañjuśrī amid a vast assembly of monks, bodhisattvas, and lay devotees. He specifically addresses hearers and so-called “outcast bodhisattvas” who have not realized transcendent insight and who thus remain attached to phenomenal appearances. Responding to a series of questions posed by Mañjuśrī and Śāriputra, the Buddha explains that all phenomena are as empty as space, with nothing to be either affirmed or rejected. Yet that very emptiness is what makes everything possible, including the bodhisattvas’ altruistic activities.

ac.

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ac.1 Translation by the Buddhavacana Translation Group. Translated from the Tibetan of the Degé Kangyur by Gregory Forgues in collaboration with Dennis Johnson and Khenpo Konchok Tamphel. The English was edited by Casey Kemp.

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i.

## INTRODUCTION

### · Setting and Storyline ·

i.1

*The Strength of the Elephant* is set on Gṛdhrakūṭa Mountain where the Buddha presides over a large assembly of monks and bodhisattvas. One afternoon, after the Buddha is addressed by Śāradvatīputra with a brief discourse on the empty nature of all phenomena, he convenes a large audience of monks, bodhisattvas, and people from the city of Rājagṛha to share Śāradvatīputra's insight. The Buddha proceeds to inform Mañjuśrī and the others that previous buddhas have also taught this Dharma discourse on transcendent insight, which is "like the strength of the elephant," on Gṛdhrakūṭa Mountain, the very place where their assembly is gathered. At the request of Ānanda, the Buddha gives a series of teachings, in the form of replies to questions posed by Mañjuśrī, that concern the most beneficial, though often counterintuitive, forms of knowledge and activities characteristic of bodhisattvas who have realized emptiness.

i.2

A number of "arrogant monks" in the assembly, however, misunderstand the Tathāgata's teaching and the Buddha is asked to clarify the intentions behind this discourse. Upon hearing his explanations, realization dawns in the minds of the various listeners and the monks affirm their new understanding. Mañjuśrī then inquires into the training in transcendent insight and the Buddha responds with a concluding teaching on the value and efficacy of this Dharma discourse. He describes twenty laudable qualities that are possessed by those who have faith in it. He also recounts how in a previous lifetime he himself became accomplished in it. The Buddha then gives instructions on the practices of bodhisattvas who wish to realize this profound insight. In the end, the Buddha commands Ānanda to remember it, and everybody rejoices and praises the Buddha's words.

### · Key Doctrines in the Discourse ·



i.3 **The illusory nature of phenomena.**

The sūtra repeatedly draws attention to the empty and thus illusory nature of all phenomena, which includes everything from sensory appearances up to central Buddhist conceptions such as the six perfections, monastic discipline, morality, merit, and even the Buddha himself. The realization of this empty and illusory nature of all phenomena is transcendent insight, which allows one to rest naturally in a state of absorption. Phenomena as well as transcendent insight are said to be like space: “Space is not something to be realized, nor is it something to be abandoned. Likewise, no phenomenon is something to be realized or abandoned.” Because of this empty nature of phenomena, all conceptions about them as substantial or real are completely mistaken. To realize this is to correctly understand emptiness.

i.4 **The unity of the bodhisattva’s insight and skillful means.**

Bodhisattvas accomplish a wide range of compassionate activities without departing from the profound insight of emptiness, which is transcendent insight. In this way, bodhisattvas are able to compassionately engage in the different realms of beings without disregarding their empty nature. Through such practices as *samādhi* or *dhāraṇī* recitation, they are able to go to buddhafiels without actually coming or going and are able to speak different languages without mixing them up.

i.5 **Transcendent insight.**

This sūtra emphasizes that transcendent insight and the illusory nature of phenomena are difficult to understand for ordinary beings, hearers, solitary realizers, and bodhisattvas who cling to phenomenal appearances. Those who are unaware of the Tathāgata’s intention behind this teaching are in danger of completely misunderstanding him. The upshot of this observation is that all conceptions, even that concerning the Tathāgata, are false, and thus all views are mistaken. This applies not only to metaphysical views of a self, a being, a soul, and a person, but to conceptions such as “me” or “mine” and preconceptions such as Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha.

i.6 **Outcast bodhisattvas.**

One noteworthy feature of this sūtra is its outspoken condemnation of the shortcomings of “outcast bodhisattvas.” Such bodhisattvas are practitioners who reside in remote places but have failed to realize transcendent insight and remain attached to their disciplined practices. Those outcast bodhisattvas will consequently look down on other bodhisattvas who dwell near a village or town. Such passages may be understood as a criticism targeting “the susceptibility of forest monks to pride and conceit,”<sup>1</sup> which accords with the Buddha’s chastisement of “arrogant monks” in this sūtra.

· Source Texts ·

i.7 There is to our knowledge no extant complete Sanskrit version of the *Hastikakṣyasūtra*. Apart from fragments of Khotanese and Sanskrit versions of the text, the complete text is extant only in Tibetan and Chinese translations.<sup>2</sup> The *Hastikakṣyasūtra* was translated into Chinese by Dharmarakṣa in the third century and by Dharmamitra in the fifth century (Taishō 813 and 814 respectively). The text is found in Kangyur collections of different periods and is also recorded in the Denkarma<sup>3</sup> and Phangthangma<sup>4</sup> catalogs of Tibetan imperial translations. Thus it appears that it was first translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan by an unknown translator no later than the early ninth century, as the Denkarma is dated to 812 CE. The Tibetan translations do not mention the names of the translators.<sup>5</sup> According to the findings of Liu and Chen, the earliest Chinese and the Sanskrit versions share an earlier source text, while the later Chinese and the Tibetan and Khotanese versions share a later source text.<sup>6</sup> This English translation was prepared based on the Tibetan translation in the Degé Kangyur in consultation with the Comparative Edition (Tib. *dpe bsdur ma*) and the Stok Palace Kangyur.

i.8 There are a number of references to the *Hastikakṣyasūtra* in Buddhist canonical literature. The *Hastikakṣyasūtra* is referred to in chapter six of the *Sikṣasamuccaya* and it is cited by Kamalaśīla in his *Sarvadharmāsvabhāvasiddhi* (Toh 3889) as well as in the tantric work *Mahāyānamelāyanapradīpa* (Toh 3720). A verse ascribed to the *Hastikakṣyasūtra* is cited by Candrakīrti in his *Mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā* (Toh 3860) and *Bodhisattvayogācāracatūṣṭakāṭikā* (Toh 3865) commentaries, but, notably, the verse is not found in any versions of the sūtra contained in the Kangyur.<sup>7</sup> This “missing” citation, as well as numerous other passages that are found in the Kangyur versions of this sūtra, have been widely quoted by indigenous Tibetan scholars. The *Hastikakṣyasūtra* is also cited a number of times in the Chinese Buddhist canon, which suggests that it may have once been an important Mahāyāna text that circulated throughout regions of Central and East Asia.<sup>8</sup>

· Remarks on the Title ·

i.9 Since no Sanskrit source text is available, and because of differing interpretations of the title’s translations that involve certain linguistic ambiguities, the translation of the sūtra’s title into English needs to be critically discussed. Liu and Chen’s study<sup>9</sup> includes a detailed discussion of all the variant titles found in the different translations, and their findings are summarized for the reader in what follows.

i.10 Concerning first of all the Chinese versions, the Catalog of Nie Daozhen attests the title “The Elephant’s Armpit” (*Xiangye* or *\*Hastikakṣa*), which also corresponds to the title of Dharmamitra’s translation. The sūtra contains no direct reference to the armpit of an elephant, but the title bearing this phrase is cited widely in medieval Chinese Buddhism because of the popularity of Dharmamitra’s works.<sup>10</sup> Dharmarakṣa’s translation speaks of “The Metaphor of the Elephant” (*Yuxiang* or *\*Hastyupama*), which would indicate that the power of the text is equivalent to the effort of an elephant.<sup>11</sup> Also attested based on his translation is a title that does not make reference to an elephant: “Without Desire” (*Wuxiwang* or *\*Akāṅkṣa*). The use of this title, however, is without sufficient evidence and may be due to a misreading or miscopying, possibly based on Gāndhārī or Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit written in Kharoṣṭhī or Brāhmī scripts, resulting in the readings of *\*Nāstikāṅkṣa* or *\*Asakāṅkṣa* instead of *Hastikakṣya*.<sup>12</sup> A paraphrase of the title as “The Stride of an Elephant” (*Xiangbu*, *\*Hastigati* or *\*Hastivikrama*) is found in the translations of both Dharmarakṣa and Dharmamitra. The Tibetan translation could be understood in a similar way, since *rtsal* can mean both “effort” and “stride.”<sup>13</sup>

i.11 The Tibetan title (*glang po’i rtsal*) features as an entry in the early ninth century Sanskrit-Tibetan glossary known as the *Mahāvvyutpatti* (*Hastikakṣyam*, Mvyut 1339 in section LIX on *dam pa’i chos kyi ming*). Csoma de Körös’ textual edition of the *Mahāvvyutpatti*, which comes with an accompanying English translation, translates the title as “The Elephant’s Dexterity (or Girth).”<sup>14</sup> However, note that in the *Mahāvvyutpatti*, the *Denkarma*, and the *Phangthangma* this is the only instance where *kakṣya* corresponds to *rtsal* and *ākrama* and *vikrama* are given as its more usual correspondents, which would yield Sanskrit forms such as *\*Hastyākrama* or *\*Hastivikrama*. Liu and Chen thus argue that the sūtra itself may actually be the source for this entry in the *Mahāvvyutpatti*. They indeed note that *glang po’i rtsal* “should not be regarded as a correct interpretation of the Sanskrit word *Hastikakṣya*.”<sup>15</sup>

i.12 Turning now to the (Buddhist Hybrid) Sanskrit titles, we can see that *kakṣyā* is derived from the Vedic *kakṣa*, which indeed has the meaning of “armpit.” Based on a reading in the Sanskrit manuscript and considering the primitive form *Hastikakṣa*, Liu and Chen reconstruct the sūtra’s title in its Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit form as *\*Hastikaccha*, which later was Sanskritized into *Hastikakṣya*. Liu and Chen note the following: “We have the contemporaneous appearance of three titles: *Yuxiang* (*\*Hastyupama*) and *Wuxiwang* (*\*Nāstikāṅkṣa*, *\*Akāṅkṣa* or *\*Asakāṅkṣa*) in Taishō 813 and, according to the Catalogue, a *Xiangbu* (*\*Hastigati* or *\*Hastivikrama*). Then after more than a century, we have *Xiangye* (*Hastikakṣa* or *Hastikaccha* in its BHS form, *Hastikakṣya* in its developed Skt. form) in Taishō 814, with its Sanskrit correspondence, *Hastikaccha*, in the Sanskrit fragment and *Hastikakṣya* in the

Tibetan translation. Finally, the word *Hastikakṣya* is transmitted into *glang po'i rtsal* and *glang po'i rtsal lta bu* (\**Hastikakṣyopama*) in Tibetan.<sup>16</sup> They then conclude that “with the exception of *Wuxiwang*, all the others can possibly be affiliated with a Sanskritization process from Middle Indic via Gāndhārī or BHS.”<sup>17</sup> As a nominal compound, *Hastikakṣya* is clearly a genitive *tatpuruṣa* or dependent determinative compound. According to Monier-Williams’s Sanskrit dictionary, the compound *hastikakṣya* may have the meaning of “lion” or “tiger.”<sup>18</sup> Next, let us look at the individual members of the compound: *hasti* and *kakṣya*. *Hasti* stands in the compound for *hastin*, which can clearly be established as meaning “elephant.” The second member, *kakṣya*, however, has a whole range of possible meanings. Monier-Williams notes them as “abiding in shrubs or dry grass,” “well fed,” “girth (of an animal),” “the enclosure of an edifice,” “similarity,” and “effort, exertion.” The Tibetan translation of this member (*rtsal*) carries similar meanings, but tends more toward meanings such as “skill,” “dexterity,” “potency,” “capacity,” “potential,” or “power.”

i.13 Unfortunately, the sūtra itself does not give any really convincing pointers to the correct interpretation of its title, since references to both elephants (*hasti*) and their supposed strength (*kakṣya*) are few. Toward the beginning of the sūtra, Śāradvatīputra declines the Buddha’s initial request to assemble the monks and bodhisattvas in the area by stating that “elephants are difficult to please (*mgu ba*, ‘satisfy, content, please, convince’).” Toward the end of the sūtra, the Buddha recounts to Ānanda that “beings who yearn for this Dharma discourse will be subdued by the strength of the bull or the strength of the elephant.” Based on these elements, we decided to translate the title as “The Strength of the Elephant,” although we are aware that further research would be necessary to validate this reading.

### · Relevant Academic Research ·

i.14 Until recently there had been no extensive academic research on the *Hastikakṣyasūtra*. In the last several years, however, a number of scholars have authored studies with direct or indirect reference to the sūtra’s contents and development. Chen (2012) addresses newly identified fragments of a Khotanese translation of the *Hastikakṣyasūtra* together with their Chinese parallels. Liu and Chen (2014) include a translation of a Sanskrit fragment of the *Hastikakṣyasūtra* in light of its Chinese and Tibetan parallels as well as a lengthy discussion of all title variants and their possible Sanskrit equivalents. Their study looks at the early development of Mahayāna sūtras and also includes a concordance of the contents found in the different translations. James Apple (2014) considers the *Hastikakṣyasūtra* from the

perspective of his research on the historical developments of entrusted transmissions of written texts in India after the fourth century. In the process, he compares the textual differences between the Tibetan translation and the earlier and later Chinese translations of the *Hastikakṣyasūtra*. Regarding the narrative variants of the story of Victory Banner of the Vajra told by the Buddha toward the end of the sūtra, Apple points out that the Dharma discourse is passed on as a Dharma scripture in the Tibetan version, but in the earlier Chinese versions of Dharmarakṣa and Dharmamitra it is said to be passed on as a mantra or a *dhāraṇī* respectively.

i.15      Regarding Tibetan mentions of the *Hastikakṣyasūtra*, Karma Phuntscho<sup>19</sup> briefly states that, according to the master Ju Mipham Gyatso, the *Hastikakṣyasūtra* stands as one of the sūtras teaching the doctrine of mind-only (*sems tsam*) understood as the *cittamātra* taught in canonical scriptures (*bka'i sems tsam*) as opposed to *cittamātra qua* doctrinal system (*grub mtha'i sems tsam*).<sup>20</sup>

## **The Great Vehicle Sūtra The Strength of the Elephant**

1.

## The Translation

[F.95.a][F.95.b]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.

1.2 Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was dwelling on Gṛdhṛakūṭa Mountain together with a large saṅgha of monks comprised of five hundred monks as well as sixty thousand bodhisattvas who were all renowned,<sup>21</sup> had attained the *dhāraṇīs*, possessed unobstructed eloquence, taught the Dharma of nonduality, and displayed inconceivable miraculous powers. They included the bodhisattva great beings Perseverant Beyond Compare and Wise; Essence of the Splendor of Overwhelming Sound, Blossom of the Four Jewels; Light Beam of Great Lightning; Seeing Beyond Extremes and Transcending All Sensory Objects; Lofty Like Mount Meru's Summit; Gladdened with Supreme Joy; Light Vanquishing with Undeclared Forces; Reaching the Far Shore of Definitive Meaning to Fulfill Beings' Aspirations; Possessing Vajralike Solidity; Beyond All Utterances, Speech, and Sounds; Voice More Majestic Than Brahmā's; Overcoming Fears with Words of Renown; Accumulation of All Precious Roots of Virtue; and the bodhisattva great being Youthful Mañjuśrī. These and other such bodhisattvas in attendance were sixty thousand in number.

1.3 In the afternoon, the venerable Śāradvatīputra, after arising from inner absorption, approached the Blessed One who at that time was sitting in front of another tree, immersed in the absorption known as *accomplishment of perfect peace*. From afar, the venerable Śāradvatīputra saw the Blessed One, who was peaceful. He quickly gathered some grass and sat down mindfully to one side with his legs crossed and back straightened. [F.96.a] As soon as he sat there, thoughts arose in his mind, such as: "How marvelous are the Tathāgata's perfectly peaceful behavior, happiness, and bliss! Happy are the beings who realize that all phenomena naturally rest in the state of absorption!"

- 1.4 The Blessed One, perceiving and understanding this, emerged from his concentration and made the sound of clearing his throat. Hearing the Blessed One clear his throat, the venerable Śāradvatīputra became filled with joy and inspiration, and walked toward where the Blessed One was sitting. When he arrived in the Blessed One's presence, he prostrated to him in amazement and uttered the following verses:
- 1.5 "In the way I accept that phenomena are empty,  
Those who neither conceptualize beings  
Nor ever conceptualize phenomena  
Remain in the world in absorption.
- 1.6 "Never ever looking at the confusion of beings,  
And considering phenomena to be just like space,  
Happy are those who believe in the illusory nature  
And do not hold the view of a self.
- 1.7 "Happy are those who do not focus on any conception,  
Such as 'these are beings' or 'these are not beings,'  
Who have no conception of any being,  
And do not hold the view that there are beings.
- 1.8 "Happy are those who are not attached to any conception of a substantial  
whole,  
Who are without the deluded conception of a substantial thing,  
Who neither cause things to arise nor to remain,  
And who are without the view of a soul.
- 1.9 "Happy are the wise ones who do not differentiate among beings,  
Who do not contradict the domain of truth,  
Who eliminate all conceptions of personhood,  
And who do not think in terms of dichotomies.
- 1.10 "Happy are those who always maintain generosity and discipline,  
Neither forming the concept of miserliness  
Nor fixating on the notion of accumulation,  
And who remain free of moral conceit. [F.96.b]
- 1.11 "Happy are those who excel in the qualities of endurance and  
determination,<sup>22</sup>  
Who are free from the notion of conflict,  
Who are neither zealous nor lazy,  
And who have no preconception concerning patience.

- 1.12 “Happy are those who are not fixated on concentration and stability,<sup>23</sup>  
And yet do not think about distractions—  
Who understand the qualities of meditative equipoise  
And have no preconceptions about concentration.
- 1.13 “Happy are those who are free from preconceptions about anything,  
Who have no insight regarding anything and yet are not under the sway of  
ignorance,  
Who are neither learned nor deluded,  
And who have no preconceptions about wisdom.
- 1.14 “Happy are those who dwell in a city as if in retreat,  
Who treat them equally, with similar conceptions of both—  
Who do not disparage city life  
But also do not idealize retreat.
- 1.15 “Happy are those practice alms-begging as a householder  
Without any preconception about this alms-begging.  
Without entertaining thoughts such as ‘I am a mendicant,’  
They have no preconceptions about alms-begging.
- 1.16 “Happy are those who pick up refuse-rags  
And wear them on their body.  
They do not think ‘I have miserable clothing,’<sup>24</sup>  
And they do not put down others.
- 1.17 “Happy are those who wear nothing but the three Dharma robes  
Approved by the Buddha and praised by the sugatas,  
Yet do not think ‘I am fearless,’  
And remain without pride.
- 1.18 “Happy are those who teach the supreme and sacred Dharma  
In which there is neither self nor being.  
They do not even think ‘I am a master teacher,’  
But they also do not amount to nothing.
- 1.19 “Happy are those who are free from preconceptions regarding any virtue,  
Who do not conceive of anything as an essence or a substance,<sup>25</sup>  
Who do not think of anything as virtuous or nonvirtuous,  
But who do not behave in a dualistic way.
- 1.20 “Happy are those who stand but have no preconception about standing,  
Who sit but have no preconception about sitting,  
Who at all times cultivate diligence as they move about



And remain without mental elaboration.

- 1.21 “Happy are those who are free from preconceptions about abiding or non-abiding,  
Who do not conceive of some special knowledge as the state of peace,  
[F.97.a]  
Who make no distinction between tathāgatas and non-Buddhists,  
And who are without assumptions about what is “the best.”
- 1.22 “Happy are those for whom there is neither number nor enumeration,  
Who do not disregard equality that is like the expanse of space,  
Who do not think of themselves and others as distinct,  
And who have no special achievements.
- 1.23 “Happy are those who appear as an illusion and behave as if in a dream,  
Who resemble optical illusions but are not deluded,  
Who are active in the worlds like reflections of the moon in water,  
And who do not strive in any way.
- 1.24 “Happy are the beings who are wise and behold the ultimate,  
Who understand that names and conventions have no essence,  
Who realize that phenomena are in the state of peace,  
And who remain unbound by the range of conceptual signs.”
- 1.25 Thereupon the Blessed One congratulated the venerable Śāradvatīputra:  
“Śāradvatīputra, supreme is this teaching that engages in this way in the  
profound wisdom! It is excellent, excellent! Therefore, Śāradvatīputra,  
assemble all the monks and bodhisattvas abiding in inner absorption on this  
Gṛdhrakūṭa Mountain, as many as there may be.”  
“Blessed One,” replied Śāradvatīputra, “I would prefer not to do so. Why?  
Because elephants are difficult to please.”
- 1.26 At that very moment, the Blessed One emitted light rays from his body and  
he summoned the bodhisattvas abiding in infinite world systems. They  
reached the place where the Blessed One was residing on Gṛdhrakūṭa  
Mountain and hovered in the sky. All the monks and bodhisattva great  
beings who had been abiding in inner absorption also arrived where the  
Blessed One was residing, as did hundreds of thousands of beings from the  
great city of Rājagṛha.
- 1.27 Then the Blessed One, knowing that all were present in the assembly,  
looked at the face of Youthful Mañjuśrī [F.97.b] and smiled. At that moment,  
Youthful Mañjuśrī rose from his seat, draped his robe over one shoulder, and  
knelt on his right knee. He bowed in the direction of the Blessed One with

joined palms and asked him, “As the tathāgatas, the worthy ones, the complete and perfect buddhas do not smile without causes and conditions, what are the causes for your smile, what are the conditions for it?”

The Blessed One replied to Youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, ten thousand buddhas have expounded the Dharma discourse known as ‘Like the Strength of the Elephant’ on this Gṛdhra-kūṭa Mountain.”

1.28 When the venerable Ānanda heard what the Blessed One had said, he swiftly rose from his seat, draped his robe over one shoulder, and knelt on his right knee. He bowed in the direction of the Blessed One with joined palms and made this request: “Blessed One, it would be excellent if you could now teach me this Dharma discourse known as ‘Like the Strength of the Elephant.’ Sugata, it would be excellent if you could explain this to me. It is rare nowadays to hear a Dharma discourse that would cause you, Blessed One, to smile upon seeing the face of Youthful Mañjuśrī. Such a Dharma discourse must be wonderful. It must be as profound as it seems to be.”

1.29 “Ānanda,” replied the Blessed One, “you are indeed skilled in the practice of discernment and your analysis is excellent, excellent. Therefore, Ānanda, listen very well and keep this in mind. I will explain it to you.”

“Excellent, Blessed One,” the venerable Ānanda agreed, and he listened as requested.

1.30 The Blessed One made a sign to Youthful Mañjuśrī in order to have him make inquiries about this Dharma discourse. Consequently, Mañjuśrī thought to himself, “I will ask the Tathāgata [F.98.a] what is this profound discourse that is not within the realm of hearers, solitary realizers, or bodhisattvas who have fallen into conceptual signs.” After Youthful Mañjuśrī had reflected upon this, he proposed, “If the Blessed One is giving me this opportunity to make inquiries so that the questions can be answered, then I will pose questions on various topics to the Blessed One, the tathāgata, the worthy one, the complete and perfect Buddha.”

“Since everyone in this assembly has come together, Mañjuśrī, ask whatever you wish,” the Blessed One replied.

1.31 Mañjuśrī then asked the following: “Blessed One, how do bodhisattvas accomplish all their activities while also maintaining all virtuous qualities? How do they both remain in all buddhāfields like the moon’s reflections in water, and also fully ripen countless beings?”

1.32 “Mañjuśrī,” replied the Blessed One, “your concise and meaningful questions are excellent, excellent! Listen attentively to this detailed explanation I will give you and keep it in mind.”

“Blessed One, I will do so,” answered Youthful Mañjuśrī, and he listened as requested.

- 1.33 The Blessed One then gave the following reply: “Mañjuśrī, if bodhisattvas possess six qualities, they will completely accomplish their tasks and also maintain all virtuous qualities. What are these six? If bodhisattvas practice generosity, then although they are benefactors who let go of all their possessions, they do not regard themselves as having completely reversed miserly behavior. Although they observe discipline, they not consider themselves as being beyond actions that result from inferior discipline. Although they possess patience and determination, they do not regard themselves as being free from behavior based on malicious thoughts. [F.98.b] Although they cultivate diligence, they do not exert themselves bodily or mentally. Although they are skilled in all concentrations, liberations, absorptions, and all meditative states, they are not stuck in a one-pointed mental state. Although they exist within the domain of insight, they regard themselves as not being fully liberated from transmigration. Mañjuśrī, if bodhisattvas possess these six qualities, they completely accomplish their tasks and also maintain all virtuous qualities.
- 1.34 “Mañjuśrī, if bodhisattvas possess another six qualities, they can accomplish their tasks, and also maintain all virtuous qualities. What are these six? Bodhisattvas assume the state of a hell being while at the same time experiencing the qualities of the higher realms. They assume the state of an animal, while at the same time experiencing the great extent of human qualities. They assume a birth in the lower castes,<sup>26</sup> while at the same time experiencing the pleasures of a cakravartin’s kingdom. They manifest within all modes of existence, while at the same time experiencing the activities associated with a specific realm. They are skilled in going to all buddhafiels, while at the same time not moving from their location. They neither come nor go, and yet appear in all buddhafiels like the moon’s reflections in water. They speak all languages yet do not mix them up. Mañjuśrī, if bodhisattvas possess these six qualities, they completely accomplish their activities and also maintain all virtuous qualities.”
- 1.35 “Blessed One,” Youthful Mañjuśrī inquired, “how do bodhisattvas assume the state of a hell being while at the same time experiencing the qualities of the higher realms?”
- “Mañjuśrī,” replied the Blessed One, [F.99.a] “bodhisattva great beings assume the state of a hell being by entering the absorption known as *great lotus*, while at the same time experiencing all the joys of the gods, including the most subtle of them. For their part, hell beings perceive these bodhisattvas as hell beings because they are themselves hell beings. Through this appearance, bodhisattvas expound the Dharma to those denizens of the hell who have the potential to be extricated from the hells.

They completely liberate many thousands of beings from the hells. Thus, Mañjuśrī, bodhisattvas assume the state of a hell being while at the same time experiencing the state of the higher realms.”

1.36 “Blessed One,” asked Mañjuśrī, “how do bodhisattvas assume the state of an animal, while at the same time experiencing the great extent of human qualities?”

“Mañjuśrī,” replied the Blessed One, “bodhisattvas assume the state of an animal by entering the absorption known as *settling in complete peace*, and without experiencing any impairment to their mental faculties, they experience the great extent of human qualities. Through this appearance, they explain the Dharma to beings that have become animals and so establish many thousands of beings in the Dharma. Thus, Mañjuśrī, bodhisattvas experience the condition of an animal while at the same time experiencing the great extent of human qualities.”

1.37 “Blessed One,” asked Mañjuśrī, “how do bodhisattvas embrace a birth in the lower castes, while at the same time experiencing the pleasures of a cakravartin’s kingdom?”

The Blessed One replied, “Mañjuśrī, in order to do this, bodhisattvas enter the absorption known as *subduing and illuminating*. By means of this absorption, which is conquering and illuminating, they embrace a birth in the lower castes, while at the same time experiencing the pleasures of a cakravartin’s kingdom. [F.99.b] Through these skillful means, they establish many thousands of beings in the Dharma. Thus, Mañjuśrī, bodhisattvas embrace a birth in the lower castes, while at the same time experiencing the happiness of a cakravartin’s kingdom.”

1.38 “Blessed One,” asked Mañjuśrī, “how do bodhisattvas both manifest within all modes of existence and also experience the activities of one specific realm?”

The Blessed One replied, “Mañjuśrī, in order to do this, they enter the absorption known as *particular display illuminating the abandonment of all activities*. Abiding in that absorption, they both manifest within all modes of existence and also experience the activities of one specific realm. In this way, Mañjuśrī, bodhisattvas manifest within all modes of existence while experiencing a particular realm.”

1.39 “Blessed One,” asked Mañjuśrī, “how do bodhisattvas excel in going to all buddhafiels while at the same time not moving from their location? Although they neither come nor go, how do they appear in all buddhafiels in the same way the moon is reflected in water?”

The Blessed One replied, “Mañjuśrī, in order to do this, bodhisattvas enter the absorption known as *conquering all forms*. Then, abiding in that absorption, they at once manifest their bodies throughout the world systems

of the ten directions, without moving from their location, without going or coming. By remaining in equanimity, they see the Buddha, the Blessed One, and hear the Dharma. Thus, Mañjuśrī, bodhisattvas excel in being reborn in all buddhafiels while at the same time not moving from their location. They neither come nor go, and yet they appear in all buddhafiels in the same way the moon is reflected in water.”

1.40 Mañjuśrī then asked, “Blessed One, how can bodhisattvas speak all kinds of languages [F.100.a] and yet not mix them up?”

“Mañjuśrī, replied the Blessed One, “bodhisattvas possess the dhāraṇī known as *infinite recitation*. As a result of that, they can engage with the infinite thoughts of the minds of beings, understand infinite languages, and comprehend infinite individual ways of being. By possessing this dhāraṇī, they both speak all languages and also do not mix them up. Thus, Mañjuśrī, bodhisattvas speak all languages and yet do not mix them up.”

1.41 Mañjuśrī then inquired further: “Blessed One, the bodhisattvas’ skillful means are difficult to manifest. Nonetheless, Blessed One, how should this Dharma discourse be understood by the bodhisattvas who wish to understand it?”

“Mañjuśrī,” replied the Blessed One, “those bodhisattvas who wish to understand this Dharma discourse should understand it to be like space.”

1.42 “How is it like space, Blessed One?” asked Mañjuśrī.

“Mañjuśrī,” replied the Blessed One, “it may be illustrated as follows: Space is not desirous, nor angry, nor ignorant. Likewise, no phenomenon is desirous, angry, or ignorant. It may be illustrated as follows: Space is not the excellence of generosity, and so forth, up to and including the excellence of insight. Likewise, no phenomenon is the excellence of generosity, and so forth, up to and including the excellence of insight. It may be illustrated as follows: Space is not something to be realized, nor is it something to be abandoned. Likewise, no phenomenon is something to be realized or abandoned. It may be illustrated as follows: Space is not something to be cultivated, nor is it something to be actualized. Likewise, no phenomenon is something to be cultivated or actualized. [F.100.b] It may be illustrated as follows: Space is not obscurity, nor is it light. Likewise, no phenomenon is obscurity or light. It may be illustrated as follows: Space is not something to be apprehended. Likewise, no phenomenon is something to be apprehended. It may be illustrated as follows: Space is not a destination attained either through the genuine path or through a bad path. Likewise, no phenomenon is a destination attained, either through the genuine path or through a bad path. It may be illustrated as follows: Space is not a destination attained through the Hearers’ Vehicle, the Solitary Realizers’ Vehicle, or the Great Vehicle. Likewise, no phenomenon is a destination

attained through the Hearers' Vehicle, the Solitary Realizers' Vehicle, or the Great Vehicle. It may be illustrated as follows: Space is not an agent that reflects or knows. Likewise, no phenomenon is an agent that reflects or knows. It may be illustrated as follows: Space is not an agent that accepts or rejects, nor is it an object to be accepted or rejected. Likewise, no phenomenon is an agent that accepts or rejects, nor is it an object to be accepted or rejected. It may be illustrated as follows: Space cannot be defiled by anything whatsoever. Likewise, no phenomenon belonging to supreme nirvāṇa can be defiled in any possible way. Thus, it will neither be assuaged nor pacified. It may be illustrated as follows: Space is not an abode because it is not abiding, nor does it abide, waver, or vacillate. Likewise, bodhisattvas should regard each and every phenomenon as abiding in non-abidingness. Having correct understanding, they do not vacillate, waver, abide, or cause anything to abide. [F.101.a]

1.43 "Mañjuśrī, since the nature of all phenomena is like this, those who wish to see the Tathāgata hold a mistaken view. Those who view this as mistaken<sup>27</sup> have correct understanding. For those who have correct understanding, generosity has neither great result nor great benefit. Those for whom generosity has neither great result nor great benefit are objects of generosity in the world. For those who are objects of generosity in the world, there is no karmic ripening from generosity. Those for whom there is no karmic ripening from generosity have perfected non-conception. Those who have perfected non-conception will quickly attain the acceptance that all phenomena do not arise."

1.44 As sixty arrogant monks in the assembly heard this teaching, they thought to themselves, "This is the path of confusion. Even the Tathāgata teaches the path of confusion. It is as follows: Some non-Buddhists also teach these words. Since the Tathāgata teaches these words too, his speech is comparable to those of some non-Buddhists, such as Kaśyapa, Maskari Gośāliputra, Ajita Keśakambalī, Sañjayi Vairattīputra, Kakuda Kātyāyana, and Nirgrantha Jñatiputra."

1.45 The Blessed One read the thoughts of these sixty arrogant monks, and he remarked to Youthful Mañjuśrī, "Thus, Mañjuśrī, if the Dharma I have expounded is comparable to what those other non-Buddhists teach, then those non-Buddhists do not understand the Dharma taught by the Tathāgata."

1.46 After the Blessed One had spoken these words, the arrogant monks became very distressed, depressed, displeased, and dejected. Still not understanding this Dharma exposition, they rose from their seats and left. Then the venerable Śāriputra asked these monks, "Venerable ones, where are you going?" [F.101.b]

- “Venerable Śāriputra,” they answered, “we do not seek this Dharma exposition.”
- 1.47 “Venerable ones,” Śāriputra replied, “you should know that the Tathāgata is teaching in these ways with an intention. Therefore, stay for a while until you ask the Tathāgata what his intention was when he taught in these ways.”
- 1.48 After hearing the venerable Śāriputra’s words, the monks went back to their seats. At that point, the venerable Śāriputra made this request: “Blessed One, in order to clarify these monks’ doubts, I beseech you to explain what the intention of the Tathāgata was when he taught in these ways.”
- 1.49 “Śāriputra, what do you think?” asked the Blessed One. “Would monks whose minds are liberated from defilements with no further appropriation become apprehensive, frightened, or terrified by any sound?”
- “No, Blessed One, they would not,” answered Śāriputra. “Monks who see the truth do not become apprehensive, frightened, or terrified by any sound. What need is there to mention those monks whose minds are liberated from defilements with no further appropriation!”
- 1.50 “Śāriputra,” continued the Blessed One, “in the present case, some foolish persons have investigated unreal phenomena and have become and remain exceedingly proud.”
- 1.51 Śāriputra then made this request: “I beseech the Blessed One to expound a teaching that, when heard, will remove the doubts of all those present in this assembly.”
- 1.52 “Śāriputra,” said the Blessed One, “those who see the Tathāgata as a dream and an illusion see him truly. Those who truly see him do not conceive of the Tathāgata in terms of truth, essence, substance, a real entity, or a partless whole. Those who do not conceive of the Tathāgata in terms of truth, essence, substance, a real entity, or a partless whole regard all constructs as false. [F.102.a] Those who see all constructs as false know all phenomena to be mistaken. The Tathāgata has taught that all those who know every phenomenon to be mistaken have perfected the view of mistakenness. They also understand that all those who have resorted to views are mistaken. This is why some are referred to as holding a mistaken view. Śāriputra, according to this discourse, those who wish to view the Tathāgata are referred to as holding a mistaken view. Śāriputra, some view the Tathāgata’s body unerringly. But those who understand the Tathāgata’s body as mistaken have no conception of the Tathāgata. Śāriputra, those who know this to be mistaken see the Tathāgata.”
- 1.53 “Blessed One, how have those who view this as mistaken correctly understood?” asked Śāriputra.

The Blessed One replied, “Śāriputra, ordinary beings discriminate and conceptualize, examine and analyze, reveal and thoroughly reveal, rely and dwell, accept and reject. They embrace the view of a self, a being, a life, and a person, and they cling to the belief in ‘I’ and are attached to the belief in ‘mine.’ They conceive their conduct, knowledge, movements, and conceptual elaborations along these lines. They understand these things, which do not actually exist, in just this way. Śāriputra, the word *nonexistent* is a designation for what is unreal. That which is unreal is a lie. The word *lie* is a designation for what is false. Those who see how mistaken are those beings who believe in the unreal are said to have discerned reality. Śāriputra, according to this very explanation, those who see this as wrong have correct understanding.”

1.54 “Blessed One,” Śāriputra asked, “in what way do those with correct understanding neither reap great result nor receive great benefit when they are generous?” [F.102.b]

“Śāriputra,” replied the Blessed One, “for those who have correct understanding through this approach, generosity is directed toward nirvāṇa. It flows and has flowed into nirvāṇa, and it will culminate in nirvāṇa. However, nirvāṇa is neither a small nor a great result, neither a small nor a great benefit. Why? Because nirvāṇa is free from all results and is therefore neither a designation nor an object of designation.”

1.55 “Well then, Blessed One,” asked Śāriputra, “how did the Tathāgata teach the particular advantages of infinite virtuous qualities with respect to nirvāṇa that does not exist for designation?”

“Śāriputra,” replied the Blessed One, “the Tathāgata taught particular advantages of infinite virtuous qualities with respect to nirvāṇa, even though it does not exist for designation, in order to inspire beings subject to the world of birth who assert selfhood, beings, life forms, and persons. However, Śāriputra, one should not consider noble beings to be those who engage in generosity, but rather those who are free from attachment and who turn away from generosity. Śāriputra, it may be illustrated as follows: When farmers have planted barley seeds in a field, husks, stalks, and leaves are produced from the barley. In that case, Śāriputra, do you think that the husks, stalks, and leaves are the fruits produced by the actions of those farmers?”

“No, Blessed One, I do not,” Śāriputra replied.

1.56 “Śāriputra,” continued the Blessed One, “it may be illustrated as follows: It is on account of the barley itself—namely, those barley seeds planted by the farmers—that the husks, stalks, and leaves are produced, as well as other ears of barley. Likewise, when noble beings practice generosity, great resources come to them with little difficulty. In addition, all fruits resulting from craving for the exhaustion of afflictions wither. [F.103.a] It may be



illustrated as follows: Those who want barley think, 'This is not the fruits of these barely seeds, nor is this the ears of barley produced by those seeds.' As a consequence, they are neither pleased by the husks nor delighted by the stalks and leaves. Likewise, it should not be taught that practicing generosity in the field of the unconditioned gives a result that is conditioned. Śāriputra, according to this discourse, generosity brings neither great result nor great benefit for those who have correct understanding."

1.57 "Blessed One," asked Śāriputra, "how can those noble beings be objects of generosity in the world when their generosity yields neither great result nor great benefit?"

"Śāriputra," replied the Blessed One, "generosity will not arise for those who do not conceive of results as great or small. Those for whom generosity does not arise will become objects of generosity in the world with its gods. In that case, Śāriputra, the practice of generosity in the inexhaustible field of generosity neither becomes a flower nor turns into a fruit. Thus, according to this discourse, Śāriputra, those for whom there is neither a great result nor a great benefit when they are generous are objects of generosity in the world."

1.58 "Blessed One, why does generosity not ripen for those who are objects of generosity in the world?" asked Śāriputra.

"What do you think, Śāriputra?" the Blessed One asked in return. "Is the generosity that culminates in nirvāṇa subject to karmic ripening?"

1.59 "No, Blessed One, it is not," Śāriputra replied. "Blessed One, if the generosity that culminates in nirvāṇa were subject to karmic ripening, noble beings would not be distinguished as being unconditioned."

"Excellent, Śāriputra, excellent," said the Blessed One. "According to this discourse, generosity does not entail karmic ripening for those who are objects of generosity in the world."

1.60 Śāriputra then asked, "Blessed One, how have those for whom generosity does not ripen perfected non-conception?" [F.103.b]

"What do you think, Śāriputra?" the Blessed One asked in return. "Do those who know the very nature of all phenomena exist? Or, do they not exist?"

1.61 "Blessed One," answered Śāriputra, "those who understand the very nature of all phenomena understand the very nature of illusions. Blessed One, this nature is nonexistent. It does not exist. Why? Blessed One, you taught that all phenomena have an illusory nature. That which is like an illusion is nonexistent. Those who understand the very nature of all phenomena have no conceptions. Why? Because nothing, no actual phenomenon whatsoever, is perceived by them."

- 1.62       “Excellent, Śāriputra, excellent,” said the Blessed One. “It is just like that. Śāriputra, if some phenomena were substantially or truly existent, beings would not attain nirvāṇa, even in the future. Śāriputra, it is precisely because all phenomena are unreal, nonexistent, and insubstantial that beings as numerous as the grains of sand in the river Ganges have attained nirvāṇa. Yet, because beings do not exist, there is nothing at all related to those beings that is brought to an end. Therefore, Śāriputra, whoever neither apprehends the conception of the nonexistence of all beings, nor the beings themselves, has perfected non-conception. Śāriputra, according to this discourse, those for whom there is no ripening of generosity have perfected non-conception.”
- 1.63       “Blessed One,” asked Śāriputra, “how will they swiftly accept the non-arising of all phenomena through this conception of having perfected non-conception?”
- “Śāriputra,” replied the Blessed One, “those who have directly realized nonexistence understand this. But what is nonexistence? The term *nonexistence* pertains to the metaphysical views of self, beings, life force, and persons, as well as the views of nihilism and eternalism. The term *nonexistence* pertains to the conceptions of Buddha, Dharma, Saṅgha, and nirvāṇa. [F.104.a] No matter how much one applies one’s mind, practices, understands, acts, or speculates, all this is nonexistent. Therefore, Śāriputra, those who are in this way completely free from such incorrect reifications understand. According to this discourse, Śāriputra, those who have perfected non-conception will quickly accept that all phenomena do not arise.”
- 1.64       When this exposition of the teaching was being presented, forty-two thousand bodhisattvas accepted that all phenomena do not arise. Six thousand male lay vow holders set their minds on unsurpassable, complete, and perfect awakening. Thirty-six thousand sons of the gods gained the realization of wisdom. As for the sixty exceedingly proud monks, their minds became liberated from defilements with no further appropriation.
- 1.65       With minds free from defilements, these sixty arrogant monks spoke the following words in unison: “Blessed One, from this day forth, we shall become renunciants who follow the six teachers. From this day forth, our teacher is no longer the Buddha and we shall rely neither on the Dharma nor on the Saṅgha. From this day forth, we shall be proponents of the nonexistence of action, causation, karma, karmic ripening, and moral conduct.”
- 1.66       At that moment, several thousand beings in the assembly thought to themselves, “These monks have thus become proponents of such untruths! Will they now give up the precepts they received from the Blessed One and

take up the traits of the non-Buddhists?"

1.67 The venerable Śāriputra clairvoyantly understood what those beings in the retinue were thinking. Therefore, he asked the monks, "Venerable ones, what was your intention when you said, 'From this day forth, we shall become renunciants who follow the six teachers'?"

"Venerable Śāriputra," answered the monks, "from this day forth, we perceive all our teachers as identical to the six teachers, as being of a single character, without any difference. [F.104.b] Perceiving all teachers as undifferentiated, we are renunciants following renunciants without conceptualizing."

1.68 Śāriputra then asked, "What was your intention when you said, 'From this day forth, our teacher is no longer the Buddha'?"

"From this day forth," they answered, "we will rely on ourselves, but not on others. We will take refuge in ourselves, but not in others. We are our own teachers and no one else is. Therefore, from this day forth, our teacher is no longer the Buddha. Why? Aside from oneself, there is no buddha. Aside from a buddha, there is no self."

1.69 Śāriputra then asked, "What was your intention when you said, 'From this day forth, we shall rely neither on the Dharma nor on the Saṅgha'?"

"From this day forth," they answered, "we do not perceive any phenomenon whatsoever that anyone should rely upon or conform to. Therefore, from this day forth, we shall rely neither on the Dharma nor on the Saṅgha."

1.70 Śāriputra then asked, "What was your intention when you said, 'From this day forth, we shall be proponents of the nonexistence of action'?"

"From this day forth," they answered, "we know that all phenomena are unproduced. We have realized that phenomena undergo no production or change anywhere. Therefore, from this day forth, we are proponents of the nonexistence of action."

1.71 Śāriputra then asked, "What was your intention when you said, 'From this day forth, we shall be proponents of the nonexistence of causation'?"

"For us," they answered, "the cause of birth in all destinies of cyclic existence has ended today. We have realized that phenomena are without any causes and conditions anywhere. Therefore, from this day forth, we are proponents of the nonexistence of causation."

1.72 Śāriputra then asked, "What was your intention when you said, 'From this day forth, we are proponents of the nonexistence of karmic ripening'?"

"From this day forth," they answered, "we perfectly understand that all phenomena are without any karma nor karmic ripening anywhere and completely beyond suffering. Therefore, from this day forth, we are proponents of the nonexistence of karmic ripening."

1.73 Śāriputra then asked, “Venerable ones, what was your intention when you said, ‘From this day forth, we are proponents of the nonexistence of moral discipline?’” [F.105.a]

“Venerable Śāriputra,” they answered, “from this day forth, we perfectly understand the fact that there is neither moral discipline, nor discourses on it, nor non-discipline, and that all phenomena are utterly disciplined. Therefore, from this day forth, we are proponents of the nonexistence of moral discipline.”

1.74 Having thus heard this teaching regarding these arrogant monks, the minds of three thousand six hundred other monks were liberated from defilements with no further appropriation. Then the Blessed One said to them, “Excellent! Monks, that which is devoid of the realization of any phenomenon is the attainment of truth. Thus, it is excellent, excellent.”

1.75 Then Youthful Mañjuśrī asked, “Blessed One, what phenomena are designated by that realization termed ‘realization of realization’?”

“Mañjuśrī,” replied the Blessed One, “that term ‘realization of realization’ is a designation for the acceptance that all phenomena do not arise.”

1.76 “How should those bodhisattvas, who seek to attain the acceptance that all phenomena do not arise, train, conduct themselves, and engage in practice?” asked Mañjuśrī.

At that time the Blessed One uttered the following verses in order to explain to Youthful Mañjuśrī the training in accepting that all phenomena do not arise:

1.77 “Those who wish to obtain the wisdom of the Buddha,  
The unsurpassed omniscience,  
Should neither take up  
Nor cast away any phenomenon.

1.78 “One does not discover any phenomena at all  
That come into being.  
Yet childish people accept these phenomena as arising,  
Although they are devoid of arising.

1.79 “When beings are taught that phenomena  
Are to be understood and rejected,  
Childish people who experience arising  
Will not have faith in non-arising.

1.80 “Having abandoned the noble path to awakening  
And the teachings pertaining to the path,  
Childish people cling to duality

- And do not understand nonduality.
- 1.81 “In myriad illusions,  
Childish people perceive distinctions [F.105.b]  
Where there are none,  
For all these illusions are of a single character.
- 1.82 “Those who are called ‘ordinary beings’  
And the skillful buddhas of the world systems  
Are not two and are not separable into two.  
They are the same in their illusory character.
- 1.83 “Some childish people say,  
‘One day our attachment will end,  
And our hatred and ignorance will be pacified;  
One day there will be no afflictions.’
- 1.84 “For those who have taught emptiness  
In order to annihilate the attachment and hatred  
That conceive of the nonexistent as existent,  
Their exhaustion is nirvāṇa.
- 1.85 “Nirvāṇa is perfectly taught  
As being without cessation or arising.  
Yet far from my teaching are those  
Who strive for something unceasing or unarisen.
- 1.86 “Those who delight in conceptions  
Of generosity, moral conduct, and awakening  
Remain within the domain of phenomenal appearances,  
And therefore do not realize my awakening.
- 1.87 “Childish people deluded about nonexistence  
Do not understand that phenomena are hollow,  
And thus they establish distinctions  
Regarding phenomena that are of a single character.
- 1.88 “For those who understand these phenomena,  
Devoid of phenomenal appearance by nature,  
Just as a hand consists of five fingers,  
It will not be difficult to attain awakening.
- 1.89 “Awakening is far from no one.  
Awakening is close to no one.  
But far from awakening are those

- Immersed in discursive and dichotomous thought.
- 1.90 “Since childish people denigrate each other  
When they get involved with one another,  
They lack self-discipline.  
Those who lack self-discipline are not tamed.
- 1.91 “Phenomena are like dreams  
And all conditioned things are unreal.  
Considering arising as an illusion,  
The wise do not grasp them as something essential.
- 1.92 “In truth, they have no discipline,  
And yet they truly have no lack of discipline.  
Since phenomena are dependently arisen,  
They do not have a self.
- 1.93 “Throughout a million eons,  
The Guide tirelessly practiced generosity  
And maintained supreme and stainless discipline.  
Yet he never proclaimed a self.
- 1.94 “It is taught that awakening has been attained  
When one is free from any conception about oneself,  
And when all conceptions of generosity,  
As well as discursive thought, have been abandoned.
- 1.95 “It is taught that through generosity one will become resourceful, [F.106.a]  
And through discipline one will be reborn in the higher realms.  
However, not observing the slightest thing anywhere  
Is the unsurpassable awakening.
- 1.96 “Childish people fixate on their perceptions:  
‘I have attained the acceptance that phenomena  
Do not arise and are not conditioned.’  
Such is the way unskilled people think.
- 1.97 “Yet, even if they strive for ten million eons,  
This acceptance is difficult to attain  
For those who believe that those phenomena,  
Devoid of arising, do arise.
- 1.98 “Phenomena are designated with names,  
But phenomena are beyond production.  
Devoid of root and foundation,

- They all have the character of space.
- 1.99 “Even if many tens of millions of buddhas expounded  
The supremely pure teaching  
On abandoning attachment and hatred,  
The teachings would still never come to an end.
- 1.100 “If these phenomena were real,  
They could all really come to an end.  
But since they are not real,  
An endpoint is never found.
- 1.101 “Endless are attachment and hatred,  
And so too is delusion.  
Devoid of a root are those things  
That are devoid of an end.
- 1.102 “If there are neither seeds nor sprouts,  
How can leaves and fruits originate?  
In the same way, that which has no leaves,  
Has no flowers.
- 1.103 “Within the non-arising of phenomena,  
The seeds of beings cannot be found.  
Since there are no seeds of beings,  
There is no arising and no nirvāṇa.
- 1.104 “Barren women  
Have no children.  
Thus, if they have no children,  
They are free from sorrow regarding those children!
- 1.105 “Likewise, those wandering in saṃsāra  
Who realize and understand  
That all phenomena are devoid of arising  
Are free from fear of suffering.
- 1.106 “Childish people are deluded by nonexistence  
And therefore do not recognize the nature of phenomena.  
Encumbered by space as if it were a burden,  
Weary will be those who are unwise!
- 1.107 “But free from sorrow  
Are those who know phenomena  
As nonexistent, endless,

Innumerable, and measureless.

- 1.108 “I have taught that all limits in the sense of a beginning  
Or an ending are nonexistent.  
Likewise, all limits, such as an ending  
Or a middle, are of a single character.
- 1.109 “Limits resulting from conceptual thought are devoid of limit.  
Thus, limits are fictitious and nonexistent.  
If all things have been understood in this way,  
There will never be two separate entities. [F.106.b]
- 1.110 “Because limits have the character of space,  
The limits of beings are inconceivable.  
Because limits are like sensory distortions,  
One does not realize wisdom.
- 1.111 “If one engages in discursive thought,  
How will negativity ever end?  
One will likewise fancy,  
‘One day I will become a buddha.’
- 1.112 “Since buddhas are unborn,  
For them there is no arising.  
And yet, childish people accept phenomena  
That do not arise, as arising.
- 1.113 “One cannot take space as a foundation,  
Or abide in, or settle in space.  
Space is without abiding,  
Obstruction, or substance.
- 1.114 “Just as space is not a substantial thing,  
So too should we understand awakening.  
Just as we should understand awakening,  
So too should we understand the world.
- 1.115 “Identical are the expanse of space,  
Awakening, and the constitutions of beings.  
For those who know these to be equal,  
Awakening is easy to attain.
- 1.116 “For those who neither strive for awakening,  
Nor direct their mind in the appropriate way,  
Nor analyze phenomena,



- Awakening is easy to attain.
- 1.117 “Awakening cannot be analyzed.  
However much one analyzes,  
One can never realize unsurpassable awakening  
Through the achievements of mind.
- 1.118 “When one thinks that awakening is attained through generosity,  
There is no attainment of awakening at all,  
Whether there is a generous intention or any other intention.  
Nonattainment is the supreme awakening!
- 1.119 “Those who are fixated on having a disciplined mind,  
Who conceive of diligence as truth itself  
And become engaged in conceptions,  
Do not practice my teaching.
- 1.120 “I have given instructions about the practice  
Without attachments to any phenomena.  
That which is free from the slightest undertaking  
Is the unsurpassable practice.
- 1.121 “Mistaken are the thoughts  
Of those who think:  
‘These phenomena are undefiled’  
Or ‘Those phenomena are defiled.’
- 1.122 “But unsurpassed is the insight of those  
Who regard phenomena as inconceivable,  
As being similar to space,  
And who are neither bound nor liberated.
- 1.123 “Conceiving of anyone as having discipline  
Or lacking discipline  
Are both explained as inferior discipline. [F.107.a]  
That which is nondual is supreme discipline.
- 1.124 “Thus, those who perceive and understand phenomena  
As indistinguishable,  
Without differences or defining characteristics,  
Uphold my teaching.
- 1.125 “Those whose minds are like space  
Proceed in the direction of nonattachment.  
Likewise, perfect is the virtuous endeavor

Of those free from attachment to wisdom.

- 1.126 “Awakening is not hard to attain  
For those who do not analyze the slightest thing,  
Without any kind of deliberation  
And no ideas of beings or phenomena.
- 1.127 “Awakening is not hard to attain  
For those who are not confined to the limits of attachment,  
Yet are also not separating from attachment  
Or trying to gain victory over attachment.
- 1.128 “Awakening is not hard to attain  
For those who never lose courage throughout the eons,  
And who neither become afraid of limits,  
Nor terrified of saṃsāra.”
- 1.129 After the Blessed One had uttered these verses, he said to Youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, twenty laudable qualities will certainly be possessed by those who have faith in this Dharma discourse, do not doubt it, do not question it, but transmit it, memorize it, recite it, accomplish it, and also correctly teach it in detail to others.
- 1.130 “What are these twenty qualities? (1) They will be protected by the gods, (2) the nāgas, (3) and the yakṣas. (4) Their minds will remain undistracted. (5) They will recall their former lives after they are reborn. (6) They will obtain the five extrasensory powers. (7) They will immediately see the bodhisattva Maitreya when they die. (8) If they thus keep this Dharma discourse in mind without any distraction and also eliminate indolence, they should expect to see the Buddha and bodhisattvas in their dreams. (9) If they have faith in this Dharma discourse, they should expect to accept that phenomena are in complete harmony with it. (10) If they contemplate this Dharma discourse, they should expect to be free from malicious thoughts in this very life. (11) Even if they come into contact with swift-acting venom, they should expect to be free from fear, provided that they keep this Dharma discourse in mind. (12) Furthermore, they should expect to put an end to all opposition. [F.107.b] (13) They should also expect to attain the all-illuminating absorption. (14) Once they directly understand this Dharma discourse, they should expect to purify all karmic obscurations. (15) Moreover, if they explain this Dharma discourse, they should expect to gain access to countless Dharma gates. (16) They will also certainly remember the thought of awakening and possess the dhāraṇī *infinite recitation*. (17) Furthermore, if they keep in mind this Dharma discourse, they will certainly not be encircled by māras. (18) They will also certainly be reborn in the presence of the Buddha. (19) All their aspirations

will certainly be fulfilled. (20) They will certainly be protected from all species of venomous beings, including those without legs, and those with two, four, or more legs.

1.131 “Hence, they will certainly be free from fears that upset even human kings. Mañjuśrī, Dharma teachers who do not doubt this Dharma discourse, and who do not question it, but memorize it, hold it, recite it, accomplish it, and further, correctly teach it in detail to others will certainly possess these twenty laudable qualities.”

1.132 Youthful Mañjuśrī then spoke these words: “Blessed One, it may be illustrated as follows: All medicinal trees pacify the diseases of beings. Likewise, this Dharma discourse should also be regarded as completely pacifying all diseases.”

“So it is, Mañjuśrī, so it is,” the Blessed One replied. “Your words are well spoken. This Dharma discourse completely pacifies all diseases. Why? Because, Mañjuśrī, countless eons in the past, a tathāgata, a worthy one, a complete and perfect buddha called Walking Like a Lion appeared in the world. [F.108.a] From afar, he expounded this Dharma discourse to many hundreds of thousands of beings. At that time, he summoned and included in his retinue a bodhisattva called Victory Banner of the Vajra, who heard this Dharma discourse from that tathāgata. Thereupon, with a mind free from distraction, doubt, or disbelief, he retained this Dharma discourse with its twenty laudable qualities and became accomplished in it. He came to possess the power of faith. He traveled to towns, villages, valleys, lands, provinces, and royal palaces where he proclaimed himself as a healer. Thereafter, thousands of beings tormented by various diseases swiftly arrived where the bodhisattva Victory Banner of the Vajra was staying so that he could save their lives. The bodhisattva, with a mind abiding in the power of faith, offered them this Dharma scripture. The mantra syllables of knowledge that arose from this Dharma discourse offered them protection, salvation, and assistance.

1.133 “Mañjuśrī, what is the sounding of this particular mantra of knowledge?

*tadyathā alata vitāla vibhrina atirtha abhrīda anuḍa vibramha nahikhagarunga  
māyāsukha ānanda jālada nadamitra amitra jotrahita sarvadatrāla aṅgamamṅga  
arthayuta sabrāmāyīśa*

1.134 “The utterance of this mantra of knowledge protected those beings. On account of this, beings intensely tormented by various diseases were fully freed from all their afflictions, whether they had ingested poison, or were harmed by non-humans, possessed by any noxious type of creatures, consumed by a disease, afflicted by leprosy, or struck by a sickness related to wind, bile, or phlegm. Thus, Mañjuśrī, the bodhisattva Victory Banner of the

- Vajra, who abided by this Dharma discourse, [F.108.b] fully freed those beings from disease. What do you think, Mañjuśrī? If you think I was somebody other than the bodhisattva called Victory Banner of the Vajra at that time, in that life, you should abandon that view. Why? Because at that time, in that life, I myself was the bodhisattva called Victory Banner of the Vajra. I had faith in this Dharma discourse and acted for the sake of those very beings. According to this discourse, Mañjuśrī, you should understand it in this way: regard this Dharma discourse as the source of all medicines.”
- 1.135 “Blessed One,” asked Mañjuśrī, “how should bodhisattvas who memorize, keep, and realize the words of this mantra of knowledge put it into practice?”
- The Blessed One answered, “Mañjuśrī, bodhisattvas who recite this mantra of knowledge should practice cleanliness and should not eat meat. They should not massage their feet or engage in social distractions. They should again and again develop feelings of kindness toward all beings. They should not resent those who happen to hurt them. Furthermore, they should not chant this Dharma discourse without performing ablutions. Neither should they keep it in a filthy place.”
- 1.136 “Blessed One, it seems to me that bodhisattvas who teach this Dharma discourse should even disregard their own body and life,” said Mañjuśrī.
- “So it is, Mañjuśrī,” replied the Blessed One. “It is just as you have said it is.”
- 1.137 Then, the Blessed One spoke to the venerable Ānanda: “Because this Dharma discourse will benefit many beings, Ānanda, you should remember it. Ānanda, beings who yearn for this Dharma discourse will be subdued by the strength of the bull and the strength of the elephant. Ānanda, [F.109.a] those who arouse faith in this Dharma discourse will stride like a lion, like a bull. Ānanda, this Dharma discourse delights bodhisattvas and makes them appear. After I have passed away, it will come into the hands of bodhisattvas, into their scriptures and repositories. It will not come into the hands, scriptures, or repositories of outcast bodhisattvas.”
- 1.138 “Blessed One, I will hold this Dharma discourse in precisely the way it was explained by the Tathāgata,” promised the venerable Ānanda.
- “Excellent, Ānanda,” replied the Blessed One. “It is excellent that you will commit yourself to teaching this Dharma discourse, just as you have received it, to the beings for whom it was given.”
- 1.139 After the Blessed One had uttered these words, the venerable Ānanda, the venerable Śāriputra, Youthful Mañjuśrī, and the worlds of the gods, humans, demigods, and gandharvas rejoiced and praised the Blessed One’s words.
- 1.140 *This completes the Great Vehicle sūtra “The Strength of the Elephant.”*

n.

## NOTES

- n.1 Boucher 2009, p. 56.
- n.2 Chen 2012, pp. 273–76.
- n.3 Denkarma, folio 298.b.3. See also Herrmann-Pfandt (2008), p. 85.
- n.4 Phangthangma (2003), p. 13.
- n.5 Apple 2014, p. 41.
- n.6 Liu and Chen 2014, p. 309.
- n.7 The passage in the *Bodhisattvayogācāracatuḥśatakaṭīkā* reads: *de bzhin du 'phags pa glang po'i rtsal gyi mdo las/ gal te chos rnams rang bzhin yod 'gyur na/ /rgyal ba nyan thos bcas pas de mkhyen 'gyur/ /ther zug chos ni mya ngan 'da' mi 'gyur/ /mkhas rnams nam yang spros dang bral mi 'gyur/ /zhes gsungs so.* (Degé Tengyur, vol. 103 (dbu ma, ya), folio 224.b).
- n.8 Liu and Chen 2014, pp. 293f.
- n.9 Liu and Chen 2014, pp. 302–09.
- n.10 Liu and Chen 2014, p. 302.
- n.11 Liu and Chen 2014, p. 304.
- n.12 Liu and Chen 2014, pp. 306f.
- n.13 Liu and Chen 2014, pp. 305f.
- n.14 Liu and Chen 2014, p. 303, n.17.
- n.15 Liu and Chen 2014, p. 303.
- n.16 Liu and Chen 2014, p. 308.

- n.17 Ibid.
- n.18 It is unlikely that this meaning was intended by this sūtra's title, although it worth noting that, in the text, Vajradhvaja's teacher is named Siṃhavikrāntagati.
- n.19 Phuntsho 2005, p. 236 n29.
- n.20 We would like to thank Gyurme Dorje for the following note: "Pekar Zangpo (*pad dkar bzang po*) in his *mdo sde spyi'i rnam bzhag*, pp. 278–79, classes this discourse among the third turning sūtras and draws a distinction between the provisional purpose of the text (*gnas skabs kyi dgos pa*), which is to subdue or overwhelm beings with the strength of the elephant in order to alleviate ailments and so forth, and the conclusive purpose (*mthar thug gi dgos pa*), which is to bring about the attainment of "unsurpassed awakening." He also classifies the sūtra as representative of Yogācāramadhyamaka (*rnal 'byor spyod pa'i dbu ma*)."
- n.21 Stok: *mngon par grags pa*; Degé: *mngon par grags pas*.
- n.22 Degé: *nges pa'i yon tan* and *thab mo dag*; Stok: *des pa'i yon tan* and *thal mo dag* (Skt. *añjali*, "supplication").
- n.23 Degé: *brtan pa mi gnas*; Stok: *brtan par mi gnas*.
- n.24 The Degé edition reads: *blangs nas bdag gis lus la 'chad par byed / bdag ni gos ngan snyam du de mi sems*; the Stok edition reads: *blangs nas lus la 'chang bar byed pa dag / bdag ni gos ngan snyam du de mi shes*.
- n.25 The Degé edition reads: *snying po med pa rjes su 'du shes med*; the Stok edition reads *snying po dang ni rdzas su 'du shes med*.
- n.26 The Tibetan *rigs* can refer to various concepts related to the Indian traditional organization of society: *varṇa*, *jāti*, *kula*, *gotra*. In the present context, *rigs* could refer to *varṇa* or *jāti*. An alternative term to "caste" would be "class."
- n.27 This passage seems to play on a semantic ambivalence between "mistaken view" and "view as mistaken," which are two ways of understanding the compound *log par lta ba* (*mithyādṛṣṭi*).

b.

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## GLOSSARY

· Types of attestation for names and terms of the corresponding ·  
source language

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in a manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other manuscripts with a parallel or similar context.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in dictionaries matching Tibetan to the corresponding language.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where the relationship between the Tibetan and source language is attested in dictionaries or other manuscripts.
RP	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan phonetic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the Tibetan phonetic rendering of the term.
RS	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan semantic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the semantics of the Tibetan translation.
SU	<i>Source unspecified</i> This term has been supplied from an unspecified source, which most often is a widely trusted dictionary.

## g.1 absorption

*ting nge 'dzin*

ཉིང་ལྷོ་འཇོན།

*samādhi*

A general term for the practice of meditative absorption aimed at developing profound states of concentration.

g.2 accomplishment of perfect peace

*rab tu zhi ba sgrub pa*

རབ་ཏུ་ཞི་བ་སྐྱབ་པ།

—

Name of a meditative absorption.

g.3 Accumulation of All Precious Roots of Virtue

*dge ba'i rtsa ba rin po che thams cad bsags pa*

དགེ་བའི་རྩ་བ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ཐམས་ཅད་བསལ་པ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha's audience.

g.4 Ajita Keśakambalī

*mi dkar ba skra'i la ba can*

མི་དཀར་བ་སྐྱའི་ལ་བ་ཅན།

*ajita keśakambalī*

An Indian ascetic who propounded the extreme of annihilation (*ucchedavāda*). In most Tibetan canonical translations his name is rendered *mi pham skra'i la ba can*, and the Tib. *mi dkar ba* as found here is, rather, one of several renderings of the Sanskrit name Asita.

g.5 Ānanda

*kun dga' bo*

ཀུན་དགའ་བོ།

*ānanda*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A major śrāvaka disciple and personal attendant of the Buddha Śākyamuni during the last twenty-five years of his life. He was a cousin of the Buddha (according to the *Mahāvastu*, he was a son of Śuklodana, one of the brothers of King Śuddhodana, which means he was a brother of Devadatta; other sources say he was a son of Amṛtodana, another brother of King Śuddhodana, which means he would have been a brother of Aniruddha).

Ānanda, having always been in the Buddha's presence, is said to have memorized all the teachings he heard and is celebrated for having recited all the Buddha's teachings by memory at the first council of the Buddhist

saṅgha, thus preserving the teachings after the Buddha's parinirvāṇa. The phrase "Thus did I hear at one time," found at the beginning of the sūtras, usually stands for his recitation of the teachings. He became a patriarch after the passing of Mahākāśyapa.

g.6 become a renunciant

*rab tu byung*

རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་།

*pravrajate*

Refers to one who has left the life of a householder and embraced the life of a wandering, renunciate follower of the Buddha.

g.7 Beyond All Utterances, Speech, and Sounds

*sgrar rjod pa dang dbyangs dang nga ro thams cad las 'das pa*

སྒྲུང་རྗེས་པ་དང་དབྱེངས་དང་ངོ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལས་འདས་པ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha's audience.

g.8 blessed one

*bcom ldan 'das*

བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས།

*bhagavān · bhagavat*

"One who has bhaga," which has many diverse meanings including "good fortune," "happiness," and "majesty." In the Buddhist context, it means one who has the good fortune of attaining enlightenment. The Tibetan translation has three syllables defined to mean "one who has conquered (the maras), possesses (the qualities of enlightenment), and has transcended (saṃsāra, or both saṃsāra and nirvāṇa).

g.9 Blossom of the Four Jewels

*rin po che bzhi'i me tog rgyas pa*

རིན་པོ་ཆེ་བཞི་འི་མེ་ཏོག་རྒྱས་པ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha's audience.

g.10 cakravartin

*'khor los sgyur ba*

འཁོར་ལོས་སྐྱུར་བ།

*cakravartin*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

An ideal monarch or emperor who, as the result of the merit accumulated in previous lifetimes, rules over a vast realm in accordance with the Dharma. Such a monarch is called a *cakravartin* because he bears a wheel (*cakra*) that rolls (*vantana*) across the earth, bringing all lands and kingdoms under his power. The cakravartin conquers his territory without causing harm, and his activity causes beings to enter the path of wholesome actions. According to Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*, just as with the buddhas, only one cakravartin appears in a world system at any given time. They are likewise endowed with the thirty-two major marks of a great being (*mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa*), but a cakravartin's marks are outshined by those of a buddha. They possess seven precious objects: the wheel, the elephant, the horse, the wish-fulfilling gem, the queen, the general, and the minister. An illustrative passage about the cakravartin and his possessions can be found in *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 3.3–3.13.

Vasubandhu lists four types of cakravartins: (1) the cakravartin with a golden wheel (*suvarṇacakravartin*) rules over four continents and is invited by lesser kings to be their ruler; (2) the cakravartin with a silver wheel (*rūpyacakravartin*) rules over three continents and his opponents submit to him as he approaches; (3) the cakravartin with a copper wheel (*tāmracakravartin*) rules over two continents and his opponents submit themselves after preparing for battle; and (4) the cakravartin with an iron wheel (*ayaścakravartin*) rules over one continent and his opponents submit themselves after brandishing weapons.

g.11 conceptual signs

*mtshan ma*

སཚལ་མ།

*nimitta*

Conceptual characteristics or reifications that lead to distraction and a false understanding of reality.

g.12 conquering all forms

*gzugs thams cad rnam par gnon pa*

གཟུགས་ཐམས་ཅད་རྣམ་པར་གཏོག་པ།

—

Name of a meditative absorption.

g.13 defilement

*zag pa*

ཟག་པ།

*asrava*

Literally “outflows,” these are mental defilements or contaminations that “flow out” toward the objects of cyclic existence, binding us to them.

g.14 dhāraṇī

*gzungs*

གཟུངས།

*dhāraṇī*

This term is used in various ways. For instance, it refers to the mental capacity of not forgetting, enabling one in particular to cultivate positive forces and to ward off negativity. It is also very commonly used as a term for mystical verses similar to mantras, the usage of which will grant a particular power.

g.15 discernment

*lhag mthong*

ལྷག་མཐོང་།

*vipaśyana*

The mental factor or power that discerns phenomena and ascertains the true nature of things.

g.16 domain of truth

*chos kyi dbyings*

ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

*dharmadhātu*

The expanse of phenomena, the sphere of ultimate reality.

g.17 Essence of the Splendor of Overwhelming Sound

*mngon par gnon pa'i sgra sgrogs gzi brjid snying po*

མངོན་པར་གཞོན་པའི་སྒྲ་སྒྲོགས་གཟི་བརྗིད་སྡིང་པོ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha’s audience.

g.18 five extrasensory powers

*mngon par shes pa lnga*

མངོན་པར་ཤེས་པ་ལྷ།

*pañcābhijñā*

(1) The divine eye, (2) the divine ear, (3) knowledge of others' minds, (4) recollection of past lives, and (5) miracles.

g.19 **gandharva**

*dri za*

དི་ཟ།

*gandharva*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of generally benevolent nonhuman beings who inhabit the skies, sometimes said to inhabit fantastic cities in the clouds, and more specifically to dwell on the eastern slopes of Mount Meru, where they are ruled by the Great King Dhṛtarāṣṭra. They are most renowned as celestial musicians who serve the gods. In the Abhidharma, the term is also used to refer to the mental body assumed by sentient beings during the intermediate state between death and rebirth. Gandharvas are said to live on fragrances (*gandha*) in the desire realm, hence the Tibetan translation *dri za*, meaning “scent eater.”

g.20 **Gladdened with Supreme Joy**

*mngon par dga' bas mgu ba skyed pa*

མངོན་པར་དགའ་བས་མགུ་བ་སྐྱེད་པ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha's audience.

g.21 **Ḡḍhrakūṭa Mountain**

*rgod kyi phung po'i ri*

རོད་ཀྱི་ཕུང་པོའི་རི།

*ḡḍhrakūṭa*

Also known as “Vulture Peak,” a hill located in modern-day Bihar, India, and in the vicinity of the ancient city of Rājagṛha. A location where many sūtras were taught and which continues to be a sacred pilgrimage site for Buddhists to this day.

g.22 **great lotus**

*pad mo chen po*

པདོ་མོ་ཆེན་པོ།

*mahāpadma*

Name of a meditative absorption.

g.23 hearer

*nyan thos*

ཉན་ཐོས།

*śravaṅka*

Followers, literally “hearers,” of those teachings of the Buddha that focus on the monastic lifestyle and liberating oneself from suffering, in contrast to followers of the Bodhisattva Vehicle who seek buddhahood for the sake of all beings.

g.24 infinite recitation

*mtha' yas par 'khyil pa*

མཐའ་ཡས་པར་འཁྲིལ་པ།

—

Name of a dhāraṇī.

g.25 inner absorption

*nang du yang dag 'jog pa*

ནང་དུ་ཡང་དག་འཛོག་པ།

*pratisaṃlayana*

This term can mean both physical seclusion and a meditative state of withdrawal.

g.26 Ju Mipham Gyatso

*'ju mi pham rgya mtsho*

འཇུ་མི་པམ་རྒྱ་མཚོ།

—

A famous polymath of the Tibetan Ancient (*rnying ma*) tradition (1846-1912) whose collected writings fill thirty-three volumes.

g.27 Kakuda Kātyāyana

*dpon po kA tyA ya na*

དཔོན་པོ་ཀ་ཏཱ་ཡ་ན།

*kakuda kātyāyana*

A teacher associated with Maskari Gośāliputra and the doctrine of non-action (*akriyāvāda*), a type of antinomianism.

g.28 Kaśyapa

*'od srung*

འོད་སྲུང།

*kaśyapa*

An Indian sage, also known as Pūraṇa Kaśyapa, who maintained the doctrine of non-action (*akriyāvāda*). Not to be confused with one of the Buddha's foremost disciples, who had the same name.

g.29 lay vow holder

*dge bsnyen*

དགེ་བསྟེན།

*upāsaka*

An unordained male practitioner who observes the five vows not to kill, lie, steal, be intoxicated, or commit sexual misconduct.

g.30 Light Beam of Great Lightning

*glog chen sgron ma*

གློག་ཆེན་སྲོན་མ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha's audience.

g.31 Light Vanquishing with Undefined Forces

*dpung pa dri ma med pas 'od zer bcom pa*

དཔུང་པ་དྲི་མ་མེད་པས་འོད་ཟེར་བཅོམ་པ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha's audience.

g.32 Lofty Like Mount Meru's Summit

*ri rab brtsegs pa ltar mngon par 'phags pa*

རི་རབ་བརྟེན་པ་ལྟར་མཛོན་པར་འཕགས་པ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha's audience.

g.33 māra

*bdud*

བདུད།



*māra*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

*Māra*, literally “death” or “maker of death,” is the name of the deva who tried to prevent the Buddha from achieving awakening, the name given to the class of beings he leads, and also an impersonal term for the destructive forces that keep beings imprisoned in saṃsāra:

(1) As a deva, Māra is said to be the principal deity in the Heaven of Making Use of Others’ Emanations (*paranirmitavaśavartin*), the highest paradise in the desire realm. He famously attempted to prevent the Buddha’s awakening under the Bodhi tree—see *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 21.1—and later sought many times to thwart the Buddha’s activity. In the sūtras, he often also creates obstacles to the progress of śrāvakas and bodhisattvas. (2) The devas ruled over by Māra are collectively called *mārakāyika* or *mārakāyikadevatā*, the “deities of Māra’s family or class.” In general, these māras too do not wish any being to escape from saṃsāra, but can also change their ways and even end up developing faith in the Buddha, as exemplified by Sārthavāha; see *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 21.14 and 21.43. (3) The term māra can also be understood as personifying four defects that prevent awakening, called (i) the divine māra (*devaputramāra*), which is the distraction of pleasures; (ii) the māra of Death (*mṛtyumāra*), which is having one’s life interrupted; (iii) the māra of the aggregates (*skandhamāra*), which is identifying with the five aggregates; and (iv) the māra of the afflictions (*kleśamāra*), which is being under the sway of the negative emotions of desire, hatred, and ignorance.

g.34 Maskari Gośāliputra

*ma ska ri 'ga' ba ya la*

མ་སྐྱ་རི་འག་འབ་ཡ་ལ།

*maskari gośāliputra*

An Indian teacher associated with the Ājīvika sect. His doctrine is known as *saṃsāravīśuddhi*, i.e., the doctrine of purity for getting rid of the cycle of birth and death.

g.35 meditative state

*mnyam par bzhaq pa*

མཉམ་པར་བཞག་པ།

*samāhita*

Literally meaning correct (*samyak*) acquisition (*āpatti*) of truth or reality, this is a term used in early Buddhism to refer to the succession of meditative states leading to the attainment of nirvāṇa.

- g.36 mendicant  
*bsod snyoms spyod pa*  
 བསོད་སྟོམས་སྟོད་པ།  
*piṇḍapātacārikin*  
 One who engages in asceticism.
- g.37 moral discipline  
*'dul ba*  
 འདུལ་བ།  
*vinaya*  
 One of the three Piṭakas, or “Baskets,” of the Buddhist canon; the one dealing specifically with the code of monastic discipline.
- g.38 Nirgrantha Jñatiputra  
*gcer bu pa nye du'u bu*  
 གཅེར་བུ་པ་ཉེ་དུ་བུ།  
*nirgrantha jñatiputra*  
 Also known as the Mahāvīra, the founder of the Jaina sect.
- g.39 nirvāṇa  
*mya ngan las 'das pa*  
 མྱ་ངན་ལས་འདས་པ།  
*nirvāṇa*  
 Literally “extinction,” the state beyond sorrow, it refers to the ultimate attainment of buddhahood, the permanent cessation of all suffering and of the afflicted mental states that lead to suffering. Three types of nirvāṇa are identified: (1) the residual nirvāṇa where the person is still dependent on conditioned psycho-physical aggregates, (2) the non-residual nirvāṇa where the aggregates have also been consumed within emptiness, and (3) the non-abiding nirvāṇa transcending the extremes of phenomenal existence and quiescence.
- g.40 noble (one)  
*'phags pa*  
 འཕགས་པ།  
*ārya*

An honorific term used to refer to anything of exalted status. Thus, it can refer to a noble person, one of a higher class or caste. In the context of Buddhism, it refers to one who has gained realization on the path of seeing and thus understands selflessness.

g.41 non-Buddhist

*mu stegs pa*

མུ་སྟེགས་པ།

*tīrthika*

Adherents of non-Buddhist spiritual traditions.

g.42 outcast bodhisattvas

*byang chub sems dpa' gdol ba*

བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་དཔའ་གཤོལ་བ།

*bodhisattvacāṇḍāla*

Bodhisattvas who are attached to disciplined practices and living in remote areas.

g.43 Overcoming Fears with Words of Renown

*grags pa'i sgras 'jigs pa bcom pa*

གྲགས་པའི་སྒྲས་འཛིགས་པ་བཙེམ་པ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha's audience.

g.44 particular display illuminating the abandonment of all activities

*spyod pa thams cad la btang ba snang ba'i khyad par ston pa*

སྟོན་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་བཏང་བ་སྣང་བའི་ཁྱེད་པར་སྟོན་པ།

—

Name of a meditative absorption.

g.45 Perseverant Beyond Compare and Wise

*brtson 'grus dpe med blo gros*

བརྩོན་འགྲུས་དཔེ་མེད་རྩོ་གྲོས།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha's audience.

g.46 Possessing Vajralike Solidity

*rdo rje lta bur brtan pa thob pa*

རྗེ་ཐུ་སྲུང་བརྟན་པ་ཐོབ་པ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha's audience.

g.47 Rājagṛha

*rgyal po'i khab*

རྗེ་ལ་པོའི་ཁབ།

*rājagṛha*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The ancient capital of Magadha prior to its relocation to Pāṭaliputra during the Mauryan dynasty, Rājagṛha is one of the most important locations in Buddhist history. The literature tells us that the Buddha and his saṅgha spent a considerable amount of time in residence in and around Rājagṛha—in nearby places, such as the Vulture Peak Mountain (Gṛdhrakūṭaparvata), a major site of the Mahāyāna sūtras, and the Bamboo Grove (Veṅuvana)—enjoying the patronage of King Bimbisāra and then of his son King Ajātaśatru. Rājagṛha is also remembered as the location where the first Buddhist monastic council was held after the Buddha Śākyamuni passed into parinirvāṇa. Now known as Rajgir and located in the modern Indian state of Bihar.

g.48 Reaching the Far Shore of Definitive Meaning to Fulfill Beings' Aspirations

*sems can gyi bsam pa nges pa'i don gyi pha rol tu bgrad par dong ba*

སེམས་ཅན་གྱི་བསམ་པ་ངེས་པའི་དོན་གྱི་པ་རོལ་ཏུ་བགྲོད་པར་དོང་བ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha's audience.

g.49 Sañjaya Vairattīputra

*kun rgyal 'be'i ra ti'i bu*

ཀུན་རྒྱལ་འབེའི་ར་ཏིའི་བུ།

*sañjaya vairattīputra*

A proponent of the doctrine of scepticism (*vikṣepavāda*).

g.50 Śāradvatīputra

*sha ra dwa ti'i bu*

ཤ་ར་དྲ་ཏིའི་བུ།

*śāradvatīputra*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the principal śrāvaka disciples of the Buddha, he was renowned for his discipline and for having been praised by the Buddha as foremost of the wise (often paired with Maudgalyāyana, who was praised as foremost in the capacity for miraculous powers). His father, Tiṣya, to honor Śāriputra's mother, Śārikā, named him Śāradvatīputra, or, in its contracted form, Śāriputra, meaning "Śārikā's Son."

g.51 Śāriputra

*shA ri'i bu*

ལྷ་རིའི་བུ།

*śāriputra*

One of the major hearers, paired with Maudgalyāyana, and noted for having been praised by the Buddha as foremost of the wise; hence, the most frequent target for Vimalakīrti's attacks on the śrāvakas and on the Hinayāna in general. Also known as Śāradvatīputra.

g.52 Seeing Beyond Extremes and Transcending All Sensory Objects

*mtha' yas par lta zhing yul thams cad las 'das pa*

མཐའ་ཡས་པར་ལྷོ་ཞིང་ཡུལ་གསལ་ཅད་ལས་འདས་པ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha's audience.

g.53 settling in complete peace

*nye bar zhi ba la 'jug pa*

ཉེ་བར་ཞི་བ་ལ་འདུག་པ།

*upaśamapraveśa*

Name of a meditative absorption.

g.54 solitary realizer

*rang sangs rgyas*

རང་སངས་རྒྱས།

*pratyekabuddha*

Literally, "buddha for himself," or "solitary realizer." Those who attain buddhahood in a time when a buddha's doctrine is no longer available in the world, and who remain either in solitude or among peers, without teaching the path of liberation to others. They are sometimes called "rhinoceros-like" for their preference to stay in solitude.

g.55 subduing and illuminating  
*mngon par gnon cing rnam par gsal ba*

མངོན་པར་གནོན་ཅིང་རྣམ་པར་གསལ་བ།

*vispaṣṭa*

Name of a meditative absorption.

g.56 sugata

*bde bar gshegs pa*

བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ།

*sugata*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the standard epithets of the buddhas. A recurrent explanation offers three different meanings for *su-* that are meant to show the special qualities of “accomplishment of one’s own purpose” (*svārthasampad*) for a complete buddha. Thus, the Sugata is “well” gone, as in the expression *su-rūpa* (“having a good form”); he is gone “in a way that he shall not come back,” as in the expression *su-naṣṭa-jvara* (“a fever that has utterly gone”); and he has gone “without any remainder” as in the expression *su-pūrṇa-ghaṭa* (“a pot that is completely full”). According to Buddhaghosa, the term means that the way the Buddha went (Skt. *gata*) is good (Skt. *su*) and where he went (Skt. *gata*) is good (Skt. *su*).

In this text:

Here used also as an epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.57 tathāgata

*de bzhin gshegs pa*

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ།

*tathāgata*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A frequently used synonym for *buddha*. According to different explanations, it can be read as *tathā-gata*, literally meaning “one who has thus gone,” or as *tathā-āgata*, “one who has thus come.” *Gata*, though literally meaning “gone,” is a past passive participle used to describe a state or condition of existence. *Tatha(tā)*, often rendered as “suchness” or “thusness,” is the quality or condition of things as they really are, which cannot be conveyed in conceptual, dualistic terms. Therefore, this epithet is interpreted in different ways, but in general it implies one who has departed in the wake of the buddhas of the past, or one who has manifested the supreme awakening

dependent on the reality that does not abide in the two extremes of existence and quiescence. It is also often used as a specific epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.58 thought of awakening

*byang chub tu sems*

བྱང་ལྷན་དུ་སེམས།

*bodhicitta*

In Mahāyāna Buddhism, this refers to the altruistic resolve to achieve complete and perfect buddhahood for the sake of oneself and all sentient beings.

g.59 three Dharma robes

*chos gos gsum*

ཚོས་གོས་གསུམ།

*tricivara*

These include the outer robe (*bla gos*), the lower robe (*mthang gos*), and the monk's shawl (*snam sbyar*).

g.60 transcendent insight

*shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa*

ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་ཕ་རོལ་དུ་ཕྱིན་པ།

*prajñāpāramitā*

The sixth of the six perfections, it refers to the profound understanding of the emptiness of all phenomena, the realization of ultimate reality.

g.61 venerable

*tshe dang ldan pa*

ཚོ་དང་ལྷན་པ།

*ayusmat*

A respectful form of address between monks and also lay companions of equal standing. Literally, one who has a [long] life.

g.62 Victory Banner of the Vajra

*rdo rje'i rgyal mtshan*

རོ་རྗེའི་རྒྱལ་མཚན།

*vajradhvaja*

The name of a past bodhisattva.

g.63 Voice More Majestic Than Brahmā's

*tshangs pa'i sgra gzi brjid mngon par 'phags pa*

ཚངས་པའི་སྐྱ་གཟི་བརྗིད་མངོན་པར་འཕགས་པ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva in the Buddha's audience.

g.64 Walking Like a Lion

*seng ge'i stabs su 'gro ba*

སེང་གེའི་སྟེན་ས་སུ་འགྲོ་བ།

*simhavikrāntagati*

The name of a past Buddha.

g.65 world system

*'jig rten gyi khams*

འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི་ཁམས།

*lokadhātu*

This can refer to one world with its orbiting sun and moon, and also to groups of these worlds in multiples of thousands, in particular a world realm of a thousand million worlds, which is said to be circular, with its circumference twice as long as its diameter.

g.66 worthy one

*dgra bcom pa*

དག་བཅོམ་པ།

*arhat*

One who has achieved the fourth and final level of attainment on the śrāvaka path, and who has thus attained liberation with the cessation of all mental afflictions.

g.67 Youthful Mañjuśrī

*'jam dpal gzhon nur gyur pa*

འཇམ་དཔལ་གཞོན་ནུར་གྱུར་པ།

*mañjuśrīkumārabhūta*

Mañjuśrī who takes the form of a youth, an epithet by which the well-known bodhisattva is often referred. He is considered to be the embodiment of the transcendent perfection of insight and is portrayed wielding a sword in his



right hand that cuts through delusion and a volume of the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra*  
in his left that contains teachings on transcendent insight.