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Gayāśīrṣa Hill

Gayāśīrṣa

Translated into Tibetan by
Surendrabodhi · Bandé Yeshé Dé

འཕགས་པ་ག་ཡུ་མགོ་འི་རི་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་འི་མདོ།

'phags pa ga yA mgo'i ri zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra “Gayāśīrṣa Hill”

Āryagayāśīrṣanāmamahāyānasūtra



Toh 109
Degé Kangyur vol. 49 (mdo sde, ca), folios 285.a–292.a.

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SUMMARY

- s.1 *Gayāśīrṣa Hill* is a pithy Buddhist scripture that describes various aspects of the Mahāyāna Buddhist path. Set on Gayāśīrṣa, the hill near Bodhgayā from which its title is derived, the sūtra presents its teaching in the form of the Buddha's inward examination, a conversation between the Buddha and the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, and dialogues between Mañjuśrī and three interlocutors—two gods and a bodhisattva. It provides a sustained but concise treatment of the progress toward awakening, the stages of aspiration for complete awakening, method and wisdom as the two broad principles of the bodhisattva path, and various classifications of bodhisattva practices. Multiple translations, commentaries, and citations of passages from *Gayāśīrṣa Hill* attest to its wide influence in the Mahāyāna Buddhist communities of India, China, and Tibet.

ac.

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ac.1 This translation was produced by the Sarasvatī Translation Team. Shenghai Li and Zhuo Siyu produced the translation and Steven Rhodes edited the text. We would like to acknowledge the support of the American Council of Learned Societies. We dedicate this work to Steven Rhodes who passed away in 2017.

ac.2 The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 *Gayāśīrṣa Hill* is a relatively short Mahāyāna Buddhist scripture, but its influence over the centuries is attested to by the multiple translations of it that were made, its frequent citation, and its use as a source of significant Mahāyāna Buddhist ideas and practices.

i.2 The sūtra opens on Gayāśīrṣa Hill near Bodhgayā, where the Buddha is dwelling with a large number of bhikṣus and bodhisattvas. Withdrawing into solitude, the Buddha reflects inwardly on the nature of his awakening, how it was attained, and the nature of the one who has attained it. After the Buddha answers the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī's query about how that awakening should be sought, two gods and a bodhisattva query Mañjuśrī in turn about the practices that lead to the awakening of a buddha.

i.3 *Gayāśīrṣa Hill* was translated into Chinese four times between the beginning of the fifth century and the end of the seventh century (Taishō 464, 465, 466, and 467), before the Tibetan translation was produced by Surendrabodhi and Yeshé Dé. Vasubandhu's *Commentary on the Gayāśīrṣa Hill Sūtra* is preserved in both Chinese and Tibetan translations.¹ Śākyabuddhi wrote a subcommentary on Vasubandhu's commentary, the *Mixed Commentary on the Gayāśīrṣa Hill Sūtra*, which has survived in the form of a Tibetan translation.² In China, the fifth-century Buddhist monk Hongchong (充弘) reportedly composed a commentary on Kumārajīva's Chinese translation of *Gayāśīrṣa Hill*.³

i.4 *Gayāśīrṣa Hill* is also cited in Kamalaśīla's *Stages of Meditation (Bhāvanākrama)*.⁴ Through the influence of Kamalaśīla, the memory of this sūtra lived on in Tibet. In the context of discussing Mahāyāna Buddhist practices in *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path*, for instance, Tsongkhapa (1357–1419) cites three passages from the sūtra that had been used in Kamalaśīla's *Stages of Meditation*.⁵ *Gayāśīrṣa Hill*'s sustained exposition of the Mahāyāna Buddhist path seems to have made it valuable for the project of writing comprehensive Buddhist manuals. Both Kamalaśīla and Tsongkhapa

made use of its clear formulation of method and wisdom as the two basic elements of the bodhisattva's path; its affirmation of compassion and sentient beings, respectively, as the beginning and basis of the bodhisattva's conduct; and its decisive statement about the importance of practice to the bodhisattva's pursuit of awakening.

i.5 *Gayāśīrṣa Hill* is set in a place and time commemorated in Buddhist accounts of the life of the Buddha. In the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, *The Chapter on a Schism in the Saṅgha (Saṅghabhedavastu)* describes in detail the Buddha's visit to Gayāśīrṣa Hill when, not long after his first teaching in Sarnath, he had returned to the Urubilvā (or Uruvilvā) area and had converted the three Kāśyapa brothers of Urubilvā (Pali Uruvelā) and their thousand *jaṭila* (matted-haired) ascetic followers who had been practicing on the banks of the nearby Nairāñjanā River. It was on Gayāśīrṣa Hill that he led them all to attain the level of arhat by displaying the "three miracles," i.e., the miracle of the supernatural, the miracle of pointing out, and the miracle of instruction, and he remained there until he was invited to Rājagṛha for the first time by King Bimbisāra. These events are summarized in a passage that appears in parallel in several other texts, notably *The Chapter on Going Forth (Pravrajyāvastu, Toh 1, 1.276)* and *The Hundred Deeds (Karmaśataka, Toh 340, 6.-319-6.320)*, with a parallel in the Pali literature, too: the Mahāvagga section of the *Vinaya Piṭaka* describes the Buddha staying on Gayāśīrṣa Hill "accompanied by a great saṅgha of bhikkhus consisting of one thousand fully ordained monks, all of whom were previously ascetics with matted hair."⁶ It was on that occasion, according to the Pali tradition, that he delivered the famous *Ādittapariyāya*, often known as the "Fire Sermon," found in the Saṃyutta Nikāya (SN 35.28), a teaching that matches what the *Saṅghabhedavastu* says of the "miracle of instruction."

i.6 The introductory setting of *Gayāśīrṣa Hill* makes it clear that although the audience includes the same thousand newly converted disciples mentioned in those accounts, the teaching recounted in the present text is supposed to have been given slightly later in this initial period, as the new monk disciples had already attained the arhat level. But, in any case, we would not expect its content, as a Mahāyāna sūtra, to bear a close resemblance to the teachings associated with *Gayāśīrṣa Hill* transmitted in the Pali tradition; moreover, the audience includes "many bodhisattva great beings."

i.7 At a later period in the Buddha's life, it was on Gayāśīrṣa Hill that the Buddha's cousin Devadatta established and led a secessionist community of monks.

i.8 Gayāśīrṣa itself is a flat-topped hill that can be visited today outside the city of Gayā in Bihar. It lies in Urubilvā, along the Nairāñjanā River, the same area of Magadha where Bodhgayā is located as well the places where, before

his awakening, the Buddha had practiced asceticism. Gayāśīrṣa was already a pilgrimage place or *tīrtha* sacred in the Brahmanical tradition, in connection with legends of a buried, reclining giant—in one version, a demon king called Gayāsura who was immobilized by Viṣṇu, and in another a saintly prince called Gaya. This hill marks the position of his head, with other features of the landscape in the region associated with other parts of his body.⁷ However, Vinītaruci’s Chinese translation of this sūtra (Taishō 466) preserves in its title an alternative interpretation of the name of the mountain, “Elephant Head” (*xiangtou*, 象頭, or *gajāśīrṣa*), which is corroborated by the form *gajasīsa* found in some of the Pali commentaries, although not in the suttas themselves. Other sūtras in the Kangyur of which the setting is *Gayāśīrṣa Hill* include the celebrated *Jewel Cloud* (Toh 231)⁸ and *Victory of the Ultimate Dharma* (Toh 246).⁹

i.9 Vasubandhu’s commentary divides *Gayāśīrṣa Hill* into nine topics. Although the sūtra contains a few enigmatic passages, an independent reading of the text will quite certainly be a meaningful and rewarding experience, especially if the reader has some familiarity with basic Buddhist concepts. That said, what makes Vasubandhu’s text particularly interesting is the specific commentarial techniques that are used and the influence that it must have exerted on Buddhist readers, translators,¹⁰ and scholars in the past, as evidenced by the commentary’s translation into both Chinese and Tibetan.

i.10 Vasubandhu’s commentary describes the general structure of the entire sūtra and provides lists of exegetical points to help organize its passages. According to Vasubandhu, the sūtra begins with (1) an introduction (*gleng gzhi*), which is followed by a description of (2) “the excellence of its harmonious audience” (*mtshun pa’i nyan pa po phun sum tshogs pa*). This point in his list corresponds to the individual lines in the sūtra that describe the qualities of the one thousand bhikṣus in attendance. The sūtra then moves into its main topics, beginning with the Buddha’s withdrawal into solitude and engagement in contemplation. This is followed by the Buddha’s acknowledgement of his own awakening and his successful promulgation of the Dharma. Vasubandhu classifies these two sections as (3) meditative absorption (*ting nge ’dzin*) and (4) “the purity of the realizer” (*rtogs pa po rnam par dag pa*). In the sūtra, the Buddha examines the means by which awakening is realized, awakening itself, and the person who attains awakening. None of these examinations discovers any real entity associated with the different factors of awakening. Vasubandhu names this section (5) “matters to be examined” (*brtag par bya ba’i dngos po*). These analyses, according to Vasubandhu, are conducted in meditative absorption; therefore, (6) “emergence from meditation” (*bzhengs pa*) designates a transition

between the completion of the Buddha's meditative absorption and the commencement of his teaching. These distinctions are not, however, indicated in the text of the sūtra.

i.11 In the next section, the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, who has access to the Buddha's thoughts about awakening, asks the Buddha questions about how awakening should be sought. In response, the Buddha speaks about the way to attain awakening, which is in tune with the nature of awakening itself. Vasubandhu's commentary gives this section the heading (7) "teachings" (*bstan pa*), and this section seems to be the source of the text's alternative title, *The Sūtra of Mañjuśrī's Inquiry about Awakening* (*Wenshushili wen puti jing*, 文殊師利問菩提經), used in the earliest Chinese translation made by Kumārajīva in the fifth century CE.

i.12 After the Buddha's instruction to Mañjuśrī, the remaining dialogues take place between Mañjuśrī and three interlocutors. Vasubandhu places the dialogue between Mañjuśrī and the first deity in a division of the text that he calls (8) "the power of the excellent qualities of bodhisattvas" (*byang chub sems dpa'i yon tan gyi mthu*). Vasubandhu remarks here that the point of asking Mañjuśrī questions while the Buddha is present is to show the excellence of the bodhisattva. The first individual who approaches Mañjuśrī is a deity to whom the bodhisattva describes a series of interrelated practices. The first part of the series begins with great compassion and ends with "the intention" and "the noblest intention" of the bodhisattva. In this part of the series, each practice is said to be *encompassed* by the next. From the noblest intention onward, each practice is said to occur *for the sake of* the next.¹¹

i.13 Mañjuśrī's instruction then distinguishes four kinds of "mind generation." The term is not defined in the sūtra itself, but in the Mahāyāna sūtras and scholastic literature it is usually synonymous with the aspiration for complete awakening—in other words, *bodhicitta*. The four types of giving rise to the mind of awakening are (1) the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening, (2) the giving rise to the mind of awakening that is associated with conduct, (3) the giving rise to the mind of awakening that is irreversible, and (4) the giving rise to the mind of awakening that is separated from the goal by one birth. *Gayāśrīṣa Hill*, using various analogies and images, presents the four kinds of giving rise to the mind of awakening primarily as four different stages of the bodhisattva's path. Vasubandhu's commentary adds that the four kinds of giving rise to the mind of awakening are encompassed by the ten levels of noble bodhisattvas.

i.14 Mañjuśrī's dialogues with the remaining two interlocutors are discussed in Vasubandhu's commentary under the last topic, (9) "the classification of practice" (*spyod pa rnam par dbye ba*). In the first of these two, Mañjuśrī is approached by a deity who asks him to explain the bodhisattva paths in

terms of their broad principles. In response, Mañjuśrī explains that method and wisdom are the two basic paths of bodhisattvas, and he elaborates how these two broad principles can be understood.

i.15 In the last dialogue, Mañjuśrī responds to a bodhisattva's questions, contrasting bodhisattvas' gnosis with the object of that gnosis, which is described as "dissociated." Vasubandhu's use of the term "very limit of reality" (*bhūtakoti*) and some additional synonyms given in the Chinese translation of the commentary indicate that "object," in this context, refers to ultimate reality. This is supported by other terms in the sūtra associated with ultimate reality, such as "unconditioned" (*asaṃskṛta*). Gnosis, on the other hand, is characterized in the sūtra as "associated"—that is, associated with the mind. Mañjuśrī then presents six categories pertaining to bodhisattvas: (1) knowledge, (2) efforts, (3) applications, (4) investigations into inexhaustible subjects, (5) matters that relate to discipline, (6) and disciplined states. Each of these six items is divided into ten types. He concludes by advising bodhisattvas aspiring to awakening to focus on practice (*pratipatti*), and he provides more twofold classifications of bodhisattva practices.

i.16 To our knowledge, there has not been a published translation of *Gayāśrīṣa Hill* in any Western language.¹² Alex Wayman's work makes several references to the sūtra,¹³ which he considers to be a source of the Yogācāra notion of the "transformation of the support" (*āśrayaparāvṛtti*).¹⁴ Beyond this, we are not aware of any comprehensive study of the sūtra. The Japanese scholar Susumu Ōtake recently published a study of the Chinese translations of Vasubandhu's sūtra commentaries that were produced during the Northern Wei period (386–535 CE), including Vasubandhu's commentary on *Gayāśrīṣa Hill*.¹⁵

i.17 The present translation was made from the Comparative Edition (Tib. *dpe bsdur ma*) of the Tibetan translation of *Gayāśrīṣa Hill*, based on the Degé Kangyur. Variant readings are recorded in the endnotes. To resolve ambiguity, to choose among multiple meanings of words, and to infer the original Sanskrit behind the Tibetan translation, we have used the four Chinese translations of the sūtra and the Chinese translation of Vasubandhu's *Commentary on the Gayāśrīṣa Hill Sūtra*. Śākyabuddhi's *Mixed Commentary on the Gayāśrīṣa Hill Sūtra* has also been consulted occasionally. However, it has been our principle not to use these sources to settle on a reading that cannot be derived from the Tibetan translation of the sūtra. We are aware that a complete textual history of this important sūtra, and a full account of the hermeneutics of its two extant Indian commentaries, cannot be adequately dealt with in the format of the present translation. Our hope is that this translation will inspire others to study this sūtra and its commentaries in turn.

The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra

Gayāśīrṣa Hill

1.

The Translation

[F.285.a]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Thus did I hear at one time. Not long after attaining full awakening, the Bhagavat was residing at the shrine of Gayāśīrṣa on Gayā Hill together with a great saṅgha of bhikṣus numbering one thousand—all of them previously ascetics with matted hair, having done what had to be done, with their task accomplished, their burdens laid down, their own purpose attained, the fetters of existence extinguished, their minds freed through perfect knowledge, and the excellence of all powers of the mind perfected, and exclusively arhats—and a great many bodhisattva great beings.

1.2 Then, alone, the Bhagavat went into isolation, settled himself inwardly, and examined the dharmadhātu, thinking, “I attained awakening. I realized gnosis. I did what had to be done. I laid down my burden. I crossed the wild forest of saṃsāra. I eliminated ignorance. I accomplished knowledge. I removed the thorn. I extinguished craving. I built the ship of Dharma. I beat the drum of Dharma. I blew the conch of Dharma. I raised the banner of Dharma. I overcame the way of saṃsāra. I described the way of Dharma. I cut off unfit paths. I demonstrated the path. I rejected barren fields. I demonstrated the fields of merit.

1.3 “Now, how did I realize awakening? [F.285.b] By what means did I realize it? Who realized it? These things ought to be examined.

1.4 “Was it realized by the body? Or was it realized by the mind?

1.5 “With respect to its being realized by the body, the body is inert matter, motionless—like grass, a tree, a wall, a clod of earth, and a visual aberration—mindless, derived from the four elements, arisen from the impurities of one’s parents, impermanent, and in need of constant anointing, washing, and massage; it has the properties of perishing, breaking apart, and being destroyed.

- 1.6 “The mind is like an illusion, dependently originated, without a basis, without characteristics, without substance, and in an open state.
- 1.7 “Awakening is merely a name, merely a convention, without language, not analyzable, not established, without movement, without engagement, without cognition, and not to be designated. It has transcended coming and going, transcended designation, and transcended the three realms. It is unseen, unheard, undifferentiated, without foundation, unobservable, without movement, without elaboration, without engagement, and not examinable. It is immeasurable, indemonstrable, without words, without syllables, without verbal expression.¹⁶
- 1.8 “Thus, who will attain full awakening? By what means will one attain full awakening? What is it to be fully awakened? All these things are mere names, merely designated, mere signs, mere conventions, conceptualized and imagined. They are not arisen, without arising, not a substance, without substance, without appropriation, indemonstrable, and without attachment.
- 1.9 “In that regard, [F.286.a] nobody will attain full awakening. There is no means by which one will attain full awakening. There is nothing whatsoever to be fully awakened. There is no means whatsoever by which to be fully awakened. Because of attaining full awakening in that way, it is called *attaining full awakening*, as in that regard awakening is immutable, unchanging, and without characteristics.”
- 1.10 Then, the ever-youthful Mañjuśrī asked the Bhagavat, “Bhagavat, if the characteristics of awakening are such, Bhagavat, how should a son of good family or a daughter of good family advance toward awakening?”¹⁷
- 1.11 “Mañjuśrī,” replied the Bhagavat, “a bodhisattva should advance toward awakening in accordance with how that awakening is.”
- 1.12 Mañjuśrī asked, “Bhagavat, how should one seek awakening?”
“Mañjuśrī,” replied the Bhagavat, “awakening transcends the three realms, transcends conventions, transcends the language of syllables, and transcends words. It is without engagement—without engagement from the very beginning. Therefore, Mañjuśrī, bodhisattvas who have transcended engagement should advance toward awakening.
- 1.13 “Mañjuśrī, engagement that is without engagement is engagement in awakening. Mañjuśrī, engagement in the absence of substance is engagement in awakening. Mañjuśrī, engagement in an open state is engagement in awakening. Mañjuśrī, engagement in the nature of the dharmadhātu is engagement in awakening. Mañjuśrī, engagement in the absence of fixation on all phenomena is engagement in awakening. [F.286.b] Mañjuśrī, engagement in the indivisible very limit of reality is engagement in awakening. Mañjuśrī, engagement in the absence of elimination and the absence of addition is engagement in awakening.¹⁸ Mañjuśrī, engagement in

the non-different and the absence of difference is engagement in awakening. Mañjuśrī, engagement in the properly understood visual aberration, echo, space, reflection of the moon in water, and mirage is engagement in awakening.”

1.14 Then, the god Light of the Magnificent Light Rays of the Stainless Moon asked the ever-youthful Mañjuśrī,¹⁹ “Mañjuśrī, what is the beginning of bodhisattvas’ conduct? What is its basis?”

“Divine son,” replied Mañjuśrī, “the beginning of bodhisattvas’ conduct is great compassion. Its basis is sentient beings.”²⁰

1.15 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, by what is the great compassion of bodhisattvas encompassed?”

“Divine son,” replied Mañjuśrī, “the great compassion of bodhisattvas is encompassed by immovability.”

1.16 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, by what is immovability encompassed?”

“Divine son,” replied Mañjuśrī, “the immovability of bodhisattvas is encompassed by the mind that is impartial toward all sentient beings.”

1.17 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, by what is the mind that is impartial toward all sentient beings encompassed?”

“Divine son,” replied Mañjuśrī, “the mind of bodhisattvas that is impartial toward all sentient beings is encompassed by the conduct that is non-different and without difference.”

1.18 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, by what is the conduct that is non-different and without difference encompassed?”

“Divine son,” replied Mañjuśrī, “the conduct that is non-different and without difference is encompassed by the intention and the noblest intention.” [F.287.a]

1.19 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, for the sake of what do the intention and the noblest intention arise?”

“Divine son, the intention and the noblest intention of bodhisattvas arise for the sake of the mind of awakening.”

1.20 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, for the sake of what does the mind of awakening arise?”

“Divine son, the mind of awakening of bodhisattvas arises for the sake of the six perfections.”

1.21 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, for the sake of what do the six perfections arise?”

“Divine son, the six perfections of bodhisattvas arise for the sake of the two: method and wisdom.”

1.22 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, for the sake of what do method and wisdom arise?”

“Divine son, the method and wisdom of bodhisattvas arise for the sake of heedfulness.”

1.23 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, for the sake of what does heedfulness arise?”

- “Divine son, the heedfulness of bodhisattvas arises for the sake of the three kinds of good conduct.”
- 1.24 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, for the sake of what do the three kinds of good conduct arise?”
- “Divine son, the three kinds of good conduct of bodhisattvas arise for the sake of the ten virtuous courses of action.”
- 1.25 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, for the sake of what do the ten virtuous courses of action arise?”
- “Divine son, the ten virtuous courses of action of bodhisattvas arise for the sake of restraint.”
- 1.26 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, for the sake of what does restraint arise?”
- “Divine son, the restraint of bodhisattvas arises for the sake of proper attention.”
- 1.27 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, for the sake of what does proper attention arise?”
- “Divine son, the proper attention of bodhisattvas arises for the sake of investigation.”
- 1.28 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, for the sake of what does investigation arise?”
- “Divine son, the investigation of bodhisattvas arises for the sake of mindfulness.” [F.287.b]
- 1.29 He asked, “Mañjuśrī, how many kinds of the bodhisattvas’ giving rise to the mind of awakening are included among causes and included among results?”
- “Divine son,” replied Mañjuśrī, “these four are the kinds of the bodhisattvas’ giving rise to the mind of awakening that are included among causes and included among results. What are these four? They are the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening, that which is associated with conduct, the irreversible, and that which is separated from the goal by one birth. With respect to these, the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as the cause of the giving rise to the mind of awakening that is associated with conduct; that associated with conduct should be viewed as the cause of the irreversible; the irreversible should be viewed as the cause of that which is separated from the goal by one birth; the giving rise to the mind of awakening that is separated from the goal by one birth should be viewed as the cause that is associated with the result.
- 1.30 “Furthermore, divine son, the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as like the planting of a seed. The giving rise to the mind of awakening that is associated with conduct should be viewed as like the forming of a sprout from a seed. The irreversible giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as like the arising of a stem, leaves, flowers, and fruits. The giving rise to the mind of awakening that is separated from the goal by one birth should be viewed as like the ripening of fruits.

- 1.31 “Furthermore, divine son, the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as like a chariot maker’s knowledge of how to gather wood. The giving rise to the mind of awakening that is associated with conduct should be viewed as like knowing how to construct the parts of a chariot. The irreversible giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as like knowing how to put together the parts of a chariot. The giving rise to the mind of awakening that is separated from the goal by one birth should be viewed as like knowing how to load packs onto a chariot.
- 1.32 “Furthermore, divine son, the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as like the forming of the new moon’s orb. The giving rise to the mind of awakening that is associated with conduct should be viewed as like the appearance of the moon’s orb on the nights of the fifth, sixth, and seventh days. [F.288.a] The irreversible giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as like the appearance of the moon’s orb on the night of the tenth day. The giving rise to the mind of awakening that is separated from the goal by one birth should be viewed as like the appearance of the moon’s orb on the night of the fourteenth day. The gnosis of the tathāgata should be viewed as like the appearance of the moon’s orb on the night of the fifteenth day.
- 1.33 “Furthermore, divine son, the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening surpasses the śrāvaka’s level. The second giving rise to the mind of awakening surpasses the pratyekabuddha’s level. The third giving rise to the mind of awakening surpasses the uncertain level. The fourth giving rise to the mind of awakening dwells in the domain of certainty.
- 1.34 “Furthermore, divine son, the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as being like learning the alphabet. The giving rise to the mind of awakening that is associated with conduct should be viewed as like knowing how to distinguish the declensions. The irreversible giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as like knowing reckoning, calculation, and arithmetic.²¹ The giving rise to the mind of awakening that is separated from the goal by one birth should be viewed as like mastering the treatises.
- 1.35 “Furthermore, divine son, the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening is related to the cause. The second giving rise to the mind of awakening is associated with gnosis. The third giving rise to the mind of awakening is associated with abandonment. The fourth giving rise to the mind of awakening is associated with the result.
- 1.36 “Furthermore, divine son, the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening is encompassed by the cause. The second giving rise to the mind of awakening is encompassed by gnosis. The third giving rise to the mind of

awakening is encompassed by abandonment. The fourth giving rise to the mind of awakening is encompassed by the result.

1.37 “Furthermore, divine son, the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening arises from the cause. [F.288.b] The second giving rise to the mind of awakening arises from gnosis. The third giving rise to the mind of awakening arises from abandonment. The fourth giving rise to the mind of awakening arises from the result.

1.38 “Furthermore, divine son, the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening is a part of the classification of cause. The second giving rise to the mind of awakening is a part of the classification of gnosis. The third giving rise to the mind of awakening is a part of the classification of abandonment. The fourth giving rise to the mind of awakening is a part of the classification of result.

1.39 “Furthermore, divine son, the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as being like the gathering of medicines. The second giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as being like skill in the classification of medicines. The third giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as being like skill in concocting medicines. The fourth giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as being like skill in treating patients.

1.40 “Furthermore, divine son, the initial giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as being like birth into the lineage of a king of Dharma. The second giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as being like undertaking the training in the lineage of a king of Dharma. The third giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as being like having completed the training in the lineage of a king of Dharma. The fourth giving rise to the mind of awakening should be viewed as being like having mastered the training in the lineage of a king of Dharma.”

1.41 Then, the god Light of the Light Rays of the Light of Certainty asked the ever-youthful Mañjuśrī,²² “Mañjuśrī, what, in brief, are the paths of bodhisattvas, the paths in possession of which bodhisattvas will quickly and fully awaken to unsurpassed, perfect, complete awakening?”

1.42 “Divine son,” replied Mañjuśrī, “the paths of the bodhisattvas, in brief, are two; possessed of these two paths, bodhisattvas will quickly and fully awaken to unsurpassed, perfect, complete awakening. [F.289.a] What are the two? They are method and wisdom.²³

1.43 “Regarding these, method is the knowledge of gathering, while wisdom is the knowledge of discernment.²⁴ Method views sentient beings, while wisdom does not view any phenomena. Method is the knowledge of connection to phenomena, while wisdom is the knowledge of separation. Method is the knowledge that observes causes, while wisdom proceeds to exhaust causes. Method is the knowledge of different phenomena, while

wisdom is the knowledge of the undifferentiated dharmadhātu. Method is the knowledge of the ornaments of buddha lands, while wisdom is the knowledge that the equality of buddha lands is undifferentiated. Method is the knowledge that engages the faculties and conduct of sentient beings, while wisdom is the knowledge that sentient beings cannot be observed. Method is the knowledge that obtains the ornaments of awakening, while wisdom is the knowledge of the complete awakening of all the buddhas' qualities.

1.44 "Divine son, furthermore, the paths, in brief, are two. What are the two? The path of accumulation and the path of discernment. Regarding these, the path of accumulation is the five perfections, while the path of discernment is the perfection of wisdom.

1.45 "Furthermore, the paths, in brief, are two. What are the two? The path with attachment and the path without attachment. Regarding these, the path with attachment is the five perfections, while the path without attachment is the perfection of wisdom.

1.46 "Furthermore, the paths, in brief, are two. What are the two? The contaminated path and the uncontaminated path. Regarding these, the contaminated path is the five perfections, while the uncontaminated path is the perfection of wisdom.

1.47 "Furthermore, the paths, in brief, are two. [F.289.b] What are the two? The limited path and the unlimited path. Regarding these, the limited path is a ground for signs, while the unlimited path is a ground that is without signs.

1.48 "Furthermore, the paths, in brief, are two. What are the two? The path of knowledge and the path of abandonment. Regarding these, the path of knowledge ranges from the first level to the seventh level, while the path of abandonment ranges from the eighth level to the tenth level."

1.49 Then, the bodhisattva great being Hero Cultivating Gnosis asked the ever-youthful Mañjuśrī,²⁵ "Mañjuśrī, how are bodhisattva great beings distinguished in terms of object? How are they distinguished in terms of gnosis?"

"Son of good family," replied Mañjuśrī, "the object is dissociated, but the gnosis is associated."²⁶

1.50 He asked, "Mañjuśrī, why is the object dissociated but the gnosis associated?"

"Son of good family," replied Mañjuśrī, "the object is unconditioned, and hence it should be understood as neither associated with nor dissociated from any phenomena whatsoever. Why is that? The object has the characteristic of being immutable, and hence it should be understood as neither associated with nor dissociated from any phenomena whatsoever. Because the object lacks any establishment from the beginning, it should be

understood as neither associated with nor dissociated from any phenomena whatsoever. Because of the absence of elimination and the absence of addition, the object should be understood as neither associated with nor dissociated from any phenomena whatsoever.²⁷

1.51 “What is called *gnosis* is a path. The path is associated with mind rather than dissociated from it. Son of good family, therefore, gnosis is said to be associated; it is not dissociated.

1.52 “Gnosis is associated with abandonment, rather than dissociated from it. Therefore, son of good family, gnosis is said to be associated; it is not dissociated.

1.53 “What is called *gnosis* is skilled in the aggregates, [F.290.a] skilled in the elements, skilled in the sense bases, skilled in dependent origination, and skilled in analyzing what is possible and what is not possible. Therefore, son of good family, gnosis is said to be associated; it is not dissociated.

1.54 “Furthermore, son of good family, the knowledges of bodhisattva great beings are of ten types. What are the ten types? They are as follows: the knowledge of causes, the knowledge of results, the knowledge of aims, the knowledge of method, the knowledge of wisdom, the knowledge of gathering, the knowledge of the perfections, the knowledge of great compassion, the knowledge of bringing sentient beings to maturity, and the knowledge of not being fixated on any phenomena. Son of good family, these ten are the knowledges of bodhisattva great beings.

1.55 “Furthermore, son of good family, the endeavors of bodhisattva great beings are of ten types. What are the ten? They are as follows: the endeavor of body for the sake of purifying the physical actions of all sentient beings, the endeavor of speech for the sake of purifying the verbal actions of all sentient beings, the endeavor of mind for the sake of purifying the mental actions of all sentient beings, the internal endeavor for the sake of eliminating fixation on all sentient beings, the external endeavor for the sake of acting equally toward all sentient beings, the endeavor of gnosis for the sake of perfecting the gnosis of buddhas, the endeavor of lands for the sake of fully displaying the array of excellent qualities of all buddha lands, the endeavor of bringing sentient beings to maturity for the sake of developing proficiency in medicines for the illnesses of the afflictions, the endeavor of suchness for the sake of perfecting the domain of certainty, and the endeavor of perfecting the gnosis of the unconditioned for the sake of eliminating the mind’s fixation on all three realms. [F.290.b] Son of good family, these ten are the endeavors of bodhisattva great beings.

1.56 “Furthermore, son of good family, the applications of bodhisattva great beings are of ten types. What are the ten? They are as follows: the application of the perfections, the application of the means for gathering disciples, the

application of wisdom, the application of method, the application of great compassion, the application of seeking the accumulations of merit, the application of seeking the accumulations of gnosis, the application of purifying intentions, the application of analyzing the truths, and the application of the absence of fixation on everything attractive or unattractive. Son of good family, these ten are the applications of bodhisattva great beings.

1.57 “Furthermore, son of good family, bodhisattva great beings’ investigations into the inexhaustible are of ten types. What are the ten? They are as follows: the investigation into inexhaustible bodies, the investigation into inexhaustible things, the investigation into inexhaustible phenomena, the investigation into inexhaustible craving, the investigation into inexhaustible views, the investigation into inexhaustible accumulations, the investigation into inexhaustible appropriation, the investigation into the inexhaustible absence of fixation, the investigation into inexhaustible conjunctions,²⁸ and the investigation into the inexhaustible knowledge of the seat of awakening. Son of good family, these ten are bodhisattva great beings’ investigations into the inexhaustible subjects.

1.58 “Furthermore, son of good family, these ten are the ten matters that relate to the discipline of bodhisattva great beings. What are the ten? They are as follows: disciplining the mind of miserliness by pouring down a rain of charity, disciplining the mind of corrupt ethical conduct by purifying the three types of actions, disciplining the mind of anger by cultivating love, [F.291.a] disciplining the mind of laziness by not tiring in the pursuit of the qualities of the buddhas, disciplining the mind of nonvirtue with the concentrations, liberations, and emanations,²⁹ disciplining the mind of ignorance by accumulating the collection of skills in reaching a definite conclusion by means of the perfection of wisdom, disciplining the afflictions by generating the accumulations of the paths, disciplining by way of accumulating the collection of truth by generating unerring paths, disciplining the mind by mastery over the timely and untimely, and disciplining the self by realizing the dharma of the absence of self. Son of good family, these ten are the matters that relate to the discipline of bodhisattva great beings.

1.59 “Furthermore, son of good family, these ten are the disciplined states of bodhisattva great beings. What are the ten? They are as follows: the disciplined state of the body through abandoning the three types of nonvirtuous physical action, the disciplined state of speech through abandoning the four types of verbal action, the disciplined state of mind through abandoning the three types of mental misconduct, the internal disciplined state by way of the absence of fixation on one’s body, the

disciplined state in regard to external objects by way of the absence of fixation on all phenomena, the disciplined state without fixation on the accumulations of gnosis effected by way of the absence of fixation on paths, the disciplined state in regard to self-aggrandizement by way of investigating the nature of the āryas' levels, the disciplined state in regard to purifying a pure future by way of remaining in the perfection of wisdom, the highly disciplined state in regard to conventions by way of not deceiving any sentient being, and the disciplined state of disregarding body and mind by way of the great compassion that brings all sentient beings to maturity. [F.291.b] Son of good family, these ten are the disciplined states of bodhisattva great beings.

1.60 “Furthermore, son of good family, awakening belongs to bodhisattva great beings who make practice essential; it does not belong to those who make wrong practice essential.³⁰ With respect to that, making practice essential is acting in accordance with what one has said. Making wrong practice essential is only a matter of words. With respect to that, making practice essential is manifold; making wrong practice essential is not manifold.

1.61 “Furthermore, son of good family, these two are the practices of bodhisattva great beings. What are the two? They are the practice of the path and the practice of abandonment. Son of good family, these two are the practices of bodhisattva great beings.

1.62 “Furthermore, son of good family, there are two practices of bodhisattva great beings. What are the two? They are the practice of subduing oneself and the practice of bringing sentient beings to maturity. Son of good family, these two are the practices of bodhisattva great beings.

1.63 “Furthermore, son of good family, there are two practices of bodhisattva great beings. What are the two? They are the practice through knowledge that is coupled with effort and the practice through spontaneous gnosis. Son of good family, these two are the practices of bodhisattva great beings.

1.64 “Furthermore, son of good family, there are two practices of bodhisattva great beings. What are the two? They are the practice in skill at establishing the levels and the practice in skill at the undifferentiated level. Son of good family, these two are the practices of bodhisattva great beings. [F.292.a]

1.65 “Furthermore, son of good family, there are two practices of bodhisattva great beings. What are the two? They are the practice that abandons the flaws related to the levels and the practice that completes the skill in advancing from one level to another. Son of good family, these two are the practices of bodhisattva great beings.

- 1.66 “Furthermore, son of good family, there are two practices of bodhisattva great beings. What are the two? They are the practice of the teachings on the levels of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas and the practice that is skilled in being irreversible from the awakening of a buddha. Son of good family, these two are the practices of bodhisattva great beings.
- 1.67 “Son of good family, the practices of bodhisattva great beings are those that are like this. Bodhisattva great beings should make effort in them. Son of good family, unsurpassed, perfect, complete awakening is not difficult to attain for bodhisattva great beings who practice in these ways.”
- 1.68 Then, the Bhagavat said to the ever-youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, you have spoken these words well. Well done! Well done!” After the Bhagavat had said so, the ever-youthful Mañjuśrī and the world with its gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas rejoiced, and they praised what was spoken by the Bhagavat.
- 1.69 *This completes the noble Mahāyāna sūtra “Gayāśīrṣa Hill.”*

c.

Colophon

c.1 Translated, revised, and finalized by the Indian preceptor Surendrabodhi and the chief editor-translator Bandé Yeshé Dé.

NOTES

n.

- n.1 *Gayāśīrṣasūtravyākhyāna*. Taishō 1531
(https://cbetaonline.dila.edu.tw/en/T1531_001) and Toh 3991.
- n.2 *Gayāśīrṣasūtramīśrakavyākhyā*. Toh 3992.
- n.3 Taishō 2059 L 376a18. See also Lamotte 2003, pp. 97–98.
- n.4 Toh 3915–3917. See the references given in the body of the translation.
- n.5 See the references given in the body of the translation.
- n.6 Oldenberg 1879, p. 34: *atha kho bhagavā uruvelāyaṃ yathābhirantaṃ viharitvā yena gayāsīsaṃ tena cārikaṃ pakkāmi mahatā bhikkhusaṃghena saddhiṃ bhikkhusahassena sabbehe’ eva purāṇajāṭilehi*.
- n.7 Sircar 1971, pp. 282–5.
- n.8 See Dharmachakra Translation Committee, trans., *The Jewel Cloud*
(<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh231.html>), Toh 231 (2019).
- n.9 See UCSB Buddhist Studies Translation Group–2, trans., *Victory of the Ultimate Dharma* (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh246.html>), Toh 246 (2021).
- n.10 Bodhiruci translated the sūtra (Taishō 465) and Vasubandhu’s commentary (Taishō 1531) into Chinese. Both texts were translated into Tibetan by Surendrabodhi and Yeshé Dé.
- n.11 In the Chinese translations, each practice is presented either as founded on the practice that follows it (Taishō 464 and 465) or else as dependent upon it (Taishō 467).
- n.12 Fairly late in our translation project, we received a draft translation of *Gayāśīrṣa Hill* prepared by Merrill Peterson and Dr. Lewis Lancaster.

- n.13 See Wayman 1984, p. 22; Wayman 1987, pp. 127–41.
- n.14 The terms *gnas 'gyur ba* and *gnas gyur pa* (*āśrayaparāvṛtti / āśrayaparāvṛtta*) appear in Vasubandhu's *Gayāśīrṣasūtravyākhyāna*. See Comparative Edition, p. 941.
- n.15 See Ōtake 2013, pp. 134–40.
- n.16 Śākyabuddhi's interpretation of the last three phrases is of interest for two reasons. First, he accommodates Vasubandhu's commentary, according to which the sūtra's phrases "without words," "without syllables," and "without verbal expression" mean "personally realized" (*so so rang gis rig pa*), "without appearance" (*snang ba med pa*), and "inexpressible" (*brjod du med pa*), respectively. Second, he employs ideas that are drawn from the Buddhist epistemological tradition, which supports the identification of the author of this sūtra commentary with the Śākyabuddhi who wrote a commentary on Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika*. Śākyabuddhi explains here (Comparative Edition, p. 964): "Conceptual construction is called 'word' since it is the cause of verbal expression. Because that [conceptual construction] does not exist, it is said that it is without words" (*sgra'i rgyu yin pa'i phyir rnam par rtog pa la sgra zhes brjod de/ de med pa'i phyir sgra med pa ste*). The term "verbal expression" (*tshig gi lam*), on the other hand, refers to "the superimposition of the aspect of a universal" (*tshig gi lam ni spyi'i rnam par sgro btags pa ste*). Śākyabuddhi maintains a distinction between the two by giving the two phrases separate senses: the former expression means that awakening is not the object of conceptualization, while the latter means that it is not the object of speech (*sgra med pa zhes bya ba des ni rnam par rtog pa'i yul ma yin pa bstan to/ /dis ni ngag gi yul ma yin pa bstan to*). Vasubandhu's glosses of the two sūtra phrases has guided Śākyabuddhi's interpretive choice. "Inexpressible" apparently means not expressible by speech, while the personal realization of the true nature by the nondual wisdom is nonconceptual. For Śākyabuddhi, the basic point about words, syllables, and verbal expression is that all of them involve forms of superimposition, whether conceptually or verbally, while such forms do not exist in ultimate reality.
- n.17 Both "advance" and the word "engagement" that follows shortly after translate the Tibetan word *'jug pa*, which corresponds to many Sanskrit words that are based on such verbs as *pravṛt*, *prasthā*, and *praviś*; each of these contains multiple meanings. "Advance" is used here only when it is preceded by *slad du* and *phyir*, suggesting the use of the dative form in the Sanskrit original, which in turn points to the function of the verb in the sense of "advancing" or "setting out." In all other cases "engagement" is used for the sake of consistency.

- n.18 “Addition” is adopted here for *gzhag pa*. This is supported by the Chinese translations’ use of the terms *zeng* 增 (Taishō 464 XIV 482a12 and Taishō 466 XIV 487b17) and *yi* 益 (Taishō 465 XIV 484b13). Vasubandhu’s *Gayāśīrṣasūtra-vyākhyāna* also explains the sūtra’s terms *dor ba med pa* and *gzhag pa med pa* with the phrase *skur pa dang / sgro btags pa rnam par spangs pa* (“abandoning refutation and superimposition”).
- n.19 The Chinese and Tibetan translations of the names of the two deities and one bodhisattva who converse with Mañjuśrī present variances and do not support, in each case, a single hypothetical Sanskrit reconstruction. A possible Sanskrit reconstruction of the Tibetan name *zla ba dri ma med pa’i gzi brjid* ‘od zer gyi ‘od is **Candranirmalatejoraśmiprabha*.
- n.20 Sanskrit cited in Tucci 1958, p. 187: *kimārambhā mañjuśrī bodhisattvānāṃ caryā kimadhiṣṭhānā/ mañjuśrīr āha/ mahākaruṇārambhā devaputra bodhisattvānāṃ caryā sattvādhiṣṭhānā*. This passage is also cited in Tsongkhapa’s *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path* (p. 293).
- n.21 *grangs*, *rtsis*, and *shod dgod pa*. These three forms of knowledge are enumerated in the lists given in the Sanskrit *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, where they follow the order of *gaṇana* (= *rtsi*), *nyasana* (= *shod dgod pa*), and *saṃkhyā* (= *grangs*). See Wogihara 1971, 7.4–5, 103.3, and 210.13. See Edgerton 1953, s.v. “nyasana.” For some examples of the lists that include some or all of these terms in the Chinese translation of the *Yogācārabhūmi*, see Taishō 1579 XXX 289b3 (*Manobhūmi*), Taishō 1579 XXX 361b7 (*Śrutamayībhūmi*), Taishō 1579 XXX 479b19–20, and Taishō 1579 XXX 528b9 (*Bodhisattvabhūmi*).
- n.22 A possible Sanskrit reconstruction of the Tibetan name ‘od rnam par nges pa’i ‘od zer gyi ‘od is **Avabhāsaviniścayaraśmiprabha*.
- n.23 This passage is cited in all three books of *Bhāvanākrama*. The Sanskrit is in Tucci 1958, p. 194: *dvāv imau bodhisattvānāṃ saṃkṣiptau mārgau/ dvābhyāṃ mārgābhyāṃ samanvāgatā bodhisattvā mahāsattoḥ kṣipram anuttarāṃ samyaksambodhim abhisambhotsyante/ katamau dvau/ upāyaś ca prajñā ca*. It is partially cited in Tucci 1978, p. 14, where the following alternative reading appears: *yad uta prajñā copāyaś ca*. For a partial citation of the passage in the second *Bhāvanākrama*, see Gyaltzen 1997, p. 127. Partial citation of this passage also appears in Tsongkhapa’s *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path*, pp. 344 and 775. In the latter instance, the Tibetan passage occurs within a larger quotation from the third *Bhāvanākrama* (Tucci 1971, pp. 13–15), where *Gayāśīrṣa Hill* is cited.

- n.24 Sanskrit cited in Tucci 1958, p. 194: *upāyah saṅgrahajñānaṃ prajñā paricchedajñānam*.
- n.25 Taishō 465 (XIV 485c10), *Yong xiuxing zhi* 勇修行智, agrees with the Tibetan name *ye shes sgrub pa'i dpa' bo*.
- n.26 The Chinese translation by Bodhiruci of the Northern Wei renders the phrases corresponding to *ldan pa med pa* and *ldan pa* in Tibetan as *buxiangying* 不相應 and *xiangying* 相應 (Taishō 465 XIV 485c12). In the Chinese translation by Bodhiruci of the Great Zhou, a very similar pair of terms, *feihehe* 非和合 and *hehe* 和合相, meaning “not conjoined” and “conjoined,” are used (Taishō 467 XIV 491b12). These Chinese equivalents suggest that the underlying Sanskrit could be *viprayukta* and *samprayukta* or phrases that could be understood to be referring to them at least on one level. The use of the Tibetan equivalents *ldan pa med pa* and *ldan pa* is consistent with this speculation. Śākyabuddhi's commentary explains, “In this context, by ‘object’ truth is intended” (*don ni 'dir de bzhin nyid la dgongs so*). Comparative Edition, p. 995. *de bzhin nyid* or *tathatā* refers to emptiness that is the ultimate reality. Being unconditioned, as the sūtra immediately points out, the ultimate reality is not associated with the mind in the Abhidharma sense. On the other hand, gnosis identified as the path, says the sūtra, is associated with the mind.
- n.27 This sūtra passage about the object serves as an occasion for an interpretation presented by Śākyabuddhi from the perspective of Yogācāra philosophy. For the relevant section of his commentary, see Comparative Edition, pp. 995–98.
- n.28 *'du ba*. The Sanskrit term is likely *saṃyojana* or *saṃyoga*. Kumārajīva translates the term in the technical sense of *jieshi* 結使 (Taishō 464 XIV 483b4) or “binding.” The term *jieshi* is known to have been used as an equivalent for *saṃyojana*. See Ogiwara 2003, s.v. “saṃyojana.” For *saṃyojana* as a technical term that is used to describe *kleśa*, see *Abhidharmakośa* 5.41–5.45 and its *bhāṣya*. For all the uses of the terms *saṃyojana* and *saṃyoga* in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* along with its Tibetan and Chinese translations, see Hirakawa 1973, s.v. “saṃyojana,” “saṃyoga.” Other Chinese translations adopt the general senses of “correspondence” (*xiangying* 相應, Taishō 465 XIV 486a23 and Taishō 467 XIV 491c23) and “conjunction” (*hehe* 和合, Taishō 466 XIV 489a15). Vasubandhu's *Gayāśīrṣasūtravyākhyāna* explains that this item involves “investigation into matters associated with advantages and disadvantages” (*don dang don ma yin pa dang ldan pa la rtog pa*).

- n.29 See three parallel Chinese translations at Taishō 464 XIV 483b9–10, Taishō 465 XIV 486b1–2, and Taishō 467 XIV 492a1.
- n.30 Sanskrit cited in Tucci 1958, p. 193: *pratipattisārāṇām bodhisattvānām bodhir nāpratipattisārāṇām*. Tsongkhapa cites this passage in *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path*, p. 340.

b.

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GLOSSARY

· Types of attestation for Sanskrit names and terms ·

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in the Sanskrit manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other Sanskrit manuscripts of the Kangyur or Tengyur.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where Tibetan-Sanskrit relationship 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 affliction

nyon mongs pa

ཉོན་མོངས་པ།

kleśa

A type of mental imperfection or disturbing emotion that binds one to saṃsāra.

g.2 aggregate

phung po

ཐུང་པོ།

skandha

Five collections of similar phenomena, under which all compounded dharmas may be included: form, feeling, perception, formation, and consciousness. On the level of an individual, the five aggregates refer to the basis upon which the mistaken idea of a self is projected.

g.3 appropriation

nye bar len pa

ཉེབར་ལེན་པ།

upādāna

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

This term also means “grasping” or “clinging,” but it has a particular meaning as the ninth of the twelve links of dependent arising, situated between craving (Skt. *trṣṇā*, Tib. *sred pa*) and becoming or existence (Skt. *bhava*, Tib. *srid pa*). In some texts, four types of appropriation are listed: that of desire (Skt. *rāga*), view (Skt. *drṣṭi*), rules and observances as paramount (Skt. *śīlavrata-parāmarśa*), and belief in a self (Skt. *ātmavāda*).

g.4 āryas’ level

’phags pa’i sa

འཕགས་པའི་ས།

āryabhūmi

Levels of bodhisattvas on the paths of seeing, meditation, and no more learning.

g.5 ascetic with matted hair

ral pa can

རལ་པ་ཅན།

jaṭila

A non-Buddhist ascetic identifiable by the wearing of locks of matted hair.

g.6 asura

lha ma yin

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།

asura

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A type of nonhuman being whose precise status is subject to different views, but is included as one of the six classes of beings in the sixfold classification of realms of rebirth. In the Buddhist context, asuras are powerful beings said to be dominated by envy, ambition, and hostility. They are also known in the pre-Buddhist and pre-Vedic mythologies of India and Iran, and feature prominently in Vedic and post-Vedic Brahmanical mythology, as well as in the Buddhist tradition. In these traditions, asuras are often described as being engaged in interminable conflict with the devas (gods).

g.7 bhagavat

bcom ldan 'das

བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས།

bhagavat

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In Buddhist literature, an epithet applied to buddhas, most often to Śākyamuni. The Sanskrit term generally means “possessing fortune,” but in specifically Buddhist contexts it implies that a buddha is in possession of six auspicious qualities (*bhaga*) associated with complete awakening. The Tibetan term—where *bcom* is said to refer to “subduing” the four *māras*, *ldan* to “possessing” the great qualities of buddhahood, and *'das* to “going beyond” *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*—possibly reflects the commentarial tradition where the Sanskrit *bhagavat* is interpreted, in addition, as “one who destroys the four *māras*.” This is achieved either by reading *bhagavat* as *bhagnavat* (“one who broke”), or by tracing the word *bhaga* to the root $\sqrt{bhañj}$ (“to break”).

g.8 bhikṣu

dge slong

དགེ་སློང་།

bhikṣu

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The term *bhikṣu*, often translated as “monk,” refers to the highest among the eight types of *prātimokṣa* vows that make one part of the Buddhist assembly. The Sanskrit term literally means “beggar” or “mendicant,” referring to the fact that Buddhist monks and nuns—like other ascetics of the time—subsisted on alms begged from the laity.

In the Tibetan tradition, which follows the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, a monk follows 253 vows as part of his moral discipline. A nun (*bhikṣuṇī*; *dge slong ma*) follows 263 rules. A novice monk (*śrāmaṇera*; *dge tshul*) or nun (*śrāmaṇerikā*; *dge tshul ma*) follows thirty-six rules of moral discipline (although in other vinaya traditions novices typically follow only ten).

g.9 Bimbisāra

gzugs can snying po

གཟུགས་ཅན་སྡིང་པོ།

bimbisāra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The king of Magadha and a great patron of the Buddha. His birth coincided with the Buddha's, and his father, King Mahāpadma, named him "Essence of Gold" after mistakenly attributing the brilliant light that marked the Buddha's birth to the birth of his son by Queen Bimbī ("Goldie"). Accounts of Bimbisāra's youth and life can be found in *The Chapter on Going Forth* (Toh 1-1, *Pravrajyāvastu*).

King Śreṇya Bimbisāra first met with the Buddha early on, when the latter was the wandering mendicant known as Gautama. Impressed by his conduct, Bimbisāra offered to take Gautama into his court, but Gautama refused, and Bimbisāra wished him success in his quest for awakening and asked him to visit his palace after he had achieved his goal. One account of this episode can be found in the sixteenth chapter of *The Play in Full* (Toh 95, *Lalitavistara*). There are other accounts where the two meet earlier on in childhood; several episodes can be found, for example, in *The Hundred Deeds* (Toh 340, *Karmaśataka*).

Later, after the Buddha's awakening, Bimbisāra became one of his most famous patrons and donated to the saṅgha the Bamboo Grove, Veṇuvana, at the outskirts of the capital of Magadha, Rājagṛha, where he built residences for the monks. Bimbisāra was imprisoned and killed by his own son, the prince Ajātaśatru, who, influenced by Devadatta, sought to usurp his father's throne.

g.10 buddha land

sangs rgyas kyi zhing

སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་ཞིང་།

buddhakṣetra

A pure realm manifested by a buddha or advanced bodhisattva through the power of their great merit and aspirations.

g.11 concentration

bsam gtan

བསམ་གཏན།

dhyāna

Generally one of the synonyms for meditation, referring to a state of mental stability. The specific four concentrations are four successively subtler states of meditation that are said to lead to rebirth into the corresponding four levels of the form realm. One of the six perfections.

g.12 dependent origination

rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba

རྟེན་ཅིང་འབྲེལ་པར་འབྱུང་བ།

pratītyasamutpāda

The relative nature of phenomena, which arises in dependence upon causes and conditions. Together with the four noble truths, this was the first teaching given by the Buddha.

g.13 dharmadhātu

chos kyi dbyings

ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

dharmadhātu

The nature of phenomena, a term for ultimate truth.

g.14 element

kham

ཁམས།

dhātu

One way of describing experience and the world in terms of eighteen elements (eye and form, ear and sound, nose and odor, tongue and taste, body and touch, and mind and mental objects, to which the six consciousnesses are added).

g.15 emanation

rnam par 'phrul pa

རྣམ་པར་འབྲུལ་པ།

vikuroṇa

In this context, a category of advanced meditative attainments.

g.16 faculty

dbang po

དབང་པོ།

indriya

Depending on the context, *indriya* can refer to the five senses (sight, smell, touch, hearing, taste) plus the mental faculty.

g.17 five perfections

pha rol tu phyin pa lnga po

ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་ལྔ་པོ།

—

Generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, and concentration.

g.18 four great elements

'byung ba chen po bzhi

འབྲུང་བ་ཆེན་པོ་བཞི།

caturmahābhūta

Earth, water, fire, and wind.

g.19 four types of verbal action

ngag gi las rnam pa bzhi

ངག་གི་ལས་རྣམ་པ་བཞི།

—

Lying, divisive speech, abusive speech, and frivolous chatter.

g.20 gandharva

dri za

དྲི་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 under the jurisdiction of 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 any sentient being in the realm

of desire (*kāmadhātu*) during the intermediate state between death and rebirth. Gandharvas are said to live on fragrances in the desire realm, hence the Tibetan translation *dri za*, meaning “scent eater.”

g.21 Gayā

ga yA

ག་ཡཱ།

gayā

One of the sacred towns of ancient India, south of the Ganges in present-day Bihar. In the Buddha’s lifetime, this was in the kingdom of Magadha. Uruvilvā, the area including Bodhgayā where the Buddha attained enlightenment, is nearby to the south, upriver from Gayā.

g.22 Gayāśīrṣa

ga yA mgo

ག་ཡཱ་མགོ།

—

An area near Bodhgayā where the present sūtra takes place.

g.23 Gayāśīrṣa Hill

ga yA mgo'i ri · ri ga yA

ག་ཡཱ་མགོ་རི་རི། · རི་ག་ཡཱ།

gayāśīrṣa

A hill near Bodhgayā where the present sūtra takes place.

g.24 giving rise to the mind of awakening

sems bskyed pa

སེམས་བསྐྱེད་པ།

bodhicittotpāda · cittotpāda

Giving rise to bodhicitta, the aspiration for complete awakening for the benefit of all beings.

g.25 great being

sems dpa' chen po

སེམས་དཔའ་ཚེན་པོ།

mahāsattva

An epithet for an accomplished bodhisattva.

g.26 Hero Cultivating Gnosis

ye shes sgrub pa dpa' bo

ཡེ་ཤེས་སྐྱབ་པ་དཔའ་བོ།

—

The name of a bodhisattva who is one of Mañjuśrī's interlocutors in this sūtra.

g.27 irreversible

phyir mi ldog pa

ཕྱིར་མི་ལྷོག་པ།

avaivartika

A stage on the bodhisattva path where the practitioner will never turn back, or be turned back, from progress toward the full awakening of a buddha.

g.28 level

sa

ས།

bhūmi

The ten levels of a bodhisattva's development into a buddha.

g.29 liberation

rnam par thar pa

རྣམ་པར་ཐར་པ།

vimokṣa

A category of advanced meditative attainments.

g.30 Light of the Light Rays of the Light of Certainty

'od rnam par nges pa'i 'od zer gyi 'od

འོད་རྣམ་པར་ངེས་པའི་འོད་ཟེར་གྱི་འོད།

—

The name of a god who is one of Mañjuśrī's interlocutors in this sūtra.

g.31 Light of the Magnificent Light Rays of the Stainless Moon

zla ba dri ma med pa'i gzi brjid 'od zer

ཟླ་བ་རྩི་མ་མེད་པའི་གཟི་བརྗིད་འོད་ཟེར།

—

The name of a god who is one of Mañjuśrī's interlocutors in this sūtra.

g.32 Mañjuśrī

'jam dpal

འཇམ་དཔལ།

mañjuśrī

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Mañjuśrī is one of the “eight close sons of the Buddha” and a bodhisattva who embodies wisdom. He is a major figure in the Mahāyāna sūtras, appearing often as an interlocutor of the Buddha. In his most well-known iconographic form, he is portrayed bearing the sword of wisdom in his right hand and a volume of the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* in his left. In addition to the epithet Kumārabhūta, which means “having a youthful form,” Mañjuśrī is also called Mañjughoṣa, Mañjusvara, and Pañcaśikha.

g.33 means for gathering disciples

bsdu ba'i dngos po

བསྐྱབ་བའི་དངོས་པོ།

saṅgrahavastu

Four things that a bodhisattva practices to bring living beings into their circle and to care for them spiritually: generosity, pleasant speech, beneficial conduct, and conduct that accords with what they teach.

g.34 method

thabs

ཐབས།

upāya

The skillful acts of a bodhisattva for the benefit of others.

g.35 mind of awakening

byang chub kyi sems

བྱང་ལྔའ་གྱི་སེམས།

bodhicitta

The determination to attain unsurpassed, perfect awakening for the sake of all sentient beings.

g.36 miserliness

ser sna

སེར་སྒྲ།

—
g.37 noblest intention

lhag pa'i bsam pa

ལྷག་པའི་བསམ་པ།

adhyāśaya

As defined in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, this is a bodhisattva's determined, deeply informed enthusiasm for the Buddhist teachings that is grounded in faith and careful study of the Dharma.

g.38 open state

bla gab med pa

བླ་གཤམ་མེད་པ།

—

Literally “without cover.”

g.39 perfection of wisdom

shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa

ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ།

prajñāpāramitā

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The sixth of the six perfections, it refers to the profound understanding of the emptiness of all phenomena, the realization of ultimate reality. It is often personified as a female deity, worshiped as the “Mother of All Buddhas” (*sarvajinamātā*).

g.40 pratyekabuddha

rang sangs rgyas

རང་སངས་རྒྱས།

pratyekabuddha

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Literally, “buddha for oneself” or “solitary realizer.” Someone who, in his or her last life, attains awakening entirely through their own contemplation, without relying on a teacher. Unlike the awakening of a fully realized buddha (*samyaksambuddha*), the accomplishment of a pratyekabuddha is not final or ultimate. They attain realization of the nature of dependent origination, the selflessness of the person, and a partial realization of the selflessness of phenomena, by observing the suchness of all that arises

through interdependence. This is the result of progress in previous lives but, unlike a buddha, they do not have the necessary merit, compassion or motivation to teach others. They are named as “rhinoceros-like” (*khadḡaviṣāṇakalpa*) for their preference for staying in solitude or as “congregators” (*vargacārin*) when their preference is to stay among peers.

g.41 Rājagṛha

rgyal po'i khab

རྒྱལ་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 (Veṇuvana)—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.42 saṃsāra

'khor ba

འཁོར་བ།

saṃsāra

The beginningless cycle of rebirth characterized by suffering and caused by the three faults of ignorance, attachment, and anger.

g.43 seat of awakening

byang chub kyi snying po

བྱང་ལྷན་གྱི་སྙིང་པོ།

bodhimanda

Although it is translated as “seat of awakening” and frequently refers to the seat upon which Śākyamuni attained awakening, the Skt. term literally means “essence of awakening.” It refers to the final realization with the corollary of the realized being performing the twelve deeds of a buddha.

g.44 sense base

skye mched

སྐྱེ་མཚེད།

āyatana

One way of describing experience and the world in terms of twelve sense sources (eye and form, ear and sound, nose and odor, tongue and taste, body and touch, and mind and mental objects).

g.45 separated from the goal by one birth

skye ba gcig gis thogs pa

སྐྱེ་བ་གཅིག་གིས་ཐོགས་པ།

ekajātīpratibaddha

A term for a bodhisattva held back from buddhahood by only a single remaining lifetime, as exemplified by Maitreya.

g.46 six perfections

pha rol tu phyin pa drug · pha rol tu phyin pa drug po dag

པ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་དུག་པ། པ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་དུག་པོ་དག

ṣaṭpāramitā

Generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and wisdom.

g.47 śrāvaka

nyan thos

ཉན་ཐོས།

śrāvaka

Primarily referring to those disciples of the Buddha who aspire to attain the state of an arhat by seeking self-liberation, in contrast to followers of the Bodhisattva Vehicle, who seek buddhahood for the sake of all beings. It is usually defined as “those who hear the teaching from the Buddha and make it heard to others.”

g.48 suchness

de kho na

དེའོན།

tattva

The true state or nature of things.

g.49 ten virtuous courses of action

dge ba bcu'i las kyī lam

དག་བ་བརྩུའི་ལས་ཀྱི་ལམ།

daśakuśalakarmapatha

These are the opposite of the ten nonvirtuous courses of action, i.e., refraining from engaging in activities related to the ten nonvirtuous courses of action and doing the opposite. There are three physical virtues: saving lives, giving, and sexual propriety. There are four verbal virtues: truthfulness, reconciling disharmony, gentle speech, and religious speech. There are three mental virtues: a loving attitude, a generous attitude, and right views.

g.50 three kinds of good conduct

legs par spyod pa rnam gsum

ལེགས་པར་སྦྱོད་པ་རྣམ་གསུམ།

—

Virtuous actions of body, speech, and mind.

g.51 three types of actions

las rnam gsum

ལས་རྣམ་གསུམ།

—

Actions of body, speech, and mind.

g.52 three types of mental misconduct

yid kyi nyes par spyod pa rnam pa gsum

ཡིད་ཀྱི་ཉེས་པར་སྦྱོད་པ་རྣམ་པ་གསུམ།

—

Greed, ill will, and wrong view.

g.53 three types of nonvirtuous physical action

lus kyi las mi dge ba rnam pa gsum

ལུས་ཀྱི་ལས་མི་དག་བ་རྣམ་པ་གསུམ།

—

Killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct.

g.54 very limit of reality

yang dag pa'i mtha'

ཡང་དག་པའི་མཐའ།

bhūtakṛtī

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

This term has three meanings: (1) the ultimate nature, (2) the experience of the ultimate nature, and (3) the quiescent state of a worthy one (*arhat*) to be avoided by bodhisattvas.