

༄༅། །ཁྱིམ་བདག་དཔས་བྱིན་གྱིས་ལུས་པ།

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# The Questions of the Householder Vīradatta

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*Vīradattagr̥hapatiparipṛcchā*

Translated into Tibetan by  
Jinamitra · Dānaśīla · Bandé Yeshé Dé

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*'phags pa khyim bdag dpas byin gyis zhus pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*

The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra “The Questions of the Householder Vīradatta”

*Āryavīradattagr̥hapatiparipṛcchānāmamahāyānasūtra*



Toh 72

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co.

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## SUMMARY

s.1

While the Buddha is residing in Anāthapiṇḍada's pleasure garden in Śrāvastī with a great assembly of monks, elsewhere in Śrāvastī the eminent householder Vīradatta hosts a meeting with five hundred householders to discuss certain questions regarding the practice of the Great Vehicle. Hoping to resolve these questions, Vīradatta and the householders decide to approach the Buddha in Anāthapiṇḍada's pleasure garden. There the Buddha explains how bodhisattvas should engender the spirit of great compassion while not being attached to the body or to enjoyments, and he then instructs the householders on how bodhisattvas should examine the impermanence and impurity of the body. This prose teaching is followed by a set of verses that reiterate how the body is impure and impermanent and that elucidate the process of karma and its effects. As a result of this teaching, Vīradatta and the five hundred householders attain the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. They then proclaim, in a well-known series of verses, the merits of aspiring for the awakening to buddhahood. The Buddha smiles, predicting that Vīradatta and the five hundred householders will attain spiritual awakening. The sūtra concludes with the Buddha telling Ānanda about the name of this Dharma discourse.

ac.

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ac.1 Translation by the University of Calgary Buddhist Studies team. This sūtra was introduced and translated by Dr. James B. Apple with assistance from Dr. Shinobu Arai Apple.

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

i.

## INTRODUCTION

i.1

While the Buddha is residing in Anāthapiṇḍada's pleasure garden in Śrāvastī with a great monastic assembly of 1,250 monks, elsewhere in Śrāvastī the eminent householder Vīradatta hosts a meeting with five hundred householders to discuss certain questions regarding the practice of the Great Vehicle. Hoping to resolve these questions, Vīradatta and the householders decide to approach the Buddha in Anāthapiṇḍada's pleasure garden. There, the Buddha explains how bodhisattvas should engender the spirit of great compassion while not being attached to the body or to possessions, and he then instructs them on how bodhisattvas should examine the impermanence and impurity of the body. This prose teaching is followed by a set of verses that reiterate how the body is impure and impermanent and that elucidate the process of karma and its effects. With this teaching, Vīradatta and the five hundred householders all attain the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. They then proclaim, in a well-known series of verses, the merits of the resolve to attain spiritual awakening. The Buddha smiles and predicts that Vīradatta and the five hundred householders will awaken to buddhahood. The sūtra concludes with the Buddha telling Ānanda about the name of this Dharma discourse.

i.2

*The Questions of the Householder Vīradatta* is preserved in Gāndhārī fragments<sup>1</sup> and in Chinese, Tibetan, and Mongolian versions. There are three Chinese versions: the *Pusa xiuxing jing* 菩薩修行經 translated by Bo Fazuo circa 290–306 CE (Taishō 330), the *Quan shou chang zhe hui* 勸授長者會 translated by Bodhiruci in 713 CE (Taishō 310(28)), and the *Wu wei shou suo wen da cheng jing* 無畏授所問大乘經 translated by Dānapāla circa 980 CE. The Tibetan version is preserved in one Dunhuang manuscript (IOL Tib J 184) and approximately twenty-eight Kangyur editions.<sup>2</sup> This English translation is based on a complete Dunhuang Tibetan manuscript (IOL Tib J 184), which was compared against another Dunhuang Tibetan manuscript

(IOL Tib J 185) and seven Kangyur editions.<sup>3</sup> The IOL Tib J 184 manuscript version is the oldest and most complete version of the extant Tibetan textual witnesses.

i.3 The sūtra is listed differently in two early ninth-century Tibetan catalogs. In the Denkarma catalog<sup>4</sup> the discourse is listed as *khyim bdag dpas byin gyis zhus pa* in three hundred śloka and is included in the Ratnakūṭa (Heap of Jewels) section. The Phangthangma catalog records the sūtra as *dpal byin gyis zhus pa* in one fascicle but does not include the discourse in the Ratnakūṭa section.<sup>5</sup> The late thirteenth-century catalog of the Tibetan Kadampa master Darma Gyaltsen (*dar ma rgyal mtshan*, 1227–1305), commonly known as Chomden Raldri (*bcom ldan ral gri*), lists the sūtra as *dpal byin gyis zhus pa*.<sup>6</sup> A listing of texts appended to Butön Rinchen Drup’s (*bu ston rin chen grub*, 1290–1364) *History of Buddhism* (*chos ’byung*) also records the work as the *khyim bdag dpal sbyin gyis zhus pa* in one fascicle.<sup>7</sup> As found in the translation, the colophon of IOL Tib J 184 lists the translators as the Indian preceptors Jinamitra and Dānaśīla along with the chief editor-translator Bandé Yeshé Dé (*ban de ye shes sde*). The colophon also mentions that the translators utilized the “revised terminology” (*skad gсар bcad*) of the new translation period and that the sūtra forms the thirty-second chapter of the Ratnakūṭa collection.<sup>8</sup>

i.4 The origins of *The Questions of the Householder Vīradatta* can be traced to the early centuries of the common era, based on the existence of fragments of the work as preserved in Gāndhārī. The scripture reflects the “Mahāyānization” of such practices as the mindfulness of the body (*kāyasmṛtyupasthāna*) and meditation on the impurity of the body (*aśubhabhāvanā*) that circulated among Yogācāra proponents in the second to fourth century.<sup>9</sup> The title *Vīradattaparipṛcchā* figures in a pre-sixth-century list of scriptures found in the *Nandimitrāvadāna*.<sup>10</sup> Although the exact contents of the discourse at that stage in its history is unknown, the *Vīradattaparipṛcchā* is listed in that work independently of any Ratnakūṭa collection, indicating that the *Vīradattaparipṛcchā* circulated as an individual text for a period of time.

i.5 *The Questions of the Householder Vīradatta* was cited as a scriptural authority by Indian Buddhist masters. The *Sūtrasamuccaya*, attributed to Nāgārjuna (ca. second–third centuries), cites the sūtra three times: once in its chapter on the rareness of great compassion and twice in its chapter on the rareness of really serious Dharma practice on the part of householders. Other Indian Buddhist commentators such as Bhāviveka (ca. 500–570), Kamalaśīla (ca. 740–95), and Atiśa (982–1054) cite the sūtra as a scriptural source for the immeasurable qualities of the resolve for awakening (*bodhicitta*). The fact that the verses from the sūtra on the resolve for awakening cited by these commentators are actually spoken by Vīradatta and his entourage of five hundred householders suggests that there was considerable latitude as to

what qualifies as the “word of the Buddha” (*buddhavacana*) and that this could include the speech of followers of the Buddha whom he had influenced and endorsed. Śāntideva’s *Śikṣāsamuccaya* also cites the sūtra several times as a scriptural authority, particularly in its chapter on the applications of mindfulness.<sup>11</sup> We can assume that *The Questions of the Householder Vīradatta* enjoyed some popularity in eighth- and ninth-century Tibet based on its inclusion among the 104 titles (no. 82) of Buddhist scriptures found in *Mahāvīyūtpatti* §65. The sūtra was also sporadically cited in later Tibetan commentaries and briefly analyzed by Pekar Sangpo (*pad dkar bzang po*, sixteenth century) in his overview of each sūtra preserved among the Tibetan Kangyurs.<sup>12</sup>

**The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra  
The Questions of the Householder Vīradatta**

1.

## The Translation

[F.194.a]

1.1 Homage to all the buddhas and bodhisattvas!

1.2 Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was staying in Prince Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍada's pleasure garden, in Śrāvastī together with a great monastic assembly of 1,250 monks. All were arhats whose contaminants had been exhausted. They were free from defilements and had attained mastery. Their minds were completely free, and their insight perfectly liberated. They were well-born great elephants, successful and accomplished. They had laid down their burdens and fulfilled their aims. They had eliminated the fetters of existence, and their minds were completely liberated through perfect knowledge. They had attained supreme perfection in mastering all mental states. Indeed, they were all this way—with the exception of one person, Venerable Ānanda. They were accompanied by five hundred bodhisattvas, all of whom had attained retention and meditative absorption.

1.3 At that time, in the great city of Śrāvastī there was a householder named Viradatta who had immense wealth, extensive assets, abundant capital and provisions, and multiple storehouses and treasuries of jewels and grain. He had many elephants, horses, camels, goats, and cows, and he also possessed many male and female slaves, employees, and day laborers. He also had a great quantity of jewels, gold, gems, pearls, lapis lazuli, [F.194.b] conch shells, crystal, coral, fine gold, and silver.

1.4 In this place, five hundred householders congregated and sat together. While assembled, they conversed: "Hey, friends! The appearance of a buddha is rarely met with. A human birth is rarely met with. The excellent freedoms are rarely met with. Faith in the teaching of the Tathāgata is rarely met with. A renunciate is rarely met with. Monkhood is rarely met with. One who strives earnestly is rarely met with. Some sentient beings have gratitude and understand deeds; they do not squander even small deeds, not to

mention extensive ones. Such people are rarely found. Even rarer to be found are those sentient beings who have conviction in the teachings of the Tathāgata. Still rarer to be found are those sentient beings who, based on their conviction in the teachings of the Tathāgata, earnestly practice them. Rarer yet to be found are those sentient beings who are adorned with the teaching of the Tathāgata. When liberation from saṃsāra is so rarely to be found, will we attain parinirvāṇa through the Śrāvaka Vehicle or the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle, or will we attain it through the unsurpassable Great Vehicle?" Thus, all those harmoniously assembled and seated together, who investigated things in this way considered that the best way to attain parinirvāṇa was not through the Śrāvaka Vehicle or the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle but through the unsurpassable Great Vehicle.

1.5 On this occasion, the householder Vīradatta, surrounded and closely attended by those five hundred householders, proceeded together from the great city of Śrāvastī and went to where the Blessed One was residing in Anāthapiṇḍada's pleasure garden in Prince Jeta's Grove. They prostrated to the feet of the Blessed One [F.195.a] and, having circumambulated the Blessed One three times, took their seats to one side. The Blessed One then posed the following question to the householder Vīradatta and the five hundred householders, although he already knew the answer: "Householders, why have you approached the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha?"

1.6 The householder Vīradatta and the five hundred householders arose from their seats, draped their robes over one shoulder, and knelt on their right knee, bowing with palms together. Vīradatta replied to the Blessed One as follows: "Blessed One, at one time I congregated and gathered together with five hundred householders, and at that time all of us who had assembled had the following conversation.

1.7 " 'Hey, friends! The appearance of a buddha is rarely met with. A human birth is rarely met with. The excellent freedoms are rarely met with. Faith in the teaching of the Tathāgata is rarely met with. A renunciate is rarely met with. Monkhood is rarely met with. One who strives earnestly is rarely met with. Some sentient beings are grateful and understand deeds; they do not squander even small deeds, not to mention extensive ones. Such people are rarely found. Even rarer to be found are those sentient beings who have conviction in the teachings of the Tathāgata. Still rarer to be found are those sentient beings who, based on their conviction in the teachings of the Tathāgata, earnestly practice them. Rarer yet to be found are those sentient beings who are adorned with the teaching of the Tathāgata. When liberation

from saṃsāra is so rarely to be found, will we attain parinirvāṇa through the Śrāvaka Vehicle or the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle, or will we attain it [F.195.b] through the unsurpassable Great Vehicle?’

1.8 “On that occasion, Blessed One, we all came to the following realization: we concluded that the best way to attain parinirvāṇa is not through the Śrāvaka Vehicle or the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle but through the unsurpassable Great Vehicle.

1.9 “Blessed One, we set off with this source of the Dharma and came straight to the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha. Blessed One, we are now asking how should a bodhisattva mahāsattva who is seeking to fully awaken to unsurpassable complete and perfect awakening train? How should one train in it, Sugata? How should one abide by it? How should one proceed with it?”<sup>13</sup>

1.10 The Blessed One then expressed his approval to the householder Vīradatta and the five hundred householders: “Householders, excellent, excellent! Householders, having set out for unsurpassable complete and perfect awakening in this way, it is good that you have approached the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha.

1.11 “Therefore, householders, please listen well and bear my words in mind, and I shall explain to you how a bodhisattva, a mahāsattva who is seeking to fully awaken to unsurpassable complete and perfect awakening should train in it, abide by it, and proceed with it.”<sup>14</sup>

1.12 “So it shall be, Blessed One,” answered the householder Vīradatta and the five hundred householders, and they began to listen to the Blessed One’s view.

1.13 The Blessed One then said to them,<sup>15</sup> “In this regard, householders, the bodhisattva mahāsattva who wishes to fully awaken to unsurpassable complete and perfect awakening [F.196.a] should cultivate the spirit of great compassion for all sentient beings. He should be respectful. He should stay close to them. He should cultivate them. He should do a lot for them.

1.14 “Householders, such a bodhisattva mahāsattva should not be attached to the body. He should not be attached to life. Likewise, he should not be attached to wealth, grain, house, wife, sons, or daughters. He should not be attached to food, drink, clothing, vehicles, bedding, flowers, incense, perfumes, ointments, or garlands. He should not be attached to possessions.

1.15 “Why is this? Householders, it is because sentient beings usually become attached to their body and life and thus commit evil deeds. By committing and accumulating this evil karma, they fall headlong into evil states and bad destinies and are reborn as hell beings.<sup>16</sup> Cultivate the spirit of great compassion for all sentient beings. When one is not attached to the body and not attached to life, one takes birth in the happy destinies.

- 1.16        “For these reasons, householders, a bodhisattva mahāsattva who wishes to fully awaken to unsurpassable complete and perfect awakening should cultivate the spirit of great compassion for all sentient beings. He should not be attached to the body. He should not be attached to life. Likewise, he should not be attached to wealth, grain, house, wife, sons, or daughters. He should not be attached to food, drink, clothing, vehicles, bedding, flowers, incense, perfumes, garlands, or ointments. He should not be attached to possessions.
- 1.17        “He should renounce extensively and fully, with total renunciation and without expectation for results. He should stand firm in the three aspects of morality, the vows of pure moral discipline. He should endure with indifference the negative deeds committed by any sentient being [F.196.b] and thus make the most of it. He should don the great armor of effort in disregarding body and life. He should have one-pointedness of mind with an undistracted mind. He should become skilled in analysis by means of insight that is free from the view of a self, a being, a life force, a soul, a man, a person, a human-born one, and a human being. Therefore, when giving gifts, he should give gifts while considering all sentient beings. He should guard moral discipline while considering all sentient beings. He should cultivate patience while considering all sentient beings. He should apply effort while considering all sentient beings. He should become established in concentration while considering all sentient beings. He should cultivate wisdom while considering all sentient beings. He should train in skillful means while considering all sentient beings.”
- 1.18        The householder Vīradatta and the five hundred householders then said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, if one perceives and dwells on the body and life, and likewise perceives and dwells on wealth, grain, house, wife, sons, or daughters, and likewise perceives and dwells on food, drink, clothing, vehicles, bedding, flowers, incense, perfumes, garlands, or ointments, and all one’s enjoyments, then, Blessed One, how should a bodhisattva examine these and thereby disregard the body? Tathāgata, how should he disregard life? Likewise, how should he disregard wealth, grain, house, wife, sons, and daughters? How should he disregard food, drink, clothing, vehicles, bedding, flowers, incense, perfumes, garlands, or ointments? How should he disregard all enjoyments?” [F.197.a]
- 1.19        The Blessed One said to the householder Vīradatta and the five hundred householders, “In this regard, householders, the bodhisattva mahāsattva should examine multiple aspects of this body. What are the multiple aspects? They consist in this body’s gradual development and gradual deterioration, its being a collection of minute particles, its hollow interior, its crookedness, and its contamination through the nine crevices and the hair pores. Like an

anthill, it serves as a den for poisonous snakes. As with a poisonous snake, people avoid dealing with it. Like the monkey of Ajātaśatru, it is hostile to friends. Like a wicked friend, it is the embodiment of deceit. Like a mass of foam, it is vacuous by nature. Like a water bubble, it breaks when grasped. Like a mirage, it is the embodiment of deception. Like a plantain, it lacks any core when split apart.

1.20 “Like an illusion, it is the embodiment of deceptiveness. Like a king, it is pampered a lot.<sup>17</sup> Like an enemy, it looks for opportunities. Like a thief, it cannot be trusted. Like an executioner, it is without any affection. Like a foe, it wants to be unbeneficial. Like a murderer, it hinders the life force of insight. Like hostile forces, it hinders qualities conducive to virtue. Like a ghost town, it is devoid of self. Like a potter’s vase, it will eventually disintegrate. Like a mire, it is filled with all sorts of filth. Like a mug of malt dregs, it is contaminated with impurities. Like the corpse of a snake, man, or dog, it has an unpleasant smell. Like a puddle of vomit, it is a source of filth. Like a wound, it is unbearable when disturbed. Like a thorn, it has the nature of piercing. Like an indignant ruler, it is difficult to appease. Like an old house, it needs attention and proper repairs. Like an old boat, it needs upkeep and proper repairs. Like a freshly made clay pot, it needs to be handled carefully. As with a mischievous friend, [F.197.b] one must always be on guard against it.

1.21 “Like a tree on a riverbank, it is unstable. Like the stream of a great river, it ends in the ocean of death. Like a house of drifters, it is the haven of all miseries. Like a hotel without guests,<sup>18</sup> it is unidentifiable. Like a jailer, it is susceptible to bribes. Like a town in savage border lands, it presents a constant threat. Like a city made of sand, it is always deteriorating. Like a fire, it is insatiable. Like the ocean, it is hard to fill up. Like a basket containing a viper, it has to be handled carefully. Like a young child, it needs constant protection. Like a broken vessel, it needs constant attention. Like a famine, it brings constant misfortune. Like poison food, it must always be purged. It is like a borrowed vessel because its purpose is temporary. It is like a cart because it bears a burden. One should apprehend the body intellectually as nothing more than these things.<sup>19</sup>

1.22 “Moreover, householders, a bodhisattva should examine this body according to the initial and final causes. The initial cause of the body is its genesis from the combination of the seminal fluid and blood of one’s father and mother. The final cause is the digestion of food and so forth. As soon as food is eaten by the mouthful, it goes to the site of phlegm. Having gone to the site of phlegm, it is worked on extensively by the phlegm and becomes very impure. Below there, it goes into the site of bile, and having reached the site of bile, it dissolves and becomes acidic. Then it goes to the site of winds.

Having dissolved and gone to the site of winds, the winds break down the waste part and make the refined part very pure. From the waste part comes ordure such as urine and vomit. From the refined part comes blood. From blood comes flesh. From flesh comes fat. From fat comes bone. From bone comes marrow. From marrow comes seminal fluid. From seminal fluid comes the body. In this way the initial and final causes are impure.

1.23 “Because the initial and final causes are impure, [F.198.a] bodhisattvas should consider the body to be impure. When viewing the body as impure, the bodhisattva should consider the following points: This so-called body is erected on the inside by three hundred and sixty bones, three hundred of which are connected like a house of rotten wood. It is interlaced with four hundred networks of veins, sheathed with five hundred handfuls of flesh, covered by six connected channels, filled with seven hundred nerves, held together by seven hundred tendons, and supported by sixteen ligaments. These are surrounded by two ligaments. The small intestines are made up of three and a half cubits of entrails. The intestines connected to the large intestine and stomach are coiled sixty times. There are openings made by twenty-five hundred subsidiary channels. There is a weakening by way of one hundred and seven vital essences, like a broken vessel. It is carpeted, like grass, with eighteen million hair pores. There are nine orifices including the five sense powers. It has seven sites. It is filled with filth. It has two handfuls of brains, two handfuls of marrow, six handfuls of fat, six handfuls of phlegm, and six handfuls of bile, all drawn by the winds. It is filled with liters<sup>20</sup> of blood and a handful of vomit. It is completely filled with all these things, like a jam-packed storehouse, and it is totally ensconced in seven layers of skin. It is nourished by six flavors. There is a burnt offering of ordure made into the bodily fire. The extremities leak continuously.

1.24 “All the parts of the body are unpleasant when observed. There are bad smells. Given that it has the nature of pus, who would have reverence for it? It is merely a borrowed vessel because its purpose is fleeting. One should apprehend with the mind of the Dharma that it is only, like a cart, for the purpose of bearing a burden. In this regard the following is said:

1.25 “Thus, concerning this impure body of the aggregates,  
Just as one with overweening pride who admires its form  
Exhibits a childish mind,  
So do the ignorant cling to and move around with this pot of vomit. [F.198.b]

1.26 “From its nose leaks a kind of mucous.  
From its mouth foul odors always rise.  
The eyes get clogged with dust, and people are subject to parasites.  
Who would have attachment to and admiration for that?

- 1.27 “ ‘As an analogy, though a fool holding charcoal  
Announces, “I will make this white,”  
He grows exhausted, as it will never become something white.  
Thus, the childish are subject to the arrogance of mistaken thought.
- 1.28 “ ‘In this way, a person who cares about hygiene  
And exclaims, “I will make this body clean,”  
May wash at a hundred bathing ghats,  
Yet it never becomes clean before it is destroyed by the power of the Lord of  
Death.’ ”<sup>21</sup>
- 1.29 Thereupon, the Blessed One said to the householder Vīradatta and the five hundred householders, “In this regard, householders, a bodhisattva mahāsattva who wishes to fully awaken to unsurpassable complete and perfect awakening should consider the body in forty-four aspects. What are these forty-four aspects? Householders, they are as follows: (1) A bodhisattva mahāsattva should consider the body as unpleasant, disagreeable by nature, and disgusting. (2) A bodhisattva should consider the body as contaminated with mucous and therefore having an offensive smell. (3) A bodhisattva should consider that body as disintegrating at the end and therefore without essence. (4) A bodhisattva should consider the body as stitched together with tendons and therefore having little strength. (5) A bodhisattva should consider the body as contaminated with filth and therefore impure. (6) The bodhisattva should consider the body unreal and therefore like an illusion. (7) A bodhisattva should consider the body as something that agitates unwise, childish, ordinary individuals. (8) A bodhisattva should consider the body as deteriorating and oozing through its nine orifices.<sup>22</sup> (9) A bodhisattva should consider the body as being ablaze with the fire of sensual desire. (10) A bodhisattva should consider the body as burning with the fire of hatred. [F.199.a] (11) A bodhisattva should consider the body as turning into flames with the fire of delusion. (12) A bodhisattva should consider the body as blinded by sensual desire, hatred, and bewilderment. (13) A bodhisattva should consider the body as enmeshed in the net of sensual desire and thrust into the net of craving. (14) A bodhisattva should consider the body as totally riddled with pores and thus a repository of pores. (15) A bodhisattva should consider the body as ravaged by four hundred and four diseases. (16) A bodhisattva should consider the body as a haven for 84,000 species of parasites. (17) A bodhisattva should consider the body as impermanent since it is of the nature of dying. (18) A bodhisattva should consider the body as insentient since it is deluded regarding phenomena. (19) A bodhisattva should consider the body as jar-like since it is gradually formed and eventually disintegrates.

(20) A bodhisattva should consider the body as destitute since it is rife with all sorts of painful afflictions. (21) A bodhisattva should consider the body as unreliable since it eventually grows old and dies. (22) A bodhisattva should consider the body as driven by deceitful and dishonest activities. (23) A bodhisattva should consider the body to be like the depths of the earth since it is hard to fill up. (24) A bodhisattva should consider the body to be like a mirror,<sup>23</sup> since one grows attached to pleasant and pleasurable forms. (25) A bodhisattva should consider the body as something that is unable to be satisfied by the five sense pleasures. (26) A bodhisattva should consider the body as overcome by attachment and anger. (27) A bodhisattva should consider the body as unstable due to experiencing reverence and abuse. (28) A bodhisattva should consider the body as other-conditioned since it arises as one thing after another like a stream of a river. (29) A bodhisattva should consider the body as a focus of mental intention due to thoughts that are focused on various inappropriate aspects. [F.199.b] (30) A bodhisattva should consider the body as ungrateful since it will end up arriving at the cremation ground. (31) A bodhisattva should consider the body as the food of wolves, jackals, dogs, and flesh-eating demons.<sup>24</sup> (32) A bodhisattva should consider the body as like a machine stitched together with bones and tendons.<sup>25</sup> (33) A bodhisattva should consider the body as unsuitable for viewing as it is full of crap, piss, spit, mucus, pus, and blood. (34) A bodhisattva should consider the body to be without independence since it has developed due to food and drink.<sup>26</sup> (35) A bodhisattva should consider the body as driven by aimless pursuits since it is impermanent and of the nature of deterioration. (36) A bodhisattva should consider the body as an enemy since it gives rise to many hostile forces. (37) A bodhisattva should consider the body to be like a killer since it experiences suffering again and again. (38) A bodhisattva should consider the body as a receptacle of suffering since it is tormented by the three types of suffering. What are the three? They are conditioned suffering, the suffering of change, and the suffering of suffering. (39) A bodhisattva should consider the body as being a mass of suffering since it is composed of the five aggregates. (40) A bodhisattva should consider the body to be selfless and ownerless since it arises from varied conditions. (41) A bodhisattva should consider the body to be lifeless since it is devoid of male and female. (42) A bodhisattva should consider the body to be empty of the aggregates, elements, and sense bases. (43) A bodhisattva should consider the body to be ephemeral like a dream, unreal like an illusion, [F.200.a] bewildering like a mirage, and deceptive like an echo. (44) A bodhisattva should consider the body to have a deceptive nature like an optical illusion. Householders, a bodhisattva mahāsattva should consider the body according to these forty-four aspects. A bodhisattva mahāsattva

who understands things in this way regarding the body relinquishes all longing for bodies, delighting in the body, taking the body as *mine*, craving for the body, relying on the body, and being attached to the body.

1.30 “Where life is concerned, he relinquishes all hankering for life, delighting in life, identifying with life as *mine*, craving for life, relying on life, and being attached to life. Likewise, he relinquishes all hankering for, delighting in, taking as *mine*, craving for, relying on, and being attached to wealth, grain, house, wife, sons, daughters, food, drink, clothing, vehicles, bedding, flowers, incense, perfumes, garlands, ointments, or any other possessions.

1.31 “Thus, he disregards body and life. Likewise, he disregards wealth, grain, house, wife, sons, daughters, food, drink, clothing, vehicles, bedding, flowers, incense, perfumes, garlands, and ointments; he quickly completes the six perfections. Householders, the bodhisattva mahāsattva who completes the six perfections will quickly become awakened to unsurpassable complete and perfect awakening.”

1.32 Then, on this occasion, in order to elaborate on the body in more detail, the Blessed One spoke the following verses: [F.200.b]

1.33 “This human existence is very difficult to find,  
So do not commit sins for the sake of the body.  
Do not expose yourself to the dangers of this body,  
Which is food for charnel-ground dwellers and jackals.

1.34 “Arousing craving for this cunning body,  
The childish are always deluded and go astray.  
Since this body is, in fact, ungrateful,  
One experiences sensations of suffering day and night.

1.35 “A machine always suffering with sickness and the like,  
This body is filled with vomit and mucous.  
Since it is always tormented with hunger and thirst,  
What wise person would arouse craving for the body?

1.36 “The body is insatiable like the depths of the earth.  
Though it is like a hostile executioner, it is pampered by the childish.  
Committing evil for the sake of the body,  
They thus experience the sensations of suffering.

1.37 “This body is not solid like a diamond,  
So do not commit evil for the sake of the body.  
Having understood death, quickly perform meritorious deeds!  
Likewise, arouse faith in the Buddha’s teaching.

- 1.38 “For as long as this body is honored  
With food, drink, ointments, and garments,  
If it steadily deteriorates despite attempts to make it endure,  
Why make such useless efforts for it?
- 1.39 “As you have found this appearance of the Sage,  
Extremely difficult to find for a hundred eons,  
And have aroused faith in the Buddha’s teachings,  
Do not descend to the lower realms!
- 1.40 “If one who has lived there for tens of millions of years  
Must still relinquish such attachments,  
Then need it be said that one who is unable to do so  
In one hundred years will not find happiness?
- 1.41 “Some uninhibited people say,  
‘Having found this human existence, which is so hard to find,  
We should have fun and enjoy this time of youth,  
And experience the joys of seeking wealth.’
- 1.42 “But how can there be any joy in seeking wealth  
When we experience such miseries for the sake of protecting it?  
Therefore, the wise should relinquish all attachment  
And find contentment in just the bare necessities.
- 1.43 “Enjoyments are like an illusion and like a dream.  
They deceive childish people. [F.201.a]  
They arise one moment and perish the next.  
What wise person would arouse craving for possessions?
- 1.44 “They are illusion-like and similar to watching an actor;  
They are like any of the myriad cities of the gandharvas.  
Such enjoyments deceive the childish.  
Thus, the childish wrongly seek them and go astray.
- 1.45 “When desired possessions pursued with a hundred miseries  
Bring incomparable harm to the body  
And may then be seized under the command of a king,  
What wise person would arouse joy for them?
- 1.46 “While remaining aloof from one’s children and spouse,  
One’s wrongly obtained wealth may be seized by a king.<sup>27</sup>  
Knowing evils such as this,  
Wise people do not arouse craving for the home.

- 1.47 “Ever covetous and seeking enjoyments,  
One is disrespectful toward one’s father and mother.  
One is not loving toward one’s children and spouse  
But nonetheless harbors constant attachment to them.
- 1.48 “A covetous woman who exclaims, ‘My enjoyments will decline,’  
Will never discover gratitude.  
A wise person does not confide in covetous people  
Who seek wealth through cunning and deception.
- 1.49 “Beings are fooled by deceitful, covetous women  
And delighted by words that express an intent to fulfill others’ wishes.  
Despite their confidence, one should not confide in them,  
Though they display affections like a child.<sup>28</sup>
- 1.50 “Covetous women who are active in the world  
May teach scholars about medicine and treatises,  
Thereby deceiving them with words like a prostitute,  
But at bottom they are unpleasant and very harsh.
- 1.51 “Covetous women are never friendly partners.  
They are without relatives and without close friends.  
They nonetheless put on a show for the sake of money.  
The wise should not confide in covetous people.
- 1.52 “Not committing any deed for the sake of covetous women and enjoyments,  
One fully engenders a mind that is utterly inexhaustible.  
Therefore, the wise gain perfect understanding  
And find contentment in even the barest of necessities.<sup>29</sup>
- 1.53 “Gold, pearls, jewels, and coral—  
For the virtuous, these things arise as if from bubbles.  
When they are not recognized as having the nature of illusion,  
People argue and fight for the sake of these things.
- 1.54 “The one who is called Maitreya will appear here. [F.201.b]  
And at the time of that tathāgata’s appearance,  
This earth will be totally filled with gold.  
Whence will he appear on that occasion?
- 1.55 “The appearance of the five sensual pleasures  
Is of the nature of deception, creating confusion and delusion.  
As an analogy, it is like desiring the water  
That seems to appear in a mirage, at midday in the hot season.

- 1.56 “Once this single eon has elapsed, this world,  
Which is of the nature of space, will turn into space.  
Even mountains will burn and be destroyed.  
Where do they come from? Where do they go?
- 1.57 “Fountains, ponds, lakes, and oceans  
Will dry up and cease to exist.  
Likewise, desired things hoarded are without essence.  
What wise person would take joy in them?
- 1.58 “Wise people with strength of mind  
Always examine the drawbacks of the home.  
When one has experienced the taste of these,  
Why would one not relinquish them?
- 1.59 “Through a mix of karma one seeks enjoyments  
And provides for children along with a spouse.  
But in times when one suffers intensely,  
Children and spouse provide no refuge.
- 1.60 “When one accepts doing various deeds,  
Children and spouses will be neglected.  
But when one experiences suffering all alone,  
They do not accept your predicament.
- 1.61 “Dejected people accept these things for the sake of happiness.  
In this way, they become disheartened with suffering.  
In this horror of the three worlds, there are no friends,  
And likewise no children, spouse, or relatives.
- 1.62 “The multitude of parents, siblings, children, spouses,  
Servants, wealth, and relatives  
Do not transmigrate because the Lord of Death has come;  
The childish transmigrate in the wake of their karmic deeds.
- 1.63 “People all depart in the wake of their karmic deeds.  
Through karmic deeds, they are transported to worldly abodes.  
Knowing the nature of the karma of this rebirth,  
The wise perform virtuous deeds.
- 1.64 “When they have gone to hell, they will have no refuge.  
Thus, the wise do not commit evil misdeeds  
For the sake of parents, siblings, loved ones, children,  
Kinsmen, and maternal relatives. [F.202.a]

- 1.65 “Apart from exhausting all that karma,  
A person is not liberated from the most frightful terrors.  
Therefore, those who are fearful of misdeeds  
Should concentrate and eliminate all misdeeds.
- 1.66 “In any case, apart from the deeds one performs,  
The Lord of Death, the horse of the Lord of Death,  
And the throng of friends, relatives, siblings,  
Parents, children, and spouse will offer no protection.
- 1.67 “You have attained a human body, but having attained it,  
You have not set about relinquishing misdeeds.  
Alas! You now experience unbearable suffering.  
This is but the ripening of nonvirtuous karmic action.
- 1.68 “Without having conviction in the ripening of karmic action,  
You create nonvirtue through your own mind.  
For this, one answers ‘I did not do anything at all.’  
Then the Dharma king Lord of Death states the following:
- 1.69 “ ‘The karma you yourself committed ripens within you.  
Having come here due to your own karma,  
Just as you previously committed undesirable deeds,  
So you now experience this suffering.
- 1.70 “ ‘At this time, your parents and your spouse  
Also do not escape the torments of suffering.  
You will be liberated by well-performed actions.  
Accordingly, you should completely abandon the home.
- 1.71 “ ‘Striving for the goal of peace with the wish to abandon  
The punishments of transgressions involving fetters and bludgeons,  
You should fear the home and thus abandon it!  
You should practice the Dharma, the teaching of one who is wise about the  
world.
- 1.72 “ ‘The home is the root of manifold miseries that blaze forth.  
Ever ablaze once it has arisen in the mind,  
It is terrifying like a pit of hot coals.  
What wise person would arouse craving for that?
- 1.73 “ ‘Home life brings the sorrows of children and spouse.  
The enjoyments of home life likewise bring sorrow.  
The drawbacks of these, moreover, are immeasurable.

In this regard, the home should be totally abandoned.

- 1.74 “ ‘The teachings of spiritual guides bring joy.  
Without needing to sow or plough, they cause happiness and satisfaction.  
The root of manifold miseries is the home.  
Joy for the fool, it is not enjoyable to the wise.
- 1.75 “ ‘This body of skin, ligaments and nerves, flesh, and bones [F.202.b]  
Creates the notion *my spouse*.  
Deluded, childish people develop attachment to it,  
Not knowing that the spouse is like an illusion.
- 1.76 “ ‘Knowing the drawbacks of the home,  
Those with insight thus abandon the joys they desire.  
Having affirmed the notion that Dharma is medicine,  
They swiftly leave the home without attachment.’ ”
- 1.77 At this point, the householder Vīradatta and the five hundred householders,  
having heard this Dharma discourse, attained the acceptance that  
phenomena are unborn. Having gained this acceptance, they were  
overjoyed and pleased. On that occasion, they spoke the following verses:
- 1.78 “Desiring the qualities of a buddha,  
We cultivate the resolve for awakening.<sup>30</sup>  
Hey! This discovery, this great discovery,  
Is the best of all discoveries!
- 1.79 “The resolve for awakening is joyful.  
Those who here cultivate this resolve,  
Which brings happiness to all sentient beings,  
Will live a good life.
- 1.80 “Whoever cultivates this resolve,  
Which benefits all sentient beings,  
Will be overjoyed when they see  
That all sentient beings are joyful.
- 1.81 “Those who delight in the resolve for awakening  
Will become illuminators of the world,  
With bodies like gold  
And fully adorned with the special marks.
- 1.82 “The resolve for awakening is a great resolve.  
It is the supreme happiness among all sentient beings.  
It is the most excellent of all qualities.

- It pacifies all illness.
- 1.83 “Sentient beings of little merit  
Do not wish for the resolve for awakening.  
They do not think of it in saṃsāra,  
And the resolve for awakening makes them weary.
- 1.84 “If the merits of the resolve for awakening  
Were to assume physical form,  
They would fill the whole expanse of space  
And exceed even that.<sup>31</sup>
- 1.85 “If someone were to fill with jewels  
As many buddha fields as there are grains of sand  
In the Ganges River,  
As an offering to the Protector of the World,
- 1.86 “This offering would be surpassed  
When someone with joined palms  
Directs their resolve toward awakening,  
Because that does not have a limit. [F.203.a]
- 1.87 “What is the resolve for awakening like?  
Transmitted by the exalted Seer,  
There is no other offering like it.  
There is nothing so magnificent.
- 1.88 “The best of medicines for being without illness,  
The resolve for awakening possesses all good qualities.  
It thoroughly quells all illnesses.  
It makes all sentient beings happy.
- 1.89 “Having witnessed the suffering of sentient beings  
Tormented by the three fires,  
The wise practice for immeasurable eons,  
Never becoming discouraged.
- 1.90 “Those who perform practices dedicated to awakening  
Are heroes comparable to the king of physicians.  
Protecting beings from suffering,  
They always abandon discouragement.
- 1.91 “These heroes seek the qualities of a buddha.  
They never give up that resolve  
Throughout all their rebirths in transmigration,

And they also teach this discipline.

- 1.92 “We who delight in this resolve  
Become the best of humans,  
Just like the Lion of the Śākya.  
We properly discover what is to be discovered.”
- 1.93 Then the Blessed One smiled. The nature of buddhas, of blessed ones, is such that when they smile, light of many colors appears from their mouth: blue, yellow, red, white, violet, crystal, and silver. These lights, after pervading the world systems without end and rising up to the worlds of Brahmā, filled the entire world with the radiance of the sun and moon. They then came back down and, having circumambulated the Blessed One three times, disappeared into the Blessed One’s head.
- 1.94 At this point, Venerable Ānanda arose from his seat and, placing his robe over one shoulder, knelt on his right knee. With palms pressed together in the direction the Blessed One, he spoke the following words to the Blessed One: [F.203.b] “Blessed One, since the thus-gone, worthy, completely awakened buddhas do not smile without a cause, without a reason, what is the cause for your smile? What is the reason?”
- 1.95 On this occasion, he requested an answer with these verses:
- 1.96 “If the leader, the supreme Victorious One,  
The Buddha, the protector, does not reveal his smile without cause,  
Why do you smile, Blessed One?  
I speak out of heartfelt kindness and with the intention to benefit the world.
- 1.97 “Why do you reveal this smile today?  
Please give us the supreme jewel of your superb advice,  
A treasury of wealth for the poor.  
Please quickly offer these eyes for the blind in the world.”
- 1.98 After Venerable Ānanda spoke these words, the Blessed One replied, “Ānanda, do you see, near the Tathāgata, these five hundred householders who have produced the resolve for unsurpassable, complete and perfect awakening?”  
“I see them, Blessed One,” he replied. “I see them, Tathāgata.”
- 1.99 Then the Blessed One said, “Ānanda, when these five hundred householders have heard the Dharma discourses, they will attain the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. Ānanda, these householders will all perform outstanding deeds for the victorious ones of the past, cultivate the roots of virtue, and pay homage to the many billions of buddhas. When these householders have transmigrated from here after dying, they will never fall

into lower destinies, and having later experienced happiness among gods and humans, they will eventually revere, honor, serve, and worship the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Maitreya, delighting and never displeasing him. [F.204.a] They will also revere, honor, serve, and worship all the buddhas, blessed ones, of this fortunate eon, delighting and never displeasing them. They will listen to the Dharma from those buddhas, those blessed ones, and having heard it, they will retain it, master it, and teach it extensively to others. After twenty-five eons, they will awaken to unsurpassable, complete and perfect awakening in various buddha fields, and they will equally appear in the world bearing the name thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Padmaśrīgarbha.”

1.100 At this point, the venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One, “Ah, how wonderful is this extensive Dharma discourse, Blessed One! It is so wonderful, Sugata. Blessed One, what is the name of this Dharma discourse? How should we remember it?”

1.101 The Blessed One replied, “In this regard, Ānanda, this Dharma discourse is called *The Teaching on the Stages of Yoga for Bodhisattvas*,<sup>32</sup> and this is how it should be remembered. It should also be remembered as *The Questions of Vīradatta*.

1.102 When the Blessed One had uttered these words, the venerable Ānanda, the monks, the bodhisattvas, the five hundred householders, and the world with its gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas all rejoiced and praised what had been proclaimed by the Blessed One.

1.103 *This concludes The Questions of the Householder Vīradatta, the twenty-eighth of the one hundred thousand sections of the Dharma discourse known as The Noble Great Heap of Jewels.*

c.

## Colophon

c.1 Translated, edited, and finalized according to the new terminological register by the Indian preceptors Jinamitra and Dānaśīla, and the chief editor-translator Bandé Yeshé Dé. [F.204.b]

n.

## NOTES

- n.1 Paul Harrison, email communication, September 16, 2019.
- n.2 Information gathered from *Resources for Kanjur and Tanjur Studies* (<http://www.rkts.org/>), Universität Wien.
- n.3 The Kangyur editions consulted for this translation were the Degé, Dolpo, Phukdrak, Hemis, Lithang, Phukthar, and Ulanbatar.
- n.4 Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, 31.
- n.5 See Phangthangma, 15.
- n.6 Schaeffer and van der Kuijp 2009, 121.
- n.7 Nishioka 1980, 70, §155.
- n.8 Still, the sūtra is usually listed as the twenty-eighth text of the Ratnakūṭa collection in such Kangyurs as Degé and Stok Palace. As noted in studies by Lalou and Nattier, the sequence and arrangement of texts was not firmly set as the collection came to be developed in the Tibetan region at the beginning of the ninth century (see Lalou 1927 and Nattier 2003, 31–36). The Dunhuang and Hemis manuscripts do list the sūtra as the thirty-second chapter of the Ratnakūṭa, as opposed to all other extant Kangyur editions. Also, the Dunhuang Tibetan lists the work as a chapter (*le'u*) rather than an “assembly” (Tib. *'dus pa*, Ch. *hui* 會), which may reflect that this Dunhuang Tibetan version of the sūtra was part of a collection that was not dependent on the Chinese version of the Ratnakūṭa for its sequence and arrangement.
- n.9 Demiéville 1954, 397; Eltschinger 2018, 597.
- n.10 Eimer 2007.
- n.11 See Goodman 2016 and Rospatt 1995.

- n.12 Pekar Sangpo 2006, 88–89.
- n.13 Cf. *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, Tib. folio 121.b *bcom ldan 'das byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa la yang dag par zhugs pas ji ltar gnas par bgyi/ ji ltar bsgrub par bgyi/ ji ltar sems rab tu gzung bar bgyi/*; Skt. (*Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* in Lévi 1983, folios 27.a.4–6 Harrison and Watanabe (2006), 113, 9–10): *kathaṃ bhagavan bodhisattvayānasamprasthiteṇa sthātavayam/ kathaṃ pratipattavayam/ kathaṃ cittam pratigrhītavayam/*. Cf. Harrison 2006, 142.19–20.
- n.14 Formulaic, cf. *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* (see Robert A. F. Thurman, trans., *The Teaching of Vimalakīrti*, Toh 176, 1.32 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh176.html#UT22084-060-005-71>)). See also *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* in Lévi 1983, folios 5.a.5–7 Lamotte 1976, 15,4–6: *evam ukte bhagavān ratnākarāya licchavikumārāya sādhu karam adāt: sādhu sādhu kumāra/ sādhu khalu punas toaṃ kumāra yas toaṃ buddhakṣetrapariśuddhim ārabhya tathāgataṃ paripṛcchasi/ tena hi kumāra śrṇu sādhu ca suṣṭhu ca manasikuru/ bhāṣiṣye 'haṃ te yathā bodhisattvānāṃ buddhakṣetrapariśuddhim ārabhya/*.
- n.15 *bcom ldan 'das/ de bzhin no zhes gsol te/ khyim bdag dpal sbyin dang / khyim bdag lnga brgya tsam de dag bcom ldan 'das kyi ltar nyan pa dang / bcom ldan 'das kyis de dag la 'di skad ces bka' stsal to/*. Formulaic, cf. *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* (see Robert A. F. Thurman, trans., *The Teaching of Vimalakīrti*, Toh 176, 1.32 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh176.html#UT22084-060-005-71>)): *bcom ldan 'das legs so zhes gsol nas lid tsa bI gzhon nu dkon mchog 'byung gnas dang / lid tsa bI gzhon nu lnga brgya tsam po de dag bcom ldan 'das kyi ltar nyan pa dang / bcom ldan 'das kyis de dag la 'di skad ces bka' stsal to /*. See also *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* in Lévi 1983, folios 5.a.7–b.1 Toh 4020 Lamotte 1976, 15,6–15: *sādhu bhagavan iti ratnākarō liccharikumāras tāni ca pañcamātrāṇi licchavikumārasātāni bhagavataḥ pratyaśrauṣuḥ / bhagavāṃs teṣāṃ etad avocat.*
- n.16 Tib. *ngan song ngan 'gro log par ltung ba sems can dmyal ba rnams su skye*. Skt. *apāyadurgativinipātaṃ narakeṣūpapadyante /*. This is a formulaic stock phrase that also occurs in the Vinaya and Perfect Wisdom literature. Cf. *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Toh 1-17; *Ekottaragama*; *Daśabalasūtra*; *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, Toh 9 (Padmakara Translation Group 2023 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh9>) and Kimura 2007).
- n.17 “Pampered a lot” is a tentative for *bgo blag mang ba* (Degé) and *bsgro blag mang ba* (Stok).
- n.18 Jonathan A. Silk has discussed the variant meanings in the underlying Sanskrit. See Silk 2007: 300–4, especially 302–3, note 20. See Silk 2007, 300–304, especially 302–3, note 20.

- n.19 This is a paraphrase of 'ba' zhig blos gzung bar bya'o ("should be intellectually grasped as only...") that concludes the series of analogies.
- n.20 The Tibetan is *bre* (Skt. *prastha*), which equals about a liter. We have taken this as plural because the average adult human body contains about five liters of blood.
- n.21 Sanskrit in Śāntideva's *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, chapter 13 (*Smṛtyupasthānapariccheda*), Toh 3940, Bendall 1971, 231; Cf. Goodman 2016, 224–25: *evaṃ vidhaṃ kāyam acaukṣarāsiṃ/ rūpābhimānī bahu manyate yaḥ/ prajñāyamānaḥ sa hi bālabuddhiḥ/ viṣṭhāghaṭaṃ yāti vahan vicetāḥ// [1] pūyaparakāraṃ vahate asya nāsā/ vaktraṃ kugandhaṃ vahate sadā ca/ cikkās tathākṣṇoḥ krimivac ca jantoh/ kas tatra rāgo bahumānatā vā// [2] aṅgāram ādāya yathā hi bālo/ ghṛṣyed ayaṃ yāsyati śuklabhāvam/ yāti kṣayaṃ na eva tu śuklabhāvam bālasya buddhir vitathābhimānā// [3] evaṃ hi yaḥ cauḥsamatir manuṣyaḥ cauḥsaṃ kariṣye aham idaṃ śarīram/ sūdvartitaṃ tīrthaśatābhisiktaṃ yāti kṣayaṃ mṛtyuvaśād acaukṣam// [4].*
- n.22 The eighth aspect corresponds to the Sanskrit in Śāntideva's *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, chapter 13 (*Smṛtyupasthānapariccheda*), Toh 3940, Bendall 1971, 231: *tathā prabhaṅguraḥ / prasravan bodhisatvena kāyaḥ pratyavekṣitavyo nava vraṇa-mukhair yāvāt /*.
- n.23 Here we have followed the Narthang and Lhasa editions, which have *me long* ("mirror"). The other editions compared in the Pedurma comparative edition, in addition to the Stok Palace edition, have *me* ("fire").
- n.24 The thirty-first aspect corresponds to Sanskrit in Śāntideva's *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, chapter 13 (*Smṛtyupasthānapariccheda*), Toh 3940, Bendall 1971, 231: *parabhojano bodhisatvena kāyaḥ pratyavekṣitavyaḥ / vṛkaśṛgālaśvapiśitāśinām /*.
- n.25 The thirty-second aspect corresponds to Sanskrit in Śāntideva's *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, chapter 13 (*Smṛtyupasthānapariccheda*), Toh 3940, Bendall 1971, 231: *yanthropamo bodhisatvena kāyaḥ pratyavekṣitavyaḥ / asthīsnāyuyyantra-saṅghātavinibaddhaḥ /*.
- n.26 The thirty-fourth aspect corresponds to Sanskrit in Śāntideva's *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, chapter 13 (*Smṛtyupasthānapariccheda*), Toh 3940, Bendall 1971, 231: *asvādhiṅo bodhisatvena kāyaḥ pratyavekṣitavyaḥ annapānasambhūta/*.
- n.27 This is a tentative rendering of the following two lines, in which the grammatical subject of the first line is ambiguous: *bud dang chung ma'i dbang du mi 'gyur bar/ rgyal pos nyes pa byung ba'i nor phrogs pa//*.

- n.28 This last line is a tentative translation of 'on kyang bu 'drar sdug par ston par byed.
- n.29 See Silk 1994, 377; *Mahāvvyutpatti* 2216: (na) itaretareṇa santuṣṭiḥ = ngan ngon gyis chog (mi) shes pa. *Mahāvvyutpatti* 2701 ngan ngon = avaraka or avavaraka (“humble, poor”).
- n.30 *sems bskyed* is an abbreviation of *byang chub sems bskyed* (*bodhicittotpāda*, “rousing the mind set on awakening”) and is translated here accordingly.
- n.31 The Sanskrit of this and the following two verses (7, 8, and 9) are found in Kamalaśīla’s *Bhāvanākrama* (Namdol 1984, 17) Toh 3908: *bodhicittād vai yat puṇyaṃ tacca rūpi bhaved yadi / ākāśadhātuṃ sampūrya bhūyaścottaritaṃ bhavet // [7] gaṅgābālukaśaṅkhyāni buddhakṣetrāṇi yo naraḥ / dadyād ratnaprapūrṇāni lokanāthebhya eva hi // [8] yaścaikaḥ prāñjalirbhūtvā cittaṃ bodhāya nāmati / iyaṃ viśiṣyate pūjā yasyā anto na vidyate // [9]*. Verse 7 is cited without identification by Bhāviveka in his *Madhyamakahṛdayakārikā* (Eckel 2008, 173) Toh 3855. All three verses are cited in Atiśa’s *Bodhipathapradīpa* (verses 15–17, Toh 3947; Apple 2019, 183) and are alluded to in Atiśa’s *Stages of the Path to Awakening* (*Bodhipathakrama*; Apple 2019, 217).
- n.32 That is, teachings on the *bodhisattvayogācārabhūmi*. Demiéville, 1954, p. 396 has discussed the importance of this alternative title as an antecedent for *yogācārabhūmi*.

b.

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## GLOSSARY

## · Types of attestation for Sanskrit names and terms ·

|    |   |
|----|---|
| AS | <i>Attested in source text</i><br>This term is attested in the Sanskrit manuscript used as a source for this translation.   |
| AO | <i>Attested in other text</i><br>This term is attested in other Sanskrit manuscripts of the Kangyur or Tengyur.   |
| AD | <i>Attested in dictionary</i><br>This term is attested in Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries.  |
| AA | <i>Approximate attestation</i><br>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><br>This term is a reconstruction based on the Tibetan phonetic rendering of the term.   |
| RS | <i>Reconstruction from Tibetan semantic rendering</i><br>This term is a reconstruction based on the semantics of the Tibetan translation.   |
| SU | <i>Source Unspecified</i><br>This term has been supplied from an unspecified source, which most often is a widely trusted dictionary.   |

g.1 acceptance that phenomena are unborn

*mi skye ba'i chos la bzod pa*

མི་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཚོས་ལ་བཟོད་པ།

*anutpattikadharmakṣānti*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The bodhisattvas' realization that all phenomena are unproduced and empty. It sustains them on the difficult path of benefiting all beings so that they do not succumb to the goal of personal liberation. Different sources link this realization to the first or eighth bodhisattva level (*bhūmi*).

g.2 aggregate

*phung po*

ཕུང་པོ།

*skandha*

The five aggregates of form, sensation, perception, formation, and consciousness. On the individual level the five aggregates refer to the basis upon which the mistaken idea of a self is projected.

g.3 Ajātaśatru

*ma skyes dgra*

མ་སྐྱེས་དགའ།

*ajātaśatru*

King of Magadha and son of king Bimbisāra. He reigned during the last ten years of the Buddha's life and about twenty years after. He overthrew his father and through invasion expanded the kingdom of Magadha. After his father's death, he became tormented with guilt and regret, converted to Buddhism, and supported the Buddha and his community.

g.4 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.5 Anāthapiṇḍada’s pleasure garden

*mgon med zas sbyin gyi kun dga’ ra ba*

མགོན་མེད་ཟས་སྤྱིན་གྱི་ཀུན་དགའ་ར་བ།

*anāthapiṇḍadārāma*

An important early Buddhist site located outside Śrāvastī. Anāthapiṇḍada, a wealthy patron of the Buddha, purchased the park at great cost, purportedly covering the ground with gold, and he donated it to the saṅgha. It was there that the Buddha spent a number of rainy seasons and gave discourses that were later recorded as sūtras. It was also the site for one of the first Buddhist monasteries.

g.6 arhat

*dgra bcom pa*

དགའ་བཅོམ་པ།

*arhat*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

According to Buddhist tradition, one who is worthy of worship (*pūjām arhati*), or one who has conquered the enemies, the mental afflictions or emotions (*kleśa-ari-hata-vat*), and reached liberation from the cycle of rebirth and suffering. It is the fourth and highest of the four fruits attainable by śrāvakas. Also used as an epithet of the Buddha.

*In this text:*

Also rendered here as “worthy.”

g.7 blessed one

*bcom ldan ’das*

བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས།

*bhagavat*

The Sanskrit is literally “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 māras], possesses [the qualities of enlightenment], and has transcended [saṃsāra, or both saṃsāra and nirvāṇa].”

g.8 bodhisattva mahāsattva

*byang chub sems dpa' sems dpa' chen po*

བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའ་སེམས་དཔའ་ཚེན་པོ།

*bodhisattvamahāsattva*

A bodhisattva mahāsattva is a bodhisattva who has completed the seventh bhūmi and is on the eighth, ninth, or tenth bhūmi prior to becoming a buddha.

g.9 Brahmā

*tshangs pa*

ཚངས་པ།

*brahmā*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

A high-ranking deity presiding over a divine world where other beings consider him the creator; he is also considered to be the lord of the Sahā world (our universe). Though not considered a creator god in Buddhism, Brahmā occupies an important place as one of two gods (the other being Indra/Śakra) said to have first exhorted the Buddha Śākyamuni to teach the Dharma. The particular heavens found in the form realm over which Brahmā rules are often some of the most sought-after realms of higher rebirth in Buddhist literature. Since there are many universes or world systems, there are also multiple Brahmās presiding over them. His most frequent epithets are “Lord of Sahā World” (*Sahāṃpati*) and Great Brahmā (*Mahābrahmā*).

g.10 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, mind and mental objects, to which the six consciousnesses are added).

g.11 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.12 Great Vehicle

*theg pa chen po*

ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ།

*mahāyāna*

The Great Vehicle of Buddhism is called “great” because it aims with altruistic intent to transport all living beings to the goal of liberation. It is distinguished from the Hīnayāna (Lesser Vehicle), including the Śrāvakayāna (Śrāvaka Vehicle) and Pratyekabuddhayāna (Solitary Buddha Vehicle), which allegedly aims to transport only its followers to their own personal liberation.

g.13 householder

*khyim bdag*

ཁྱིམ་བདག

*gṛhapati*

The term “householder” is usually used for wealthy lay patrons of the Buddhist community. It also refers to a subdivision of the vaiśya (mercantile) class of traditional Indian society, comprising businessmen, merchants, landowners, and so on.

g.14 life force

*srog*

སྲོག

*jīva*

g.15 Lord of Death

*'chi bdag · gshin rje*

འཛིན་བདག་ · གཤིན་རྗེ།

*mṛtyu · yama*

Another name for King Yama (Skt. *yamarāja*; Tib. *gshin rje rgyal po*), the deity who judges the dead and rules over the hell realms of the underworld.

g.16 machine

*'khrul 'khor*

འཇུལ་འཁོར།

*yantra*

This term can refer to a magical diagram or any mechanical tool or device (such as a siege weapon). In *The Questions of the Householder Vīradatta* it is used metaphorically in the latter sense to refer to the human body as a machine.

g.17 Maitreya

*byams pa*

བྱམས་པ།

*maitreya*

The bodhisattva who became Śākyamuni's regent and is prophesied to be the next buddha, the fifth buddha in the current eon. In early Buddhism he appears as the human disciple sent by his teacher to pay his respects to the Buddha, who gives him the gift of a robe and prophesies that he will be the next buddha, and that his companion Ajita will be the next cakravartin. As a bodhisattva, he has both these names. In *Karuṇāpūṇḍarikasūtra* (Toh 112), the Buddha Ratnagarbha prophesies that Vimalavaiśayana, the fourth of the thousand young Vedapāṭhaka pupils of Samudrareṇu, will be the Buddha Maitreya.

g.18 meditative absorption

*ting nge 'dzin*

ཉིང་ངེ་འཛིན།

*samādhi*

A central term in Buddhism for states of deep concentration. It refers more specifically to contemplations involving one-pointed concentration that foster wholesome states of mind. It can refer more broadly to teachings (or sets of teachings) that lead the listener to states of absorption.

g.19 monkhood

*dge slong gi dngos po*

དགེ་སློང་གི་དངོས་པོ།

*bhikṣubhāva*

According to certain usage, a phrase used in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya in praise of monks fully committed to the monastic ideal, as opposed especially to those who merely wear the robes.

g.20 one who has attained mastery

*dbang dang ldan par gyur pa*

དབང་དང་ལྷན་པར་གྱུར་པ།

*vaśībhūta*

g.21 Padmaśrīgarbha

*pad ma'i dpal gyi snying po*

པད་མའི་དཔལ་གྱི་སྙིང་པོ།

*padmaśrīgarbha*

According to the Buddha's prophecy at the conclusion of *The Questions of the Householder Vīradatta*, this is the name that will be given to each of the five hundred householders when they become buddhas.

g.22 parinirvāṇa

*yongs su mya ngan las 'das pa*

ཡོངས་སུ་སྐྱུ་རྣམས་འདས་པ།

*parinirvāṇa*

The final or complete nirvāṇa, which occurs when an arhat or a buddha passes away. It implies the non-residual nirvāṇa where the aggregates have also been consumed within emptiness.

g.23 Pratyekabuddha Vehicle

*rang rgyal gyi theg pa*

རང་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཐེག་པ།

*pratyekabuddhayāna*

The vehicle comprising the teaching of the pratyekabuddhas, literally “solitary enlightened ones” or “buddhas on their own.” The pratyekabuddhas are typically defined as those who have attained liberation but do not teach the path to liberation to others. Pratyekabuddhas are said to appear in universes and times in which there is no fully enlightened buddha who has rediscovered the path and taught it to others.

g.24 Prince Jeta's Grove

*rgyal bu rgyal byed kyi tshal*

ཀླུ་བུ་ཀླུ་བྱེད་ཀྱི་ཚལ།

*jetavana*

A grove that was bought by the Buddha's wealthy follower and supporter Anāthapiṇḍada from a prince named Jeta and donated to the Buddha and his saṅgha.

g.25 renunciate

*rab tu byung ba*

རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་བ།

*pravrajita*

The Tibetan literally means “to go forth” or “one who has gone forth.” Refers to who one has renounce settled, household life (“gone forth from home to homelessness”) to become a monk or wandering spiritual practitioner.

g.26 resolve for awakening

*byang chub sems*

བྱང་ལྔུབ་སེམས།

*bodhicitta*

The intention to reach unsurpassed, completely perfect awakening (Skt. *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*) in order to liberate all beings from suffering.

g.27 retention

*gzungs*

གཟུངས།

*dhāraṇī*

The term *dhāraṇī*—in some sūtras a mnemonic formula and also the ability of realized beings to retain ( $\sqrt{dhr}$ ) in their transmudane memory any teachings—refers, in its most general use, to *dhāraṇīs* as understood in the context of the *Dhāraṇī* genre and Mahāyāna Buddhism. Such *dhāraṇīs* are divinely revealed prayer formulae that are dedicated to a particular deity and typically include homage, praise, supplication, exhortation to act, and, most importantly, the heart mantra or mantras of the deity. The specific meaning of “retention” is also present in this inasmuch as *dhāraṇīs*, once obtained, are never lost but stay with the person who obtained them. They function as doors (*dhāraṇīdvāra*) or access points (*dhāraṇīmukha*) to infinite qualities of buddhahood. Even shorter mantras, when they are regarded as functioning in this way, can be designated as *dhāraṇī*.

g.28 seer

*drang srong*

དང་སྲོང་།

*ṛṣi*

Indian sage, often a wandering ascetic or hermit. “Great Seer” (*maharṣi, drang srong chen po*) is often used as an epithet of the Buddha.

g.29 sense base

*skye mched*

སྐྱེ་མཚན།

*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, mind and mental objects).

g.30 six perfections

*pha rol tu phyin pa drug*

ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་དུག

*ṣaṭpāramitā*

The trainings of the bodhisattva path: generosity (*dāna, byin pa*), discipline (*śīla, tshul khrims*), patience or acceptance (*kṣānti, bzod pa*), diligence or effort (*vīrya, brtson 'grus*), meditative concentration (*dhyāna, bsam gtan*), and insight (*prajñā, shes rab*).

g.31 skillful means

*thabs la mkhas pa*

ཐབས་ལ་མཁས་པ།

*upāyakauśalya*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The concept of skillful or expedient means is central to the understanding of the Buddha’s enlightened deeds and the many scriptures that are revealed contingent to the needs, interests, and mental dispositions of specific types of individuals. It is, therefore, equated with compassion and the form body of the buddhas, the rūpakāya.

According to the Great Vehicle, training in skillful means collectively denotes the first five of the six perfections when integrated with wisdom, the sixth transcendent perfection. It is therefore paired with wisdom (*prajñā*),

forming the two indispensable aspects of the path. It is also the seventh of the ten perfections. (*Provisional 84000 definition. New definition forthcoming.*)

g.32 Śrāvaka Vehicle

*nyan thos kyi theg pa*

ཉན་ཐོས་ཀྱི་ཐེག་པ།

*śrāvakayāna*

The vehicle comprising the teaching of the śrāvakas, those disciples of the Buddha who aspire to attain the state of an arhat by seeking self-liberation. The śrāvakas are typically defined as “those who hear the teaching from the Buddha and make it heard by others.”

g.33 Śrāvastī

*mnyan yod*

མཉན་ཡོད།

*śrāvastī*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

During the life of the Buddha, Śrāvastī was the capital city of the powerful kingdom of Kośala, ruled by King Prasenajit, who became a follower and patron of the Buddha. It was also the hometown of Anāthapiṇḍada, the wealthy patron who first invited the Buddha there, and then offered him a park known as Jetavana, Prince Jeta’s Grove, which became one of the first Buddhist monasteries. The Buddha is said to have spent about twenty-five rainy seasons with his disciples in Śrāvastī, thus it is named as the setting of numerous events and teachings. It is located in present-day Uttar Pradesh in northern India.

g.34 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”); he has gone “without any remainder” as in the expression *su-pūrṇa-ghaṭa* (“a pot that is

completely full"). According to Buddhaghōṣa, 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*).

g.35 tathāgata

*de bzhin gshegs pa*

དེ་སྟོན་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 also often used as a specific epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

*In this text:*

Also rendered here as “thus-gone.”

g.36 three aspects of morality

*tshul khrims rnam pa gsum*

ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་རྣམ་པ་གསུམ།

*trividham śīlam*

The morality of restraint (*saṃvara*), the morality that gathers wholesome qualities (*kuśaladharmasaṃgrāha*), and the morality that works for the benefit of beings (*sattvārthakriyā*).

g.37 three worlds

*srid gsum*

སྟོང་གསུམ།

*tribhava*

This can refer to the underworlds, the earth, and the heavens, or it can be synonymous with the three realms of desire, form, and formlessness.

g.38 thus-gone  
*de bzhin gshegs pa*  
དེ་བཞིན་གསེགས་པ།  
*tathāgata*  
See “tathāgata.”

g.39 Vīradatta  
*dpas byin · dpa' sbyin*  
དཔས་བྱིན། · དཔའ་སྤྱིན།  
*vīradatta*

A wealthy householder in Śrāvastī, presumably a bodhisattva, who is the main interlocutor of the Buddha in *The Questions of the Householder Vīradatta*.

g.40 worthy  
*dgra bcom pa*  
དགྲ་བཅོམ་པ།  
*arhat*  
See “arhat.”