The Sūtra of the Inquiry of Jayamati

Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra
The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra “The Inquiry of Jayamati”

Āryajayamatipariprcchānāmamahāyānasūtra
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SUMMARY

s.1 The sūtra is introduced with the Buddha residing in Anāthapiṇḍada’s grove in Jeta Wood in Śrāvastī together with a great assembly of monks and a great multitude of bodhisatvas. The Buddha then addresses the bodhisatva Jayamati, instructs him on nineteen moral prescriptions, and indicates the corresponding effects of practicing these prescriptions when they are cultivated.
Translation by the University of Calgary Buddhist Studies team. This sūtra was introduced and translated by James B. Apple.

This translation has been completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.
INTRODUCTION

At first glance, the *Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra* ("The Sūtra of the Inquiry of Jayamati") appears to be a short Mahāyāna sūtra preserved in the Tibetan Kangyurs,\(^1\) as well as in a recently published Sanskrit manuscript.\(^2\) However, despite appearances, the *Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra* in fact has an intertextual relationship, previously unrecognized, as part of the *Śūraṃgama-samādhisūtra* ("The Concentration of Heroic Progress") (Apple 2015).

The Sanskrit version of the *Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra* is preserved as the eighth among twenty sūtras contained in a unique, but incomplete, manuscript collection recovered from the Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet. The Sanskrit edition is divided into three paragraphs with section numbers. We have retained the section numbers in the following translation of the Tibetan version. The Tibetan version of the *Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra* exists in twelve available Tibetan exemplars that date initially from the late eighth to mid-ninth century, beginning with the Dunhuang IOL Tib J 75 exemplar, up through the vulgate editions of handwritten and printed Kangyur versions which date from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries.

The *Inquiry of Jayamati* is listed in two early ninth century Tibetan catalogs, the Lhenkarma (lhan kar ma),\(^3\) and the Phangthangma (’phang thang ma),\(^4\) as the *Jayamatiparipṛcchā* (rgyal ba’i blo gros kyis zhus pa) in eleven ślokas. The late thirteenth century catalog of the Tibetan Kadampa master Darma Gyaltsen (dar ma rgyal mtshan, 1227-1305), commonly known as Chomden Reltri (bcom ldan ral gri), lists the sūtra as the *Jayamatiparipṛcchā* (rgyal ba’i blo gros kyis zhus pa) in eleven ślokas.\(^5\) A listing of texts appended to the *History of Buddhism in India and its Spread to Tibet* by Butön Rinchen Drup (bu ston rin chen grub, 1290-1364) also records the work as the *Jayamatiparipṛcchā* (rgyal ba’i blo gros kyis zhus pa) in eleven ślokas.\(^6\) These catalog lists match the Tibetan title of the
sūtra that is found in a marginal note above the first line of the Sanskrit manuscript of the Jayamatiparipṛcchā as ‘phags pa rgyal ba’i blo gros kyis zhūs pa’i mdo ste bṛgyad pa rdzogs so?.

However, among vulgate Kangyurs, the Tshalpa (tshal pa) editions of Cone (C), Degé (D), Jangsatham (J), Peking (Q), the independent Kangyurs of Phug brag (F, F2), and the Gondhya (Go) proto-Kangyur give the title as The Mahāyāna Sūtra “Jayamati” (Jayamatināmamahāyānasūtra, rgyal ba’i blo gros zhes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo), while only the Kangyurs of the Thempangma (thems spang ma) line of London (L) and Stok Palace (S), as well as the mixed Kangyur of Narthang (N), give the title, in Tibetan at least, as ‘phags pa rgyal ba’i blo gros kyis zhūs pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo, (The Mahāyāna Sūtra “The Inquiry of Jayamati”). Although this should translate the Sanskrit Jayamatiparipṛcchānāmamahāyānasūtra, these Kangyurs, too, use the Sanskrit title Jayamatināmamahāyānasūtra. None of the available Tibetan editions have a colophon that lists the translators of the sūtra.

Analysis of the Sanskrit and Tibetan versions indicate that they preserve different nidāṇa or prologues. The Sanskrit version has the Bhagavān residing at Vulture’s Peak in Rājagrha with a great company of 1,250 monks, while the Tibetan version has the Bhagavān residing at the grove of Anāthapiṇḍada in Jeta Wood in Śrāvastī together with a great assembly of monks and a great multitude of bodhisatvas. Vinita’s study also notes that the conclusions of the Sanskrit and Tibetan versions differ. These differences between the Sanskrit and Tibetan versions of the introductory settings and formulaic conclusions may well indicate that this brief sūtra was redacted in a manner similar to the Mūlasarvāstivāda rules on “how to make up a sūtra.” This is based on the fact that all Tibetan versions of the sūtra give Śrāvastī as the setting, this being the favored location for a redacted text among the Mūlasarvāstivāda according to Gregory Schopen’s recent analysis.

The other immediately apparent difference in content between the Sanskrit and Tibetan versions is that the edited Tibetan contains nineteen prescriptions rather than the fourteen in the Sanskrit. In the following translation, the third and fourth prescriptions in the Tibetan are in inverse order compared with the Sanskrit. Notably, the eighth prescription in the Tibetan version discusses knowledge, while the Sanskrit version has meditative absorption. Classical philological and phylogenetic textual analysis of the available Tibetan exemplars of the Jayamatiparipṛcchā indicates there are four lines of textual relations grouped within the (I) Tshalpa (C, D, J, N, Q, Y) line, (II) Thempangma (L, S) line, (III) Dunhuang (M) and Phug brag (F, F2) manuscripts, and (IV) Western Kangyur lines (Go). Textual
analysis also indicates two recensions of the sūtra, with the Dunhuang exemplar and the two Phug brag exemplars, each containing sixteen prescriptions, representing one textual recension, while the Gondhla proto-Kangyur and vulgate Kangyurs represent another textual recension. The Dunhuang and Phug brag exemplars may represent early, but incomplete, Tibetan translations of the sūtra.

Be that as it may, the doctrinal content of the *Jayamatiparipṛcchā*, including all nineteen prescriptions found among vulgate Tibetan Kangyurs, is actually contained within the much older version of Kumārajīva’s early fifth century Chinese translation of the *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, the *Shoulengyan sanmei jing*, 首楞嚴三昧經 (Taishō. no. 642, 15), as well as the later ninth century Tibetan translation of the *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*. This intertextual relation between the *Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra* and *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra* has not been noticed before, either by traditional Buddhist scholars or by modern Buddhist studies scholars. Versions in French and English of the corresponding content are located in section 153 of Étienne Lamotte’s translation of the *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, under the title given by Lamotte, “Why and How to Practice the Heroic Progress.” Kumārajīva's Chinese version and the Tibetan version of the *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, translated by Śākyaprabha and Ratnakṛṣṇa, closely match the syntax and terminology found in the Tibetan version of the *Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra*, despite several minor differences in wording (Apple, 2015).

Although there is a direct correspondence in content between the *Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra* and this section of the *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, a significant difference between the two sūtras is the person speaking the prescribed content. In the *Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra* the prescriptions are delivered by the Buddha to the bodhisatva Jayamati. The *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, on the other hand, attributes the prescriptions to Jayamati. After Jayamati proclaims the nineteen prescriptions in the *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, the Buddha responds to Jayamati, corresponding to section 154 of Lamotte’s *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra* translation, with a proclamation advocating the practice of the *Śūraṅgama-samādhi*, emphasizing how this *samādhi* encompasses and goes beyond the qualities that the bodhisatva Jayamati had declared.

The correspondence between the *Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra* and this section of the *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra* brings up a number of interesting questions related to philology, intertextuality, and other cultural practices in the study of Mahāyāna sūtras. Based on the analysis of these sūtras, the *stemma codicum* for the content of the *Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra*, due to its being
incorporated into the Śūraṃgamasamādhisūtra, pushes the inferred archetype or oldest inferable ancestor of this sūtra back before the fifth century of Kumārajīva.

How do we know this? The content of the Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra was wholly subsumed and inverted from the Buddha’s speech to represent the bodhisatva Jayamati’s proclamation, including all nineteen prescriptions in the Śūraṃgamasamādhisūtra. This means that the content of the Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra must precede the composition of this section of the Śūraṃgamasamādhisūtra. Most modern scholars theorize that the Śūraṃgamasamādhisūtra is one of the oldest Mahāyāna sūtras due to its listing in Chinese catalogs as being translated several times before Kumārajīva’s fifth century Chinese version, including the non-extant second century Shoulengyan jing, 首楞嚴經, of Lokakṣema (支讖, 185 C.E.) and the lost third century translation of Zhi Qian (支謙). Although we are unable to verify that these early, but lost, Chinese versions included the section that corresponds with the Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra, we can still infer that the content of the Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra with its nineteen prescriptions must go back to the fourth century. It is highly probable that the content of the Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra circulated as a type of subhāṣita or set of well-spoken sayings for monks who took up the vocation of Mahāyāna practices.

In sum, the evidence of relationships between the Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra and Śūraṃgamasamādhisūtra brings a nuanced awareness to the intertextual relationships between Mahāyāna sūtras. This evidence indicates that the authorial communities that composed and compiled “Mahāyāna” texts during the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta eras in South Asia were aware of each other’s work and that there were shared elements between authorial communities of different “Mahāyāna” sūtras. The subsuming of the Jayamatiparipṛcchāsūtra into the Śūraṃgamasamādhisūtra also provides a rare glimpse of something more. It points toward the editorial practices utilized by the authors of Mahāyāna sūtras to gain rhetorical advantage over competitors. The shared content demonstrates that the authorial communities of these sūtras were not only borrowing each other’s ideas, stock phrases, and literary tropes, but were actively competing to demonstrate that their vision of the bodhisatva way superseded the practices and motivations outlined by other groups.
The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra

The Inquiry of Jayamati
1.

The Translation

[F.250.b]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisatvas!

Thus I have heard at one time. The Bhagavān was residing at the grove of Anāthapiṇḍada in Jeta Wood in Śrāvasti together with a great assembly of monks and a great multitude of bodhisatvas. Then, the Bhagavān addressed the bodhisatva Jayamati as follows.

1.2 “Jayamati, a faithful man or woman of a good family\textsuperscript{17} (1) who desires merit should worship the Tathāgata; (2) who desires discernment should be devoted to learning; (3) who desires heavenly rebirth should uphold moral conduct; (4) who desires wealth should increase charity; (5) who desires beauty should cultivate patience; (6) who desires eloquence should pay respect to the guru; (7) who desires memory should not have excessive pride; (8) who desires knowledge should frequently practice appropriate mindfulness; [F.251.a] (9) who desires liberation should abstain from all evil; (10) who desires to make all beings happy should generate the mind for awakening; (11) who desires a sweet voice should speak truthfully; (12) who desires virtuous qualities should take joy in solitude; (13) who desires the Dharma should attend to the spiritual friend; (14) who desires quiescence should frequently practice no contact with others; (15) who desires insight should frequently examine things as empty; (16) who desires rebirth in the world of Brahmā should cultivate love, compassion, joy, and equanimity; (17) who desires the abundant resources of gods and humans should behave in conformity with the path of ten virtuous actions; (18) who desires complete nirvāṇa should take joy in empty dharmas; (19) who desires to obtain all virtuous qualities\textsuperscript{18} should worship the Three Jewels.”
When the Bhagavān had spoken, the bodhisatva mahāsatva Jayamati, the complete assembly, and the world with its gods, humans, demigods and gandharvas rejoiced and highly praised what had been proclaimed by the Bhagavān.

1.4  This completes the noble Mahāyāna sūtra, “The Inquiry of Jayamati.”
On the necessity of employing the plural “Kangyurs” as opposed to “the Kangyur,” see the work of Peter Skilling (1997, 2009, 2013).

Vinītā (2010), Vol I,1, pp 305-316.

§236; see Herrmann-Pfandt (2008), p 124. The Lhenkarma is also sometimes called the Denkarma (*ldan kar ma*).


Schaeffer and van der Kuijp (2009), p 133.


Vinītā (2010), p 314, note α.

We follow the Buddhist Sanskrit spelling of ‘bodhisatva’ with a single rather than a double ‘t’ as found in manuscripts and inscriptions as the latter is a convention of modern editors. See Bhattacharya (2010).


Schopen (2004).

As detailed by Schopen (2004, p 397), narrative elements appear to carry great weight for some scholars but “we know next to nothing for certain about how early texts were redacted and transmitted” (ibid, p 399). The rules for redaction in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya “clearly favor Śrāvastī” as the setting. Both Rājagrha and Śrāvastī are among the six great cities recommended as a location if the setting is forgotten. Schopen provides analysis of occurrences noting that Gokhale records a 75% occurrence of Sāvatthi in Pāli texts, Minh Chang records a 45% occurrence in the Chinese
Madhyama-āgama, and Schopen himself estimates an 80% occurrence rate for Śrāvastī in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya. Currently known redaction rules applied to sūtras, therefore, place the location in Śrāvastī more frequently than would otherwise be expected.


n.15 See Hureau (2010), p 1224, and Nattier (2008), p 75.

n.16 On the notion of early Mahāyāna formations as an optional and legitimate vocation, or particular lifestyle, within Buddhist communities see Nattier (2003), pp 84-86, and Skilton (2002), p 134.

n.17 The translation follows Vinitā’s (2010, pp 57 and 459) observation for kula-putra (as well as kuladuhitā) that -putra in the latter part of a compound does not mean ‘son’ but indicates a ‘member’ of a class or group.

n.18 Refers to “all qualities.”
Indian Sūtras

‘phags pa rgyal ba’i blo gros zhes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo (Jayamatināmamahā-yānasūtra), Toh. 194, also entitled ‘phags pa rgyal ba’i blo gros kyis zhus pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo (Jayatiparipṛcchānāmamahāyānasūtra) in (L), (S), and (N):

(C) Cone Kangyur, vol. 41 (mdo sde, tsa), folios 309b-310a;
(D) Degé Kangyur, vol. 61 (mdo sde, tsa), folios 250b-251a;
(F) Phug brag Kangyur, vol. 70 (mdo sde, ma), folios 58b-59a;
(F2) Phug brag Kangyur, vol. 82 (mdo sde, sa), folios 257b-258b;
(Go) Gondhla Collection, vol. 13 (ka-na, folio 200b – ka-ma, folio 1a);
(J) Lithang Kangyur, vol. 56 (mdo sde, tsa), folios 282a-282b;
(L) London Kangyur, vol. 52 (mdo sde, za), folios 7b-8b;
(M) IOL Tib J 75 (http://idp.bl.uk:80/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=IOL Tib J75;img=1);
(N) Narthang Kangyur, vol. 61 (mdo sde, ba), folios 403b-404b;
(Q) Peking Kangyur, vol. 34 (mdo sna tshogs, mu), folios 260b-261a (p 232);
(S) Stok Palace Kangyur, vol. 73 (mdo sde, za), folios 6b-7b;

Śūraṃgama samādhi nāma mahā yāna sūtra:  
Shoulengyan sanmei jing, 首楞嚴三昧經 (Taishō 642, 15), translated by Kumārajīva (402-412 c.e.).

· Tibetan Indigenous Sources ·

   Beijing: mi rigs dpe skrun khang.

   Beijing: mi rigs dpe skrun khang.

· Modern Sources ·


g. GLOSSARY

g.1 All qualities
yon tan thams cad
sarvaguṇa

Anāthapiṇḍada
mgon med zas sbyin
Anāthapiṇḍada

Appropriate mindfulness
tshul bzhin yid byed pa
yonişo manasikara

g.4 Beauty
gzugs bzang ba
rūpa

Bhagavān
becom ldan ’das
bhagavān
Discernment

*shes rab*

*prajñā*

Eloquence

*spobs pa*

*pratibhā*

Excessive pride

*mngon pa’i nga rgyal*

*abhimāna (Not attested in Sanskrit manuscript)*

Faithful man of a good family

*rigs kyi bu*

*kulaputra*

Faithful woman of a good family

*rigs kyi bu mo*

*kuladuhitā*

Heavenly rebirth

*mtho ris*

*svarga*

Insight

*lhag mthong*

*vipaśyanā*
g.13  Jayamati
rgyal ba'i blo gros
jayamati

g.14  Jeta Wood
rgyal bu rgyal byed kyi tshal
jetavana

g.15  Knowledge
ye shes
jñāna

g.16  Learning
thos pa
śruta

g.17  Liberation
thar pa
mokṣa (Not attested in Sanskrit manuscript)

g.18  Meditative absorption
bsam gtan
dhyāna

g.19  Memory
gzung
dhāranī (Not attested in Sanskrit manuscript)
g.20 Merit
  bsod nams
  ལྷེན་ནག་
  punya

g.21 Moral conduct
  tshul khrims
  ཡོད་དྲུག་
  śīla

g.22 Quiescence
  zhi gnas
  ཡེད་ལན།
  śamatha

g.23 Solitude
  mb tu dben pa
  རབ་ཏུ་རིག་པ།
  praviveka (Not attested in Sanskrit manuscript)

g.24 Spiritual friend
  dge ba’i bshes gnyen
  ཤོགས་བི་བོེ་སྡེ་བུན་པ།
  kalyāṇamitra

g.25 Śrāvastī
  mnyan yod
  મન્યન યોદ
  Śrāvastī

g.26 Sweet voice
  skad snyan pa
  སྐལ་སྨོན་པ།
  mañjusvāra
g.27 Take joy in  
:\textit{mb yoğun par dga' bar bya}  
\textit{མ  ན ་ པ ར ་ ད ག འ ་ བ ར ་  །}

\textit{trīṇi ratnāni}  

G.28 Three Jewels  
:\textit{dkon mchog gsum}  
\textit{ད  ན ་ མ  ག ་ ག  མ །}

G.29 Wealth  
:\textit{longs spyod}  
\textit{ཐན་ལྟ་ཤེ}  
\textit{bhoga}