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Evaluating Whether Progress is Certain or Uncertain

Niyatāniyatagatimudrāvātāra

འཕགས་པ་ངེས་པ་དང་མ་ངེས་པར་འགོ་བའི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ལ་འཇུག་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་མདོ།

*'phags pa nges pa dang ma nges par 'gro ba'i phyag rgya la 'jug pa zhes bya ba'i theg pa
chen po'i mdo*

The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra “Evaluating Whether Progress is Certain or
Uncertain”

Niyatāniyatagatimudrāvātāranāmamahāyānasūtra



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Translated by David Jackson
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SUMMARY

- s.1 In this sūtra, Mañjuśrī asks the Buddha about the factors that make it either certain or not certain that a bodhisattva will attain unsurpassable, perfect awakening. In response, the Buddha describes five ways in which bodhisattvas may or may not make progress on the path. As an analogy for different ways of making progress, he compares five different ways of traveling a very great distance: using a cattle cart, using an elephant chariot, using the moon and sun, using the magical power of the śrāvakas, and using the magical power of the Tathāgata.

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INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 The Mahāyāna sūtra called *Evaluating Whether Progress is Certain or Uncertain* explains five ways in which bodhisattvas may make progress on the path, describing five different ways of traveling as an analogy for that progress. It begins when its main interlocutor, Mañjuśrī, asks the Buddha how to evaluate whether it is either uncertain that a bodhisattva will attain unsurpassable, perfect awakening, or certain that he will attain it. Much of what follows is the Buddha's answer: he explains five spiritual approaches for bodhisattvas, comparing each with a different method for traveling very great distances. The five methods are (1) using a cattle cart, (2) using an elephant chariot, (3) using the powers of the moon and sun, (4) using the magical power of the śrāvakas, and (5) using the magical power of the Tathāgata. Of these five approaches, the first two would surely not enable the traveler to reach the spiritual destination of unsurpassable, perfect awakening, while the last three would convey the traveler to that destination and would guarantee that they would not turn back before reaching it.

i.2 The first two approaches are limited insofar as they follow the teachings of the Śrāvaka Vehicle, which thereby impedes the progress of bodhisattvas who follow such approaches. By contrast, the last three methods incorporate progressively greater adherence to and support of the Mahāyāna, which makes them more effective as spiritual vehicles. The final method is the most effective of all, insofar as it carries its adherence to the Mahāyāna to the highest degree. The sūtra also stresses the great benefits of devotion to the Mahāyāna. The section that follows ends with a long series of comparisons of the relative merits of many (mostly hypothetical) practices, while also working in the five methods of travel as types of the mind of awakening. In a subsequent concluding section, another long series of comparisons establishes the great merit of the highest practices of the Mahāyāna.

i.3 This is a minor and generally overlooked sūtra in Tibet. We could not trace it as being quoted by even one Tibetan author. It is listed in both the Denkarma¹ and Phangthangma² imperial translation catalogs, which confirms it was translated into Tibetan no later than the early ninth century. It appears to have been better known elsewhere in South, Central, and East Asia. Although no full Sanskrit version is known to exist, the sūtra is quoted by Śāntideva twice in his *Śikṣāsamuccaya*,³ and several small Sanskrit fragments were discovered in Turfan.⁴ The sūtra is also quoted in the Khotanese anthology known in English translation as the *Book of Zambasta*.⁵ At least three Chinese translations exist: *Bubi ding dingzhi ru yin jing* 不必定入定入印經 (Taishō 645), translated by Gautama Prajñāruci in 542, *Li zhuangyan sanmei jing* 力莊嚴三昧經 (Taishō 647), translated by Narendrayaśas in 585, and *Dingzhi buding yin jing* 入定不定印經 (Taishō 646), translated by Yijing in 700. The fact that the sūtra was known in India, circulated in Central Asia, and was translated into Chinese no less than three times from the mid-sixth to the turn of the eighth century suggests that, despite its seeming insignificance in Tibet, the sūtra was well regarded in the rest of the Mahāyāna Buddhist world of the medieval period.

i.4 The present translation from Tibetan is based on the Degé xylograph and the Comparative Edition (Tib. *dpe bsdur ma*).

The Translation

The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra

Evaluating Whether Progress is Certain or Uncertain

1. Evaluating Whether Progress is Certain or Uncertain

[F.63.a]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was dwelling on Vulture Peak Mountain in Rājagṛha, along with a great saṅgha of 1,250 bhikṣus. Together with them were six septillion bodhisattvas, including such bodhisattvas as Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta, Avalokiteśvara, Mahāsthāmaprāpta, [F.63.b] Bhaiṣajyarāja, Bhaiṣajyasamudgata, and the bodhisattva King of the Sound Emanated by a Stūpa. The entire group of six septillion bodhisattvas all dwelled in the absorption of the miraculous power of certain tranquility; had attained the absorption that is like an ocean tide of deep, steady water; had attained the dhāraṇī of conferring empowerment; and had attained the dhāraṇī of achieving the limitless colors of the buddhas.

1.2 Then Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta asked the Blessed One, “How can one evaluate whether, for these bodhisattvas, it is uncertain that they will attain unsurpassable, perfect awakening, for they may turn back from the path leading to unsurpassable wisdom? And how may one evaluate whether, for those bodhisattvas, it is certain that they will attain unsurpassable, perfect awakening, and they will not turn back from the path leading to unsurpassable wisdom? Please teach the Dharma discourse that is called *evaluating whether a bodhisattva’s progress is certain or uncertain*, so that I will understand it.”

1.3 “Mañjuśrī,” the Blessed One replied, “there are five types of progress that bodhisattvas may make. They are a bodhisattva’s progress that is like travel using a cattle cart,⁶ like travel using an elephant chariot, like travel using the moon and sun, like travel using the magical power of the śrāvakas, and like travel using the magical power of the Tathāgata. These are the five types of progress that bodhisattvas may make. Mañjuśrī, in that regard, for two types

of bodhisattva it is not certain that they will reach unsurpassable, perfect awakening, while for three types of bodhisattva [F.64.a] it is certain that they will reach unsurpassable, perfect awakening.”

1.4 “Blessed One, which are the bodhisattvas who are not certain to reach unsurpassable, perfect awakening, and who will turn back from the path leading to unsurpassable wisdom?” asked Mañjuśrī.

1.5 “Mañjuśrī,” the Blessed One answered, “they are those bodhisattvas whose progress is like travel using a cattle cart and like travel using an elephant chariot. Those are the bodhisattvas who are not certain to reach unsurpassable, perfect awakening, and who will turn back from the path leading to unsurpassable wisdom. But the bodhisattvas whose progress is like travel using the moon and sun, like travel using the magical power of the śrāvakas, and like travel using the magical power of the Tathāgata—these three are the bodhisattvas who are certain to reach unsurpassable, perfect awakening, and who will not turn back from the path leading to unsurpassable wisdom.

1.6 “Mañjuśrī, you may wonder how one should understand bodhisattvas whose progress is like travel using a cattle cart. Mañjuśrī, they are like this: Suppose someone wished to travel across as many world systems as are equal in number to the atoms in five hundred buddhafi elds, and suppose that they had business, important business,⁷ an objective, an important objective, urgent affairs, or extremely urgent affairs to attend to there. They would think, ‘In what kind of vehicle shall I travel across those world systems?’ and then they might consider, ‘Well then, let me go by cattle cart. I am sure to be able to travel across those world systems that way.’ Suppose they then climbed onto their cart and set off. After they had traveled for a very long time, they might have managed to travel a hundred *yojanas*, but then suppose they were driven back eighty *yojanas* by a great cyclone. [F.64.b] In the best case, Mañjuśrī, what do you think? Could that person ever travel across those world systems, even if they traveled for an eon, or a hundred eons, or a thousand eons, or a trillion eons, or an inexpressible number of inexpressibly many eons? Or could they travel across even one world system?”

1.7 “Blessed One, that would be impossible—not feasible at all!” answered Mañjuśrī. “Even if that person on the cattle cart traveled for an eon, or a hundred eons, or a thousand eons, or a trillion eons, or an inexpressible number of inexpressibly many eons, they could not travel across even one world system. That would be impossible!”

1.8 “Mañjuśrī, in the same way,” continued the Blessed One, “if certain sons or daughters of good family, having conceived the thought of attaining unsurpassable, perfect awakening, do not uphold or recite the Mahāyāna

scriptures, but stay instead with followers of the Śrāvaka Vehicle and support, follow, and honor those followers of the Śrāvaka Vehicle; and accustoming themselves to staying with them, they apply themselves to and practice that tradition; and staying in the same gardens, monasteries, or walking places with them, they read the śrāvaka scriptures, recite them, reflect on them, and understand them, encouraging others to read them, recite them, reflect on them, and understand them—through that conditioning⁸ of having produced a root of virtue by upholding the Śrāvaka Vehicle, their discriminating wisdom would become dull, and that would make them turn back from the path leading to unsurpassable wisdom. The faculty and eye of discriminating wisdom that arise from those bodhisattvas cultivating the mind of awakening would be dulled and destroyed by the conditioning of having produced a root of virtue by upholding and maintaining the Śrāvaka Vehicle. [F.65.a]

1.9 “Mañjuśrī, suppose a certain man’s eye has shut because of an eye disease. If, for the sake of restoring the eye’s ability to open and close again, the eye were examined for one month, and if after a month had passed, rather than the eye being made to open and close, instead that person’s enemy or adversary filled that eye with a handful of powdered long pepper and thus blinded that eye,⁹ just so Mañjuśrī, the faculty and eye of discriminating wisdom that arise from those bodhisattvas cultivating the mind of awakening would be dulled and destroyed by the conditioning of having produced a root of virtue by upholding and maintaining the Śrāvaka Vehicle. Mañjuśrī, you should understand such bodhisattvas to be those whose progress is like travel using a cattle cart.

1.10 “Mañjuśrī, you may wonder how one should understand bodhisattvas whose progress is like travel using an elephant chariot.

1.11 “Suppose, Mañjuśrī, that someone wished to travel across those very world systems, and suppose that they had business, important business, an objective, an important objective, urgent affairs, or extremely urgent affairs to attend to there. They would think, ‘In what kind of vehicle shall I travel across those world systems?’ and then they might consider, ‘Well then, let me go by an eight-part elephant chariot. I am sure to be able to travel across those world systems that way.’ Suppose they then climbed onto their eight-part elephant chariot and set off. After they had traveled for a hundred years, they might have managed to travel two thousand yojanas, but then suppose they were driven back by a great cyclone. In that case, Mañjuśrī, what do you think? Could that person who rode the elephant chariot ever travel across even one single world system, even if they traveled for an eon, or a hundred eons, or a thousand eons, or a trillion eons, or an inexpressible number of inexpressibly many eons?”

- 1.12 “Blessed One, that would be impossible—not feasible at all!” answered Mañjuśrī. [F.65.b] “Even if that person on the elephant chariot were to travel for an eon, or a hundred eons, or a thousand eons, or a trillion eons, or an inexpressible number of inexpressibly many eons, they could not travel across even one world system. That would be impossible!”
- 1.13 “Mañjuśrī, in the same way,” the Blessed One continued, “if certain sons or daughters of good family, having conceived the thought of attaining unsurpassable, perfect awakening, stay with followers of the Śrāvaka Vehicle and support, follow, and honor those followers of the Śrāvaka Vehicle; and accustoming themselves to staying with them, they apply themselves to and practice that tradition; and staying in the same gardens, monasteries, or walking places with them, they read the śrāvaka scriptures, recite them, reflect on them, and understand them, encouraging others to read them, recite them, and practice them—through that conditioning of having produced a root of virtue by upholding the Śrāvaka Vehicle, their discriminating wisdom would become dull, and that would make them turn back from the path leading to unsurpassable wisdom.
- 1.14 “The faculty and eye of discriminating wisdom that are the conditioning of having produced a root of virtue that arises from those bodhisattvas cultivating the mind of awakening would be dulled and destroyed by the conditioning of having produced a root of virtue by upholding and maintaining the Śrāvaka Vehicle. Mañjuśrī, suppose that there existed a huge tree trunk that was a thousand yojanas long, and rather than be carried away by the ocean, it was driven back by sky-dwelling yakṣas from its course through the ocean. And if they then attached to it a lump of iron five thousand yojanas tall, Mañjuśrī, what do you think? [F.66.a] Would that huge tree trunk be able to move through the ocean or be used by beings to cross it?”
- “No, Blessed One,” replied Mañjuśrī.
- 1.15 “In the same way, Mañjuśrī,” continued the Blessed One, “the tree of discriminating wisdom that arises from those bodhisattvas cultivating the mind of awakening will be driven back from the ocean of omniscient wisdom by their conditioning of having produced a root of virtue by upholding the Śrāvaka Vehicle, and they will not move through the ocean of omniscient wisdom or be able to ferry beings across the ocean of cyclic existence. Mañjuśrī, you should understand such bodhisattvas to be those whose progress is like travel using an elephant chariot.
- 1.16 “Mañjuśrī, you may wonder how one should understand bodhisattvas whose progress is like travel using the sun and moon.

- 1.17 “Mañjuśrī, suppose someone wished to travel across those very world systems, and suppose that they had business, important business, an objective, an important objective, urgent affairs, or extremely urgent affairs to attend to there. They would think, ‘Using what kind of magical power shall I travel across those world systems?’ and then they might consider, ‘Well then, let me go using the sun and moon. I am sure to be able to travel across those world systems that way.’ Suppose they then set off using the sun and moon. Mañjuśrī, what do you think? Could that person who went using the sun and moon travel across those world systems?”
- 1.18 “Blessed One, they would be able to,” replied Mañjuśrī. “Sugata, eventually, after a long period of time, they would be able to.”
- 1.19 “Mañjuśrī, in the same way,” continued the Blessed One, “if certain sons or daughters of good family, having conceived the thought of attaining unsurpassable, perfect awakening, do not stay with followers of the Śrāvaka Vehicle or support, follow, or honor those followers of the Śrāvaka Vehicle; [F.66.b] and not accustoming themselves to staying with them, they do not apply themselves to or practice that tradition; and not staying in the same gardens, monasteries, or walking places with them, they do not read the śrāvaka scriptures, recite them, or contemplate them, nor encourage others to read or recite even so much as a single verse from them—if what they do read is only the Mahāyāna, and what they teach is only the Mahāyāna, then Mañjuśrī, you should understand such bodhisattvas to be those whose progress is like travel using the moon and sun.
- 1.20 “As an analogy Mañjuśrī, the great and mighty king of the garuḍas who has reached maturity and has gained strength and great power could, if he wanted to, fly from the top of the central mountain of one world system to that of the next world system. Mañjuśrī, in the same way, bodhisattvas whose progress is like travel using the moon and sun possess the strength of moral discipline, learning, reflection, and altruism; they have attained maturity and great power, and if they wanted to, they could go from one buddhfield to another and teach those among the disciples of the tathāgatas.
- 1.21 “Mañjuśrī, you may wonder how one should understand bodhisattvas whose progress is like travel using the magical power of the śrāvakas.
- 1.22 “Suppose, Mañjuśrī, that someone wished to travel across those very world systems, and suppose that they had business, important business, an objective, an important objective, urgent affairs, or extremely urgent affairs to attend to there. They would think, ‘Using what kind of magical power shall I travel across those world systems?’ and then they might consider, ‘Well

then, let me travel across those world systems using the magical power of the śrāvakas.’ [F.67.a] Mañjuśrī, what do you think? Could that person travel across those world systems using the magical power of the śrāvakas?”

“Yes, Blessed One,” answered Mañjuśrī, “they would be able to.”

1.23 “Mañjuśrī, in the same way,” continued the Blessed One, “certain sons or daughters of good family, having conceived the thought of attaining unsurpassable, perfect awakening, do not stay with followers of the Śrāvaka Vehicle or support, follow, or honor those followers of the Śrāvaka Vehicle; and not accustoming themselves to staying with them, they do not apply themselves to or practice that tradition; and not staying in the same gardens, monasteries, or walking places with them, they do not read the śrāvaka scriptures, recite them, reflect on them, or understand them, nor encourage others to read or recite even so much as a single verse from them. What they do read is only the Mahāyāna, and what they teach is only the Mahāyāna.

1.24 “Showing reverence and respect to bodhisattvas who are devoted to the Mahāyāna, to those who read the Mahāyāna scriptures, and to those who uphold the Mahāyāna, they dedicate themselves to them and approach them. Having approached them, they stay with them and support, follow, and honor them; and accustoming themselves to staying with them, they apply themselves to and practice that tradition. Staying in the same gardens, monasteries, or walking places with them, they seek the Mahāyāna scriptures, collect them, and maintain them. With the utmost reverence, they worship them with lamps, fragrant substances, flowers, incense, garlands of flowers, and unguents. They read and recite the Mahāyāna scriptures and, with gladness and delight, teach them. [F.67.b] They do not give rise to a disrespectful attitude toward untrained bodhisattvas. They teach smilingly and sincerely; without speaking coarsely, harshly, or roughly, they teach gladly and with sweet words. Even at the cost of their lives, they do not give up the Mahāyāna. With heartfelt altruism they support as much as they can and to the best of their abilities those bodhisattvas who have entered the Mahāyāna, those who recite the Mahāyāna scriptures, and those who uphold the Mahāyāna. They do not dispute or quarrel with anyone. Their nature is to seek out sūtras that have not appeared or been heard before, and they give rise to fervent reverence for the teaching of that which is heard from such sūtras. They do not look down upon other bodhisattvas who are untrained in the practices of the bodhisattvas, and they do not incite others with real or spurious moral faults.¹⁰ And they do not seek fault even in the delusions of others, while they do train in loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity. You should understand such bodhisattvas, Mañjuśrī, to be those whose progress is like travel using the magical power of the śrāvakas.

1.25 “Mañjuśrī, you may wonder how one should understand bodhisattvas whose progress is like travel using the magical power of the Tathāgata.

1.26 “Mañjuśrī, suppose that someone wished to travel across those very world systems, and suppose that they had business, important business, an objective, an important objective, urgent affairs, or extremely urgent affairs to attend to there. They would think, ‘Using what kind of magical power shall I swiftly travel across those world systems?’ and then they might consider, ‘Well then, surely I should supplicate the Tathāgata in order to travel across those world systems.’ [F.68.a] Mañjuśrī, that person, going into the presence of the Tathāgata and supplicating him, would say, ‘Blessed One, I seek to travel across as many world systems as are equal in number to the atoms in five hundred buddhafiels. As I have business, important business, an objective, an important objective, urgent affairs, or extremely urgent affairs to attend to there, kindly make it so that I travel across those world systems.’ Mañjuśrī, what do you think? If the Tathāgata makes it so that the person travels across those world systems, is it the Tathāgata’s doing that they swiftly travel across those world systems?”

“Yes, Blessed One,” answered Mañjuśrī. “Yes, Sugata, it is his doing.”

1.27 “Mañjuśrī, in the same way,” continued the Blessed One, “certain sons or daughters of good family, having conceived the thought of attaining unsurpassable, perfect awakening, do not stay with followers of the Śrāvaka Vehicle or support, follow, or honor those followers of the Śrāvaka Vehicle; and not accustoming themselves to staying with them, they do not apply themselves to or practice that tradition; and not staying in the same gardens, monasteries, or walking places with them, they do not read the śrāvaka scriptures, recite them, reflect on them, or understand them, nor encourage others to read or recite even so much as a single verse from them. What they do read is only the Mahāyāna, what they recite is only the Mahāyāna, and what they teach is only the Mahāyāna.

1.28 “Their bodies, speech, and minds are completely pure, they possess moral discipline, and they are endowed with virtuous qualities. [F.68.b] They establish the bodies, speech, and minds of others in complete purity, and they cause them to be endowed with moral discipline and virtuous qualities. They show reverence and respect to bodhisattvas who have entered the Mahāyāna, to those who read the Mahāyāna scriptures, and to those who uphold the Mahāyāna. They dedicate themselves to them and approach them. Having approached them, they stay with them and support, follow, and honor them; and accustoming themselves to staying with them, they apply themselves to and practice that tradition. Staying in the same gardens, monasteries, or walking places with them, they seek the Mahāyāna scriptures, collect them, and maintain them. With the utmost reverence, they

fervently worship them with lamps, fragrant substances, flowers, incense, garlands of flowers, and unguents. They read and recite the Mahāyāna scriptures, and with gladness and great delight, they strongly encourage others to read and recite them. They do not give rise to a disrespectful attitude toward untrained bodhisattvas, and they establish other bodhisattvas in just that training.

1.29 “They teach smilingly and sincerely, and they establish others in teaching smilingly and sincerely. Without speaking coarsely, harshly, or roughly, they establish others in just that training. They teach gladly and with sweet words. Even at the cost of their lives they do not give up the Mahāyāna. With fervent reverence, gladness, and great delight, they deferentially serve those bodhisattvas who have entered the Mahāyāna, those who recite the Mahāyāna scriptures, and those who uphold the Mahāyāna. And with great contemplation¹¹ and altruism they establish others in just that training.

1.30 “They do not dispute or quarrel with anyone. With fervent reverence, they pursue and seek out sūtras that have not appeared or been heard before. [F.69.a] They give rise to fervent reverence for the teaching of that which is heard from such sūtras, and they establish others in just that training.

1.31 “They are not arrogant toward others who are untrained in the practices of the bodhisattvas, and they do not incite others with real or spurious moral faults. They do not seek fault even in the delusions of others, and they establish others in just that training.

1.32 “They observe the mass of beings deprived of the deeds of a bodhisattva, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the deeds of a bodhisattva. They observe the mass of beings deprived of the path of a bodhisattva, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the path of a bodhisattva. They observe the mass of beings deprived of the conduct of a bodhisattva, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the conduct of a bodhisattva.

1.33 “They observe the mass of beings deprived of the cause of becoming a bodhisattva, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the cause of becoming a bodhisattva. They observe the mass of beings deprived of the skill in means of a bodhisattva, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the skill in means of a bodhisattva. They observe the mass of beings deprived of the duties¹² of a bodhisattva, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the duties of a bodhisattva.

1.34 “They observe the mass of beings deprived of the strength of a bodhisattva’s conditioning conduct,¹³ [F.69.b] and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the strength of a bodhisattva’s

conditioning conduct. They observe the mass of beings deprived of the basis for the conduct of a bodhisattva, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the basis for the conduct of a bodhisattva.

1.35 “They observe the mass of beings deprived of the loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity of a bodhisattva, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity of a bodhisattva.

1.36 “They naturally share¹⁴ with others, and they cause others to naturally share. They observe the mass of beings deprived of the Buddha’s Dharma, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the Buddha’s Dharma.

1.37 “They observe the mass of beings who are devoid of longing for virtuous qualities, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings who are devoid of longing for virtuous qualities. They observe the mass of beings who are bound by fetters, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings who are bound by fetters. They examine the mass of beings who have been sick for a long time, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings who have been sick for a long time. They observe the mass of beings deprived of the production of roots of virtue for buddhahood, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the production of roots of virtue for buddhahood. [F.70.a] They observe the mass of beings who are without a protector, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings who are without a protector. They observe the mass of beings who have been asleep for a long time, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings who have been asleep for a long time. They observe the mass of beings who have been born in a bad lineage, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings who have been born in a bad lineage. They observe the mass of beings deprived of the mind of awakening, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the mind of awakening.

1.38 “They observe the mass of beings deprived of the conduct of a bodhisattva, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the conduct of a bodhisattva. They observe the mass of beings deprived of the conduct of the Dharma, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the conduct of the Dharma. They observe the mass of beings deprived of the accumulation of merit and wisdom, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the accumulation of merit and wisdom.

1.39 “They observe the mass of beings deprived of devotion for the Mahāyāna, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of devotion for the Mahāyāna. They observe the mass of beings deprived of the vows of

moral discipline, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the vows of moral discipline. [F.70.b]

1.40 “They observe the mass of beings deprived of the qualities that accord with the Dharma, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the qualities that accord with the Dharma. They observe the mass of beings deprived of patience and tenderness, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of patience and tenderness. They observe the mass of beings deprived of meditative calm and insight, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of meditative calm and insight.

1.41 “They observe the mass of beings deprived of generosity, discipline, restraint, and gentleness, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of generosity, discipline, restraint, and gentleness. They observe the mass of beings deprived of mindfulness, intelligence, resoluteness, and understanding, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of mindfulness, intelligence, resoluteness, and understanding. They observe the mass of beings deprived of engaging in the method of the path of the perfections, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of engaging in the method of the path of the perfections.

1.42 “They observe the mass of beings deprived of being born into the lineage of the buddhas, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of being born into the lineage of the buddhas. They observe the mass of beings deprived of a spiritual friend, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of a spiritual friend. [F.71.a]

1.43 “They observe the mass of beings deprived of the desire to benefit beings, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the desire to benefit beings. They observe the mass of beings deprived of reliance on the Dharma, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of reliance on the Dharma. They observe the mass of beings deprived of reliance on wisdom, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of reliance on wisdom.

1.44 “They observe the mass of beings deprived of reliance on the meaning, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of reliance on the meaning. They observe the mass of beings deprived of reliance on the sūtras of definitive meaning, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of reliance on the sūtras of definitive meaning. They observe the mass of beings deprived of the four perfect endeavors, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings deprived of the four perfect endeavors. They are skilled in teaching the true Dharma, the meaning, and the Vinaya, and they cause others to be skilled in teaching the true Dharma,

the meaning, and the Vinaya. They observe the mass of beings who are destitute, and they cause others to observe the mass of beings who are destitute.

1.45 “Such bodhisattvas pervade the entire world with loving kindness. [F.71.b] They think, ‘Alas! These beings are without a protector! These beings are without a refuge! These beings are without an ally! These beings are without a sanctuary! These beings are without an abode! These beings are without a defender! Alas, may I one day become the protector of these beings! May I become their refuge! May I become their ally! May I become their sanctuary! May I become their abode! May I become their defender!’

1.46 “As an analogy Mañjuśrī, a garuḍa, the king of birds, who has reached maturity and has gained strength and great power could, if he wanted to, fly from the top of the central mountain of one world system to that of the next world system.¹⁵ Mañjuśrī, in the same way, bodhisattvas whose progress is like traveling by means of the magical power of the Tathāgata, due to the strength of their roots of virtue and their speed, force, and great bravery, are born among the disciples of the buddhas when they desire to be born there, and they also become the protectors, refuges, allies, sanctuaries, abodes, and defenders for all beings who have been born in the evil, miserable lower realms. You should understand such bodhisattvas, Mañjuśrī, to be those whose progress is like travel using the magical power of the Tathāgata.

1.47 “Mañjuśrī, suppose that certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to tathāgatas numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and every day they filled world systems numbering as many as the grains of sand of the Ganges River with precious jewels of the highest type¹⁶ and offered them to each of those tathāgatas, and were to make such offerings for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges. And suppose other sons or daughters of good family were to establish a single being in the fruit of a stream-enterer. The latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former. [F.72.a]

1.48 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family established beings numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction as stream-enterers, and other sons or daughters of good family were to establish a single being in the fruit of a once-returner, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.

1.49 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family established beings numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction as once-returners, and if other sons or daughters of good family were to establish a single being in the fruit of a non-returner, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.

- 1.50 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family established beings numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction as non-returners, and if other sons or daughters of good family were to establish a single being in the fruit of a worthy one, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.
- 1.51 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family established beings numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction as worthy ones, and other sons or daughters of good family were to establish a single being in the fruit of a pratyekabuddha, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.
- 1.52 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family established beings numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction as pratyekabuddhas, [F.72.b] and other sons or daughters of good family were to establish a single being in the mind of awakening whose progress is like travel using a goat cart,¹⁷ the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.
- 1.53 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family established beings numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction in the mind of awakening whose progress is like travel using a goat cart, and if other sons or daughters of good family were to establish a single being in the mind of awakening whose progress is like travel using an elephant chariot, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.
- 1.54 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family established beings numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction in the mind of awakening whose progress is like travel using an elephant chariot, and if other sons or daughters of good family were to establish a single being in the mind of awakening whose progress is like travel using the moon and sun, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.
- 1.55 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family established beings numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction in the mind of awakening whose progress is like travel using the moon and sun, and if other sons or daughters of good family were to establish a single being in the mind of awakening whose progress is like travel using the magical power of the śrāvakas, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.
- 1.56 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family established beings numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction in the mind of awakening whose progress is like travel using the magical power of the śrāvakas, and if other sons or daughters of good family were to

establish a single being in the mind of awakening whose progress is like travel using the magical power of the Tathāgata, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former. [F.73.a]

1.57 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to beings numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family for just one day were to give a single meal to a faithful lay follower who has taken refuge in the Three Jewels, observes the five moral precepts, and delights in the teaching of the Blessed One, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.

1.58 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to faithful lay followers who have taken refuge in the Three Jewels, observe the five moral precepts, and delight in the teaching of the Blessed One, numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family for just one day were to give a single meal to a person of the eighth level, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.

1.59 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to people of the eighth level numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family for just one day were to give a single meal to a stream-enterer, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former. [F.73.b]

1.60 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to stream-enterers numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family for just one day were to give a single meal to a once-returner, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.

1.61 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to once-returners numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as

there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family for just one day were to give a single meal to a non-returner, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.

1.62 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to non-returners numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family for just one day were to give a single meal to a worthy one, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.

1.63 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to worthy ones numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family for just one day were to give a single meal to a pratyekabuddha, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former. [F.74.a]

1.64 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to pratyekabuddhas numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family for just one day were to give a single meal to a bodhisattva whose progress is like travel using a goat cart, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.

1.65 “Why is that? Because, Mañjuśrī, for bodhisattvas, in accord with the particular nature of the mind of awakening that they first cultivated, there are no nonvirtuous deeds whatsoever that they have not abandoned, and there are no buddha qualities whatsoever that they have not acquired. Hence, Mañjuśrī, bodhisattvas possess inconceivable good qualities. As an analogy, Mañjuśrī, the *kalaviṅka*, king of birds, even though it is still inside its egg and has not opened its eyes, overpowers the entire assembly of other birds with its deep and melodious voice.¹⁸ In the same way, Mañjuśrī, bodhisattvas who have cultivated the mind of awakening for the first time, though they are still inside the egg of ignorance, and though their eyes are still covered by the dark film of karma and the defilements, they still overpower all the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas by the sound of their voice of accomplishing the dedication of their roots of virtue.

1.66 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to bodhisattvas whose progress is like travel using a goat cart, numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems

in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family for just one day were to give a single meal to a bodhisattva whose progress is like travel using an elephant chariot, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former. [F.74.b]

1.67 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to bodhisattvas whose progress is like travel using an elephant chariot, numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family for just one day were to give a single meal to a bodhisattva whose progress is like traveling by means of the moon and sun, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.

1.68 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to bodhisattvas whose progress is like travel using the moon and sun, numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family for just one day were to give a single meal to a bodhisattva whose progress is like travel using the magical power of the śrāvakas, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.

1.69 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to bodhisattvas whose progress is like travel using the magical power of śrāvakas, numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family for just one day were to give a single meal to a bodhisattva whose progress is like traveling by means of the magical power of the Tathāgata, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former. [F.75.a]

1.70 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to bodhisattvas whose progress is like travel using the magical power of the Tathāgata, numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family were to hear this Dharma teaching and feel devotion to and conviction in it, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.

- 1.71 “Mañjuśrī, suppose that certain sons or daughters of good family prepared types of food numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction. And suppose they were to construct dwellings for pratyekabuddhas numbering as many as the atoms of ten billionfold world systems, made of gold from the Jambu River, decorated with lamps made of precious jewels as brilliant as lightning, surrounded by verandas stacked with precious jewels of every kind of luster, beautified by clusters of jewels, pearls, and gems, with hoisted banners, flags, and parasols, wrapped with nets of precious jewels of the highest type, and covered with canopies made of nets of small bells. And suppose they anointed them with *uragasāra* sandalwood,¹⁹ and they arranged such flowers as *mandāra*,²⁰ great *mandāra*, *mañjūṣaka*,²¹ great *mañjūṣaka*, nutmeg flowers,²² nāga-tree flowers,²³ *taranibarna*,²⁴ *gotaraṇi*,²⁵ *saugandhikam*,²⁶ *dhanuskarin*,²⁷ divine nutmeg flowers, blue lotuses, red lotuses, white lotuses, great white lotuses, and great flowers. And suppose that to those pratyekabuddhas they offered divine, hundred-flavored foods, and also offered divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges. And suppose that other sons or daughters of good family were to hear the words *buddha* or *omniscient one* or *protector of the world*, [F.75.b] or were to see a buddha painting or a buddha statue. The latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former. That being so, it goes without saying that to pay homage with hands joined together would produce merit immeasurably greater than this. It is more meritorious still to offer lamps, incense, flowers, and fragrant perfume—even to offer just a single praise of his good qualities. It would create great prosperity and finally result in their reaching the state of omniscience.
- 1.72 “As an analogy Mañjuśrī, suppose a tiny drop of water merged with the water of the ocean—it would not be exhausted before the arising of the final fire that burns the universe at the end of the eon. Mañjuśrī, in the same way, however small a root of virtue may be that one has produced in relation to the Tathāgata, it will not be exhausted or reach its end before the fire of the wisdom of omniscience arises.
- 1.73 “As an analogy Mañjuśrī, the disk of the moon, no matter how small it is in size, circumference, or greatness, will outshine the entire mass of stars and will be clearly and very distinctly present in the night sky. Mañjuśrī, in the same way, however small a root of virtue may be that one has produced in relation to the Tathāgata, it will outshine all other roots of virtue in its exaltation, expanse, and greatness and will be clearly present. So, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata, the Worthy One, the Perfectly Awakened One, possesses inconceivable good qualities.

- 1.74 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family offered each day divine, hundred-flavored foods to all the tathāgatas, the bodhisattvas, and the śrāvakas numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, and also offered them divine garments, and were to make such offerings every day for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if other sons or daughters of good family were to hear this Dharma teaching and feel devotion to it, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former. [F.76.a] That being so, it goes without saying that to write this teaching down, or cause others to write it down, or teach it would produce still greater merit that would cause the attainment of the wisdom of buddhahood.
- 1.75 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family out of anger were to deny countless śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas food and clothing, and if other sons or daughters of good family out of hatred and anger were to take away or deny a single meal to a bodhisattva devoted to the Mahāyāna, the latter would produce evil immeasurably greater than the former. Why is that? Because all the generosity, patience, morality, diligence, meditative concentration, discriminating wisdom, and so forth perfected over the course of immeasurable millions of eons by all the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas of the past, present, and future—all of it merely overcomes the defilements arisen in one person’s mind. Whereas, for a bodhisattva, to give even so much as a single mouthful of food to a being born in one of the animal realms will prevent the lineage of the Three Jewels from being severed.
- 1.76 “As an analogy, Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family out of hatred and anger were to destroy the aggregates of morality, of meditative absorption, of discriminating wisdom, of liberation, and of the vision and wisdom of liberation of countless śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, and if other sons or daughters of good family out of anger were to destroy even so much as the observance of a single point of discipline by a bodhisattva devoted to the Mahāyāna, [F.76.b] the latter would produce evil immeasurably greater than the former. Why is that? Because the aggregates of morality, of meditative absorption, of discriminating wisdom, of liberation, and of the vision and wisdom of liberation of all the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas merely overcome the defilements arisen in one person’s mind. Whereas, for a bodhisattva, all the aggregates of morality, of meditative absorption, of discriminating wisdom, of liberation, and of the vision and wisdom of liberation arisen from a single training for even a single day overcome all the defilements of all beings and lead to the attainments up to the wisdom of omniscience.

- 1.77 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family out of hatred and malice were to imprison all the beings of all the world systems in every direction, and if other sons or daughters of good family out of hatred and malice toward a bodhisattva were to turn their backs on him, saying, ‘May I not meet with him!’ the latter would produce evil immeasurably greater than the former.
- 1.78 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family were to blind all the beings of all the world systems in every direction, and if other sons or daughters of good family were to look at a bodhisattva with hatred and malice, the latter would produce evil immeasurably greater than the former.
- 1.79 “Mañjuśrī, as an analogy, if all the beings of all the world systems in every direction were to be blinded, and then certain sons or daughters of good family were lovingly to restore their sight, but other sons or daughters of good family were joyfully to look at a bodhisattva devoted to the Mahāyāna, [F.77.a] the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.
- 1.80 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family were to set free all the beings of all the world systems in every direction who had been imprisoned, and then were to establish them in the happiness of a universal emperor, and if other sons or daughters of good family joyfully desired to see a bodhisattva devoted to the Mahāyāna and joyfully praised him, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.
- 1.81 “Mañjuśrī, if certain bodhisattvas were to establish all the beings of all the world systems in every direction in the state of a pratyekabuddha, and if other bodhisattvas were to increase merely a single root of virtue produced in relation to buddhahood of a bodhisattva devoted to the Mahāyāna, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.
- 1.82 “Mañjuśrī, if certain bodhisattvas devoted to the Mahāyāna were to establish in the mind of awakening all the beings of all the world systems in every direction, and if other bodhisattvas devoted to the Mahāyāna were to cause a bodhisattva devoted to the Mahāyāna to recite even a single verse concerning what is beyond the aggregates,²⁸ the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.
- 1.83 “Mañjuśrī, as an analogy, if certain sons or daughters of good family were to cause pratyekabuddhas numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction to be born in hells, animal realms, or hungry ghost realms, and if certain sons or daughters of good family were to cause a single bodhisattva to lose his devotion to the mind of awakening, the latter would produce evil immeasurably greater than the former. [F.77.b]
- 1.84 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family were to cause all the beings of all the world systems in every direction to lose their devotion to the mind of awakening, and if other sons or daughters of good family were

to cause a single bodhisattva devoted to the Mahāyāna to lose his devotion to the Mahāyāna, the latter would produce evil immeasurably greater than the former.

1.85 “Mañjuśrī, if certain sons or daughters of good family were to cause all the beings of all the world systems in every direction to be born as hell beings, animals, hungry ghosts, or in the world of Yama, and then certain bodhisattvas freed all of those beings from the realms of the hells, animals, and Yama and established them in the mind of awakening, but other bodhisattvas were to cause a single being to become devoted to the Mahāyāna, the latter would produce merit immeasurably greater than the former.

1.86 “Mañjuśrī, if someone were to cause pratyekabuddhas numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction to fall away from the state of a pratyekabuddha, and if a person were to cause a single bodhisattva devoted to the Mahāyāna to fall away from the state of a bodhisattva, the latter would produce evil immeasurably greater than the former.

1.87 “Mañjuśrī, suppose someone, in order to prevent the acquisition of wealth and service by pratyekabuddhas numbering as many as the atoms of all the world systems in every direction, jealous of their wealth and service, were to proclaim everywhere infamous, harsh, and critical reports about them.²⁹ And suppose other sons or daughters of good family, in order to prevent the acquisition of wealth and service by a single bodhisattva devoted to the Mahāyāna, jealous of their wealth and service, were to criticize him. The latter would produce evil immeasurably greater than the former. [F.78.a]

1.88 “Mañjuśrī, if someone, in order to uphold the holy Dharma, were joyfully to give even as much as a single cup of water³⁰ to a bodhisattva devoted to the Mahāyāna, and if by that deed they would later experience the numerous royal domains of universal emperors, then what need is there to mention a bodhisattva devoted to reading and recitation?”

1.89 After the Blessed One had thus spoken, those bodhisattvas, the śrāvakas, and the world with its gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas rejoiced and praised what the Blessed One had taught.

1.90 *This completes the noble Mahāyāna sūtra “Evaluating Whether Progress is Certain or Uncertain.”*

c.

Colophon

- c.1 This was translated, checked, and finalized by the Indian preceptors Prajñāvarma and Surendrabodhi and the chief editor-translator, the monk Yeshé Dé, and others.

n.

NOTES

- n.1 Denkarma, folio 298.b.7. See also Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, p. 90, no. 167. Note that in the Denkarma, the full title is given as *'phags pa chos kyi tshul nges pa dang ma nges par 'grol ba'i phyag rgya la 'jug pa*.
- n.2 Phangthangma, 14.
- n.3 For an English translation, see Bendall (ed.) 1902, 6, 89.
- n.4 See Karashima 2010, 461–63.
- n.5 See Karashima 2010, 462, n.24.
- n.6 Note that much later in the text this cattle cart (Tib. *phyugs kyi shing rta*) is called a goat cart (Tib. *ra'i shing rta*). According to Negi (p. 6334), the goat cart is an established type, together with that for cattle and deer.
- n.7 For *bya ba chen po* Negi gives the Sanskrit *mahākṛtyam*.
- n.8 On “conditioning” (*mngon par 'du byed*), cf. the *Abhidharmasamuccaya: cetanā katamā | cittābhisamkāro manaskarma | kuśalākuśalāvyākṛteṣu cittapreṇākarmikā | |* “What is intentional thought? It consists in conditioning by the mind, mental activity. It has the function of directing the mind toward wholesome, unwholesome, or neutral activities.” For a French translation, see Rahula 1971, 7 (English tr. by Boin-Webb 2001, 9). The important term “conditioning” (Skt. *abhisamkāra*) is clarified in the *vyākhyā* (Toh 4054 124b–125a): “The statement ‘it has the function of directing the mind toward wholesome, unwholesome, or neutral activities’ is taught because, in this case, [intentional thought] makes the mind attend to phenomena such as wholesomeness and the rest just as it is conditioned to (Tib. *mngon par 'dus byas pa*).”

- n.9 The Indian long pepper (*Piper longum*) is both a medicine and a spice and is highly irritating to the eye.
- n.10 Translation tentative. The Tibetan reads *nyes pa bden pa dang mi bden pas gzhan dag la gleng bar mi byed*.
- n.11 Tib. *bsam pa chen po*.
- n.12 Tib. *bya ba*.
- n.13 Tib. *mngon par 'du byed pa'i spyod pa'i stobs*.
- n.14 Tib. *bgo bsha'*, Skt. *saṃvibhāga*; in Negi there is also the expression *bgo bsha' byed pa'i ngang tshul can, saṃvibhāgaśīla*.
- n.15 Curiously the same example of the king of the garuḍas is used twice.
- n.16 Tib. *nor bu rin po che dbang gi rgyal po*. According to Edgerton 1953, vol. 2, a *maṇiratnam vaśīrājam* is “a kind of magic gem [that] can display on earth the splendor of solar and lunar palaces.”
- n.17 Note that near the beginning of the text it is called a *cattle cart*.
- n.18 On the legendary *kalaviṅka* bird, which can already sing while still inside its egg and before it has opened its eyes, see Jackson 1992.
- n.19 Tib. *tsan dan sbrul gyi rgyal po*. A rare and precious type of sandalwood.
- n.20 Sakaki, *Mahāvvyutpatti*, no. 6202. According to Monier-Williams, *mandāraḥva* is the red blooms of the coral tree, considered as celestial flowers.
- n.21 Sakaki no. 6164. According to Monier-Williams, *mañjūśaka* is the white blooms of an herbaceous plant, considered as celestial flowers.
- n.22 Tib. *sna ma'i me tog*; Skt. *sumanā* in Negi.
- n.23 Sakaki no. 4224, *nāgavṛkṣa*.
- n.24 Sakaki no. 6207, *taranibarna*.
- n.25 Sakaki no. 6208, *gotaraṇi*.
- n.26 Tib. *dri mchog*; Sakaki, no. 6148, *saugandhikam*.
- n.27 Sakaki no. 6160, *dhanuskarin*. According to Edgerton, *dhānuṣkārin*.
- n.28 Tib. *phung po med pa*.

n.29 The translation “infamous, harsh, and critical” is tentative. The Tibetan reads
grags pa dang sgra dang tshigs su bcad pa ma yin pa.

n.30 Note that the word *chu ra* is equivalent to *chu ra ma*.

b.

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g.

GLOSSARY

g.1 Altruism

lhag pa'i bsam pa

ལྷག་པའི་བསམ་པ།

adhyāśaya

Selfless concern for the well-being of others.

g.2 Asura

lha ma yin

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།

asura

One of the six classes of sentient beings. The *asuras* are dominated by envy, ambition, and hostility, and are incessantly embroiled in disputes with the gods. They are frequently portrayed in Brahmanical and Buddhist mythology as having a disruptive effect on cosmic and social harmony.

g.3 Avalokiteśvara

spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug

སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས་དབང་ཕྱུག

Avalokiteśvara

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the “eight close sons of the Buddha,” he is also known as the bodhisattva who embodies compassion. In certain tantras, he is also the lord of the three families, where he embodies the compassion of the buddhas. In Tibet, he attained great significance as a special protector of Tibet, and in China, in female form, as Guanyin, the most important bodhisattva in all of East Asia.

g.4 Bhaiṣajyarāja

sman gyi rgyal po

སྐྱོན་གྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

Bhaiṣajyarāja

g.5 Bhaiṣajyasamudgata

sman gyi yang dag 'phags

སྐྱོན་གྱི་ཡང་དག་འཕགས།

Bhaiṣajyasamudgata

g.6 Bhikṣu

dge slong

དགེ་སློང་།

bhikṣu

The term *bhikṣu*, which is often translated as “monk,” refers to the highest type among the types of *prātimokṣa* vows that make one part of the monastic community. The term is explained as having at least three possible meanings: (1) someone who begs; (2) someone who has taken the highest level of Buddhist ordination; and (3) someone who has destroyed mental defilements.

g.7 Blessed One

bcom ldan 'das

བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས།

bhagavat

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 (Skt. *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 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 Bodhisattva

byang chub sems dpa'

བྱང་ལྷན་སེམས་དཔལ།

bodhisattva

A person who is dedicated not merely to attaining liberation through attaining the state of an arhat, but to becoming a buddha for the benefit of all beings.

g.9 **Buddhfield**

sangs rgyas kyi zhing

སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་ཞིང་།

buddhakṣetra

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

g.10 **Compassion**

snying rje

སྙིང་རྗེ།

karuṇā

One of the four immeasurables of the Mahāyāna, known in early Buddhism as “pure abodes” (Skt. *brahmavihāra*), which comprise (1) loving kindness, (2) compassion, (3) sympathetic joy, and (4) equanimity. Immeasurable compassion arises from the wish for all living beings to be free from suffering and the causes of suffering.

g.11 **Defilement**

nyon mongs pa

ཉོན་མོངས་པ།

kleśa

A type of mental affliction. The most basic defilements are attachment, aversion, and confusion.

g.12 **Dhāraṇī**

gzungs

གཟུངས།

dhāraṇī

As incantations or spells, *dhāraṇīs* are mnemonic formulas possessed by advanced bodhisattvas that contain a quintessence of their attainments. The same term in Sanskrit and Tibetan also refers to a highly developed power present in bodhisattvas that is a process of memory and recall of detailed teachings. This is best translated “retention” in other contexts.

g.13 Discriminating wisdom

shes rab

ཤེས་རབ།

prajñā

As the sixth of the six perfections, it refers to the profound understanding of the emptiness of all phenomena, the realization of ultimate reality. In other contexts, it refers to the mental factor responsible for ascertaining specific qualities of a given object, such as its characteristics or whether it should be taken up or rejected.

g.14 Eon

bskal pa

བསྐལ་པ།

kalpa

A unit for measuring time; of variable length from several million to billions of years.

g.15 Equanimity

btang snyoms

བཏང་སྟོང་མཁམ།

upekṣā

The fourth of the four immeasurables, an unbiased attitude of equal regard for all sentient beings without discriminating between enemies, friends, or neutral people.

g.16 Five moral precepts

bslab pa'i gzhi lnga

བསྐྱབ་པའི་གཞི་ལྔ།

pañcaśikṣāpada

Abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and intoxicants.

g.17 Four perfect endeavors

yang dag par spong ba bzhi

ཡང་དག་པར་སྤོང་བ་བཞི།

catuḥsamyakprahāṇa

The four perfect endeavors are (1) relinquishing the existing evils and nonvirtues, (2) not giving rise to evils and nonvirtues currently absent, (3) giving rise to virtues not yet present, and (4) increasing virtues already developed.

g.18 Gandharva

dri za

དྲི་ཟ།

gandharva

The term generally refers to a class of nonhuman beings sometimes known as “celestial musicians.” In Abhidharma cosmology, the term is also used to refer to the mental body assumed by any sentient being in the realm of desire (Skt. *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.19 Garuḍa

nam mkha' lding

ནམ་མཁའ་ལྗིང།

garuḍa

A class of nonhuman beings described as eagle-type birds with a gigantic wingspan. They were traditionally enemies of the *nāgas*. In the Vedas, they were thought to have brought nectar from the heavens to earth.

g.20 Hell being

sems can dmyal ba

སེམས་ཅན་དམྱལ་བ།

naraka

One of the five or six classes of beings, engendered by anger and powerful negative actions. They are dominated by great suffering and said to dwell in different hells with specific characteristics.

g.21 Hungry ghost

yi dags

ཡི་དགས།

preta

One of the five or six classes of beings, considered to be the karmic fruition of past miserliness. In Sanskrit, literally “the departed”; they are analogous to the ancestral spirits of Vedic tradition, the *pitrs*, who starve without the offerings of descendants. They live in the realm of Yama, the Lord of Death. They are particularly known to suffer from great hunger and thirst and the inability to acquire sustenance.

g.22 Insight

lhag mthong

ལྷག་མཐོང་།

vipaśyanā

Refers to insight into the nature of reality or the practice of developing such insight. One of the two basic forms of Buddhist meditation, the other being meditative calm (Skt. *samatha*; Tib. *zhi gnas*).

g.23 Jambu River

dzam bu chu bo

ཛམ་བུ་ཚུ་བོ།

Jambunadī

Legendary river carrying the remains of the golden fruit of a legendary *jambu* (rose apple) tree.

g.24 Kalaviṅka

ka la ping ka

ཀ་ལ་ཕིང་ཀ།

kalaviṅka

A legendary bird whose voice is believed to be extremely beautiful. It is often depicted as having a human head.

g.25 King of the Sound Emanated by a Stūpa

mchod rten mngon par bsgrags pa'i sgra skad rgyal po

མཚོད་རྟེན་མངོན་པར་བསྐྱགས་པའི་སྒྲ་སྐད་རྒྱལ་པོ།

—

g.26 Loving kindness

byams pa

བྱམས་པ།

maitrī

One of the four immeasurables of the Mahāyāna, known in early Buddhism as “pure abodes” (Skt. *brahmavihāra*), which comprise (1) loving kindness, (2) compassion, (3) sympathetic joy, and (4) equanimity. Immeasurable loving kindness arises from the wish for all living beings to have happiness and the causes of happiness.

g.27 Mahāsthāmaprāpta

mthu chen thob

མཐུ་ཆེན་ཐོབ།

Mahāsthāmaprāpta

g.28 Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta

'jam dpal gzhon nur gyur pa

འཇམ་དཔལ་གཞོན་ནུར་གྱུར་པ།

Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta

An epithet of Mañjuśrī, the “Ever-Youthful.”

g.29 Meditative calm

zhi gnas

ཞི་གནས།

śamatha

The meditative practice of calming the mind to rest free from the disturbance of thought. One of the two basic forms of Buddhist meditation, the other being insight (Skt. *vipaśyanā*; Tib. *lhag mthong*).

g.30 Merit

bsod nams

བསོད་ནམས།

punya

Wholesome tendencies imprinted in the mind as a result of positive and skillful thoughts, words, and actions that ripen in the experience of happiness and well-being. According to the Mahāyāna, it is important to

dedicate the merit of one's wholesome actions to the benefit of all beings, ensuring that others also experience the results generated by positive actions.

g.31 Mind of awakening

byang chub kyi sems

བྱང་ལྡན་གྱི་སེམས།

bodhicitta

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

g.32 Non-returner

phyir mi 'ong ba

ཕྱིར་སི་འོང་བ།

anāgāmin

One who has achieved the third level of attainment on the path of the śrāvakas, and who is free from further rebirth in the desire realm.

g.33 Omniscient one

thams cad mkhyen pa

ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པ།

sarvajña

An epithet of a buddha.

g.34 Once-returner

lan cig phyir 'ong ba

ལན་ཅིག་ཕྱིར་འོང་བ།

sakṛdāgāmin

One who has achieved the second level of attainment on the path of the śrāvakas, and who will be reborn in saṃsāra only once more.

g.35 Person of the eighth level

gang zag brgyad pa

གང་ཟག་བརྒྱད་པ།

aṣṭamaka

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A person who is “eight steps” away in the arc of their development from becoming an arhat (Tib. *dgra bcom pa*). Specifically, this term refers to one who is on the cusp of becoming a stream enterer (Skt. *srotaāpanna*; Tib. *rgyun du zhugs pa*), and it is the first and lowest stage in a list of eight stages or classes of a noble person (Skt. *āryapudgala*). The person at this lowest stage in the sequence is still on the path of seeing (Skt. *darśanamārga*; Tib. *mthong lam*) and then enters the path of cultivation (Skt. *bhāvanāmārga*; Tib. *sgom lam*) upon attaining the next stage, that of a stream enterer (stage seven). From there they progress through the remaining stages of the śrāvaka path, becoming in turn a once-returner (stages six and five), a non-returner (stages four and three), and an arhat (stages two and one). This same “eighth stage” also appears in a set of ten stages (Skt. *daśabhūmi*; Tib. *sa bcu*) found in Mahāyāna sources, where it is the third out of the ten. Not to be confused with the ten stages of the bodhisattva’s path, these ten stages mark the progress of one who sequentially follows the paths of a śrāvaka, pratyekabuddha, and then bodhisattva on their way to complete buddhahood. In this set of ten stages a person “on the eighth stage” is similarly one who is on the cusp of becoming a stream enterer.

g.36 Prajñāvarma

pradz+nyA barma

པརྒྱེ་བརྩམ།

Prajñāvarma

Indian scholar and translator who lived during the eighth century and came to Tibet on the invitation of King Trisong Detsen. He contributed to the translation of seventy-seven Buddhist works from Sanskrit into Tibetan during his stay in Tibet.

g.37 Pratyekabuddha

rang sangs rgyas

རང་སངས་རྒྱལ།

pratyekabuddha

An individual who, in his or her last life, attains realization by realizing the nature of interdependent origination without relying upon a spiritual guide.

g.38 Precious jewels as brilliant as lightning

nor bu rin po che glog gi sgron ma

ནོར་བུ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་གློག་གི་སྒྲོན་མ།

g.39 Precious jewels of every kind of luster

nor bu rin po che snang ba thams cad

ནོར་བུ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་སྣང་བ་ཐམས་ཅད།

sarvaprabhāsamaṇiratna · sarvaprabhāsamuccayamaṇiratna

g.40 Protector of the world

'jig rten gyi mgon po

འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི་མགོན་པོ།

lokanātha

An epithet of a buddha.

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 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 Refuge

skyabs

སྐྱབས།

śaraṇa

A reference to the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha, the “Three Jewels of Refuge.”

g.43 Spiritual friend

dge ba'i bshes gnyen

དག་བའི་བཤེས་གཉེན།

kalyāṇamitra

A spiritual teacher who can contribute to an individual's progress on the spiritual path to awakening and act wholeheartedly for the welfare of students.

g.44 Śrāvaka

nyan thos

ཉན་ཐོས།

śrāvaka

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

g.45 Stream-enterer

rgyun du zhugs pa

རྒྱུན་དུ་ལུགས་པ།

srotaāpanna

One who has achieved the first level of attainment on the path of the śrāvakas, and who has entered the “stream” of practice that leads to nirvāṇa.

g.46 Sugata

bde bar gshegs pa

བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ།

sugata

An epithet of a buddha meaning “well-gone.”

g.47 Surendrabodhi

su ren dra bo dhi

སུ་རེན་བློ་བློ།

Surendrabodhi

Surendrabodhi came to Tibet during reign of King Ralpachen (r. 815–38 CE). He is listed as the translator of forty-three texts and was one of the small group of *paṇḍitas* responsible for the Mahāvvyutpatti Sanskrit-Tibetan dictionary.

g.48 Sympathetic joy

dga' ba

དགའ་བ།

muditā

The third of the four immeasurables, the others being loving kindness, compassion, and equanimity.

g.49 Tathāgata

de bzhin gshegs pa

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ།

tathāgata

A frequently used synonym for a buddha. The expression is interpreted in different ways, but in general it implies one who has arrived at the realization of the ultimate state.

g.50 Universal emperor

'khor los sgyur ba

འཁོར་ལོས་སྐུར་བ།

cakravartin

A just and pious king who rules over the universe according to the laws of Dharma. Such a monarch is called a *cakravartin* because he wields a disk (Skt. *cakra*) that rolls (Skt. *vantana*) over continents, worlds, and world systems, bringing them under his power.

g.51 Vulture Peak Mountain

bya rgod kyī phung po'i ri

བྱ་རྗེ་དགྱི་ཕུང་པོའི་རི།

gṛdhrakūṭaparvata

A mountain near Rājagṛha, favorite retreat of the Buddha, and setting of many of his discourses.

g.52 Worthy one

dgra bcom pa

དགུ་བཙམ་པ།

arhat

One who has achieved the fourth and final level of attainment on the path of the śrāvakas, and who has attained liberation with the cessation of all mental defilements. It is also used as an epithet of the buddhas. The Skt. means either “worthy one” or “one who has killed their foes” (i.e., afflictions).

g.53 Yakṣa

gnod sbyin

གཞོན་སྒྱིན།

yakṣa

A class of semidivine beings said to dwell in the north, under the jurisdiction of the Great King Vaiśravaṇa. They are said to haunt or protect natural places as well as towns. Yakṣas can be malevolent or benevolent and are known for bestowing wealth and other boons.

g.54 Yama

gshin rje

གཤེན་རྗེ།

Yama

The lord of death in Indian mythology, who judges the dead and rules over the hells and the realm of the hungry ghosts.

g.55 Yeshé Dé

ye shes sde

ཡེ་ཤེས་སྡེ།

—

A prolific Tibetan translator active during the late eighth and early ninth centuries.

g.56 Yojana

dpag tshad

དཔག་ཚད།

yojana

The longest unit of distance in classical India. The lack of a uniform standard for the smaller units means that there is no precise equivalent, especially as its theoretical length tended to increase over time. Therefore, it can mean between four and ten miles.

