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Siṃha's Questions

Siṃhaparipṛcchā

འཕགས་པ་སང་གས་ལུས་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་མདོ།

'phags pa seng ges zhus pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra “Siṃha’s Questions”

Āryasiṃhapariṣcchānāmamahāyānasūtra

· Toh 81 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 44 (dkon brtsegs, cha), folios 27.a–29.b

TRANSLATED INTO TIBETAN BY

· Dānaśīla · Munivarman · Yeshé Dé ·



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co.

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SUMMARY

s.

s.1 At the opening of this sūtra, King Ajātaśatru's son Siṃha and his five hundred attendants approach the Buddha, who is on Vulture Peak. After paying homage and offering golden parasols, Siṃha asks the Buddha a series of questions about the conduct of bodhisattvas. The Buddha answers each of Siṃha's questions with a series of verses describing the various karmic causes that result in the qualities and attributes of bodhisattvas. Afterward, when Siṃha and his attendants promise to train in this teaching, the Buddha smiles, causing the three-thousandfold world system to quake. When the bodhisattva Ajita asks the Buddha why he smiled, the Buddha explains that Siṃha and all of his companions will become buddhas and establish buddhafiels similar to that of Amitābha.

ac.

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ac.1

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ac.2

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

INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 *Siṃha's Questions* is listed as the thirty-seventh chapter of the Ratnakūṭa (Heap of Jewels) section of the Kangyur and was translated into Tibetan from an unknown Sanskrit source in the early ninth century by the Indian scholars Dānaśīla and Munivarman and the Tibetan translator and chief editor Yeshé Dé. It is listed in both ninth-century imperial catalogs, the Denkarma and Phangthangma.¹

i.2 There are three versions of the text found in the Chinese Tripiṭaka. The translator of Taishō 344, the first and likely earliest version of the sūtra, is unknown.² Taishō 343 was translated by Dharmarakṣa (*zhu fa hu* 竺法護) during the Jing Dynasty, around 200–300 CE. The text was again revised in China by the Indian translator Bodhiruci (*pu ti liu zhi* 菩提流志) sometime between 706 and 713, when he undertook a project to translate the Ratnakūṭa collection as a whole (Taishō 310) into Chinese. At that time, *Siṃha's Questions* was included among fifteen sūtras that Bodhiruci chose to retranslate while accepting into his collection the Chinese of twenty-two other sūtras that had been translated previously.³

i.3 Any Sanskrit original was thought to be lost until recently, when a Sanskrit manuscript of *Siṃha's Questions*, along with nineteen other sūtras, was found in the Potala Palace in Lhasa. Bhikṣuṇī Vinītā published a critical edition of this collection in the series *Sanskrit Texts from the Autonomous Region* (2010) along with an emended edition of the Sanskrit, parallel editions of the Tibetan and Chinese, an English translation based on the Sanskrit, and reference to other Tibetan and Chinese recensions in the notes. Unfortunately, due to the manuscript's inaccessibility and the collection missing a final colophon, its origin and date are currently unknown.⁴

i.4 The sūtra is not particularly well known, but verses of it are quoted in a few Indian commentaries, including Śāntideva's training anthology, the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*. It is also quoted in some Tibetan commentaries, usually in the

context of using the Buddha's words to verify that a certain virtuous practice is the concordant cause for developing a particular positive result or quality.⁵

i.5 *Siṃha's Questions* presents the practices of bodhisattvas through a question-and-answer dialogue between the Buddha and Prince Siṃha, the son of King Ajātaśatru of Magadha. At the beginning of the sūtra, Siṃha and five hundred of his attendants approach the Buddha and supplicate him, each offering a golden parasol. Feeling confident, Siṃha asks the Buddha a series of questions about the conduct of bodhisattvas concerning how one attains the various sublime qualities and attributes possessed by bodhisattvas and by the Buddha himself. The Buddha then directly answers each question, listing the practice or virtuous conduct that acts as the concordant cause for acquiring each particular quality. The dialogue thereby becomes an elementary teaching on virtuous causes and results, encompassing a broad range of attainments and how they are accomplished through the proper virtuous activity.

i.6 The dialogue between Siṃha and the Buddha seems to keep a wide audience in mind, discussing matters that could potentially appeal to a layperson's worldly interests, such as acquiring wealth, beauty, power, and loyal servants. However, the primary focus of Siṃha's series of questions remains how to correctly follow the practices of bodhisattvas and attain the final goal of becoming a buddha. Even when his questions are concerned with how to attain wealth and power, they can be understood to be relevant to a bodhisattva's career (to attract followers, etc.), and we can surmise that Siṃha's interest in them is for the benefit of others.

i.7 At the conclusion of the sūtra, Siṃha and his attendants promise to follow this teaching. The Buddha is pleased and gives them an extraordinary prophecy: Siṃha and all five hundred attendants will become buddhas and will, three hundred eons after the emanation of Maitreya, in an eon called Great Illumination, establish buddhafi elds "like that of Amitābha."

i.8 Prince Siṃha himself is an elusive figure in Buddhist literature. While his father, King Ajātaśatru, is quite famous in the sūtras, any mention of this particular Siṃha seems to be unique to this sūtra. King Ajātaśatru's other son and eventual successor, Udayabhadra, is much better known in the histories and literature, but from our research there does not seem to be any connection between these two princes, nor mention of Siṃha, outside of this sūtra.⁶

i.9 Our translation is based primarily on the Tibetan found in the Degé Kangyur, with reference to all the recensions found in the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) and Stok Palace Kangyurs. Any significant differences

in meaning between these versions have been documented in the notes. We also consulted fragments of the text found in the collection from Dunhuang, but these did not show any notable differences.⁷

i.10 The Sanskrit manuscript from the Potala was closely consulted, as were the Sanskrit verses quoted in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*. The Sanskrit witnesses have been favored in some instances where they present a clearer reading than the Tibetan, particularly when these differences were verified by the Chinese translations. In this regard, Vinītā's critical edition was an invaluable source, as we consulted it for the Sanskrit as well as for its comparative editions of the Tibetan and Chinese. In cases where we have referred to the Chinese, we have given preference to Bodhiruci's translation, as it was a revision made with knowledge of the previous Chinese versions, and it also corresponds most closely with the Sanskrit manuscript. Any significant differences in meaning found in the Sanskrit and Chinese have been documented in the notes.

**The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra
Simḥa's Questions**

1.

The Translation

[F.27.a]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas!

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was dwelling in Rājagṛha on Vulture Peak, together with a great saṅgha of 1,250 monks and a great saṅgha of bodhisattvas.⁸

1.2 Knowing all and seeing all,
The Victorious One is a peerless being.⁹
The son¹⁰ of King Ajātaśatru
Was known as Siṃha.¹¹ {1}

1.3 Accompanied and attended
By five hundred wealthy noblemen,¹² [F.27.b]
He departed from Rājagṛha
With great royal grandeur.¹³ {2}

1.4 Carrying golden parasols,¹⁴
They went before the perfect Buddha.
Bowing their heads to the feet of the Buddha,
They offered the five hundred parasols. {3}

1.5 Offering these to the Great Sage,
All of them set out for awakening.
By the power of the perfect Buddha,
They became fearless.¹⁵ {4}

1.6 Siṃha joined his palms in reverence
And asked the perfect Buddha,
“Will the Guide¹⁶ please explain to me
The conduct of bodhisattvas? {5}

- 1.7 “How does one become beautiful?
How does one take miraculous birth?¹⁷
How does one remember previous births?
Great Sage, please give your instruction.” {6}
- 1.8 Knowing their pure intentions with his wisdom,
The Buddha gave his instruction:
“I will give a teaching on what you have asked:
The conduct of bodhisattvas.¹⁸ {7}
- 1.9 “One becomes beautiful through patience.
One takes miraculous birth by pure conduct.¹⁹
One recalls past lives by giving the Dharma.
Youth, know it to be thus!”²⁰ {8}
- 1.10 “How does one manifest
The thirty-two marks, the eighty excellent signs,
And a body radiant like gold²¹
That delights beings upon seeing?” {9}
- 1.11 “The marks manifest through complete generosity.
Likewise, the excellent signs come to be through love.
The golden radiance of the victorious ones
Manifests by having an attitude of equality toward all beings.”²² {10}
- 1.12 “How is retention attained?
How does absorption arise?
How do statements become acceptable?
Great Sage, please give your teaching!”²³ {11}
- 1.13 “Retention is attained through receptivity to the Dharma.
Absorption arises by training the mind.
Statements become acceptable
When one abandons senseless talk.”²⁴ {12}
- 1.14 “How does one become mindful?
O Sage,²⁵ how does one become intelligent?
How does one come to act according to the Dharma?²⁶ [F.28.a]
O Holy Being,²⁷ how does one become wise?”²⁸ {13}
- 1.15 “One comes to possess mindfulness by being undeceiving.²⁹
One becomes intelligent by contemplating meaning.
One comes to act according to the Dharma³⁰ by having reverence.
One becomes wise by knowing the characteristics of phenomena.”³¹ {14}

- 1.16 “By what action is a bodhisattva³² born
In the presence of the guardians of the world?³³
How do they come to ask questions
Directly³⁴ before the guardians of the world?”³⁵ {15}
- 1.17 “The one who never obstructs
The giving of Dharma
Will with great swiftness³⁶
Come to meet the guardians of the world.”³⁷ {16}
- 1.18 “How does one relinquish rebirth in inopportune states?
How does one go forth to favorable states?
How does one become heedful
Wherever one takes birth throughout all of one’s lives?” {17}
- 1.19 “Inopportune births are relinquished through faith.³⁸
One goes forth to favorable states through moral discipline.
One becomes always heedful
By becoming familiar with emptiness.”³⁹ {18}
- 1.20 “O Sage,⁴⁰ how do bodhisattvas⁴¹
Purify their karma?
How do they dodge the snares of Māra?
How do they avoid becoming bereft of Dharma?”⁴² {19}
- 1.21 “Karma is purified through firm resolution.⁴³
Māra is subdued through perseverance.
They avoid becoming bereft of the Dharma⁴⁴
By acting according to their words.” {20}
- 1.22 “How does one’s voice become like the pleasing song
Of the kalaviṅka bird and like the voice of Brahmā?
O Sage,⁴⁵ how does one please beings
With their diverse inclinations?”⁴⁶ {21}
- 1.23 “The voice of Brahmā is obtained by speaking truthfully.
The voice becomes pleasing by abandoning harsh words.⁴⁷
One pleases beings⁴⁸
By relinquishing senseless talk and slander.”⁴⁹ {22}
- 1.24 “How does one come to have a long life?
How does one come to have fewer illnesses?
How, O Supreme Guide,⁵⁰
Does a retinue⁵¹ come to be undivided?” {23}

- 1.25 “One comes to have a long life by not killing.
One will have fewer illnesses by causing no harm.⁵²
A retinue comes to be undivided
When one reconciles disputes.” {24}
- 1.26 “How does one obtain wealth?⁵³ [F.28.b]
How do possessions cease to diminish?
How does one become distinguished
Wherever one is born?” {25}
- 1.27 “Wealth is obtained through nonattachment.⁵⁴
Possessions increase by being without stinginess.
One will be distinguished wherever one is born
By being without jealousy.”⁵⁵ {26}
- 1.28 “How does one obtain divine sight?
How does one obtain divine hearing?
And how, O Guide, does one know
The dying, transmigration, and rebirth of beings?”⁵⁶ {27}
- 1.29 “Divine sight is obtained by giving lamps.
The ear is purified⁵⁷ by giving music.
The dying, transmigration, and rebirth of beings are known through
wisdom.⁵⁸
Thus do these accomplishments arise.” {28}
- 1.30 “O Guide, how do the defilements of bodhisattvas⁵⁹
Come to be exhausted?
How do they recollect previous lives?
How do they obtain miraculous powers?”⁶⁰ {29}
- 1.31 “The miraculous powers are obtained by offering vehicles.
The recollections are gained by cultivating⁶¹ mindfulness.
They reach the cessation of defilements
By fully abandoning the two extremes.” {30}
- 1.32 “How is the buddhafield perfected?
How is its saṅgha perfected?
How does its light shine perfectly
Such that the ten directions are illuminated?”⁶² {31}⁶³
- 1.33 “The buddhafield is perfected through aspiration.
The saṅgha is perfected by magnetizing disciples.⁶⁴
The ten directions are illuminated brightly

- By offering jeweled canopies.” {32}
- 1.34 “By what quality⁶⁵ does one attain
The embodiment⁶⁶ of all qualities,
So that a bodhisattva⁶⁷ will be dear to beings
Wherever they are born?”⁶⁸ {33}
- 1.35 “By surrendering the mind to the purpose of awakening
In order to liberate all beings,⁶⁹
They attain the embodiment of all qualities
And will thus be held dear.” {34}
- 1.36 “In what instruction should one train,
And how should one cultivate the mind,
To become an omniscient teacher
Like you, Great Sage?” {35}⁷⁰
- 1.37 “If one trains in being impartial
To all beings without exception,
And if the mind is cultivated in that impartiality,
One will become an all-surpassing victorious one.” {36}
- 1.38 “Throughout all one’s lives,
How will the mind of awakening
Never be abandoned even in a dream, [F.29.a]
Let alone while awake?”⁷¹ {37}⁷²
- 1.39 “In whatever region one dwells,
Whether a village or a city,
By correctly guiding others toward awakening,
The mind of awakening is not abandoned.” {38}
- 1.40 “Wherever one is born,⁷³
How can one acquire great strength
And always be elevated with power
So that even ten million māras can do no harm?”⁷⁴ {39}
- 1.41 “In this life, if one offers the five essences⁷⁵
And gives courage to those who are afraid,
Then wherever one is born⁷⁶
One will also have great strength,
Always be elevated with power,
And be unharmed even by ten million māras.”⁷⁷ {40}⁷⁸
- 1.42 Having heard this teaching

- On the conduct of bodhisattvas⁷⁹
Directly from the Guardian of the World,
Siṃha⁸⁰ was overjoyed.⁸¹ {41}⁸²
- 1.43 He and his companions
Spoke the following words:⁸³
“We will train
In this teaching on conduct.”⁸⁴ {42}
- 1.44 Then the Buddha smiled,
And the trichiliocosm quaked.⁸⁵
Ajita then asked the Buddha
The following question:
“Why did you smile?
Great Sage,⁸⁶ please explain this!”⁸⁷ {43}⁸⁸
- 1.45 And so to Ajita
The Buddha replied,
“Ajita, please listen to the reason
That I smiled.”⁸⁹ {44}
- 1.46 “Previously,⁹⁰ these boys⁹¹ assembled before
Eight hundred million buddhas and a quadrillion more.⁹²
For the purpose of awakening,
They made offerings to those guides of humans.⁹³ {45}
- 1.47 “Since the time of⁹⁴ Dīpaṅkara—
The perfect buddha,⁹⁵ supreme among people⁹⁶—
I have been ripening
These brahmin boys.⁹⁷ {46}
- 1.48 “When the splendid⁹⁸ eon called
Great Illumination⁹⁹ arises,
In that single eon
They will all become guides.¹⁰⁰ {47}¹⁰¹
- 1.49 “They will become guides for the world
Named Jñānaketudhvaja,¹⁰²
And their array will be
Just like that of Amitābha. {48}
- 1.50 “From the time of Maitreya
Through three hundred full eons, [F.29.b]
They will always

- Meet with buddhas.¹⁰³ {49}
- 1.51 “Moreover, whoever hears but the name
Under which they attain awakening
Shall, without exception, become incomparable
And omniscient beings in the world.¹⁰⁴ {50}
- 1.52 “Whoever, on hearing this prophecy,¹⁰⁵
Becomes inspired
Will have merit unparalleled
Throughout these three worlds. {51}
- 1.53 “Consider someone who for six thousand eons
Filled up all the buddhafiels¹⁰⁶
With jewels and offered them
For the purpose of awakening.¹⁰⁷ {52}
- 1.54 “The tally of that person’s merit
Could never match or compare to
Hearing this Dharma presentation¹⁰⁸
And setting out for the sake of awakening.”¹⁰⁹ {53}
- 1.55 When this Dharma had been expounded,
By the power of the Protector of the World,¹¹⁰
The gods brought down a rain of flowers,
And the trichiliocosm quaked. {54}
- 1.56 Siṃha, along with his companions,¹¹¹
Obtained the five superknowledges and,
Having made offerings for one week,
Took ordination in the teaching.¹¹² {55}
- 1.57 All of them obtained absorption
And inexhaustible¹¹³ retention.
Wishing to accomplish¹¹⁴ the welfare of beings,
They brought them to¹¹⁵ the Dharma of the buddhas.¹¹⁶ {56}
- 1.58 When this Dharma presentation was taught, eight hundred million beings
set out for supreme awakening.¹¹⁷ When the Blessed One had spoken,
Siṃha, along with his companions and the world with its gods, humans,
asuras, and gandharvas, rejoiced and praised the words of the Blessed
One.¹¹⁸
- 1.59 *This concludes the thirty-seventh chapter, “Siṃha’s Questions,” from the eleven
hundred chapters of the Dharma presentation of The Noble Great Heap of Jewels.*

c.

Colophon

c.1 The Indian preceptors Dānaśīla and Munivarman and the chief editor-translator Bandé Yeshé Dé translated, edited, and finalized this according to the new lexical register.

ab.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>D</i>	Degé (<i>sde dge</i>) Kangyur
<i>H</i>	Lhasa (<i>zhol</i>) Kangyur
<i>K</i>	Kangxi (Peking late 17th century) Kangyur
<i>N</i>	Narthang (<i>snar thang</i>) Kangyur
<i>S</i>	Stok Palace (<i>stog pho brang bris ma</i>) Kangyur
<i>Sanskrit</i>	Sanskrit manuscript found in the Potala Palace (see introduction and bibliography)
<i>Taishō</i> 310	8th century Chinese translation by Bodhiruci (菩提流志), Taishō 310 (37)
<i>Taishō</i> 343	3rd century Chinese translation by Dharmarakṣa (竺法護)
<i>Taishō</i> 344	An early Chinese translation by unknown translators
<i>Y</i>	Yongle (<i>g.yung lo</i>) Kangyur
<i>Śikṣ</i>	Sanskrit text of <i>Śikṣāsamuccaya</i> by Śāntideva

n.

NOTES

- n.1 In both catalogs it is listed as being sixty ślokaś in length, although the Phangthangma notably does not list it under the Ratnakūṭa collection but instead includes it among a general list of short sūtras less than one *bampo* in length.
- n.2 Vinīṭā 2010, vol. I,2, p. 456.
- n.3 Pederson 1980, p. 60.
- n.4 Currently the manuscript is kept in the Potala Palace in Lhasa. Vinīṭā's critical edition is based on a copy of the manuscript kept in the China Tibetology Research Center. For further details on the state of this manuscript see Vinīṭā 2010, vol. I,1, pp. xv–xvii.
- n.5 Our research has revealed two Sakya texts that quote a text called *seng ges zhus pa* (*Siṃha's Questions*), saying that it decries the negative effects of giving someone alcohol: "If one gives alcohol to another, one will be born five hundred times with crippled limbs" (*gzhan la chang sbyin na skye ba lnga brgyar lag rdum du skye*). See Könchok Lhündrup and Sangyé Phuntsok, *sa skya'i chos 'byung gces bsduś* volume 4, p. 55; the same quote is found in Künga Sangpo, *kun dga' bzang po'i bka' 'bum*, volume 4, folio 314.a (p. 627). However, this passage is not found in any version of the text known to us. In fact, the sūtra seems to only discuss virtuous causes for positive qualities and does not discuss the inverse negative ones.
- n.6 Our research included a thorough survey of Sanskrit, Pali, and Tibetan resources for any mention of Siṃha. There is a Licchavi general named Siha (the Pali equivalent of Siṃha), who questions the Buddha about generosity, found in the Anguttara Nikāya of the Pali canon (A.iii.38f; iv.79f), but he is unrelated to the Prince Siṃha of this sūtra. Further research on Siṃha's

identity might consider untranslated Chinese sources, which falls outside the scope of this project.

- n.7 The first of the two fragments, IOL Tib J 201, is not currently available. The second fragment, IOL Tib J 202, did not show any significant difference from the passages found in the Kangyur witnesses.
- n.8 The opening in the Sanskrit manuscript is somewhat unclear, as the traditional opening itself immediately enters into verse, and the description of the Buddha's retinue is omitted. Vinīta suggests it is likely that this opening became corrupted through the processes of versification. See Vinīta 2010, vol. I,2, p. 456. Vinīta's conjectural reconstruction for this opening is as follows: "Thus have I heard. At one time the Blessed One left Rājagṛha, / the victor, the unparalleled one, would roam about at the Vulture's Peak" (*evaṃ mayā śrutam ekasmin samaye bhagavān rājagṛhāt samuddhitaḥ | vyavahared gṛdhrakūṭe jino hy apratipudgalaḥ | |*). "And together with a great saṅgha of bodhisattvas" is missing in Taishō 310.
- n.9 These two lines are included in the first verse of the Potala Sanskrit manuscript, where Vinīta has conjecturally reconstructed the phrase *jino hy apratipudgalaḥ* ("the victor, the unparalleled one"). Because of this, verses 1–4 of the Tibetan are out of line with the Sanskrit but realign with verse 5 in both editions due to the omission in the Sanskrit of the second half of verse 4 (see [n.15](#)). These two lines are absent in Taishō 310.
- n.10 Taishō 310 reads "the beloved son" (所愛之子).
- n.11 It is curious that the anonymously translated Chinese version (Taishō 344) names the prince 和休 (*he xiu*). Old Chinese phonology (Karlgren 1957) give this as *g'āb χiāb* or similar, whereas Tang dynasty reconstructions (Stimson 1976) would suggest **huσ*xiou*, which approximates the Indic *siṃha* only if the sequence of syllables is reversed. Assuming the possibility that 和休 is metathesis, 休和 may denote an attempt to transcribe the Prakrit form *sīha* (Woolner 1912, p. 213), which also means "Lion."
- n.12 The N, H, and S editions of the Kangyur differ from D and the Sanskrit, as they all have "noblewomen," or literally "daughters of merchants" (*tshong dpon bu mo*); however, all the Kangyur editions later on in verse 47 refer to Siṃha's attendants as "these brahmin boys" (*bram ze'i khye'u*). Usually, the term *khye'u* refers to boys, so we have translated it accordingly. Taishō 310 reads "five hundred friends" (與其同友五百人俱。).
- n.13 This line is absent in Taishō 310.

- n.14 Taishō 310 has “various types of parasols” (種種幢幡寶蓋) rather than “golden parasols.”
- n.15 These last two lines in verse 4 are not found in the Sanskrit edition or any of the Chinese translations.
- n.16 Taishō 310 has “Tathāgata” (如來).
- n.17 Taishō 310 reads “How can one be lotus-born?” (蓮花中化生).
- n.18 This verse is rendered in prose in Taishō 310 as “At that time, the Tathāgata, who had reached the shore of perfection in all conduct, replied to the question and spoke the following verses” (爾時如來了達諸行究竟彼岸, 隨問而答即說頌曰).
- n.19 Taishō 310 reads that the cause for miraculous birth is generosity (Ch. 施, correlating to Skt. *dāna*). The line in Taishō 310 reads, “One becomes lotus-born through giving” (施蓮花化生).
- n.20 Śikṣ places the last two lines of verse 8 after verse 16, which also refers to the giving of Dharma.
- n.21 This third line of the verse is absent in Taishō 310.
- n.22 The last two lines of this verse read differently in Taishō 310: “Through having an attitude of equality toward all beings, one has the form that delights beings upon seeing” (等心於眾生, 觀者無厭足).
- n.23 This fourth line of this verse is absent in Taishō 310.
- n.24 The fourth line of this verse in Taishō 310 reads, “when one respects all beings” (敬重於眾生).
- n.25 Omitted in the Sanskrit, which gives “O Great Sage” (*mahāmune*) in the fourth line.
- n.26 Tib. *chos spyod 'gyur*; Sanskrit: *gatimān* (“imbued with practices”).
- n.27 The Sanskrit has “O Great Sage” (*mahāmune*).
- n.28 The last two lines of Taishō 310 read, “[How can they achieve] practicing as taught in Dharma; [How can they be] solid [...] and indestructible?” (如法而修行, 堅固不可壞). Vinītā 2010, vol. I,2, p. 471, note c.
- n.29 Tib. *g.yo med pa* (“undeceiving”) can also be read as “unwavering”; however, the Sanskrit *aśaṭhaḥ* (“not being false”) and the Chinese 不諂 (“not

flattering”) support the former connotation used here. The Tibetan *g.yo ba med pa* (= *aśaṭhaḥ*) is attested in Negi 1993, p. 6088.

- n.30 See [n.26](#).
- n.31 The Sanskrit manuscript reads *paṇḍīto dharmanakṣayā* (“One becomes wise by safeguarding the Dharma”). Taishō 310 reads, “by protecting Dharma his mind becomes solid” (尊重所修行，護法心堅固). Vinītā 2010, vol. I,2, p. 473, note a.
- n.32 Reading the Sanskrit. In the Tibetan the subject is omitted.
- n.33 We are here following the Sanskrit manuscript and Chinese by placing this epithet for buddhas in the plural, since the Tibetan is ambiguous as to whether it is singular or plural. Although here in Siṃha’s question this might seem a bit odd, due to the cosmology that is referenced later on in the sūtra, it makes sense for Siṃha to speak about meeting with *many* buddhas throughout the multi-lifetime career of a bodhisattva.
- n.34 D: *mngon sum du*; Sanskrit: *viśāradaḥ* (“with confidence”).
- n.35 The last two lines of this verse read differently in Taishō 310: “As [we] come to ask for the subtle truth, may the Tathāgata tell [us about it]” (能請微妙義，唯願如來說).
- n.36 This third line in Taishō 310 reads, “By doing that, he will always be able to...” (因此故恆得).
- n.37 Taishō 310 reads “tathāgatas” (諸如來) rather than “guardians of the world.”
- n.38 Sanskrit: *śrāddho ’kṣaṇaṃ varjayati*. Śikṣ quotes as *śrāddhayā kṣaṇam akṣaṇaṃ varjayati* (“Opportune and inopportune births are relinquished through faith”).
- n.39 Here the Sanskrit applies the adverb “always” to “becoming familiar,” which are both in the same pāda in the Sanskrit manuscript: *śūnyatāṃ bhāvayen nityam*.
- n.40 Omitted in the Sanskrit and Taishō 310.
- n.41 The Sanskrit has the singular *bodhisattvaḥ*.
- n.42 The last two lines of this verse in Taishō 310 read “How can he be loved by all in every lifespan?” (而於世世中，為眾之所愛). Vinītā 2010, vol. I,2, p. 477, note c.

- n.43 Here we are following the Sanskrit *adhimokṣa* (“firm resolution”), which is confirmed by Taishō 310, 勝解. The Tibetan has *rnām par grol ba* (“complete liberation”), which in this case would suggest the Sanskrit back-translation *vimokṣa*.
- n.44 Taishō 310 reads “he will be loved wherever he is born” (如說而修行，所生令眾愛). Vinītā (2010), vol. I,2, 473, note e.
- n.45 “O Sage” is absent in Taishō 310.
- n.46 The last two lines of this verse in Taishō 310 read, “How does one make beings / feel delighted upon seeing them?” (云何令世間，見者皆歡喜).
- n.47 This line in Taishō 310 reads, “The voice becomes like the song of the kalaviṅka bird through speaking gentle words” (迦陵由軟語).
- n.48 For this line, Taishō 310 has “One makes those who see them feel delighted” (見者皆歡喜).
- n.49 Here an equivalent of the Tibetan term *phra ma* (“slander”) is not found in the Sanskrit manuscript (which would have read as *piśuna* or *paiśunya*), though it is found in Taishō 310. See also Silk’s analysis of this section, where he offers a very different reading of the unemended manuscript: “Who separates the united pleases one of multiple inclinations.” Silk 2013, p. 78.
- n.50 The Sanskrit has “O Great Sage” (*mahāmune*).
- n.51 Following the Sanskrit, which gives the singular *pārivara*. The Tibetan has *g.yog ’khor rnams* (“attendants”).
- n.52 Rather than “by causing no harm,” Taishō 310 has “by reducing the sorrow of others” (除他憂).
- n.53 Here term *don* (Skt. *arthāḥ*) is translated as “wealth.”
- n.54 D: *chags pa med pas*; Sanskrit: *alobhena*. Taishō 310 has “being without jealousy” (Ch. 不嫉) to be the cause of obtaining wealth, although it may be implied that this is jealousy for other’s wealth, which would correlate to *alobha* in the Sanskrit. The Tibetan has “being without jealousy” (*phrag dog med pas*) as the cause for the third quality in the Buddha’s reply, for being “distinguished wherever one is born.”
- n.55 For the last two lines of this verse the Sanskrit reads, “Without envy, one is distinguished. Being humble, one always becomes the best” (*anīrṣayā*

maheśatvaṃ nirmānāgragataḥ sadā | |). Taishō 310 is closer to the Sanskrit reading here: “Be humble to accomplish honor, / And one will possess might, power, and ease” (謙下成尊貴，有威德自在).

- n.56 Verses 27 through 30 constitute the six superknowledges (*ṣaḍabhijñā*), although for the third among these, which is represented in the last two lines of this verse, the Sanskrit reads differently: “How, O Guide, does one come to know / The arising thoughts of beings?” (*cittotpattiṃ ca sattvānāṃ jñānte kena nāyaka*). Taishō 310’s parallel verse supports the Sanskrit, although the two sets of questions appear in separate locations in the text and in the opposite order. The two older Chinese translations support the Tibetan, representing the third superknowledge as knowing the death and transmigration of beings, rather than their thoughts.
- n.57 Rather than “the ear is purified,” Taishō 310 reads “divine hearing is obtained” (成天耳).
- n.58 Here the Sanskrit reads *cittotpattijñatā jñānād* (“The arising thoughts of beings are known through wisdom”). Taishō 310 says this is acquired through “avoiding the two extremes” (捨離於二邊).
- n.59 This translation follows the reading in the Sanskrit witness, which gives the plural *bodhisattvānām*.
- n.60 In Taishō 310 the order of these lines is different: miraculous powers come first, followed by previous lives and then defilements.
- n.61 Tib. *bsgom pa*. While Vinītā gives the emended Sanskrit *abhyāsād* (“constancy”), Silk prefers the unemended manuscript reading of *anāsād* (“nondestruction”). Silk 2013, p. 78.
- n.62 The third and fourth lines of this verse read differently in Taishō 310: “How does one obtain perfect light that follows the body? The ocean of merits is to be explained” (獲隨體圓光，功德海當說).
- n.63 Verses 31 and 32 here appear later in the Sanskrit manuscript as Siṃha’s last question in the series, right after verse 40. The sequence of verses here follows the Tibetan translation.
- n.64 For this line, Taishō 310 has “The saṅgha is perfected through the power of patience” (忍力眾成就).
- n.65 Tib. *chos*; Sanskrit and Śikṣ have *karman* (“deed”).

- n.66 Tib. *bsdu ba*; Sanskrit: *saṃgraha*. Vinīta interprets this to mean one “attracts” all qualities. Vinīta 2010, vol. I,2, p. 489.
- n.67 The Sanskrit omits “bodhisattva.”
- n.68 This verse is somewhat different in the Potala Sanskrit manuscript: “Through what act / Are all the dharmas included? / O Leader, how does one become / Dear to all beings?” (*saṃgrahaḥ sarvadharmāṇāṃ karmaṇā kena jāyate | priyaś ca sarvasattvānāṃ kathaṃ bhavati nāyaka | |*). Note that the Sanskrit gives two questions here, while in the Tibetan there is only one. This verse is cited in Śīkṣ; while the first two lines are identical to the Potala Sanskrit manuscript, the second two lines support the Tibetan: *priyaś ca bhoti sattvānāṃ yatra yatropapadyate*.
- n.69 Taishō 310 reads differently: “By having sufficient great aspiration / And by not retreating from the mind of awakening” (勝志樂具足，不退菩提心). “In order to liberate all beings” is absent.
- n.70 There is no parallel for verses 35 and 36 in any of the Chinese translations.
- n.71 This last line of the verse is absent in Taishō 310.
- n.72 The following two verses, 37 and 38, are quoted in Śīkṣ. The content is quite similar to the Sanskrit manuscript. However, Siṃha’s question has been changed to a statement by exchanging the interrogative (*kena*) for a demonstrative pronoun (*tena*).
- n.73 The first line of this verse is absent in Taishō 310.
- n.74 Given the omission of the first line in Taishō 310 of this verse, the fourth line differs as well: “Hopefully the Honored One will explain it” (唯願人尊說).
- n.75 There is a parallel of this phrase found in the *Divyāvadāna*, where the Buddha describes thirty-seven ways that a wise person offers gifts: “He gives a gift of the five essences, which results in his having great strength in all his lives to come.” Rotman 2017, p. 265.
- n.76 This line is absent in Taishō 310.
- n.77 This final line of the verse is absent in Taishō 310.
- n.78 This verse is extended by half a verse’s length in both the Tibetan and Sanskrit.
- n.79 Reading the Sanskrit, which gives the plural *bodhisattvānām*.

- n.80 Sanskrit has *nṛpātmaja* (“son of the king”), rather than *siṃha*.
- n.81 The last three lines of this verse are absent in Taishō 310.
- n.82 From here onward, Taishō 310 is in prose rather than verse.
- n.83 Sanskrit adds *prāñjalir* (“with hands folded in respect”).
- n.84 The N and H editions of the Kangyur have “steadfast conduct” (*spyod pa brtan pa*). The Sanskrit adds “O Sage” (*mune*).
- n.85 For the last two lines of verse 43, the Sanskrit reads “The Buddha revealed a smile illuminating numerous fields” (*smitaṃ prāviṣkarod buddho 'nekakṣetrāvabhāsakam |*). Taishō 310 matches the Sanskrit.
- n.86 Tib. *thub chen*; Sanskrit has the vocative “Lord” (*vibho*).
- n.87 In Taishō 310, “please explain this” is followed by “to rid us of doubts” (斷除疑惑).
- n.88 This verse is expanded by the two lines of verse in the Tibetan. It is of regular meter length in the Sanskrit.
- n.89 “Please listen to the reason / That I smiled” is absent in Taishō 310.
- n.90 “Previously” (*purā*) is taken from the Sanskrit. Taishō 310 also reflects this with 於往昔.
- n.91 In the Chinese version, the subject is “the prince and his five hundred friends” (此王子等五百同友).
- n.92 Here the Sanskrit reads this number as eighty *koṭis* and twelve *niyutas*. Taishō 310 has ten *niyutas* and eighty *koṭis* (十那由他八十億).
- n.93 “They made offerings to the guides of humans” is absent in Taishō 310.
- n.94 Tib. *tshun chad du*; Sanskrit has *upāharya*, “after having offered...” (according to Vinītā’s emendation, *upahāya* is found in the Sanskrit manuscript). Vinītā 2010, p. 498, n. 4.
- n.95 Sanskrit has *mahārṣim* (“great sage”).
- n.96 The phrase “supreme among people” is absent in the Chinese.
- n.97 For the last two pādas of this verse the Sanskrit reads, “I have ripened them when they showed promise of accomplishment” (*paripācitā mayā caite yadā siddhipradāyakāḥ | |*). Taishō 310 also includes “When I came before the

Buddha Dīpaṅkara as a young brahmin I brought them to ripen” (而我往在然燈佛時。作婆羅門子成熟於彼). This addition, implying that the Buddha was there with the five hundred brahmin boys, relates to the narrative of the brahmin Megha, a previous incarnation of the Buddha Śākyamuni who made an offering to the Buddha Dīpaṅkara and received from him the prophecy that he would someday attain buddhahood as Śākyamuni. The *Mahāvastu* recounts this narrative while also mentioning five hundred brahmins who were fellow students of Megha, although it does not mention them going before Dīpaṅkara. See Conze 1973, pp. 20–24.

- n.98 This reading follows D: *mdzes pa*, which comes close to reflecting the Sanskrit *suśobhana*; K has *mdzes po*; Y, H, N, and S have “great” (*chen po*).
- n.99 The name of this eon varies significantly among the Chinese versions: Taishō 310 has 安樂光嚴 (“Adorned with Radiant Peace and Happiness,” Skt. **Sukhaprabhāśubha*), although 光嚴 may just be a description of the eon as being “splendid” (*śobha*), in which case the proper name would just be 安樂 “Peace and Happiness”; Taishō 343 has 摩訶波羅會, which is possibly a transliteration for “Mahābala”; and Taishō 344 has 摩訶波羅蜜, a transliteration for “Mahāpāramitā.”
- n.100 The Sanskrit has “the most excellent among humans” (*dvīpadottamāḥ*). “In that single eon / They will all become guides” is absent in the Chinese.
- n.101 The Sanskrit places here what is verse 49 in the Tibetan, thus reading the verses in the alternate order: 49, 47, 48; and then syncing up again with the Tibetan at verse 50.
- n.102 The Chinese affirms that this implies they will all have the same name. This name predicted for the five hundred varies significantly among the Chinese versions: Taishō 310 has 智慧幢相 (“Wisdom Banner,” Skt. *Jñānadhvaṅga*); Taishō 343 has an unclear transliteration, 若那伎頭陀耶; and Taishō 344 has 若那頸頭陀那, possibly as transliteration for *Jñānagadhutana*.
- n.103 In Taishō 310 this passage reads differently: “All of them will always be miraculously born in the presence of Maitreya and other blessed ones in the future and sincerely make offerings to them. And thus, they will serve one billion blessed ones for three hundred eons” (彼諸人於未來世彌勒佛等諸世尊前，恆受化生親承供養，如是奉事十億如來滿三百劫). Taishō 310 then includes an additional unique passage here: “The lattermost of these buddhas will be named Boundless Wisdom, well trained in all dharmas. At that time, the Buddha Boundless Wisdom will know the hearts of all those people as desiring happiness, and so, appropriately for each, he will grant an account

of their achievements of unsurpassable, truly perfect awakening” (其最後佛號無邊智善學諸法。時無邊智佛。知彼諸人心之欲樂。各隨所應。為授阿耨多羅三藐三菩提記). This is the only mention of the Buddha Boundless Wisdom (無邊智) in the Taishō Tripiṭaka. Boundless Wisdom is predicted to be the last buddha of the far distant future that Siṃha and his five hundred companions will meet during their long careers as bodhisattvas. For this verse the Sanskrit reads, “Now and in the future, after honoring sixty *koṭis* of great sages, they will become guides [i.e., buddhas]” (*adhunānāgate 'py ete ṣaṣṭi koṭi maharṣiṇām | maitreyādīn samabhyarcya bhaviṣyanti vināyakāḥ | |*). The Tibetan gives a translation for *vināyaka* (*rnam par dren pa*) in verse 47, where the Sanskrit gives *dvīpadottama*. See [n.100](#).

- n.104 For this verse the Sanskrit reads, “Moreover, whoever shall hear but the name of those bodhisattvas / Will have no doubts in awakening or fear of the path toward it” (*ye caiṣāṃ bodhisattvānāṃ nāmaṃ śroṣyanti kevalam | na teṣāṃ saṃśayo bodher nāpi tadgatito bhayam | |*). These lines are absent in Taishō 310.
- n.105 The Tibetan and Sanskrit here (*lung bstan, vyākaraṇa*) could arguably refer to either the prophecy or the teaching given previous to it. Taishō 310 describes the term as an “explanation” (所說).
- n.106 Here the Sanskrit describes filling one thousand buddhafiels for one hundred *koṭi* eons.
- n.107 “For the purpose of awakening” is absent in the Chinese.
- n.108 The Sanskrit has “hearing this true Dharma one will/shall (optative) have confidence in it” (*saṃśrutya saddharmaṃ śraddadhyād*). Taishō 310 has “the roots of virtue that are born by hearing this Dharma presentation” (聞是經典所生善根).
- n.109 “And setting out for the sake of awakening” is absent in Taishō 310.
- n.110 For these first two lines the Sanskrit has “Eighty *koṭis* of beings advanced toward the highest awakening” (*koṭiyāṣīti sattvānām agrabodhau pratasthīre*). Taishō 310 matches the Sanskrit.
- n.111 The Sanskrit has “most excellent youths” (*śreṣṭhisutaiḥ*).
- n.112 The Sanskrit omits “in the teaching.”
- n.113 The Sanskrit omits “inexhaustible.”

- n.114 Reading the Sanskrit: *sattvārthaṃ sampupūrṣanto*. See Vinītā 2010, vol. I,2, p. 509, note c.
- n.115 Sanskrit has “through the exhibition of the Dharma of the buddhas” (*buddha-dharmanidarśanāt*).
- n.116 There is no parallel for this last verse in the Chinese. Taishō 310 includes a unique concluding passage here that describes the rejoicing assembly and affirms that the Buddha had eliminated any of Siṃha’s doubts: “At that time the bodhisattvas, all the gods, and all those who were inspired toward the great awakening rejoiced as they saw the prince and his companions demonstrate their superpowers in accordance with the wishes of all. They said, ‘The doubts of Prince Siṃha are all expelled by the Tathāgata, the Dharma King. Thus is the inconceivability of the Blessed One. His true Dharma, his pure faith, and their fruits are inconceivable. There is no limit or end to the Tathāgata’s merits; there is no Dharma that he has not attained. He causes those who are not awakened to become awakened; his capability pervades all realms, as he has attained the complete Dharma of the three times. After hearing such a collection of merits that results in pleasure and peace, who among the wise would not have their faith and satisfaction arise and be inspired toward awakening?’ ” (爾時諸菩薩摩訶薩及諸天人，所有趣向大菩提者，見彼王子與諸同友隨眾所樂示現神變，皆大歡喜。咸作是言：「師子王子所問疑惑，如來法王悉為除斷。如是世尊不可思議，如來正法及能信受，乃至果報不可思議。如來功德無量無邊，於一切法靡不明達。為世導師度未度者，普能遍於十方世界，悉已了知三世諸法。誰有智者得聞如是生安樂處功德之聚，而不發起猛利信樂，趣求菩提？」)。
- n.117 The beginning of this paragraph is omitted in the Sanskrit. There, the line “eight hundred million beings set out for supreme awakening” is found in verse 54 (*koṭiyāśīti sattvānām agrabodhau pratasthīre*).
- n.118 The Sanskrit continues in verse up to this point. Verse 57 in the Sanskrit corresponds to this paragraph, which is much briefer in the Sanskrit, as much of the audience is omitted: “Thus the Blessed One having spoken, Prince Siṃha was pleased. The entire world with its gods was delighted by the words of the Sage” (*idaṃ hy avocad bhagavāṃs tuṣṭaḥ siṃho nṛpātmajaḥ | sarve sadevalokā hi abhyanandan muner vacaḥ | |*).

b.

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GLOSSARY

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

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

g.1 absorption

ting nge 'dzin

ཉིང་ལྷོ་འཇོན།

samādhi

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In a general sense, *samādhi* can describe a number of different meditative states. In the Mahāyāna literature, in particular in the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras, we find extensive lists of different samādhis, numbering over one hundred.

In a more restricted sense, and when understood as a mental state, *samādhi* is defined as the one-pointedness of the mind (*cittaikāgratā*), the ability to remain on the same object over long periods of time. The *Draḥor Bamponyipa* (*sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*) commentary on the *Mahāvīyūtpatti* explains the term *samādhi* as referring to the instrument through which mind and mental states “get collected,” i.e., it is by the force of samādhi that the continuum of mind and mental states becomes collected on a single point of reference without getting distracted.

g.2 Ajātaśatru

ma skyes dgra

མ་སྐྱེས་དགའ།

ajātaśatru

King Ajātaśatru of Magadha succeeded his father, Bimbisāra, after imprisoning him and causing his death. Despite this evil act, King Ajātaśatru was later repentant and, in the end, is viewed favorably in Buddhist literature.

g.3 Ajita

ma pham pa

མ་ཕམ་པ།

ajita

Another name for Maitreya, the future buddha.

g.4 Amitābha

'od dpag med

འོད་དཔག་མེད།

amitābha

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The buddha of the western buddhafiield of Sukhāvātī, where fortunate beings are reborn to make further progress toward spiritual maturity.

Amitābha made his great vows to create such a realm when he was a bodhisattva called Dharmākara. In the Pure Land Buddhist tradition, popular in East Asia, aspiring to be reborn in his buddha realm is the main emphasis; in other Mahāyāna traditions, too, it is a widespread practice. For a detailed

description of the realm, see *The Display of the Pure Land of Sukhāvātī*, Toh 115. In some tantras that make reference to the five families he is the tathāgata associated with the lotus family.

Amitābha, “Infinite Light,” is also known in many Indian Buddhist works as Amitāyus, “Infinite Life.” In both East Asian and Tibetan Buddhist traditions he is often conflated with another buddha named “Infinite Life,” Aparimitāyus, or “Infinite Life and Wisdom,” Aparimitāyurjñāna, the shorter version of whose name has also been back-translated from Tibetan into Sanskrit as Amitāyus but who presides over a realm in the zenith. For details on the relation between these buddhas and their names, see *The Aparimitāyurjñāna Sūtra* (1) Toh 674, i.9.

g.5 attitude of equality

sems mnyam pa

སེམས་མཉམ་པ།

samacitta

A state of mind that regards all being equally and is without hostility or malice towards any being.

g.6 blessed one

bcom ldan 'das

བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས།

bhagavat

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

g.7 buddhafiield

sangs rgyas zhing

སངས་རྒྱས་ཞིང་།

buddhakṣetra

A pure realm manifested by a buddha in which beings may follow the path to awakening without fear of falling into lower realms. In many sources it is said to be brought to manifestation through a buddha or bodhisattva's merit and aspiration.

g.8 characteristics of phenomena

chos kyi mtshan nyid

ཚོས་ཀྱི་མཚན་ཉིད།

dharmalakṣaṇa

The defining characteristics (*lakṣaṇa*) of phenomena (*dharma*). The term *lakṣaṇa* is used in a variety of contexts to indicate the primary characteristic or defining feature of any particular phenomena; for instance the *lakṣaṇa* of fire is that it is hot and burning.

g.9 Dānaśīla

dA na shI la

དུ་ན་ཤྱི་ལ།

dānaśīla

An Indian preceptor from Kashmir who was resident in Tibet during the late eighth and early ninth centuries. He was a frequent collaborator of Yeshé Dé.

g.10 Dīpaṅkara

mar me mdzad pa

མར་མེ་མཛད་པ།

dīpaṅkara

Dīpaṅkara is a buddha of the past said to have lived one hundred thousand years before Śākyamuni. In depictions of the buddhas of the three times, he represents the buddha of the past, while Śākyamuni represents the present, and Maitreya represents the future.

g.11 divine hearing

lha'i rna ba

ལྷ་འི་རྣ་བ།

divyaśrotra

Clairaudience, i.e., the sublime ability to understand all languages and listen to them whether they are nearby or far away. This is the second of the six (or sometimes five) superknowledges (*ṣaḍabhijñā*).

g.12 divine sight

lha'i mig

ལྷའི་མིག

divyacakṣus

Clairvoyance, i.e., the ability to see all forms whether they are near or far, subtle or gross; also the ability to see the births and deaths of sentient beings. This is the first of the six (or sometimes five) superknowledges (*ṣaḍabhijñā*).

g.13 eighty excellent signs

dpe byad bzang po brgyad cu

དཔེ་བྱད་བཟང་པོ་བརྒྱད་པ།

aṣṭīyanuṣyañjana

The eighty minor or secondary signs possessed by a “great being” (*mahāpuruṣa*), which all buddhas are said to have.

g.14 favorable states

bzang 'gro

བཟང་འགྲོ།

sadgati

The higher states of rebirth including those of gods, asuras, and human beings.

g.15 firm resolution

mos pa

མོས་པ།

adhimokṣa

In a general sense, the mental inclination or focus toward a virtuous object. The term is also classified as a mental factor (*caitta*), being categorized variably according to different Buddhist schools but generally indicating the mental ability to focus on one object without straying to another. The term is also commonly translated as “determination,” “interest,” or “zeal.”

g.16 five essences

snying po lnga

སྟིང་པོ་ལྔ།

pañcasāra

The identity of the five essences is uncertain; they are only a few mentions of the term in Kangyur, none of which identify what they are. According to most Tibetan dictionaries, such as the *dung dkar tshig mdzod chen mo*, they are honey (*sbrang rtsi*), raw sugar (*bu ram*), salt (*tshwa*), ghee (*zhun mar*), and sesame oil (*til mar*). Rotman notes that Ayurveda sources also list the five essences as “milk, sugar, honey, ghee, and long pepper (*Piper longum*).” See Rotman (2017), p. 543, n. 571.

g.17 five superknowledges

mngon par shes pa lnga

མངོན་པར་ཤེས་པ་ལྔ།

pañcābhijñā

See the six superknowledges. The five superknowledges follow the same set excluding the knowledge of how to extinguish the defilements (discussed fourth in *Siṃha's Questions*).

g.18 giving

sbyin pa

སྤྱིན་པ།

dāna

The practice of giving or making offerings to others. One of the six perfections of a bodhisattva.

g.19 Great Illumination

snang ba che

སྒྲུབ་ཆེ།

mahāprabhāsa

The name of the eon in the future in which Siṃha and his attendants are prophesied to become buddhas by the Buddha Śākyamuni. This name varies significantly in the Chinese versions of *Siṃha's Questions* (see [n.99](#)).

g.20 great sage

thub pa chen po

ཐུབ་པ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahāmuni

An epithet of a buddha.

g.21 guardians of the world

'jig rten mgon

འཇིག་རྟེན་མགོན།

lokanātha

An epithet commonly referring to buddhas or high-level bodhisattvas.

g.22 guide

'dren pa

འདྲེན་པ།

nāyaka

An epithet of a buddha.

g.23 inopportune states

mi khom pa

མི་ཁོམ་པ།

akṣaṇa

The Sanskrit literally means “without leisure”; this refers to being born in a state in which one will not have the opportunity to meet with a buddha or their teachings. Eight situations are typically listed: (1) being born in a hell realm, (2) as an animal, (3) as a hungry ghost, (4) as a long-life god, (5) in a borderland or non-Buddhist country, (6) having wrong views, (7) as someone with impaired faculties who is unable to understand the teachings, or (8) in a time or place where no buddha has come.

g.24 instruction

bslab pa

བསྐྱབ་པ།

śikṣita

A general term for practice of the Dharma. Sometimes translated as “training.”

g.25 jealousy

phrag dog

ཕྲག་དོག

īrṣyā

The mental state of jealousy, *īrṣyā* is sometimes translated as “envy.” It is classified as one of the twenty subsidiary afflictions (*upakleśa*).

g.26 Jñānaketudhvaja

ye shes tog gi rgyal mtshan

ཡི་ཤེས་ཏོག་གི་སྐུལ་མཚན།

jñānaketudhvaja

The name that Simha and his five hundred attendants will take when they become buddhas in the future, according to the Buddha's prophecy. This name varies significantly in the Chinese versions of *Simha's Questions* (see verse 48 and [n.102](#)).

g.27 kalaviṅka bird

ka la ping ka

ཀ་ལ་པིང་ཀ།

kalaviṅka

A mythical Indian bird renowned for its beautiful call. Some dictionaries equate it with the Indian cuckoo (or other Indian songbirds), while other sources will attribute mythical qualities to it.

g.28 love

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) love, sometimes translated as "loving kindness," (2) compassion, (3) empathetic joy, and (4) impartiality. Immeasurable love arises from the wish for all living beings to have happiness and the causes of happiness.

g.29 Maitreya

byams pa

བྱམས་པ།

maitreya

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The bodhisattva Maitreya is an important figure in many Buddhist traditions, where he is unanimously regarded as the buddha of the future era. He is said to currently reside in the heaven of Tuṣita, as Śākyamuni's regent, where he awaits the proper time to take his final rebirth and become the fifth buddha in the Fortunate Eon, reestablishing the Dharma in this world after the teachings of the current buddha have disappeared. Within the Mahāyāna sūtras, Maitreya is elevated to the same status as other central bodhisattvas such as Mañjuśrī and Avalokiteśvara, and his name appears frequently in

sūtras, either as the Buddha's interlocutor or as a teacher of the Dharma. *Maitreya* literally means "Loving One." He is also known as Ajita, meaning "Invincible."

For more information on Maitreya, see, for example, the introduction to *Maitreya's Setting Out* (Toh 198).

g.30 Māra

bdud

བདུད།

māra

The principal deity in Paranirmitavaśavartin, the highest heaven in the desire realm. He is best known for his role in trying to prevent the Buddha's awakening. The name Māra is also used as a generic name for the deities in his abode, and also as an impersonal term for destructive forces that keep beings imprisoned in saṃsāra.

g.31 mindfulness

dran pa

སྒོ་པ།

smṛti

One of the most important trainings for the Buddhist practitioner, it is traditionally taught within the teachings on the four applications of mindfulness.

g.32 miraculous birth

rdzus te skye ba

རྩུ་ཏེ་སྐྱེ་བ།

upapāduka

Regarded as the most superior of the four modes of birth, the three other modes being birth from an egg, birth from a womb, or birth from warmth and moisture. Those who take a miraculous birth are spontaneously born fully mature at the time of their birth.

g.33 moral discipline

tshul khrims

ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས།

śīla

Morally virtuous or disciplined conduct and the abandonment of morally undisciplined conduct of body, speech, and mind. In a general sense, moral discipline is the cause for rebirth in higher, more favorable states, but it is also foundational to Buddhist practice as one of the three trainings (*trīśikṣā*) and one of the six perfections of a bodhisattva.

g.34 Munivarman

mu ni bar ma

མུ་ནི་བར་མ།

munivarman

An Indian preceptor who was resident in Tibet during the late eighth and early ninth centuries.

g.35 patience

bzod pa

བཟོད་པ།

kṣānti

On a mundane level, patience is said to be the cause for becoming beautiful in future lives, but it is also foundational to Buddhist practice and one of the six perfections of a bodhisattva. As such it can be classified into three modes: the capacity to tolerate abuse from sentient beings, to tolerate the hardships of the path to buddhahood, and to tolerate the profound nature of ultimate reality.

g.36 perseverance

brtson 'grus

བརྩོན་འགྲུས།

vīrya

A state of mind characterized by having joyful persistence when engaging in virtuous activity. One of the six perfections of a bodhisattva.

g.37 pure intention

lhag bsam

ལྷག་བསམ།

adhyāśaya

A strong sense of determination, often associated with altruism.

g.38 Rājagrha

rgyal po'i khab

རྒྱལ་པོ་འཁམས།

rājagṛha

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

g.39 receptivity

bzod pa

བཟོད་པ།

kṣānti

See Patience.

g.40 retention

gzungs

གཟུངས།

dhāraṇī

From the Sanskrit root \sqrt{dhr} , (“to retain” or “to hold”), a dhāraṇī is a verbal formula that holds the words and meaning of a larger text or doctrine. In its simplest function it serves as a mnemonic device for remembering a certain teaching, but in certain contexts the dhāraṇī may carry a magical connotation, and in this sense it is a precursor to the mantra.

g.41 saṅgha

dge 'dun

དགེ་འདུན།

saṅgha

The community of followers of the Buddha’s teachings, particularly the monastics.

g.42 senseless talk

kyal ba

ཀྱལ་བ།

pralāpa

Seventh of the ten nonvirtuous (*akuśala*) actions, the third of the three related to speech (the first two being slander and harsh speech).

g.43 **Siṃha**

seng ge

སེང་གེ།

siṃha

Prince Siṃha, son of King Ajātaśatru.

g.44 **six superknowledges**

mngon shes drug

མངོན་ཤེས་དྲུག།

ṣaḍabhijñā

The six superknowledges in *Siṃha's Question* are discussed in verses 27–30 in the following order: (1) divine sight, a form of clairvoyance; (2) divine hearing, a form of clairaudience; (3) knowing the dying, transmigration, and rebirth of sentient beings; (4) knowing how to extinguish the defilements; (5) the recollection of former lives; and (6) knowing how to perform miraculous transformations. In Buddhist literature, the six are not always given in this order, and sometimes the superknowledges are listed as five, excluding knowing how to extinguish the defilements.

g.45 **slander**

phra ma

ཕྱ་མ།

paiśunya

Fifth of the ten nonvirtuous (*akuśala*) actions, the first of the three related to speech (the latter two being harsh speech and senseless talk).

g.46 **stinginess**

ser sna

སེར་སྒྲ།

matsara

The mental state of stinginess, *matsara* is sometimes translated as “miserliness” or “avarice.” It is classified as one of the twenty subsidiary afflictions (*upakleśa*).

g.47 thirty-two marks

sum cu rtsa gnyis mtshan

ལུམ་རུ་ཙ་གཉིས་མཚན།

dvātriṃśallakṣaṇa

The thirty-two marks manifested by a “great being” (*mahāpuruṣa*). As “great beings,” all buddhas are said to display them.

g.48 two extremes

mtsha' gnyis

མཐའ་གཉིས།

antadvaya · śāśvatocchedāntadvaya

The two views of (1) eternalism (*śāśvatānta*), the belief in a permanent, causeless creator and/or the belief in an independent, permanent, singular self; and (2) nihilism (*ucchedānta*), the belief that things ultimately do not exist and/or the denial of the law of cause and effect or of past and future lives.

g.49 voice of Brahmā

tshangs pa'i dbyangs

ཚངས་པའི་དབྱངས།

brahmasvara

A voice that has the qualities of the voice of the god Brahmā. This is one of the thirty-two marks of a buddha.

g.50 Vulture Peak

bya rgod kyi phung po'i ri

བྱ་རྗོད་ཀྱི་ཕུང་པོའི་རི།

gṛdhrakūṭaparvata

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The Gṛdhrakūṭa, literally Vulture Peak, was a hill located in the kingdom of Magadha, in the vicinity of the ancient city of Rājagṛha (modern-day Rajgir, in the state of Bihar, India), where the Buddha bestowed many sūtras, especially the Great Vehicle teachings, such as the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras. It continues to be a sacred pilgrimage site for Buddhists to this day.

g.51 wealthy noblemen

tshong dpon bu

ཚོང་དཔོན་བྱེད་པ།

śreṣṭhiputra

The term *śreṣṭhin* and its Pāli equivalent *setṭhi* have undergone a particular development in Buddhism. The Tibetan translation “merchant” or “owner of merchandise” (*tshong dpon*) reflects that *śreṣṭhin* later came to be associated with traders, merchants, and also moneylenders. However, in Sanskrit the term literally means “distinguished,” and an older survey of the term shows that it implies a kind of nobleman of influential social standing who has both access to wealth and a close association with the king. For a more detailed history on the development of this term, see Chakravarti (1996), chapter 3, particularly pp. 73–79.

g.52 Yeshé Dé

ye shes sde

ཡེ་ཤེས་སྡེ།

—

A famous Tibetan translator and monk of the eighth to the ninth century, he translated into Tibetan and revised, in collaboration with various Indian scholars, more than two hundred and fifty texts of the Kangyur and Tengyur.