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The Sūtra of the Question of Subāhu

Subāhuparipṛcchāsūtra

འཕགས་པ་ལག་བཟངས་ཀྱིས་ལུས་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་མདོ།

'phags pa lag bzangs kyis zhus pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra “The Question of Subāhu”

Āryasubāhupariṣcchānāmamahāyānasūtra



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SUMMARY

- s.1 In this scripture Śākyamuni Buddha describes how a bodhisattva should ideally train in the six perfections. In the Veṇuvana near Rājagṛha, the Buddha teaches this sūtra in response to a single question put to him by the bodhisattva Subāhu: what are the qualities a bodhisattva should have in order to progress to perfect awakening? The Buddha responds by first listing the six perfections of generosity, ethical discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and insight, and then expounding in greater detail on each perfection in turn.

ac.

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i.

INTRODUCTION

i.1

The Question of Subāhu is a Great Vehicle sūtra in which Śākyamuni Buddha teaches how a bodhisattva should ideally practice the six perfections. According to the opening and closing phrases appended to its Tibetan translation, it constitutes “the twenty-sixth section of the Noble Dharma Discourse, the Great Heap of Jewels, in one hundred thousand sections.”

i.2

Although it is no longer extant in Sanskrit and little can be known for certain about its provenance, there is some indication that it was well known in India. It was translated into Chinese in the fifth century CE by the famed translator Kumārajīva (344–413).¹ The Tibetan, according to its colophon, was translated, edited, and finalized, based on revisions done according to the language reform, by a translation team consisting of the Indian preceptors Dānaśīla and Jinamitra, and the Tibetan chief editor-translator Bandé Yeshé Dé, who were active in Tibet in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. Indeed, the sūtra is listed in the Denkarma (*ldan/lhan dkar ma*) catalog of imperial translations usually dated to 812,² and the mention of the “language reform” suggests that the translation may have been finalized only after 783/795.³ Korean and Mongolian translations were also made, and the Degé edition of the Tibetan Tengyur includes an aspiration prayer derived from it as well.⁴ Finally, to avoid confusion it should be noted that there is another Kangyur text that has the same Sanskrit title as *The Question of Subāhu* but that has no relationship to it, being a tantra of the Action (Kriyā) class.⁵

i.3

The sūtra is set at the Kalandakanivāpa, in the Veṇuvana near Rājagṛha, where the Buddha is accompanied by a large assembly of monks. A bodhisattva great being by the name of Subāhu, with servants in tow, visits the Buddha from the nearby town of Rājagṛha to pose a single question: what are the qualities bodhisattvas should have in order to progress to perfect awakening? The entire sūtra consists of the Buddha’s response to this question. He begins by simply listing the six perfections of generosity,

ethical discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and insight, and then expounds in greater detail on each perfection in turn. Each of the six sections of the ensuing discourse stipulates first how bodhisattvas should ideally practice the perfection in question, and then how bodhisattvas should gradually train in that perfection if they lack the requisite capacity to undertake it as ideally stipulated. Each section ends by emphasizing how the aspiration to undertake that perfection ideally is, just by itself, the most sublime form of the perfection; it is the cultivation of this mental attitude, stresses the Buddha, suffused with compassion for all beings, that will enable bodhisattvas to swiftly and easily complete the perfections.

i.4 Subāhu himself, as the sūtra's opening frame seems to suggest, is probably a lay bodhisattva, and the stipulations for a bodhisattva's ideal practice of generosity and ethical discipline thus reflect a resolutely lay orientation. For instance, a bodhisattva should give gifts as extravagant as land; he should never give in a way that harms his children, wives, male and female slaves, or servants and laborers; and his ethical discipline should consist primarily of observing the five lay vows of an upāsaka. Along with the explanations of paths of gradual training, and the emphasis on aspiring to practice it as the highest form of each perfection, these features taken together suggest an open appeal to an audience that extends beyond the circle of strict ascetics.

i.5 If the *The Question of Subāhu* was therefore primarily intended for an audience of lay Buddhist practitioners, that is by no means exclusively so. Throughout the text, the Buddha presents the "Hearers' Vehicle" as a perfectly viable approach. The ideal bodhisattva he describes should strive to preserve the integrity of the vehicles of the hearers (śrāvaka), solitary buddhas (pratyekabuddha), and bodhisattvas, teach each one as appropriate, and even acquire his own "great saṅgha of hearer attendants." Despite this relative absence of perceived incompatibility between hearer and bodhisattva practitioners here in comparison to more disparaging statements in some other Mahāyāna sūtras, there is nonetheless a discernible hierarchy in the Buddha's presentation that reflects the presumed superiority of the Bodhisattvas' Vehicle.⁶

i.6 The present translation is based mainly on the Tibetan version of the sūtra present in the Degé Kangyur, in consultation with the variant readings presented in the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) and the Stok Palace version.

The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra

The Question of Subāhu

1.

The Translation

1.1

[F.154.a] [B1] Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.

1.2

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was at the Kalandakanivāpa in the Veṇuvana, by Rājagṛha, together with a great assembly of monks. At that time a bodhisattva great being named Subāhu set out with his servants from the city of Rājagṛha for the Kalandakanivāpa in the Veṇuvana, where the Blessed One was staying. As soon as he arrived, Subāhu touched his head to the feet of the Blessed One, circumambulated him three times, and sat down to one side. With palms joined, the bodhisattva great being Subāhu bowed to the Blessed One and asked him, “Blessed One, what are the qualities bodhisattva great beings should have if they are to awaken swiftly and completely to unsurpassed and perfect awakening?”

1.3

The Blessed One replied to the bodhisattva great being Subāhu as follows: “Subāhu, if bodhisattva great beings are to awaken swiftly and perfectly, they must constantly and relentlessly complete the six perfections. What are these six? They are the perfection of generosity, the perfection of ethical discipline, the perfection of patience, the perfection of diligence, [F.154.b] the perfection of concentration, and the perfection of insight. Subāhu, bodhisattva great beings must constantly and relentlessly complete these six perfections.”

1.4

“Subāhu, how do bodhisattva great beings complete *the perfection of generosity*? Subāhu, they seek resources in accordance with the Dharma, and not contrary to the Dharma. They practice generosity without bias, and not with bias. They practice generosity without harming or causing distress to creatures or other beings. It is not done for fame, reputation, or praise. It is not done out of cowardice, fear, hoping for reward, or for the sake of a high rebirth. It does not involve hypocrisy, pretense, or disdain. Bodhisattvas respect, venerate, serve, and honor the recipients no matter whether or not they are particularly worthy, have superknowledge,⁷ have ethical discipline,

are familiar to them, or are their relatives. With great inspiration, intense joy, and strong faith, they give little if they possess⁸ but little, they give much if they possess much, they give excellent things if they possess excellent things,⁹ they give modest things if they possess but modest things, and they give exquisite things if they possess exquisite things. Subāhu, just as bodhisattvas give one hundred thousand gifts with a magnanimous and cheerful attitude, so do they give a simple coin with a magnanimous and cheerful attitude.

1.5 “To enable all beings to gain stability through the strength of the unsurpassed wisdom of omniscience, bodhisattvas give nourishment to those who desire nourishment. [F.155.a] To enable all beings to gain the strength that entirely quenches the thirst of afflictions, they give drink to those who desire drink. To enable all beings to acquire the clothing of shame and decency, they give clothing to those who desire clothing. To enable all beings to acquire the vehicle of bodhisattvas and the unsurpassed vehicle of complete buddhas, they give mounts to those who desire mounts. To enable all beings to acquire the fragrance of the buddhas’ ethical discipline, they give perfume to those who desire perfume. To enable all beings to acquire the unsurpassable flower of the thus-gone ones’ seven branches of awakening, they give flowers to those who desire flowers. To enable all¹⁰ beings to gain the strength of overcoming the stench of wrongdoing, they give fragrant powder to those who desire fragrant powder. To enable all beings to acquire the unguent of faultless ethical discipline and conduct, they give scented unguents to those who desire scented unguents. To enable all beings to acquire the strength that thoroughly pacifies any torment of afflictions, they give parasols to those who desire parasols. To enable all beings to attain the unsurpassable comfort of superknowledge,¹¹ they give shoes to those who desire shoes. To enable all beings to gain the strength to prepare for the comfort of bedding in the abodes of the gods, Brahmā, and the noble ones, they give bedding to those who desire bedding. To enable all beings to acquire the throne of the Hero, the seat of awakening unmoved by all the obstacles of māras and afflictions, they give seats to those who desire seats. To enable all beings to attain bodies that will serve as shelter, abode, protection, and refuge, they give shelter to those who desire shelter. [F.155.b] To enable all beings to attain bodies that will serve as reservoirs for the Dharma, they give pots, vases, and utensils to those who desire them.

1.6 To enable all beings to attain all the absorptions and attainments of unsurpassed tranquility and quiescence, bodhisattvas give the gift of groves for ascetic practice to the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha. To enable all beings to attain the thirty-two major and eighty minor marks of a great man, they

give the gift of adornments to stūpas. To enable all beings to gain the limitless divine vision of the thus-gone ones, they give the gift of lamps at darkened stūpas and paths. To enable all beings to acquire the limitless divine hearing of the thus-gone ones, they give the gift of melodious music in their worship of the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha. To enable all beings to gain unsurpassed, exquisite appearance, ethical discipline, and conduct, bodhisattvas give the gift of alms bowls and monastic robes. To enable all beings to gain the power to give relief, they give the gift of sieves. To enable all beings to attain the completion of the accumulation of great insight, they give the gift of reed brushes, ink, palm leaves, and Dharma seats. To eliminate all the illnesses of afflictions from all beings, bodhisattvas give the gift of medicines to cure the sick and other standard resources. To enable all beings to attain the ground of the three kinds of awakening and the ground of the expanse of ambrosia, they give the gift of land. To enable all beings to obtain the lofty, sublime Dharma without a teacher, [F.156.a] they build lofty stūpas and statues.

1.7 “To enable all beings to quickly acquire the different kinds of superknowledge upon seeing what they have acquired, bodhisattvas give gifts quickly and without reluctance.¹² To enable beings to attain complete awakening without hindrance, they give suitable gifts, not unsuitable ones. To enable all beings to acquire unimpeded great eloquence, they give gifts limitlessly. To enable all beings to acquire unparalleled great compassion, they give equally to all beings. To enable all beings to perfectly and completely awaken to the Dharma that cannot be destroyed or harmed by any māras or non-Buddhists, bodhisattvas give gifts that do no harm to others.

1.8 “Subāhu, if bodhisattvas are without the wealth and means to give these gifts, they make aspirations, mentally yearning and wishing to give these limitless, immeasurable gifts to all beings throughout all world systems. Subāhu, whether or not bodhisattvas have the capacity to give these gifts, they make aspirations, mentally yearning and wishing as follows: ‘May all beings throughout all world systems become connected to and filled with my own happiness! May absolutely all their intentions be effortlessly fulfilled in all ways,¹³ and may all their wishes without exception be fulfilled, so that they may abide in happiness! May this aspiration of mine be auspicious! May this aspiration of mine be virtuous!’

1.9 “Bodhisattvas make such aspirations, [F.156.b] yearning and wishing to give oceans of jewels to all beings throughout all world systems. Bodhisattvas make aspirations, yearning and wishing to give endless, immeasurable mountains of wealth, mountains of gold, mountains of clothing, mountains of all utensils, oceans of food, oceans of drink, and

finely wrought abodes where one can comfortably dwell. They also delight and rejoice at least three times a day in all the acts of giving, offering, and bestowing material possessions, protection from fear, and the gifts of Dharma performed by all beings of the past, future, and present throughout all the world systems in the entirety of cyclic existence.

1.10 “Even if bodhisattvas are unable to give wealth to those who request it, they offer them their own share of food, provide them with assistance, or show them the means to seek what they want, and then eradicate their desire with a Dharma discourse.

1.11 “Should bodhisattvas even just wish to give those gifts, they dedicate this generosity to unsurpassable, perfect, and complete awakening so that all beings are ferried across, liberated, and relieved, and so that they may transcend suffering, attain omniscience, and perfect all the qualities of a buddha. Having offered their gift, they again dedicate this generosity to unsurpassable, perfect, and complete awakening so that all beings are ferried across, liberated, and relieved, and so that they may transcend suffering, attain omniscience, and perfect all the qualities of a buddha.

1.12 “Should bodhisattvas lack the capacity to train in giving, offering, and bestowing, this is how they properly train: From time to time, [F.157.a] or little by little, they strive and exert themselves in abandoning, forsaking, and eliminating attachment, stinginess, and fear of giving. From time to time, or little by little, they also strive and exert themselves in training, developing, and perfecting the acts of giving, offering, and bestowing. Even when they take another birth, they do not lose heart or become discouraged. Subāhu, bodhisattvas’ formation of the resolve to awaken, their recollection and cultivation of the resolve to awaken, and their wishes and aspirations to awaken are themselves their immeasurable, incalculable great acts of giving, offering, and bestowing. Why is that? It is because among all acts of giving, offering, and bestowing, the foremost and supreme is the wish to give, offer, and bestow to all beings in all world systems a shower of sublime Dharma and a shower of the expanse of ambrosia.

1.13 “Subāhu, in this way bodhisattvas will very quickly complete the perfection of generosity, with ease and pleasure, little difficulty, and little pain.

1.14 “Subāhu, bodhisattvas do not cut off limbs or other body parts when requested by beggars, nor would they offer them to beggars, even if they were cut off. Why is that? Because by that very act the beggars would fall into the severe hells and incur more¹⁴ severe non-virtuous deeds. [F.157.b] Yet it is not the case that they would not surrender their own limbs and body parts for the sake of other beings, or their benefit.

1.15

- “Subāhu, if beggars ask bodhisattva great beings for all their possessions, bodhisattvas do not give away all their possessions in a way that harms, neglects, or causes suffering for their parents, or in a way that harms, neglects, or causes suffering for their children, wives, male and female slaves, or servants and laborers.
- 1.16 “Why is that? Bodhisattvas love all beings equally. Just as they practice generosity without harming, neglecting, or causing suffering for their parents, and without harming, neglecting, or causing suffering for their children, spouses, male and female slaves, or servants and laborers, so do they care the same for all beings. Yet, it is also not the case that they would not surrender all their possessions for the sake and benefit of other beings.
- 1.17 “Subāhu, the thus-gone ones have not praised generosity that brings harm to beings. Therefore, how could they do so regarding bodhisattvas’ cutting off of limbs?”
- 1.18 “Subāhu, how do bodhisattvas complete *the perfection of ethical discipline*? Subāhu, even at the cost of their own lives, bodhisattvas do not beat, kill, or rejoice in the killing of other creatures and beings. Even at the cost of their own lives, they do not take what is not given, incite others to take what is not given, or rejoice in the taking of what is not given. Even at the cost of their own lives, they do not engage in sexual misconduct, incite others to engage in sexual misconduct, [F.158.a] or rejoice in sexual misconduct. Even at the cost of their own lives, they do not tell lies, incite others to tell lies, or rejoice in the telling of lies. Even at the cost of their own lives, they do not drink alcohol, incite others to drink alcohol, or rejoice in the drinking of alcohol. They practice these five moral precepts, adhering to them at length, resolutely, firmly, and without lapsing. Similarly, they endeavor to abandon, discard, and relinquish the activities of tilling fields and having others till fields; tethering beings and having others tether beings; entrapping beings and having others entrap beings; beating beings and having others beat beings; or slaughtering beings and having others slaughter beings. Thus do they practice these five moral precepts at length, resolutely, firmly, and without lapsing. They similarly abandon, discard, and relinquish divisive words, harsh speech, and idle chatter.
- 1.19 “Bodhisattvas train in the following line of thinking: ‘All creatures and all beings are just like my parents. They are just like a beloved only son. If my parents or my beloved only son were to harm me, I would not harm them back. Even if my parents or beloved only son were to strike me with their hands, clods of earth, sticks, knives, or arrows, I would not strike them back. Even if they attempted to kill me, I would not attempt to kill them back. Just as I would not harm my parents or beloved only son even if they were to harm me, I would not strike back even if all people and all beings were to

strike me with their hands, clods of earth, sticks, knives, or arrows. Even if they attempted to kill me, I would not attempt to kill them back.’ Just as when one is, for example, glad and overjoyed upon seeing one’s father, mother, or only beloved son return after traveling abroad for a long time, [F.158.b] so too, Subāhu, bodhisattva great beings are pleased and overjoyed upon seeing all creatures and beings.

1.20 “Bodhisattvas keep the ethical discipline of abandoning killing in order to establish all beings in the ethical discipline of abandoning killing at the level of no-more-training. They keep the ethical discipline of abandoning taking what is not given in order to establish all beings in the ethical discipline of abandoning taking what not is given at the level of no-more-training. They keep the ethical discipline of abandoning sexual misconduct in order to establish all beings in the ethical discipline of pure conduct at the level of no-more-training. They keep the ethical discipline of abandoning lying in order to establish all beings in the ethical discipline of abandoning lying at the level of no-more-training. They keep the ethical discipline of abandoning alcohol in order to establish all beings in the ethical discipline of abandoning alcohol at the level of no-more-training.

1.21 “Bodhisattvas keep the ethical discipline of abandoning tilling fields and having others till fields so that all beings may attain undivided, vajra-like absorption. They keep the ethical discipline of abandoning tethering and having others tether so that all the bonds of afflictions may be shorn from all beings. They keep the ethical discipline of abandoning entrapping and having others entrap so that all beings may be prevented from and divested of the five destinies.¹⁵ Bodhisattvas keep the ethical discipline of abandoning beating and inciting beatings so that all beings may attain the intrinsic nature that is not overpowered by any of the obstacles of māras and afflictive obscurations. They keep the ethical discipline of abandoning cutting and having others cut so that all beings may be protected in all actions of body, speech, and mind.

1.22 “Bodhisattvas keep the ethical discipline of abandoning divisive speech in order to obtain an undivided great saṅgha of hearer attendants. [F.159.a] They keep the ethical discipline of abandoning harsh speech in order to acquire the melodiousness of Brahmā, and be imbued with a voice that has the five aspects of clarity. They keep the ethical discipline of abandoning idle chatter for the sake of acquiring unimpeded speech that is worthy of retaining.

1.23 “Bodhisattvas keep the ethical discipline of sheltering those terrified by death in order to put all beings at peace from fear of birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, lamentation, suffering, unhappiness, and despair. They keep

the ethical discipline of guarding against the squandering and destruction of others' wealth and belongings so that all beings may obtain the unsurpassable wealth of the factors conducive to awakening.

1.24 "Bodhisattvas keep the ethical discipline of giving up attachment to others' spouses and enabling others to give up such attachment for the sake of obtaining the unwavering intrinsic nature. They keep the ethical discipline of giving up exerting control over others and having others exert control so that all beings may obtain mastery over their own minds. They keep the ethical discipline of untying bonds and of having others untie bonds in order to destroy all the fetters of the armies of māras and the afflictions on the throne of the Hero, the seat of awakening. Their ethical discipline of going forth from the household is in order to attain a liberated, undefiled mind.

1.25 "Bodhisattvas keep the ethical discipline of confessing¹⁶ to striking others for the sake of uprooting fear through the four kinds of fearlessness. They keep the ethical discipline of averting quarrels¹⁷ in order to obtain the four features of protection. They keep the ethical discipline of using non-deceptive speech in order to obtain the intrinsic nature that cannot be controverted by any obstacles of māras or afflictive obscurations, while on the throne of the Hero, the seat of awakening. They keep the ethical discipline of reconciling those who are divided and stabilizing relations so that there is no schism in the great saṅgha of noble hearer attendants. [F.159.b] They keep the ethical discipline of using gentle and pleasant words so that truthful speech that is melodious and pleasing may reach the ears of all beings. They keep the ethical discipline of harmonious speech so that they may receive fruitful Dharma teachings that are inviolable and worthy of retention. They keep the ethical discipline of praising the qualities of the Buddha so that they may obtain a great saṅgha entourage¹⁸ endowed with the qualities of the noble ones.

1.26 "Bodhisattvas keep the ethical discipline of prostrating three times a day to the innumerable, immeasurable buddhas, dharmas, saṅghas, and bodhisattvas of the past, present, and future throughout all world systems, touching the five points of their bodies to the ground. This is so that all beings may obtain the five sublime properties of supreme faith, diligence, mindfulness, absorption, and insight, which are so stable that beings will be unwavering and firm on the throne of the Hero, the seat of awakening. They keep the ethical discipline of venerating all stūpas of the buddhas three times a day so that they may attain the fulfillment of all the qualities of a buddha.

1.27

“Bodhisattvas keep the ethical discipline of extolling the qualities of the Dharma three times a day so that the unsurpassable, non-abiding wheel of Dharma will be turned. They keep the ethical discipline of extolling the qualities of the saṅgha three times a day, in order to obtain the great entourage of an undivided saṅgha of noble ones. They keep the ethical discipline of going for refuge to the supreme Three Jewels three times a day, for the sake of giving unsurpassable refuge to all beings. They keep the ethical discipline of supplicating three times a day that all world systems may never be bereft of the Three Jewels and bodhisattvas, in order to attain perfect awakening, which is the only certain promise of well-being. [F.160.a] They keep the ethical discipline of supplicating three times a day that all the buddhas teach the Dharma for an eon, in order to attain the tenth bodhisattva level, the Cloud of Dharma.¹⁹ They keep the ethical discipline of confessing, forsaking, and condemning every misdeed three times a day, in order to destroy the entire sequence of habitual tendencies. They keep the ethical discipline of taking up all roots of virtue three times a day, in order to complete all the perfections. They keep the ethical discipline of rejoicing three times a day in all the roots of virtue of the past, present, and future buddhas, solitary buddhas, the noble saṅgha of hearers, bodhisattvas, and all beings in all destinies belonging to all world systems, in order to complete the infinite, immeasurable accumulations of awakening. They keep the ethical discipline of aspiring for complete awakening three times a day, in order to reach certainty in attaining perfect awakening. They keep the ethical discipline of dedicating all roots of virtue to the attainment of perfect awakening three times a day, solely in order to obtain the different kinds of power and fearlessness of the thus-gone ones.

1.28 “Bodhisattvas keep the ethical discipline of serving²⁰ their parents, teachers, elders, preceptors, and masters in order to attain the unassailable intrinsic nature. They keep the ethical discipline of comforting the frightened, the terrified, the destitute, and the defenseless, in order to become skilled in tirelessly elucidating the answers to all questions. They keep the ethical discipline of protecting and helping those who are immersed in suffering caused by kings, thieves, fire, water, or retribution, [F.160.b] in order to obtain the protection²¹ of the great states, levels, and perfections.

1.29 “Bodhisattvas keep the ethical discipline of praising the miraculous feats performed by the buddhas, solitary buddhas, noble hearers, and bodhisattvas, in order to obtain the unsurpassable miraculous powers of the thus-gone ones. They keep the ethical discipline of performing bodily actions that are conducive to protecting the minds of others, bodily actions that delight and gladden others’ minds, verbal actions conducive to

protecting the minds of others, and verbal actions that delight and gladden others' minds, in order to obtain the infinite power of the thus-gone ones to know the minds of others. They keep the ethical discipline of properly engendering mindfulness of the goal of this life, other lifetimes, the Hearers' Vehicle, the Solitary Buddhas' Vehicle, and the Perfect Awakening Vehicle, as well as the ethical discipline of making this mindfulness arise in those who are forgetful and careless, in order to attain the unforgettable intrinsic nature. They keep the ethical discipline of listening to, retaining, cultivating, and expounding the Dharma in order to attain the discriminations and perfections.

1.30 "Should they even just wish to take up and practice ethical discipline, bodhisattvas dedicate all of their roots of virtue of body, speech, and mind so that all beings [F.161.a] are ferried across, liberated, and relieved, and so that they may attain omniscience and perfect all the qualities of a buddha. While taking up and practicing ethical discipline, and again after having done so, they dedicate it so that all beings are ferried across, liberated, and relieved, and so that they may attain omniscience and perfect all the qualities of a buddha.

1.31 "Should they lack the capacity to train in that ethical discipline without breaching, violating, or corrupting it, this is how they properly train: From time to time, or little by little, they strive and exert themselves in abandoning, forsaking, and eliminating non-virtue. From time to time, or little by little, they also strive and exert themselves in training in, developing, and perfecting virtue. Even when they take another rebirth, they do not lose heart or become discouraged.

1.32 "Subāhu, bodhisattvas' formation of the resolve to awaken, their recollection and cultivation of the resolve to awaken, and their wishes and aspirations to awaken are themselves the bodhisattvas' incalculable and immeasurable acts of undertaking and engaging in ethical discipline.

1.33 "Why is that? It is because among all the ways of undertaking and engaging in virtuous ethical discipline, foremost and supreme is the wish to engender undefiled ethical discipline and ethical discipline at the level of no-more-training, and to do so perfectly, in all beings throughout all world systems. [F.161.b]

1.34 "Subāhu, in this way bodhisattvas will very quickly complete the perfection of ethical discipline, with ease and pleasure, little difficulty, and little pain."

1.35 "Subāhu, how do bodhisattvas complete *the perfection of patience*? Subāhu, even if others take their lives, steal all their possessions, ravish their spouses, or lie, slander, speak harshly, or idly gossip about them—even if

they abuse them, kill them, seize them, hit them, or cut them—bodhisattvas do not retaliate, get angry in return, or harbor animosity or resentment toward them.

1.36 “This is how they train: They think, ‘This is the result of the negative actions I have committed and accumulated in previous lives and in this one. This is their karmic ripening. Why should I retaliate, get angry in return, or harbor animosity or resentment, when I am experiencing the results and karmic ripening of my own actions?’

1.37 “Furthermore, Subāhu, bodhisattvas properly train by thinking the following: ‘Even if others were to take my life, steal all my possessions, ravish my spouse, or lie, slander, speak harshly, or idly gossip about me—even if they were to abuse me, kill me, seize me, hit me, or cut me—should I retaliate, get angry in return, or harbor animosity or resentment toward them, I will incur the further unwanted, unpleasant, and disagreeable suffering of fully ripened effects and effects similar to their cause that are more severe than this unwanted, unpleasant, and disagreeable sensation of suffering—that are a hundred times greater, or a thousand times, [F.162.a] or more.’

1.38 “Moreover, Subāhu, bodhisattvas properly train by thinking as follows: ‘Because I have life, my life is taken. Because I have possessions, my possessions are stolen. Because I have an ear faculty, I hear lies, slander, harsh words, and idle gossip. Because I have a body, my body is led along, fettered, seized, beaten, and cut. Since I myself have assumed the life faculty, the ear faculty, and the body that form the substance and basis of my suffering, how could I retaliate, get angry in return, or harbor hostility or enmity?’

1.39

“Moreover, Subāhu, bodhisattvas properly train by thinking the following: ‘For example, the defining feature of the earth element is solidity. That is its identity, its character, and its nature. The defining feature of the water element is moisture. The defining feature of the fire element is heat. The defining feature of the wind element is lightness and movement. These are their identities, their characters, their natures. In the same way, all life forms have the character of exhaustion, abandonment, and extinction. Moreover, all faculties are characterized by contact with suffering and the experience of suffering. All bodies, for that matter, have the quality of suffering, the quality of contact with suffering, and the quality of the experience of suffering. That is their identity, their character, and their nature. How could I retaliate, get angry in return, or harbor hostility or enmity just because²² the life faculty, which is characterized by exhaustion, abandonment, and extinction, is exhausted, dissolved, and extinguished, or because the six faculties, which are characterized by suffering, contact with suffering, and the experience of suffering, [F.162.b] are in contact with suffering? Why is that? It is because that is their identity, their character, and their nature.’

1.40 “Moreover, Subāhu, bodhisattvas properly train by thinking as follows: ‘My eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind are neither “me” nor “mine.” Others’ eyes, ears, noses, tongues, bodies, and minds are also neither them nor theirs. Such being the case, how could the wise, knowing the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind to be neither them nor theirs, delight in, be attached to, or truly enjoy them? And how could they retaliate by hitting, harming, getting angry, or harboring hostility or enmity toward others?’

1.41 “Moreover, Subāhu, bodhisattvas properly train by thinking as follows: ‘The sufferings experienced by humans are few and minor. Yet, the sufferings of anguished spirits are much more terrible and difficult to endure, while the sufferings of the animal realm and the hells are even more terrible and difficult to endure than those. Such being the case, why would I, on account of just a few minor sufferings, retaliate, get angry in return, or harbor hostility or enmity?’

1.42 “Moreover, Subāhu, bodhisattvas properly train by thinking as follows: ‘It is unreasonable and improper for someone who wishes only for their own happiness and welfare to retaliate, get angry in return, or harbor hostility or enmity. Such being the case, how much more unreasonable and improper would it be for someone who wishes for the happiness of all worlds, wishes to benefit all worlds, has donned the great armor, has taken a vow with great resolve, has entered [F.163.a] the Great Vehicle, and who wishes to perfect the vast qualities of a buddha? One will not gather, develop, or perfect the qualities of a buddha by being impatient, retaliating, getting angry in return,

or harboring hostility or enmity. Rather, one will gather, develop, and perfect the qualities of a buddha through having patience, not retaliating, not getting angry in return, and not harboring hostility or enmity.’

1.43 “Subāhu, sons or daughters of noble family who wish to fulfill all the qualities of a buddha should not retaliate, get angry in return, or harbor hostility and enmity, even if they are subjected to the sufferings of the Hell of Endless Torment, let alone the sufferings of humans. Even if they are insulted, reviled, deprecated, or disgraced, they endure and embrace it in order to acquire the sentiment of love, the sentiment of compassion, and the immaculate, pure, and pristine awakened mind of the thus-gone ones. Even if they are dragged away, bound, and captured, they endure and embrace it for the sake of the sentiment of love, the sentiment of compassion, and in order to crack the shell of the obscuration of ignorance for a single instant. Even if they are beaten, they endure and embrace it for the sake of the sentiment of love, the sentiment of compassion, and to divest all beings of their passion and aggression.

1.44 “Even if their ears are cut off, they endure and embrace it for the sake of the sentiment of love, the sentiment of compassion, and to engender in all beings the ear for Dharma that arouses faith. Even if their noses are cut off, they endure and embrace it for the sake of the sentiment of love, the sentiment of compassion, and to enable all beings to enjoy the exquisite and unsurpassable qualities of ethical discipline. [F.163.b] Even if their legs are cut off, they endure and embrace it for the sake of the sentiment of love, the sentiment of compassion, and for all beings to obtain the thus-gone ones’ four bases of miraculous power. Even if their hands are cut off, they endure and embrace it for the sake of the sentiment of love, the sentiment of compassion, and for all beings to obtain the generosity of the outstretched²³ hand of the Dharma—peace and tranquility. Even if all their limbs are cut off, they endure and embrace it for the sake of the sentiment of love, the sentiment of compassion, and in order to complete all the major and minor limbs of the six perfections. Even if their eyes are gouged out, they endure and embrace it for the sake of the sentiment of love, the sentiment of compassion, and for all beings to obtain the eternal eye of vigilance. Even if their heads are cut off, they endure and embrace it for the sake of the sentiment of love, the sentiment of compassion, and for all beings to obtain the summit of Dharma—omniscience.

1.45 “Should they even just wish to focus upon and bring to mind these kinds of patience and acquiescence, they dedicate this so that all beings are ferried across, liberated, and relieved, and so that they may attain omniscience and perfect all the qualities of a buddha. While focusing upon and bringing them

to mind, and again after, they dedicate this so that all beings are ferried across, liberated, and relieved, and so that they may attain omniscience and perfect all the qualities of a buddha.

1.46 “Should they lack the capacity to be unwavering, flawless, and uncorrupted in training in these kinds of patience and acquiescence, this is how they properly train: From time to time, or little [F.164.a] by little, they strive and exert themselves in abandoning, forsaking, and eliminating their lack of patience and acquiescence. From time to time, or little by little, they also strive and exert themselves in training, developing, and perfecting their patience and acquiescence. Even when they take another rebirth, they neither lose heart, nor get discouraged. Subāhu, bodhisattvas’ formation of the resolve set on awakening, their recollection and cultivation of the resolve for awakening, and their wishes and aspirations for awakening are themselves the bodhisattvas’ immeasurable and incalculable virtues of practicing and truly accomplishing patience.

1.47 “Why is that? It is because among all the virtues of practicing and truly accomplishing patience, foremost and supreme is the wish to engender undefiled patience and patience at the level of no-more-training, and to do so perfectly, in all beings throughout all world systems.

1.48 “Subāhu, in this way bodhisattvas very quickly complete the perfection of patience with ease and pleasure, little difficulty, and little pain.”

1.49 “Subāhu, how do bodhisattvas complete *the perfection of diligence*? Subāhu, bodhisattvas properly train in this by thinking as follows: ‘In each of the ten directions, there are infinite and limitless world systems, and in each of these world systems there are infinite beings. Thus, this infinite and limitless multitude of beings has neither limit nor end. I shall don armor to benefit this infinite multitude of beings. [F.164.b] If I don armor to bring happiness to the infinite multitude of beings, then even when I am careless, distracted, or asleep, the infinite roots of virtue from the infinite goal of benefiting and bringing happiness to all beings will grow, expand, and be perfected²⁴ in each and every moment of thought, throughout the day and night. Thus, since in each and every moment of thought there will arise infinite roots of virtue and infinite heaps of accumulations conducive to awakening, it will not be difficult to obtain perfect awakening. That being the case, I shall now sincerely tend to the infinite growth and expansion of these roots of virtue in each and every moment of thought. On that basis, I will ensure that perfect awakening will not be difficult to obtain. In so doing, why would I slacken my diligence, even at the cost of my own life, when it enables me to attain perfect awakening?’

1.50

“Moreover, Subāhu, bodhisattvas train properly by thinking as follows: ‘Even those who wish to eliminate and overcome only the suffering of aging on behalf of the infinite multitude of beings will have roots of virtue grow and expand in each and every moment of thought. Such being the case, how much more so will that be the case for those who wish to eliminate the infinite multitude of beings’ suffering of birth and death, their suffering of being separated from what they like and encountering what they dislike, their suffering of not acquiring what they want, the suffering of animal births and Yama’s world, and the suffering of the hells, the cold hells, and the hot hells?’ [F.165.a]

1.51 “Moreover, Subāhu, bodhisattvas train properly by thinking as follows: ‘Even those who wish to eliminate the infinite multitude of beings’ suffering for just a single moment of thought will have infinite roots of virtue grow and expand in each and every moment of thought. Such being the case, how much more so will that be the case for those who wish to eliminate all the suffering—from the suffering of birth up to that of becoming²⁵—of the infinite multitude of beings throughout the infinite and immeasurable eons that have yet to come and go?’

1.52 “In addition, Subāhu, bodhisattvas train properly with the following thought: ‘Even those who wish for the qualities of a solitary buddha or a hearer will have roots of virtue grow and expand throughout each and every moment of thought. Such being the case, how much more so will that be the case for the sons or daughters of noble family who seek, wish, and aspire to perfect the mastery²⁶ of the infinite and boundless qualities and powers of a buddha? For even when they are careless or asleep, the four causes, four conditions, and four aims will grow and expand in each and every moment of thought into four infinite and boundless heaps of roots of virtue and four infinite and boundless heaps of accumulations conducive to awakening. With the emergence in each and every moment of thought of the four infinite heaps of roots of virtue and the four infinite and boundless heaps of accumulations conducive to awakening it will not be difficult to attain awakening. Therefore, I shall now tend to the four infinite heaps of roots of virtue [F.165.b] and the four infinite heaps of accumulations for perfect awakening in each and every moment of thought. On that basis, I will ensure that perfect awakening will not be difficult to obtain. In so doing, why would I slacken my diligence, even at the cost of my own life, when it enables me to attain perfect awakening?’

1.53 “ ‘The four great oceans are evidently finite and limited in the east. They are obviously finite and limited as well in the south, west, north, nadir, and zenith. Yet, the four infinite and boundless great oceans of the accumulations of roots of virtue and factors conducive to awakening have neither end nor

- limit. Thus, given that I will attain perfect awakening once these four great oceans of the accumulations of roots of virtue and factors conducive to awakening have grown and expanded throughout each and every moment of thought, why would I slacken my diligence, even at the cost of my life?
- 1.54 “Furthermore, Subāhu, bodhisattvas train properly by thinking as follows: ‘If even lions, tigers, dogs, jackals, vultures, curlews, crows, owls, worms, bees, horseflies, and gadflies can perfectly and completely awaken to buddhahood, then as a human being, why should I slacken my diligence, even at the cost of my own life, when it allows me to attain perfect awakening?’
- 1.55 “Moreover, Subāhu, bodhisattvas train properly by thinking as follows: ‘If even a hundred or a thousand people can realize and attain buddhahood, why should I not also realize and attain buddhahood now? Thus-gone ones, worthy ones, perfect buddhas equal in number to the grains of sand in the Ganges River have also realized and attained it. If thus-gone ones, worthy ones, perfect buddhas equal in number to the grains of sand in the Ganges River have realized and attained it, then [F.166.a] why should I slacken my diligence, even at the cost of my life, when it allows me to attain perfect awakening?’
- 1.56 “Furthermore, Subāhu, bodhisattvas have applied diligence, whenever they constantly and perpetually listen to, ascertain, and reflect upon—as though their hair and clothes were on fire—any Dharma teaching that is reported to be a teaching by a buddha, whether it be taught by a buddha, explained by a worthy one, explained by a bodhisattva, or even explained by madmen, as well as any Dharma teaching that leads to the completion of the perfections of generosity, ethical discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and insight, and that leads to the attainment of the qualities of a buddha, and the attainment of perfect awakening and omniscience.
- 1.57 “By carefully heeding and keeping in mind the Dharma, the wise and industrious constantly and perpetually receive, master, explain, recite, contemplate, teach, and convey to others those Dharma teachings as if their own hair and clothes were on fire, even if they are turned back with spears.
- 1.58 “By carefully heeding and keeping in mind the Dharma, the wise and industrious use their own bodies as instruments in the service of all beings’ welfare and to practice any activity connected with the Dharma²⁷ for happiness in this and other worlds, whether they are turned back with spears, or whether they have been entrusted with this or not. Just as the four great elements, unobstructed and unbound, are like instruments in the service of all beings, likewise, Subāhu, do bodhisattvas use their own bodies as instruments in the service of all beings. For they are distinguished by venerating the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha; serving bodhisattvas,

preceptors, and teachers; and attending upon [F.166.b] the elderly, sick, and defenseless. As if their hair and clothes were on fire, they attract others, inspiring faith in them by being agreeable with them through speech that brings joy to others' hearts and minds; by acting in conformity with them; by sharing liberally with them, supporting them, and serving as their companions; and by acting in harmony with virtue.

1.59 "They induct, tame, and establish in the Hearers' Vehicle those suited to the Hearers' Vehicle. They induct, tame, and establish in the Solitary Buddhas' Vehicle those suited to the Solitary Buddhas' Vehicle. They induct, tame, and establish in the Perfect Awakening Vehicle those suited to the Perfect Awakening Vehicle. Even if they are turned back with spears, the wise and industrious act as if their hair and clothes were on fire, disregarding cold for the sake and purpose of the sublime Dharma, for the sake and purpose of the six perfections, and for the sake and purpose of virtue. They also disregard heat, hunger, thirst, gadflies, horseflies, wind, sun, encounters with scorpions and snakes, others' offensive words, insulting name-calling, leisure, misfortune, sleep, displeasure, their bodies, and their lives. For the sake and purpose of perfect awakening, the wise and industrious, even if turned back with spears, also disregard the sufferings of gods; the sufferings of asuras, humans, and anguished spirits; and the sufferings of the animal realms and hells. The wise and industrious, even if turned back with spears, maintain firm diligence and courage in order to attain the fulfillment of the unequaled qualities of a buddha [F.167.a] and to attain the completion of all conduct and perfections.

1.60 "Should they even just wish to focus on and apply this diligence and courage, they dedicate this so that all beings are ferried across, liberated, and relieved, and so that they may attain omniscience and perfect all the qualities of a buddha. While focusing upon and applying diligence and courage, and again after having done so, they dedicate this so that all beings are ferried across, liberated, and relieved, and so that they may attain omniscience and perfect all the qualities of a buddha.

1.61 "Should they lack the capacity to be unwavering, flawless, and uncorrupted in training in this diligence, bodhisattvas train as follows: From time to time, or little by little, they strive and exert themselves in abandoning, forsaking, and eliminating indolence and laziness. From time to time, or little by little, they also strive and exert themselves in training, developing, and perfecting diligence and courage. Even when they take another rebirth, they become neither disheartened nor discouraged. Subāhu, bodhisattvas' formation of the resolve set on awakening, their recollection and cultivation

of the resolve for awakening, and their wishes and aspirations for awakening are themselves the bodhisattvas' immeasurable and incalculable virtues of diligence and exertion.

1.62 "Why is that? It is because among all the virtues of diligence and exertion, foremost and supreme is the wish to engender undefiled diligence and diligence at the level of no-more training, [F.167.b] and to do so perfectly, in all beings throughout all world systems. Subāhu, in this way bodhisattvas very quickly complete the perfection of diligence with ease and pleasure, little difficulty, and little pain." [B2]

1.63 "Subāhu, how do bodhisattvas complete *the perfection of concentration*? Subāhu, when bodhisattvas see sights with their eyes they do not cling to their characteristics and features. They are attentive and vigilant about restraining the mind's movements toward worldly covetousness, unhappiness, and factors connected with evil deeds and non-virtues that occur when the eye faculty is left uncontrolled by restraint. Thus, they control the eye faculty with the eye faculty. Similarly, when their ears hear sounds, their noses perceive smells, their tongues experience tastes, their bodies feel contact, and their minds cognize phenomena, they do not cling to characteristics and features. They are attentive and vigilant about restraining the mind's movements toward worldly covetousness, unhappiness, and factors connected with evil deeds and non-virtues that occur when the mental faculty is left uncontrolled by restraint. Thus, they control the mental faculty with the mental faculty.

1.64 "Whether they are walking, standing, sitting, lying, or silent, bodhisattvas neither dispense with nor forsake the states of meditative equipoise and calm abiding. Whether they are in solitude or not, their behavior is uncorrupted: their hands are not restless, they do not talk nonsense, they do not speak too much, their eyes and other sense faculties are neither distracted nor agitated, they do not indulge in idle talk, and they are constant physically, verbally, and mentally. [F.168.a] They are content with their amenities of food, drink, bedding, mats, dwelling places, and medicines to cure sicknesses, no matter what they are; they are easily sustained, easily satisfied, and easily served; their conduct and personal associations are virtuous, and in their personal associations they are withdrawn from society.²⁸

1.65 "Bodhisattvas remain neutral and unchanged with regard to obtaining or not obtaining things; they are neither proud nor humble. They remain neutral and unchanged with regard to happiness and suffering, praise and blame, fame and anonymity, and life and death; they are neither proud nor humble. They remain neutral and unchanged with regard to loved ones and enemies, fortune and misfortune, pleasant agreeable things and unpleasant

disagreeable things, noble and ignoble things, and solitude and crowds; they are neither proud nor humble. Likewise, attractive and unattractive sights are neither agreeable nor disagreeable to bodhisattvas. Attractive and unattractive sounds, smells, tastes, tangibles, and mental phenomena are also neither agreeable nor disagreeable to them. Since objects of desire are experienced based on misconception, driven by their own mind, bodhisattvas²⁹ think of them as skeletons. Since objects of desire are a host of enemies, they think of them as lumps of flesh.³⁰ Since one suffers when indulging in desires, but is happy when forsaking them, they think of them as a brush fire.³¹ Since desires cause much harm, they think of them as fruits on the tips of trees. Since desires are not under control, they think of them as beggars. Since one takes pleasure in desires due to momentary confusion, they think of them as dreams. Since desires are produced by the distorted perception of suffering as happiness, they think of them as leprosy. Since desires are the object of all evil behavior, [F.168.b], and cause one to fall into negative destinies and reach the brink of hell, they think of them as metal hooks. Since desires do not satiate but only increase one's thirst, they think of them as salt water.

- 1.66 "Bodhisattvas perfect and settle into the first concentration—a state secluded from desires, secluded from any factors connected with evil deeds and non-virtues, accompanied by reflection and analysis, and imbued with the joy and pleasure born of seclusion.
- 1.67 "When they have brought about the cessation of reflection and analysis, they become inwardly serene, and therefore their minds become concentrated. Through this they perfect and settle into the second concentration, which is free of reflection and analysis and is imbued with the joy and pleasure born of meditative absorption.
- 1.68 "Through disenchantment with joy, they remain impartial, maintain mindfulness and introspection, and experience physical pleasure. They thus perfect and settle into the third concentration. The noble ones call such people *impartial ones dwelling on pleasure that is imbued with mindfulness*.
- 1.69 "Through also relinquishing pleasure, and having formerly relinquished pain in the past, both happiness and unhappiness vanish. Thus they perfect and settle into the fourth concentration, which is pure impartiality and mindfulness, unconnected with pleasure or pain.³²
- 1.70 "By bringing to mind the perception of happiness for all beings, bodhisattvas perfect and settle into immeasurable love. By bringing to mind the perception of the suffering of all beings, they perfect and settle into immeasurable compassion. By bringing to mind the perception of rejoicing

for all beings, they perfect and settle into immeasurable joy. By bringing to mind neither pain nor pleasure with respect to any being, they perfect and settle into immeasurable impartiality.

1.71 “By bringing to mind the perception of form as coarse, and the perception of space as tranquil, bodhisattvas perfect and settle into the sphere of infinite space. [F.169.a] By bringing to mind the perception of consciousness as tranquil, they perfect and settle into the sphere of infinite consciousness. By bringing to mind the perception of absolute nothingness as tranquil, they perfect and settle into the sense sphere of absolute nothingness. By bringing to mind the perception of a state with neither perception nor non-perception as tranquil, they perfect and settle into the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception.

1.72 “By bringing to mind the perception of their inhalations and exhalations of shorter duration as having shorter duration and those of longer duration as having longer duration, precisely in accordance with how long their inhalations and exhalations last and endure, they perfect and settle into the mindfulness of breathing. By bringing to mind the marks of repulsiveness in the bodies of beings, they perfect and settle into the perception of repulsiveness. By bringing to mind the marks of death, they perfect and settle into the perception of death. By bringing to mind the marks of sickness and aging, they perfect and settle into the perception of their defects. By bringing to mind that the search for food and its transience are causes for disease and harm, they perfect and settle into the perception of food as disagreeable. By bringing to mind the marks of the entire world, with its households, villages, cities, and countries, as devoid of wealth and devoid of wondrous forests and delightful groves, they perfect and settle into the perception that the entire world is unpleasant.

1.73 “With a perception of internal physical matter, bodhisattvas bring to mind a small amount of external physical matter characterized by appealing and unappealing colors, and thereby perfect and settle into the first stage of mastery over the senses. With a perception of internal physical matter, they bring to mind an immeasurable amount of external physical matter characterized by appealing and unappealing colors, and thereby perfect and settle into the second stage of mastery over the senses. They cultivate and accomplish disintegration as the perception that, due to wind or water, even the ash of a cremated corpse does not remain, [F.169.b] and as the perception that after something has broken and disintegrated even powder and dust do not remain. Thus, with a perception that there is no internal physical matter, bodhisattvas bring to mind a minute amount of external physical matter characterized by appealing and unappealing colors, and thereby perfect and settle into the third stage of mastery over the senses. Similarly, with a

perception that there is no internal physical matter, they bring to mind an immeasurable amount of external physical matter characterized by appealing and unappealing colors, and thereby perfect and settle into the fourth stage of mastery over the senses. Similarly, with a perception that there is no internal physical matter, they bring to mind an immeasurable amount of external physical matter characterized by an immeasurable and attractive blue color, and thereby perfect and settle into the fifth stage of mastery over the senses. Similarly, with a perception that there is no internal physical matter, they bring to mind an immeasurable amount of external physical matter characterized in turn by an immeasurable and attractive yellow, red, and white color, and thereby perfect and settle into the sixth, seventh, and eighth stages of mastery over the senses.

1.74 “Saying, ‘The earth element is limitless,’ bodhisattvas bring its characteristics to mind and thereby perfect and settle into the totality of earth. Saying, ‘Water, fire, wind, blue, yellow, red, white, space, and consciousness are limitless,’ they bring their characteristics to mind and thereby perfect and settle within the totality of water, the totality of fire, the totality of wind, the totality of blue, the totality of yellow, the totality of red, the totality of white, the totality of space, and the totality of consciousness.

1.75 “Upon settling into equilibrium, bodhisattvas apply their minds to focus on all roots of virtue. They apply their minds to focus on great compassion, on obtaining the sublime Dharma, on ensuring that the lineage of the Three Jewels is not cut off, on the body and ornaments of the Buddha, [F.170.a] on the Brahmā-like voice of the Buddha’s speech, on previous aspirations, on ripening all beings, on purifying all the worlds, on the arrangement of the seat of awakening, on turning the wheel of Dharma, and on conquering the afflictions in all beings.

1.76 “When practicing concentration, they practice it free from the four objects of consciousness.³³ They practice concentration without dwelling on the element of earth, the element of water, the element of fire, the element of wind, the element of space, the element of consciousness, this world, or future worlds. In order to attain all unsurpassed states of absorption and equilibrium, they settle into concentration and delight in it.

1.77 “Should bodhisattvas even just wish to practice concentration and rest in equilibrium with respect to those concentrations and absorptions, they dedicate this so that all beings are ferried across, liberated, and relieved, and so that they may attain omniscience and perfect all the qualities of a buddha. While doing these practices, and again after doing them, they dedicate this so that all beings are ferried across, liberated, and relieved, and so that they may attain omniscience and perfect all the qualities of a buddha.

1.78

“Should they lack the capacity to train in those concentrations and absorptions then this is how they properly train: From time to time, or little by little, they strive and exert themselves in abandoning, forsaking, and eliminating distraction and non-absorption. [F.170.b] From time to time, or little by little, they also strive and exert themselves in training, developing, and perfecting the practice of single-pointedly focusing their minds and resting them in equipoise. Even when they take another rebirth, they do not become disheartened or discouraged. Subāhu, bodhisattvas’ formation of the resolve set on awakening, their recollection and cultivation of the resolve set on awakening, and their aspirations and prayers for awakening are themselves the bodhisattvas’ incalculable and immeasurable virtues of resting their minds in equipoise and focusing their minds single-pointedly.

1.79 “Why is that? It is because the wish to engender undefiled concentration and concentration at the level of no-more-training, and to do so perfectly, in all beings throughout all world systems, is the infinite and boundless virtue of resting one’s mind in equipoise and focusing one’s minds single-pointedly.

1.80 “Subāhu, in this way bodhisattvas complete the perfection of concentration, with ease and pleasure, little difficulty, and little pain.”

1.81 “Subāhu, how do bodhisattvas complete *the perfection of insight*? Subāhu, even if they are turned back with spears, they approach, rely upon, and venerate individuals who are learned, retain what they have learned, and have collected what they have learned, as well as those who understand the content, are well-spoken, are discerning, and who have reflected upon³⁴ the significance of what they have learned. For the sake of learning, explanations, content, reflecting upon the significance, and venerating masters and preceptors, [F.171.a] they disregard cold, heat, hunger, thirst, gadflies, horseflies, wind, sun, encounters with scorpions and snakes, others’ offensive words and insulting name-calling, violent, rough, or unbearable physical sensations, and even being killed. They maintain the perception that Dharma teachings are precious jewels. They observe the perception that Dharma preachers are treasuries of precious jewels. They observe the perception that listening to the Dharma is discovering something rare. They observe the perception that retaining the Dharma is as important as life. They observe the perception that amassing the qualities of Dharma is vitally important. They observe the perception that reflecting on the Dharma is an opportunity that will not be found again within a hundred lifetimes.

1.82 “When bodhisattvas hear those Dharma teachings, and, retaining them, study and reflect upon them, they will come to know the constituents. They will also come to know the aggregates, the sense spheres, the truths of noble

beings, dependent origination, time, the vehicles, and the accumulation of virtue.

1.83 “How do bodhisattvas understand the constituents? The constituents are twofold, known as conditioned and unconditioned. These are the two constituents. What are conditioned and unconditioned constituents? A *conditioned constituent* is anything whatsoever that arises, remains, and ceases. An *unconditioned constituent* is anything whatsoever that does not arise, remain, or cease. Thus do they understand the conditioned and unconditioned constituents.

1.84 “Moreover, bodhisattvas know the three constituents: virtuous, non-virtuous, and neutral constituents. What are virtuous, non-virtuous, and neutral constituents? A *virtuous constituent* is anything whatsoever that lacks attachment or is associated with a lack of attachment, anything whatsoever that lacks anger or is associated with a lack of anger, and anything whatsoever that lacks ignorance [F.171.b] or is associated with a lack of ignorance. A *non-virtuous constituent* is anything whatsoever that has attachment or is associated with attachment, anything whatsoever that has anger or is associated with anger, and anything whatsoever that has ignorance or is associated with ignorance. *Neutrality* is anything not included within those two. Thus do bodhisattvas understand the three constituents.

1.85 “Moreover, bodhisattvas know the three realms. What are the three? The desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm. What is the desire realm? The *desire realm* comprises the beings in the hells, animals, anguished spirits, asuras, humans, and the gods of the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Heaven of the Thirty-Three, Heaven Free from Strife, Heaven of Joy, Heaven of Delighting in Emanations, and Heaven of Making Use of Others’ Emanations, as well as anyone who yearns for, is attached to, is angry at, is ignorant of, wishes for, makes aspirations for, or conditions themselves to those types of beings.

1.86 “What is the form realm? The *form realm* comprises the gods in the Brahmā Realm, and the gods in the heavens of the High Priests of Brahmā, Mahābrahmā, Limited Light, Limitless Light, Luminous, Limited Virtue, Limitless Virtue, Perfected Virtue, Cloudless, Increased Merit, Great Fruition, Concept-Free Beings, Unlofty, No Hardship, Sublime, Gorgeous, and Highest, as well as anyone who yearns for, is attached to, is angry at, is ignorant of, wishes for, makes aspirations for, or conditions themselves to those types of beings.

1.87 “What is the formless realm? The *formless realm* comprises the gods who move about in the Sphere of Infinite Space, the gods who move about in the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness, the gods who move about in the Sphere of Absolute Nothingness, the gods who move about in the Sphere of Neither

Perception nor Non-Perception, [F.172.a] as well as anyone who yearns for, is attached to, is angry at, is ignorant of, wishes for, makes aspirations for, or conditions themselves to those types of beings. Thus do bodhisattvas know the three realms.

1.88 “Moreover, they know the four realms. What are the four? The four are known as the desire realm, the form realm, the formless realm, and the unconditioned realm. Thus do they know the four realms.

1.89 “Moreover, they know the six realms. What are the six? They are the realms of desire, malice, harm, deliverance, freedom from malice, and freedom from harm. Thus do they know the six realms.

1.90 “In addition to that, they know the six elements. What are the six? They are the elements of earth, water, fire, wind, space, and consciousness. They know these six elements. Among them, the earth element bears the qualities of being impermanent, unstable, and subject to change—and that which is impermanent is suffering, and that which is suffering is selfless. In the same way, the elements of water, fire, wind, space, and consciousness also bear the qualities of being impermanent, unstable, and subject to change—and that which is impermanent is suffering, and that which is suffering is selfless. Thus do they know the six elements accordingly.

1.91 “When bodhisattvas hear those teachings and, retaining them, study and consider them, they come to understand the five aggregates. These five are the aggregates of forms, sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness. [F.172.b]

1.92 “As for forms, they are like bubbles: worthless, fragile, and fleeting. Sensations are like foam on water: worthless, fragile, and fleeting. Perceptions are like a mirage: worthless, fragile, and fleeting. Formations are like the plantain tree: worthless, fragile, and fleeting. Consciousness is like an illusion: worthless, fragile, and fleeting. Thus do bodhisattvas understand the five aggregates.

1.93 “When bodhisattva hear those teachings and, retaining them, study and consider them, they come to understand the six inner sense spheres. The six inner sense spheres are known as the inner sense spheres of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind.

1.94 “Among them, bodhisattvas understand that the inner sense sphere of the eyes is subject to sickness, aging, and death; is empty of both ‘me’ and ‘mine’; is ablaze with the fires of desire, aversion, and ignorance; is ablaze with birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, lamentation, suffering, unhappiness, and despair; and is ablaze with suffering.

1.95 “Likewise, bodhisattvas know that the inner sense spheres of the ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind are also subject to sickness, aging, and death; are empty of both ‘me’ and ‘mine’; are ablaze with the fires of desire,

aversion, and ignorance; are ablaze with birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow, lamentation, suffering, unhappiness, and despair; and ablaze with suffering. Thus do they understand the six inner sense spheres.

1.96 “Furthermore, bodhisattvas understand the six outer sense spheres [F.173.a] as the forms cognized through the eyes, the sounds cognized through the ears, the smells cognized through the nose, the tastes cognized through the tongue, the tangibles cognized through the body, and the phenomena cognized by the mind. These six are known as the outer sense spheres.

1.97 “Among them, the outer sense sphere of forms cognized through³⁵ the eyes is unreliable, undependable, powerless, and fragile, for it utterly lacks permanence, solidity, endurance, reality, unmistakable reality, or incontrovertible reality. All that it has is illusion, the creation of illusion, and the capacity to delude the mind. Likewise, the outer sense spheres of the sounds cognized through the ears, the smells cognized through the nose, the tastes cognized through the tongue, the tangibles cognized through the body, and the phenomena cognized by the mind are unreliable, undependable, powerless, and fragile, for they utterly lack permanence, solidity, endurance, reality, unmistakable reality, or incontrovertible reality. All that they have is illusion, the creation of illusion, and the capacity to delude the mind. Thus do bodhisattvas understand the six outer sense spheres.

1.98 “So, when bodhisattvas hear those teachings and, retaining them, study and consider them, they come to understand the four truths of noble beings. What are the four? They are the truths, according to noble beings, of suffering, the source of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path to the cessation of suffering. Those are known as the truths of noble beings.

1.99 “The five aggregates, six sensory elements, six inner sense spheres, [F.173.b] and six outer sense spheres are known as *suffering*. Bodhisattvas regard suffering as impermanent, intolerable, sickly, tumorous, painful, sinful, selfless, and perishable by nature.

1.100 “The *truth of noble beings of the source of suffering* refers to desire, aversion, delusion, and pride; fixation on the notion of ‘I’; fixation on the notion of ‘this is my self’; and fixation on self with regard to the following notions: it will emerge; it will not emerge; it will have form; it will be formless; it will have perception; it will not have perception; it will neither have perception, nor will it not have perception; the self is the aggregates; the self is separate from the aggregates; the self is in the aggregates; the aggregates are in the self; the self is the elements and sense spheres;³⁶ the self is separate from the sense spheres; the self is in the sense spheres; the sense spheres are in the self; the self is sensation; the self is what feels; the self is a tiny material entity; the self is a tiny formless entity; the self is an infinite material entity;

the self is an infinite formless entity; the self is permanent; the self is impermanent; the self is both permanent and impermanent; the self is neither permanent nor impermanent; the self is finite; the self is infinite; the self is both finite and infinite; the self is neither finite nor infinite; the self will emerge after death; the self will not emerge after death; [F.174.a] the self will and will not emerge after death; the self will neither emerge nor not emerge after death; life is the body; life and the body are separate; where does this being come from and where will it go after death?; beings are cut off from existence in that they perish and cease to exist; the doer is the experiencer; the doer and the experiencer are separate; because the self exists, what belongs to the self also exists; the self exists because what belongs to the self exists; the self is present here in this manner; the self is turning into something else; it will be the same; it will turn into something else; it will emerge here; it will emerge in that manner; it will emerge elsewhere; the self was here in the past; the self has now emerged; or the self emerged before as something else. Thus, the truth of the source of suffering of noble beings includes false views about perishable composites, egotistical pride, mental states, fixation, latent impulses of pride, arrogance, self-aggrandizement, assertions in which a self is propounded, desire, aversion, delusion, and all kinds of pride; actions of body, speech, or mind that are meritorious,³⁷ non-meritorious, or unchanging; as well as everything else included in the desire, form, or formless realms.

1.101 “The *truth of noble beings of the cessation of suffering* refers to the exhaustion of desire, aversion, delusion, and pride, as well as the absence of fixation on the self and assertions in which a self is propounded.

1.102 “The *truth of noble beings of the path to the cessation of suffering* is attentiveness to suffering as suffering, the source as the source, [F.174.b] cessation as cessation, and the path as the path; it is regarding conditioned phenomena as faulty and maintaining that observation; it is regarding nirvāṇa as beneficial and maintaining that observation; as well as the right view of seeing things as they are and having discernment regarding actions performed, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right absorption.

“These are the four truths of noble beings.

1.103 “When, upon analyzing and reflecting on those four truths of noble beings, bodhisattvas comprehend and cultivate³⁸ them, they regard conditioned elements as impermanent, painful, empty, and selfless. They also regard unconditioned elements as a shelter, abode, protection, and refuge; yet, they do not make manifest the uncompounded elements. Thus do they understand the four truths of noble beings.

1.104

“So, when bodhisattvas hear those teachings and, retaining them, study and consider them, they come to understand dependent origination. Ignorance creates the condition for formations. Formations create the condition for consciousness. Consciousness creates the condition for name and form. Name and form create the condition for the six sense spheres. The six sense spheres create the condition for contact. Contact creates the condition for sensation. Sensation creates the condition for craving. Craving creates the condition for clinging. Clinging creates the condition for becoming. Becoming creates the condition for birth. Birth creates the condition for aging and death. This process is known as dependent origination.

1.105 “*Ignorance* refers to not understanding and not recognizing the four truths of noble beings and dependent origination.

“*Formations* refers to any action of the body, speech, and mind, no matter how minor, that is meritorious, non-meritorious, or unchanging, [F.175.a] or anything that leads to the desire, form, or formless realms.

1.106 “*Consciousness* is the mind or mental faculty³⁹ that arises from even the most minor formation.

“*Name and form* refers to both ‘name’—any sensation, perception, thought, contact, or consideration of any kind that comes from consciousness—and ‘form’—any embryonic form, miraculous form, or perceptible form of any kind that appears together with ‘name.’

1.107 “*The six sense spheres* refers to the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind that emerge from name and form.

“*Contact* refers to the convergence of eye, form, and eye consciousness, where the eye consciousness arises based on the eyes and form. It also refers to the convergence of the triad of mental consciousness, mind, and mental objects, where the mental consciousness arises based on the mind and mental objects, as well as the other triads inclusive of ears, nose, tongue, and body.

1.108 “*Sensation, which is of three types*, refers to the painful, pleasurable, and neutral sensations that arise from contact.

“*Craving* refers to the desire, attachment, and infatuation that arise from sensation.

1.109 “*Clinging* refers to the yearning, beliefs, ethical discipline, asceticism, and claims about self that arise from craving.

“*Becoming* refers to the forms, sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness that arise from clinging.

1.110 “*Birth* refers to the emergence, birth, and formation of whatever has come into existence.

“*Aging* refers to the change, decay, and degeneration of whatever has come into existence.

“*Death* refers to the passing away and separation of whatever has come into existence.

1.111 “When, upon analyzing and reflecting on dependent origination, bodhisattvas comprehend and cultivate it, they do not make assumptions. [F.175.b] They do not make assumptions about earth. They do not make the assumption that earth belongs to them. Nor do they delight in earth. They also do not make any assumption that water, fire, wind, sky, and consciousness are singular, different, visible, hearable, distinguishable, perceivable, and beyond suffering. Neither do they make assumptions about nirvāṇa, assuming that nirvāṇa is theirs, or delight in nirvāṇa.

1.112 “When they consider dependently arisen phenomena, they comprehend and cultivate the three gates of liberation: the emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness of phenomena.

1.113 “When they consider dependently arisen phenomena, they comprehend and cultivate the cessation of dependent origination as follows: the cessation of ignorance will cause the cessation of formations. The cessation of formations will cause the cessation of consciousness. The cessation of consciousness will cause the cessation of name and form. The cessation of name and form will cause the cessation of the six sense spheres. The cessation of the six sense spheres will cause the cessation of contact. The cessation of contact will cause the cessation of sensation. The cessation of sensation will cause the cessation of craving. The cessation of craving will cause the cessation of clinging. The cessation of clinging will cause the cessation of becoming. The cessation of becoming will cause the cessation of birth. The cessation of birth will cause the cessation of aging and death.

“Although they consider the cessation of dependent origination in that manner, they do not make manifest the cessation of dependent origination; thus do bodhisattvas understand the cessation of dependent origination.

1.114 “So, when bodhisattvas hear those teachings and, retaining them, study and consider them, they come to understand the three times. What are the three? They are the past, the future, and the present; these are known as the three times. *The past* refers to any conditioned phenomenon that has ceased. [F.176.a] *The future* refers to any conditioned phenomenon that has not yet come into existence and arisen. *The present* refers to any conditioned phenomenon that has arisen and exists currently.

1.115 “So, when bodhisattvas recollect the roots of their past non-virtues, they revile and condemn them, giving them up for good.

“They regard even the most miniscule root of their future non-virtues as coming to fruition unequivocally, and becoming something repulsive, unpleasant, and frightening; they then settle into that observation.

“Bodhisattvas do not provide the opportunity for their roots of non-virtue to develop presently; they control with restraint their body, speech, mind, and six senses.

1.116 “Bodhisattvas recollect the roots of their past virtue, their resolve set on awakening, their wishes and aspirations for the mind of awakening and, with fervent yearning, joy, and faith, they dedicate these so that all beings are ferried across, liberated, and relieved, and so that they may completely transcend suffering, attain omniscience, and perfect all the qualities of a buddha.

1.117 “With fervent yearning, joy, and faith they wish, long, and aspire that their future roots of virtue, intention set on awakening, and wishes and aspirations for awakening may also enable all beings to be ferried across, liberated, and relieved, and so that they may completely transcend suffering, attain omniscience, and perfect all the qualities of a buddha.

1.118 “So that all sentient beings may be ferried across, liberated, and relieved, [F.176.b] and so that they may attain omniscience, and perfect all the qualities of a buddha, bodhisattvas never ever forsake, diminish, forget, or neglect their present virtuous streams and trains of thought.

1.119 “All past aggregates, sensory elements, and sense spheres are past, done, absent, and no longer exist. Thus, presently, they are devoid of a self and anything belonging to a self. All future aggregates, sensory elements, and sense spheres have not yet arisen, appeared, or come into existence. Thus, presently, they are devoid of a self and anything belonging to a self. All present aggregates, sensory elements, and sense spheres neither remain nor endure.

1.120 “Why is that? It is because the world does not remain for more than a moment. And that moment itself, whose time of arising, remaining, and ceasing are all separate, neither remains nor endures. The duration of a moment is in terms of the inner and outer aggregates, the sensory elements, and the sense spheres. The inner and outer aggregates, the sensory elements, and the sense spheres exist in terms of duration. The present aggregates, sensory elements, and sense spheres neither remain nor endure for even a mere moment, and that which neither remains nor endures is devoid of a self and anything belonging to a self. Moreover, the future has not arisen, appeared, or come into existence, so it is devoid of a self and anything belonging to a self. Moreover, the past is over, not arisen, and does not exist, so it is naturally devoid of a self and anything belonging to a self. Since the lack of a self and the lack of anything belonging to a self has never

arisen or come into existence throughout the three times, it is inappropriate for the wise and circumspect to believe in a self, thinking, 'This is mine,' 'This is me,' or 'This possession of mine exists.'

1.121 "Bodhisattvas maintain the perception that all existences and conditioned phenomena are devoid of self, the perception of being free of attachment toward them, [F.177.a] the perception of having discarded them, and the perception of their cessation; it is not the case, however, that cessation is made manifest.

1.122 "When bodhisattvas, who thus understand the three times, hear those teachings and, retaining them, study and consider them, they come to understand the three vehicles. What are the three? The *three vehicles* refers to the Gods' Vehicle, Brahmā's Vehicle, and the Noble Ones' Vehicle. The Gods' Vehicle is the first concentration, as well as the second, third, and fourth concentrations. Brahmā's Vehicle is love, as well as compassion, joy, and impartiality. The Noble Ones' Vehicle is the eightfold path of the noble ones: right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right absorption.

1.123 "Bodhisattvas sometimes cultivate the Gods' Vehicle and establish beings in it; sometimes they cultivate Brahmā's Vehicle and establish beings in it; and sometimes they cultivate the Noble Ones' Vehicle and establish beings in it. And yet, they do not make manifest the liberation of the noble ones.

1.124 "Furthermore, they also know three further vehicles. What are the three? These three vehicles are the Hearers' Vehicle, the Solitary Buddhas' Vehicle, and the Great Vehicle.

1.125 "The *Hearers' Vehicle* pertains to those with lesser inclinations and faculties who have not a mere moment's interest in existence, and do not perpetuate existence, but reject it. Through seeing the advantages of attaining nirvāṇa, it is as if their hair and clothes were on fire—they acquire the strongest of intentions and efforts to comprehend and realize⁴⁰ the four truths of noble beings.

1.126 "The *Solitary Buddhas' Vehicle* pertains to those with middling inclinations and faculties, who delight in solitude, are devoted to their own aims, strive to dwell in the concentrations and attainments, [F.177.b] are skilled in discerning dependent origination, and wish and make aspirations for their own awakening.

1.127 "The *Great Vehicle* pertains to those with especially exalted inclinations and faculties, who wish to fulfill all the qualities of a buddha and all six perfections so that all sentient beings may be ferried across, liberated, relieved, and obtain omniscience. It pertains to those who, for the benefit of the world, disregard the suffering of saṃsāra, and have much contempt for the pleasures of saṃsāra, let alone its sufferings. It pertains to those who

observe superior conduct and ethical discipline, and who endeavor to chant, recite, explain, and reflect upon⁴¹ the sūtras about the Perfect Awakening Vehicle. It also pertains to bodhisattva great beings who are virtuous spiritual friends, train in the four kinds of blessing—truth, generosity, tranquility, and insight—and hear, receive, memorize, and enjoy analyzing all objects of knowledge. It pertains to those who wish to authentically cultivate all absorptions and attainments, who disregard their own welfare and strive for the welfare of the world, and who wish to establish, and delight in establishing, all beings in the three vehicles in accordance with their capacity. It also pertains to those who themselves firmly adhere to the vehicle of awakening, and with steadfast, unshakable, and vajra-like minds, continuously wish and make aspirations for awakening. This is how bodhisattvas understand the three vehicles. [F.178.a]

- 1.128 “When bodhisattvas hear those teachings and, retaining them, study and consider them, they come to understand the virtuous method: prostrating to the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha. They do so by observing as follows: ‘I prostrate to all the past, future, and present buddhas, dharmas, and saṅghas throughout all the world systems.’ When practicing a single prostration, they form the intention of awakening, imagining that they prostrate boundlessly and immeasurably. When aspiring for awakening, they dedicate it so that all beings may be ferried across, liberated, relieved, attain omniscience, and perfect all the qualities of a buddha. Similarly, when going for refuge they also form the intention of awakening. When practicing any activity—walking, standing, sitting, sleeping, washing, eating, drinking, plowing the fields, or planting seeds—they form and cultivate the mind of awakening through making aspirations for awakening boundlessly and immeasurably.
- 1.129 “When practicing meditative equipoise and concentration, they also form and cultivate the mind of awakening by making aspirations for awakening, boundlessly and immeasurably, that all beings may be ferried across, liberated, relieved, attain omniscience, and perfect all the qualities of a buddha.
- 1.130 “They arouse and cultivate the mind of awakening by making aspirations to completely perfect all the qualities of a buddha—an omniscient one who is supreme throughout the whole world, a tamer of all beings, a peerless one, an incomparable one, a reliever of the whole world, a liberator of the whole world, a [F.178.b] truly complete buddha.
- 1.131 “Whatever virtue bodhisattvas practice, they dedicate it so that all beings will be free of fear, their chain of bad destinies will be severed, their sufferings and afflictions will be utterly pacified, and they will attain nirvāṇa.

1.132

“They dedicate it so that those belonging to the Hearers’ Vehicle now and in the future will complete the Hearers’ Vehicle. They dedicate it so that those belonging to the Solitary Buddhas’ Vehicle now and in the future will complete the Solitary Buddhas’ Vehicle. They dedicate it so that those belonging to the Bodhisattvas’ Vehicle now and in the future will complete the Bodhisattvas’ Vehicle. They dedicate it so that past, future, and present thus-gone ones throughout all world systems will remain for an eon, teach the Dharma for an eon, and their saṅghas will be harmonious for an eon.

1.133 “Bodhisattvas also understand that establishing beings on the path of the higher realms, the path of hearers, the path of solitary buddhas, or the path of perfect awakening; or conforming with beings through generosity, pleasant speech, meaningful conduct, or practicing what they preach; or anything else, for that matter, as appropriate, can truly give rise to virtuous factors and become roots of virtue and the like.

1.134 “Bodhisattvas think, ‘I will practice these Dharma verses three times daily.’ The verses are as follows: [F.179.a]

“Wherever⁴² I wander, I bow my head infinite times
To the perfect Buddhas, Dharmas, Saṅghas,
And bodhisattvas dwelling
Throughout every world system.

1.135 “I reverentially go for refuge infinite times
To all those whose qualities are unequalled among beings,
To the sources of incomparable qualities,
And to those possessing immeasurable qualities.

1.136 “I make infinite supplications
That no world system whatsoever,
Even rarely, be bereft
Of the Buddha, Dharma, Saṅgha, and bodhisattvas!

1.137 “I reverentially make infinite supplications
To the blissful ones throughout all the world systems,
So that they remain for every eon
Teaching the tranquil Dharma!

1.138 “I condemn
And abandon all evil deeds—
Each and every negative deed I have ever committed
In the past and present, however momentary!

1.139 “I will wholly embrace virtue,
However momentary.

- In this life, for as long as I shall live,
May I abide by all virtues!
- 1.140 “May all the virtues
Of the buddhas and bodhisattvas,
Past, present, and yet to come to this world,
Who turn the wheel of the Dharma of awakening,
- 1.141 As well as the ethical discipline, insight, absorption,
Liberation, life, and qualities
Of all the victorious and noble ones,
Bring benefit to all world systems!
- 1.142 “I repeatedly and reverentially rejoice, infinite times,
In the virtues
Of all beings of the five destinies,
Past, present, and yet to come!
- 1.143 “I make infinite aspirations
That each and every being without exception,
Myself included, [F.179.b] may have all those
Authentic qualities and infinite virtues!
- 1.144 “Through all my virtue
From the past, present, and future,
May the Three Jewels always appear
In every world system!
- 1.145 “May we not be bereft for eons
Of the Three Jewels’ and bodhisattvas’ presence!
May we complete awakening
And the perfections without hindrance!
- 1.146 “May beings have every happiness,
Be without fear, transcend the lower realms,
Be free from all non-virtues,
And perfect all roots of virtue!
- 1.147 “May they fulfill their aspiration prayers
According to all of the three vehicles!
May they have long life, liberation,
And fulfill their extraordinary purpose!
- 1.148 “When making aspirations for complete awakening,
May they be cast infinitely and immeasurably!

- May the suffering and afflictions
Of all beings be utterly quelled!
- 1.149 “I offer my own body with conviction
To all victorious ones and bodhisattvas
Of each and every world system
For use in actions whose purpose is Dharma!
- 1.150 “I will make infinite aspirations
That in the future, until attaining⁴³ perfect awakening,
I may serve the Three Jewels
In each and every lifetime!
- 1.151 “May I worship the Three Jewels and bodhisattvas
Of each and every world system
With sublime, divine perfume, garlands, and bouquets of flowers
Equal to the reaches of the sky!
- 1.152 “May I give them heaps of silver and gold,
Clothing and precious substances,
Infinite chariots with steeds,⁴⁴
And infinite bedding and food, equal to the reaches of Mount Sumeru!
- 1.153 “May I be like a sanctuary, a foundation,⁴⁵ and a parent to beings,
Fulfilling their wishes through the path!
May I delight in patience, be pure in ethical discipline,
And teach the Dharma to beings!
- 1.154 “May I discover the sublime vehicle of awakening [F.180.a]
And don sturdy armor for the sake of the Three Jewels!
May I complete the perfections
And the qualities of a buddha!
- 1.155 “May I be free of all evil deeds
And may my activities of body, speech, and mind be supremely virtuous!
May I not regress from awakening!
May I delight in awakening and become a bodhisattva!
- 1.156 “I will train in all the virtues of the buddhas and bodhisattvas,
In each and every existence!
And I will also orient all worlds
Toward all of those qualities!
- “Thus do bodhisattvas understand the accumulation of their own and others’ roots of virtue.

- 1.157 “Should bodhisattvas so much as wish to turn toward and bring to mind that insight and wisdom, they dedicate this so that all beings may be ferried across, liberated, relieved, attain omniscience, and perfect all the qualities of a buddha. While turning toward it and bringing it to mind, as well as after having done so, they dedicate this so that all beings may be ferried across, liberated, relieved, attain omniscience, and perfect all the qualities of a buddha.
- 1.158 “Should bodhisattvas lack the capacity to train in that insight and wisdom, then this is how they properly train: From time to time, or little by little, they strive and exert themselves in abandoning, forsaking, and eliminating misunderstanding and ignorance. From time to time, or little by little, they also strive and exert themselves in training in, developing, and perfecting insight and wisdom. Even when they take another rebirth, they do not become disheartened or discouraged.
- 1.159 “Subāhu, bodhisattvas’ formation of the resolve set on awakening [F.180.b], their recollection and cultivation of the resolve for awakening, and their aspiration and prayers for awakening are themselves the immeasurable, incalculable virtues of insight and wisdom.
“Why is that? It is because among all the virtues of insight and wisdom, foremost and supreme is the wish to engender undefiled insight and wisdom at the level of no-more-training, and to do so perfectly, in all beings throughout all world systems.
- 1.160 “Subāhu, thus do bodhisattvas quickly complete the perfection of insight with ease and pleasure, little difficulty, and little pain. Bodhisattvas who complete all the perfections will quickly and perfectly awaken to unsurpassable, perfect, and complete awakening.
- 1.161 “When this Dharma discourse is taught, the goals of the three vehicles and birth in the higher realms are accomplished for all the countless and unfathomable divine and human beings.”
- 1.162 After the Blessed One had thus spoken, the bodhisattva great being Subāhu, the other bodhisattvas, the great hearers, and the world with its gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas rejoiced and praised what the Blessed One had said.
- 1.163 *Thus concludes the section “The Question of Subāhu,” the twenty-sixth section of “The Noble Dharma Discourse, the Great Heap of Jewels,” in one hundred thousand sections.*

c.

Colophon

- c.1 Translated, edited, and finalized, based on revisions done according to the language reform, by the Indian preceptors Dānaśīla and Jinamitra, and the chief editor-translator Bandé Yeshé Dé.

ab.

ABBREVIATIONS

- C Choné Kangyur (*co*)
- D Degé Kangyur
- H Lhasa Kangyur (*zhol*)
- J 'jang sa tham / Lithang Kangyur (*li*)
- K Peking Kangxi 1684/92 Kangyur (*pe*)
- K_Y Peking Yongle Kangyur (*g.yung*)
- N Narthang Kangyur (*snar*)
- S Stok Palace Kangyur
- U Urga Kangyur (*khu*)

NOTES

n.

- n.1 The Chinese translation Taishō 310 (26), *Shanbipusahui* (善臂菩薩會), was completed by Kumārajīva sometime during the years 402–412 CE, when he lived in what was then the Chinese capital of Chang’an (modern day Xi’an).
- n.2 Denkarma, folio 296.a.5. See also Herrmann-Pfandt (2008, p. 30, no. 51), and *ibid.* pp. xviii–xx for the dating.
- n.3 The “language reform” refers to the imperial edict reflected in the Drajor Bampo Nyipa (*sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*, Toh 4347, see Halkias 2004), whose first appearance Scherrer-Schaub (2002, p. 285) dates to 783 or 795 under the reign of Trisong Detsen (*khri srong lde btsan*), r. 756–c. 797, c. 798–c. 800, see Dotson (2007 p. 2n4).
- n.4 *’phags pa lag bzangs kyis zhus pa’i mdo las byung ba’i smon lam* (Toh 4381), Degé Tengyur vol. 207 (sna tshogs, nyo), folios 310.a–310.b.
- n.5 *The Tantra of the Question of Subāhu* (Toh 805, *dpung bzang gis zhus pa’i rgyud*, *Subāhupariṣcchātantra*).
- n.6 Jonathan Silk (1994), in his comparison of two other texts in the Ratnakūṭa (Heap of Jewels) collection, the *Ratnarāśisūtra* (Toh 88) and the *Kāśyapapari-varta* (Toh 87), suggested that their shared features might point toward the characteristics of a hypothetical “textual community” that could help account for the selection of the works found in the Ratnakūṭa collection. Three possible defining features that can be gleaned from Silk’s study and those of others (Nattier 2003, Boucher 2008) are an absence of discernible antagonism between śrāvaka (hearer) and bodhisattva practitioners; an emphasis on monastic ideals; and a concomitant valorization of renunciation and the ascetic life. *The Question of Subāhu* corresponds only in small part to that pattern.

- n.7 D: *mngon par shes pa* (“superknowledge”); N, H: *mngon par grags pa* (“famous”).
- n.8 D: *bdog* (“possess”); K_Y, K: *'dod* (“want,” “desire”).
- n.9 K_Y, N: *-bzang du bdog na yang bzang du sbyin* (missing “they give excellent things if they possess excellent things”).
- n.10 N, H: *-thams cad* (missing “all”).
- n.11 K_Y: *-shes pa* (missing “knowledge”). This clause would then read, “To enable all beings to truly attain unsurpassable comfort.”
- n.12 *yongs su nyon mongs par ma gyur pa*; probably renders *parikliṣṭha*.
- n.13 J, K, C: *-thams cad kyi thams cad rnam pa*; D: *+thams cad kyi thams cad rnam pa*. There is also the alternate reading in K_Y: *-thams cad kyi*.
- n.14 K_Y, N, H: *che ba*; D: *cher*.
- n.15 In this enumeration, the jealous gods are taken to be part of the god realm.
- n.16 D: *'chags* (“confess”); K_Y, K: *'tshugs*; J, C: *'chugs*; N: *mi 'jug*.
- n.17 J, C: *rtsod* (“quarrel”); D: *gcos* (“cutting”).
- n.18 D: *gyi*; N: *dang*. The reading of N would be alternately rendered as “a great saṅgha of monks and attendants.”
- n.19 Skt. *Dharmamegha*.
- n.20 J, K, N, C: *-yongs su spyad par byed pa'i*; D: *+yongs su spyad par byed pa'i*.
- n.21 N, H: *bsrung* (“protection”); D: *bskang* (“fulfillment”).
- n.22 K_Y, K, N, H: *pas*; D: *pa'i*.
- n.23 K_Y, J, K, C: *brkyang ba* (“extended”); D: *bkyang ba* (“unattested”).
- n.24 D: *rdzogs pa* (“perfection,” “completion”); K_Y, K: *rtogs pa* (“realization”).
- n.25 This is a reference to the twelve links of dependent origination, i.e., the first to the last (if starting with birth). This sentence has a lot of very different variants and might indicate a place of some uncertainty. K_Y: *sdug bsngal nas srid pa'i sdug bsngal gtsal*; J, C: *skye ba'i sdug bsngal srid pa'i sdug bsngal gyi bar du bsal*; K: *skye ba'i sdug bsngal srid pa'i sdug bsngal gyi bar dud pa'i sdug bsngal gtsal*; N: *skye ba'i sdug bsngal nas srid pa'i sdug bsngal gyi bar du brtsal*.
- n.26

- chub pa* likely renders the Skt. *paryavāpti* (“mastery,” “comprehension”; cf. Edgerton, p.334).
- n.27 N, H: *-chos can*; D: *+chos can*.
- n.28 This phrase (*du 'dzi las dben pa'i spyod yul*) conveys the sense of being unaffected by social affairs even when steeped in them (cf. Edgerton, p. 215).
- n.29 Here reading K_Y, K, N, H: *de*; D: *de'i*.
- n.30 *sha snag gu / sna gu* is most likely the same as *sha snag bu*: “tumor,” or “lump of flesh” (see Negi, vol. 16: 6791 and Monier Williams: 805). Note that there are two variants: K_Y: *sha sneg* and N, H: *sha sna*.
- n.31 Variant readings include K_Y: *rtswa tham* (“scattered grass”) and N: *rtsa me* (“channel/nerve fire”).
- n.32 This passage on the four concentrations can also be found in *The Play in Full* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh95.html#UT22084-046-001-1689>) (*Lalitavistara*, Toh 95), in the *Transcendent Perfection of Wisdom in Ten Thousand Lines* (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh11.html#UT22084-031-002-170>) (*Dāśa-sāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā*, Toh 11), and in the other long *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras* (<http://read.84000.co/section/O1JC114941JC14665.html>), among other works.
- n.33 The four objects of consciousness (*rnam par shes pa'i gnas bzhi*, (Nordrang Orgyan, vol. 1, p. 708) can refer to either (1) forms, (2) sensations, (3) formations, and (4) perceptions, or, alternatively, (1) consciousness, (2) sensations, (3) perceptions, and (4) formations. Given the mention of “forms” just below, it appears to be the former classification in this context.
- n.34 K_Y, K, J, C, N, H: *rtog* (“reflect upon,” “consider”); D: *rtogs* (“realize,” “understand”).
- n.35 K_Y, K, N, H: *gis* ; D: *gi*. This reading matches with previous and later internal patterns of this text.
- n.36 K_Y, K, C, N, H, U: *skye mched*; D: *skyed mched*.
- n.37 Tib. *nye bar 'gro ba* probably renders Skt. *upasarpati*, “to approach.”
- n.38 MV: *rnam par 'jig pa*; this likely renders the Skt. *vibhāvanā*.
- n.39 K_Y, K, J, C, N, H: *yid*; D: *yod*.
- n.40 N, H: *rtogs* (“to realize”); D: *rtog* (“to consider”).

- n.41 K_Y, N, H: *-rnams* (plural particle); D: *+rnams*.
- n.42 K_Y, K: *gang 'gro*; D: *gan 'gro*; N: *ngan 'gro*.
- n.43 K_Y, K, N, H: *'gyur bar*; D: *gyur par*.
- n.44 C, H, U: *bzhon* ("mount," "steed"); D: *gzhon* ("youth").
- n.45 Here, *lus* most likely translates *āśraya*.

b.

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GLOSSARY

g.

g.1 Absorption

ting nge 'dzin

ཉིང་རེ་འཛིན།

samādhi

A state of meditative concentration or absorption.

g.2 Aggregates

phung po

ཕུང་པོ།

skandha

Five collections of similar dharmas, under which all compounded dharmas may be included: form, feeling, perception, formation, and consciousness.

g.3 Attainments

snyoms par 'jug pa

སྟོབས་པར་འཇུག་པ།

samāpatti

A technical term referring to a meditative state attained through the practice of concentration.

g.4 Brahmā

tshangs pa

ཚངས་པ།

Brahmā

A high ranking deity, presiding over a divine world where other beings consider him the creator; he is also considered to be the “Lord of the Sahā-World” (our universe).

g.5 Brahmā Realm

tshangs ris

ཚངས་རིས།

brahmakāyika

g.6 Cloudless Heaven

sprin med

སྤྲིན་མེད།

anabhraka

g.7 Concept-Free Beings Heaven

'du shes med pa'i sems can

འདུ་ཤེས་མེད་པའི་སེམས་ཅན།

asamjñisattoa

g.8 Dānaśīla

dA na shI la

དཱ་ན་ཤྱི་ལ།

Dānaśīla

An Indian paṇḍita resident in Tibet during the late 8th and early 9th centuries.

g.9 Discriminations

so so yang dag par rig pa

སོ་སོ་ཡང་དག་པར་རིག་པ།

pratisamvoid

The discrimination of dharma, the discrimination of things, the discrimination of expression, and the discrimination of eloquence.

g.10 Expanse of ambrosia

bdud rtsi'i dbyings

བདུད་རྩི་འདྲིའི་འཕྲིང་ས།

amṛtadhātu

An epithet of perfect awakening.

g.11 Five aspects of clarity

yan lag lnga pa

ཡན་ལག་ལྔ་པ།

pañcāṅga

Five aspects of clarity of melodious speech: it is intelligible and brings full comprehension, is worthy to listen to and without unpleasant intonations, has depth and resonance, is generous and pleasant to hear, and is unruffled.

g.12 Four bases of miraculous power

rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa bzhi

རྩུ་འཕྲུལ་གྱི་རྣང་པ་བཞི།

caturṛddhipāda

Intention, diligence, attention, and discernment.

g.13 Four kinds of fearlessness

mi 'jigs pa rnam pa bzhi

མི་འཇིགས་པ་རྣམ་པ་བཞི།

caturvāri vaiśāradyaṅi

1. fearlessness in asserting one's own perfect realization, 2. fearlessness in asserting one's own perfect abandonment, 3. fearlessness in revealing the path to liberation, and 4. fearlessness in revealing hindrances on the path.

g.14 Ganges River

gang gA

Gaṅgā

The river Ganges in India.

g.15 Gorgeous Heaven

shin tu mthong

ཤིན་ཏུ་མཐོང།

sudarśana

g.16 Great Fruition Heaven

'bras bu che

འབྲས་བུ་ཚེ།

bṛhatphala

g.17 Heaven Free from Strife

'thab bral

འཐབ་བྲལ།

yāma

The lowest of the heavenly realms. Characterized by freedom from difficulty.

g.18 Heaven of Delighting in Emanations

'phrul dga'

འཕྲུལ་དགའ།

nirmāṇarati

g.19 Heaven of Joy

dga' ldan

དགའ་ལྷན།

tuṣita

g.20 Heaven of Making Use of Others' Emanations

gzhan 'phrul dbang byed

གཞན་འཕྲུལ་དབང་བྱེད།

paranirmitavaśavartin

g.21 Heaven of the Four Great Kings

rgyal chen bzhi'i ris

རྒྱལ་ཆེན་བཞིའི་རིས།

cāturmahārājika

g.22 Heaven of the Thirty-Three

sum cu rtsa gsum

སུམ་རུ་ཙ་གསུམ།

trāyastriṃśa

g.23 Heavens of the High Priests of Brahmā

tshangs pa mdun na 'don

ཚངས་པ་མདུན་ན་འདོན།

brahmapurohita

g.24 Highest Heaven

'og min

འོག་མིན།
akaniṣṭha

g.25 Increased Merit Heaven

bsod nams skyes

བསོད་ནམས་སྐྱེས།
pun्यaprasava

g.26 Intrinsic nature

chos nyid

ཚོས་ཉིད།
dharmatā

The nature of phenomena, in terms of their specialized relative characteristics, such as the heat of fire, the moisture of water, etc.; and in terms of their common ultimate characteristic, emptiness.

g.27 Jinamitra

dzi na mi tra

ཇོ་ནམ་མི་ཏྲ།
Jinamitra

An Indian Kashmiri paṇḍita who was resident in Tibet during the late 8th and early 9th centuries. He worked with several Tibetan translators on the translation of several sūtras. He is also the author of the *Nyāyabindupiṇḍārtha* (Degé no. 4233), which is contained in the Tibetan Tengyur (*bstan 'gyur*) collection.

g.28 Kalandakanivāpa

bya ka lan da ka'i gnas pa

བྱ་ཀ་ལན་ད་ཀའི་གནས་པ།
kalandakanivāpa

Literally, “The Squirrel Feeding Ground.” A location within the Veṅuvana where the Buddha stayed. The place received its name from the many squirrels living there, being fed by humans. It should be noted that Tibetan translations misunderstand the Sanskrit term *kalandaka* to be a kind of bird (Tib. *bya*).

g.29 Limited Light Heaven

'od chung

འོད་ཚུང།
parittābha

g.30 Limited Virtue Heaven

dge chung

དགོ་ཚུང།
parittaśubha

g.31 Limitless Light Heaven

tshad med 'od

ཚད་མེད་འོད།
apramāṇābha

g.32 Limitless Virtue Heaven

tshad med dge

ཚད་མེད་དགོ།
apramāṇaśubha

g.33 Luminous Heaven

'od gsal

འོད་གསལ།
ābhāsvara

g.34 Mahābrahmā Heaven

tshangs chen

ཚངས་ཚེན།
mahābrahma

g.35 Mastery over the senses

zil gyis gnon pa'i skye mched

ཟེལ་གྱིས་གཞོན་པའི་སྐྱེ་མཚེད།
abhibhvāyatana

Eight stages of mastery over the senses is a classic formula describing the process of stabilizing the mind through meditation. They are divided by form (attractive, unattractive, good, and bad) and color (white, red, yellow, and blue).

g.36 Mount Sumeru

ri rab

རི་རབ།
Meru

The central mountain according to Buddhist cosmology.

g.37 No Hardship Heaven

mi gdung ba

མི་གདུང་བ།

atapa

g.38 Perfected Virtue Heaven

dge rgyas

དགོ་རྒྱལ།

śubhakarṣna

g.39 Rājagṛha

rgyal po'i khab

རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཁབ།

rājagṛha

The ancient capital of Magadha; the site where many Great Vehicle sūtras take place.

g.40 Seat of awakening

byang chub kyi snying po

བྱང་ལྷན་གྱི་སྙིང་པོ།

bodhimanda

Platform of enlightenment in Bodh Gayā on which Śākyamuni attained enlightenment.

g.41 Sense spheres

skye mched

སྐྱེ་མཆེད།

āyatana

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

g.42 Sphere of Absolute Nothingness

ci yang med pa'i skye mched

ཅི་ཡང་མེད་པའི་སྐྱེ་མཆེད།

ākimcanyāyatana

One of the three lower formless realms among the four formless realms, so termed because in its preparatory phase absolute nothingness is the object of meditation.

g.43 Sphere of Infinite Consciousness

rnam shes mtha' yas skye mched

རྣམ་ཤེས་མཐའ་ཡས་སྐྱེ་མཆེད།

vijñānānantyāyatana

One of the three lower formless realms among the four formless realms, so termed because in its preparatory phase infinite consciousness is the object of meditation.

g.44 Sphere of Infinite Space

nam mkha' mtha' yas skye mched

ནམ་མཁའ་མཐའ་ཡས་སྐྱེ་མཆེད།

ākāśānantyāyatana

One of the three lower formless realms among the four formless realms, so termed because in its preparatory phase infinite space is the object of meditation.

g.45 Sphere of Neither Perception nor Non-Perception

'du shes med 'du shes med min skye mched

འདུ་ཤེས་མེད་འདུ་ཤེས་མེད་མིན་སྐྱེ་མཆེད།

naiṣaṣaṃjñānāsanaññāyatana

The highest of the four formless realms, so termed because conceptions are weak in it, but not entirely absent.

g.46 Subāhu

lag bzangs

ལག་བཟངས།

Subāhu

A bodhisattva, the protagonist of this text.

g.47 Sublime Heaven

gya nom snang

གྱུ་ལོམ་སྤང།

sudrśa

g.48 Unlofty Heaven

mi che ba

མི་ཆེ་བ།

abrha · avrha

g.49 Veṇuvana

'od ma'i tshal

འོད་མའི་ཚལ།

veṇuvana

The famous bamboo grove near Rājagṛha where the Buddha regularly stayed and gave teachings. It was situated on land donated by King Bimbisāra of Magadha, the first of several landholdings donated to the Buddhist community during the time of the Buddha.

g.50 **Worthy one**

dgra bcom pa

དག་བཙམ་པ།

arhat

'Worthy one' or 'someone who has killed their foes' (i.e. mental afflictions). A Buddhist saint who has obtained liberation.

g.51 **Yama's world**

gshin rje'i 'jig rten

གཤིན་རྗེའི་འཇིག་རྟེན།

yamaloka

The world of the dead, another term for the realm of anguished spirits.

g.52 **Yeshé Dé**

ye shes sde

ཡེ་ཤེས་སྡེ།

Not available

A prolific Tibetan translator active during the late 8th and early 9th centuries.