

THE ORNAMENT OF THE LIGHT OF AWARENESS

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ཡེ་ཤེས་སྣང་བའི་རྒྱན།

The Ornament of the Light of Awareness That Enters the Domain of All Buddhas

Sarvabuddhaviṣayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkāra

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*'phags pa sangs rgyas thams cad kyi yul la 'jug pa 'i
ye shes snang ba 'i rgyan zhes bya ba theg pa chen po 'i mdo*

The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra “The Ornament of the Light of
Awareness That Enters the Domain of All Buddhas”

*Āryasarvabuddhaviṣayāvatārajñānālokālaṃkāranāma-
mahāyānasūtra*

Toh 100, Degé Kangyur, vol 47 (mdo sde, ga), folios 276a–305a

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Contents

Summary *vi*

Acknowledgements *vi*

Introduction *vii*

THE TRANSLATION

*The Ornament of the Light of Awareness That Enters the
Domain of All Buddhas 1*

Notes 54

Bibliography 59

Summary

The main topic of this sūtra is an explanation of how the Buddha and all things share the very same empty nature. Through a set of similes, the sūtra shows how an illusion-like Buddha may dispense appropriate teachings to sentient beings in accordance with their propensities. His activities are effortless since his realization is free from concepts. Thus, the Tathāgata's non-conceptual awareness results in great compassion beyond any reference point.

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Introduction

“Space has no abode;
It is free from elaboration, and stainless.
Your mind is the same as space,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!”¹

The Ornament of the Light of Awareness (Jñānālokālaṃkāra, hereafter JAA) is of particular significance for its discussion of the nature of a buddha, his appearance to sentient beings, and his beneficial activities. These themes are in turn related to the doctrine of buddha nature (*tathāgatagarbha*), important for both general Mahāyāna Buddhism and Secret Mantra. The JAA has even been interpreted as propounding an explicit Vajrayāna perspective of purity, and has been quoted by masters of secret mantra in India, Tibet, and Japan.

Although this sūtra is called “an ornament” (*alaṃkāra*), it is perhaps rather about an ornament. More literally, *alaṃkāra* means “something that completes,” and according to the conventions of ancient and medieval Indian literature, that is what an ornament should do. Therefore, rather than being a dispensable decoration, the sūtra completes and adorns the light or appearance (*āloka*) of a special type of knowledge (*jñāna*). This knowledge is a meaningful awareness, not just the awareness of an ordinary object. This awareness can engage with, or descend into (*avatāra*), the scope of all

buddhas, which is their object or, more precisely, their domain (*viṣaya*). If we follow the interpretation of the Ratnagotravibhāga, the light of awareness is itself the ornament that allows bodhisattvas to descend or enter into the domain of all buddhas.²

Although texts preserved as *sūtra* or *sūtrānta* are classified as “Word of the Buddha” (*buddhavacana*), this does not necessarily mean that the Buddha is the main speaker. For example, the bulk of the *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya* (the “Heart Sūtra”) consists of a dialogue between the venerable Śāriputra and the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. In the present sūtra, however, Buddha Śākyamuni is not only there to offer a seal of approval but is, in effect, the main speaker.

The sūtra locates its teaching in Rājgir, on the mountain of Vulture Peak. Although this is also the place where many of the teachings are set, the Buddha is here dwelling in the Womb of the Dharmadhātu Palace. The symbolism is perhaps more attuned to the third turning of the *dharmacakra*, taking place in a variety of locations and teaching a wide array of advanced topics.

The teaching does not take place within the ordinary appearance of our world sphere. Just before the Buddha sits on his lion throne, the entire environment is transformed into the purest gold and jewels. Such emphasis on the purified appearance of the environment of the sūtra may be significant in the light of its more esoteric interpretations.

The audience is made up of two kinds of individual: *śrāvakas* who have already become arhats, and bodhisattvas who are close to buddhahood, i.e., on the tenth or last level (*bhūmi*), called “Cloud of Dharma.” The *śrāvakas* are headed by Ājñātakauṇḍinya; his name means “Kaunḍinya who understood,” and he is described in other sūtras as the first monk to have been praised by the Buddha for having understood his teaching. The bodhisattvas are headed by Mañjuśrī, the embodiment of wisdom or higher knowledge, who is also the main interlocutor of this sūtra.

The Buddha signals that an exceptional teaching will take place through a *prātihārya*, an extraordinary display of light meant to attract

audiences from very far away. *Prātihārya* is sometimes translated as “miracle,” but rather than being an inexplicable testimony of divine intervention, *prātihāryas* are classified in Mahāyāna scholasticism as a means to draw the listeners’ attention, and to instill reverence toward what is going to be taught.

If we follow Buddhist cosmology and cosmogony, the appearance of a buddha may be understood as an exceptional event, resulting from myriads of positive causal concomitances. Each buddha conforms to specific cosmic regularities, due to inner causal factors (his aspirations during countless previous lives) and outer ones (the collective merit of sentient beings); and each buddha arises within a specific area of the universe, called a “buddhafield” (*buddhakṣetra*). This will be the field of activity of one, and only one, buddha—at least in the sense that only one buddha will enact the specific set of activities that, just as the sun cannot avoid shining, no buddha can avoid performing. Certain teachings will be taught by all the buddhas; the jeweled throne that appears and invites Buddha Śākyamuni to sit and teach suggests that this is, indeed, one of those recurrent teachings.

Infinite buddhafields may exist at the same time. Mahāyāna sūtras often specify that diligent and wise bodhisattvas can perceive and even visit other buddhafields, paying their respects and obtaining teachings from the buddhas residing there. In this sūtra, after Buddha Śākyamuni emits light that fills the entire trichiliocosm, a very large number of bodhisattvas arrive from other buddhafields—suggesting once more the importance of the teaching about to be given.

Mañjuśrī is the bodhisattva associated with wisdom (*prajñā*).³ The JAA’s thematic focus on wisdom and the *prajñāpāramitā* is quite clear: Mañjuśrī begins by asking the Buddha about the meaning of non-arising and non-cessation.

As the *Heart Sūtra* puts it, all dharmas are “emptiness, without characteristics, non-arisen, non-ceased.”⁴ That all dharmas neither arise nor cease seems to be a specifically Mahāyāna doctrine that sets the Mahāyāna sūtras, and the treatises associated with them, apart from their non-Mahāyāna counterparts. While all Buddhist schools

agree that dharmas are dependently arisen, within a Mahāyāna perspective this also entails that in some sense they do not arise and do not cease (in the Yogācāra scheme of three natures, this regards only their “wrongly imagined nature,” the *parikalpita*).

In response to Mañjuśrī, the Buddha answers that “non-arising and non-cessation [...] designates the Tathāgata.”⁵ The Buddha is a synonym for the non-arising of all dharmas, appearing in a certain way to sentient beings according to their karma and their dispositions. In other words, in the landscape of the JAA, there is no ultimate difference between the Tathāgata and the *tathatā*, the nature of things; nor, also, between the teacher and the place where the teaching occurs (the lion throne at the center of the Womb of Dharmadhātu Palace), between the teacher and the assembly of listeners (bodhisattvas on the tenth bhūmi), or between the teacher and the Dharma that he teaches (which is the nature of a Buddha’s appearance as a teacher). All these differences appear within the close-knit fabric of interdependence and its ultimate emptiness.⁶ The JAA relates the teachings on dependent arising and emptiness to a specific perspective regarding a type of awareness (*jñāna*), which, unlike ordinary consciousness, is free from a point of reference.⁷

An analysis of the contents of the JAA should take into account its close relation to the *Ratnagotravibhāga*, the principal treatise on buddha nature within Indian Buddhist literature. Despite being a treatise rather than a sūtra, the *Ratnagotravibhāga* is invested with special authority, as it is considered to have been revealed by Maitreya, the very next buddha in our specific universe. Within the Tibetan tradition, Asaṅga (the recipient of Maitreya’s revealed texts) is believed to be the author of its main commentary, in which the JAA is cited.⁸ Although the term *tathāgatagarbha* never occurs in the JAA, Maitreya and Asaṅga clearly interpret the text in the context of the teachings on buddha nature.

The *Ratnagotravibhāga* is composed of three sections (five chapters), dealing with the *tathāgatagarbha* in a non-purified, partially purified, and completely purified state, respectively. The

themes of the JAA are mostly related to the completely purified state, i.e., a perfect and complete buddha and his activity.

The *Ratnagotravibhāga* makes use of the JAA in two different sections. In chapter 1, the JAA is quoted in connection with one of the crucial verses that explain the nature of buddhahood:

Unproduced, effortless, not arisen by understanding from others,
Buddhahood is endowed with the power of awareness and
compassion, and has the two purposes.⁹

The *Vyākhyā* (commentary) quotes from various sections of the sūtra¹⁰ and relates them to the first four qualifications found in the verse:

- i. When the JAA states that “non-arising” and “non-cessation” are epithets of the Tathāgata, it shows that the Buddha is *unproduced*.
- ii. The nine examples explain what it means for the Tathāgata to be non-arising and non-cessation (given in the *Ratnagotravibhāga* as the reason for his being unproduced).
- iii. The explanations of all that has been pacified show that, since all his elaborations and concepts have been pacified, the Tathāgata is *effortless* with respect to his own activities.
- iv. The next section shows that the Tathāgata realizes for himself the gates to the realization of the nature of all dharmas, and goes on to explain the sixteen features of the Tathāgata’s realization (this links to *not arisen by understanding from others*).
- v. One sentence describes the Tathāgata’s great compassion, showing that he is *endowed with unexcelled awareness and compassion*.

According to the *Vyākhyā*, therefore, the JAA is an elaborate exposition of the nature of buddhahood—buddha nature in its fully purified form. Furthermore, chapter 4 of the *Ratnagotravibhāga* can be considered a commentary on the section of the JAA presenting the nine examples of a buddha’s activity; this also regards buddha nature in a fully purified state, and activity is in fact the final topic in the list of seven “crucial terms” (*vajrapada*) through which Maitreya’s

treatise, in its opening stanza, parses its own contents.

In the JAA the appearance of a Buddha is compared to (1) Indra's Palace reflected upon the emerald ground, (2) the Dharma drum that plays for the gods, (3) a rain cloud, (4) the god Mahābrahmā, (5) the rays of the sun, (6) the wish-fulfilling jewel, (7) an echo, (8) the earth, and (9) space.¹¹ The *Ratnagotravibhāga* elaborates on the significance of each example, on their mutual relationship, and on the overall purpose of the whole set. A verse in chapter 4 (4.83) interprets the initial sections of the JAA (including the nine examples) as a syllogism, including a thesis, an example, and a logical ground or proof (*pratijñā, dṛṣṭānta, hetu*):

The thesis is that all effort has been pacified;
The logical ground is that wisdom is free from concepts;
The examples starting with Śakra's image
Are for the sake of establishing the subject matter.

Thus the *Ratnagotravibhāga* provides some keys for understanding the sūtra according to a number of topical subdivisions and an overall rationale behind its structure.

The activity of a buddha is a complex matter, and it is therefore understandable that the *Ratnagotravibhāga* gears its interpretation of the JAA toward the illustrations that help make this difficult point easier to assimilate. Buddhas are free from delusion in the form of conventions, yet appear to engage with conventions in order to benefit others. A buddha is free from mental constructs and intentional mental elaborations, yet his teachings are attuned to each and every mindset. This seeming paradox has been tackled through a number of divergent solutions, some of which (as we shall see) are directly linked to the contents of the JAA.

Following the nine examples, the JAA discusses the nature of awakening. The topic is brought up to explain why a buddha's activity is as described in the nine examples. The answer is that a buddha's activity could not be otherwise because of the nature of a buddha's

awakening. The JAA's progression follows the questions posed by Mañjuśrī, directly enunciating the first part of the syllogistic structure discussed above (the relationship between thesis and logical ground).

This section offers several remarkable explanations of a buddha's awakening, relying on fundamental categories of Buddhist thought, such as the twelve entrances (*āyatana*) and the eighteen bases (*dhātu*). These categories subsume the entirety of existent things (dharmas) within schemes that may highlight the dependent arising of sentience, defined as the perception of objects. Mañjuśrī most consistently praises the Buddha for the lack of that perception. The section on the nature of awakening concludes with several verses extolling Śākyamuni Buddha as "you who are free of any point of reference" (*nirālamba*). Freedom from point of reference is *jñāna* rather than *viññāna*; it is not mind or conventions (*buddhi* or *saṃvṛti*). Mañjuśrī is asked by the Buddha to rely on *jñāna*, and he responds to the teachings with an extensive praise of its nature. This section is therefore related to the *Laṅkāvatāra*'s explicit discussion of the distinction between *jñāna* and *viññāna*; as also to the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, and a number of other treatises wherein ultimate truth is described as never within the range of consciousness.

One of the first prominent authors to employ the JAA is probably the Madhyamaka philosopher Bhāviveka (6th century), who inaugurates a long trend of quoting the JAA when discussing the nature of buddhahood. More specifically, he cites the JAA in order to prove that a buddha is devoid of any conceptuality or mind whatsoever.¹² Candrakīrti and Kamalaśīla also quote the JAA in the context of establishing that all dharmas share the same nature as the Buddha.¹³

The JAA starts to be quoted in a Mantranaya context at least by the 8th century, in Buddhaguhya's commentary on the *Mahāvairocana-sūtra*. The latter text is of special importance for East Asian Buddhism. Kūkai (Kobo Daishi, 8th–9th century), who founded the Shingon school of Japan, brought the JAA back to Japan from his visit to China in 806. The JAA influenced his visualization techniques

relating to the dharmakāya. In this instance, the JAA had a direct bearing on very practical aspects of tantric meditation.¹⁴ The Vajrayāna adept Naḍapāda (Nāropā, 10th–11th century), whose lineage became influential in Tibet during the later translation period, quoted from the JAA in the *Sekoddeśaṭīkā*, a text primarily associated with the Kālacakra tradition and still extant in Sanskrit.¹⁵ In this work Naḍapāda cites the following verse to corroborate his explanation of a buddha’s awareness in relation to the four *mudrās*:

With your unplaced awareness,
You see all the fields,
And the conduct of all beings.
You are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!¹⁶

Naḍapāda’s quote brings up the doctrine of “non-abiding” or “no ground to stand upon” (*apratiṣṭhāna*), the idea, recurrent in some sūtras, that the mind should not abide within any dharma whatsoever. This theme was also important for subsequent secret mantra authors who made use of the JAA for scriptural support.

According to Tibetan sources,¹⁷ Advayavajra (11th century, also known as Maitrīgupta and Maitrīpa) was a student of Naropa, Ratnākaraśānti (10–11th century), Jñānaśrīmitra (10–11th century), and Śabarapāda (10–11th century?). He is also considered one of the two main teachers of Marpa Chokyi Lodro (*mar pa chos kyi blo gros*, 1012–1097). The colophons to his works describe Advayavajra as both a great scholar (*paṇḍita*) and a realized Vajrayāna adept (*avadhūta*). Although his works are short, they reflect this double characterization. His Madhyamaka interpretation is especially attuned to Vajrayāna practice and to the context and terminology of *mahāmudrā*. In both regards, recurrent notions in the JAA play an important role within his writings, and he cites the JAA in at least three texts.¹⁸

Furthermore, the relationship between non-arising and primordial purity has been linked in the Tibetan tradition to the JAA, which thus

becomes an important element in the exposition of secret mantra within that fold.¹⁹

Many scholars throughout the Mahāyāna Buddhist world have taken the JAA as an authoritative source of inspiration; we hope that contemporary readers may also find some of its depth transmitted in the English translation.

The translation presented here is primarily based on the Sanskrit edition by the Study Group on Buddhist Sanskrit Literature (2005). The Sanskrit was also compared to the Tibetan translation in the Degé Kangyur. In several instances the Tibetan proved useful by offering more complete readings. Hence, we have at times followed the Tibetan rather than the Sanskrit reading. On occasion, we have also consulted Kimura's transliteration of the Sanskrit manuscript (GRETIL version, 2004) and reverted to its readings. For the most part, the Tibetan follows the Sanskrit closely, although in a few instances it appears to be based on a different manuscript tradition. This is certainly plausible if the proposed date of the Sanskrit manuscript (11th–13th century) is correct, since the Tibetan translation was produced centuries earlier.

THE TRANSLATION

The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra

The Ornament of the Light of Awareness That Enters the Domain of All Buddhas

[F.276.a] Homage to the Buddha!

Thus have I heard, at one time, the Bhagavat was dwelling on the Vulture Peak Mountain in Rājgir, on a summit of infinite gems, in the Womb of Dharmadhātu Palace, together with a great assembly of twenty-five thousand monks. All of them were arhats who had exhausted their outflows. They were without afflictions and controlled. Their minds were perfectly liberated, and their wisdom was perfectly free. They were knowledgeable great elephants who had accomplished what needed to be done. They had laid down their burden and fulfilled their own benefit. They had destroyed the bonds of existence and, thanks to their correct knowledge, their minds were perfectly liberated. They had obtained supreme perfection in mastering all mental states. The sixty-eight great hearers, headed by Ājñātakaunḍinya, were also there. [4]

Moreover, present with the Bhagavat were seventy-two quintillion bodhisattvas, such as the youthful Mañjuśrī, Dhanaśrī, Buddhiśrī, Bhaiṣajyarāja, and Bhaiṣajyasamudgata. All of them were turning the Dharma wheel that does not turn back. They were skilled in inquiring

about the sūtras of the Vaipulya Sūtras of the Heap of Jewels²⁰ and had obtained the level called Cloud of Dharma. In terms of wisdom, they were like Sumeru, and all of them had thoroughly cultivated the dharmas of emptiness, no sign, no wish, no arising, no birth, and no existence. The greatly profound Dharma appeared to them, [F.276.b] and they had the postures of the tathāgatas. In other world spheres, they had been sent out by quintillions of tathāgatas. All of them were fully clairvoyant and well settled in the essential nature of all dharmas. [6]

At that time, the Bhagavat thought: “To generate great swiftness, strength, impetus, and stamina in the bodhisattva great beings, I shall give a Dharma discourse. From as many world spheres as there are grains of sand in the river Ganges, I shall cause splendid bodhisattva great beings to assemble. Hence, I will display a sign to show that there is to be a great teaching of the Dharma. I shall cause a great light, so that bodhisattva great beings shall come to me and ask for a great Dharma teaching.”

With that thought, the Bhagavat illuminated the ten directions with great clouds of light rays that shone in as many worlds as there are atoms of dust in the great trichiliocosm—an uncountable and inconceivable number. At that very time, as many bodhisattva great beings as there are atoms of dust in ten ineffable quintillion buddhafiels approached him from all the ten directions; each and every bodhisattva great being arrived with exceptional feats beyond imagination. They first performed a fitting, inconceivable worship of the Bhagavat, and then sat down in front of him on lotus seats that appeared through the force of their aspirations. They stayed still, looking at the Bhagavat without blinking. [8]

A lion throne within a great, jeweled lotus then appeared at the center of the Womb of Dharmadhātu Palace. It was an uncountable number of leagues in width, and of unprecedented height. [F.277.a] It was made of gems and jewels sparkling in every way, with lightning for lamps, and a surrounding railing made of gems and jewels. Its

staffs were of gems and jewels of inconceivable brilliance, and incomparable gems and jewels enclosed it. Jewel garlands splendid beyond comparison beautified the throne, studded with many types of precious gems. It was hung about with raised parasols, standards, and flags.

From above the lion throne within the great lotus of gems and jewels, ten innumerable quintillions of light rays now issued forth in all directions and illumined the very many world spheres in the ten directions by their great brightness.

And at that very time, from each and every one of the ten directions, gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, demigods, garuḍas, kinnaras, great serpents, śakras, brahmās, and world protectors arrived, as many as there are atoms of dust in the ineffable quintillion buddhafiels.

Some of them arrived together with a quintillion apsaras, uncountable and beyond conception, singing and playing musical instruments while they sat in jeweled palaces. Some arrived with palaces that were made of flowers, others with palaces were made of heaps of *uragasāra* sandalwood. Some palaces were made of pearls, others of diamonds, and others still of gems and jewels that shone like diamonds. [10]

Some were made of gold from the river Jāmbū, and others were built with gems that shone in all colors. Some were made of the *vaśirāja* gem and others of wish-fulfilling jewels. Still other palaces [F.277.b] were made of those gems worn by Śakra.

Yet others arrived with uncountable, inconceivable quadrillions of apsaras, singing and playing musical instruments while they sat in palaces of great jewels, gems beaming uninterruptedly from the array of pure, ocean-ground jewels.

As they arrived, they first worshipped the Bhagavat in an inconceivable, matchless, immeasurable, and limitless manner. Then they arranged themselves on one side, on seats that manifested through their own aspirations. After having seated themselves, they stayed still, looking at the Bhagavat without blinking.

At that very moment this world sphere, a great trichiliocosm, turned into Jāmbū River gold. It was adorned with trees of many great gems and jewels, divine flowering trees, trees of fine fabrics, and trees of *uragasāra* sandalwood perfume. It was covered with a net of precious moon gems, sun gems, and *vidyutpradīpa* gems. Parasols, standards, and flags were hoisted. Innumerable quintillions of apsaras with half their bodies in sight thronged all the trees, which were enveloped by strings of pearls and garlands of great precious jewels. [12]

At that time these verses rang out from the lion throne with its great, jeweled lotus inside:

“Come, be seated, king of the best among men!
I came about by the force of your merit.
Fulfilling my wish, today I shall support you,
Victor, best among the two-footed.

“My body is made of jewels.
Oh Guide, for your sake,
At my center is a beautiful jewel lotus; [F.278.a]
Protector, please fulfill my wish today! [14]

“Seated on this jewel lotus,
You shall beautify this entire world and me.
You shall teach the Dharma to many millions of living beings.
Hearing such Dharma, one obtains a lion throne like this!

“Thousands of light rays shining from your limbs
Illuminate many world spheres.
This is the sign of someone in whom joy is born.
Guide, ascend to me!”²¹

“Quickly, take your seat and grant your favor!
In the past, in this very place,
I have supported eighty million self-arisen sages.
May the Bhagavat also, today, bestow his favor!”²² [16]

At this the Bhagavat arose from his previous seat and sat down on the lion throne with its great jewel lotus inside. He sat with his legs

crossed and observed the entire gathering of bodhisattvas. Then, to those bodhisattva great beings, he signaled that he was about to deliver a distinguished Dharma teaching.

At that very time, the entire assembly of bodhisattvas had the thought, “The youthful Mañjuśrī should now inquire of the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha, about non-arising and non-cessation. We have not heard that Dharma teaching for a long time.”

The youthful Mañjuśrī had understood the Bhagavat’s signal, and he also knew what the bodhisattva great beings were thinking. So he arose and adjusted his upper robe so that one shoulder was uncovered. He then knelt in front of the Bhagavat with his right knee placed in the center of a lotus.²³ With joined palms he then addressed the Bhagavat:²⁴ “Bhagavat, ‘non-arising’ and ‘non-cessation’ have been spoken of. Bhagavat, to what dharma do the terms ‘non-arising’ and ‘non-cessation’ refer?” [18] [F.278.b]

He also expressed his question in verse:

“Guide, you speak
Of ‘non-cessation’ and ‘non-arising.’
Greatly wise one,
How do you explain those terms?

“‘Non-cessation’ and ‘non-arising,’
Why are they called so?
Great sage, please tell us
Through examples and reasons!

“These many bodhisattvas have come here,
Wishing for awareness;
They were sent to salute you, Lord, by many guides of the world.
So please teach the lofty and excellent, good Dharma!” [20]

In reply, the Bhagavat said to the youthful Mañjuśrī, “Good, Mañjuśrī, good! Mañjuśrī, it is good that you think to ask the Tathāgata about

this matter. You are striving for the benefit of many people, for the happiness of many people, and with compassion for the world. You are doing so for the goodness, benefit, and happiness of a great group of beings, both gods and men. You are also acting so that the bodhisattva great beings who have come here may obtain the level of a buddha. Mañjuśrī, you should apply yourself to this point without alarm, without fear, and without hesitation. And, Mañjuśrī, you must rely on awareness. Mañjuśrī, when the Tathāgata teaches about ‘non-arising and non-cessation,’ this expression actually refers to the Tathāgata.

“It is as follows: Mañjuśrī, imagine that this wide earth were made entirely of beryl, so that in that beryl one could see reflections of the abode of the Thirty-Three; of Śakra, lord of the gods; and of his Palace of Victory. [F.279.a] And imagine that Śakra, lord of the gods, could be seen there, playing and enjoying himself with the five divine objects of pleasure. [22]

“At that time, the gods might call out to all the men, women, boys, and girls of Jambūdvīpa, ‘Come here, men and women! Look at Śakra, lord of the gods, as he is playing, enjoying, and amusing himself with the five divine objects of pleasure in his Palace of Victory. Come, all men and women, offer gifts and make merit. Take up discipline and abide by it. Then you shall also get to play, enjoy, and amuse yourself in such Palaces of Victory. You will become like Śakra himself and will come to possess wealth like his. The lord of the gods, Śakra, has all divine enjoyments, and so shall you.’

“Then, Mañjuśrī, all those men, women, girls, and boys, who could see the abode of the Thirty-Three along with Śakra, lord of the gods, and his Palace of Victory reflected in the wide earth of beryl, would fold their hands toward this reflection. They would scatter flowers and offer perfumes toward it, saying, ‘May we also obtain such a body as that of Śakra, lord of the gods; may we also play, enjoy, and amuse ourselves in the Palace of Victory, just like Śakra, lord of the gods.’ [24]

“However, those beings would not understand that this would merely be a reflection in the wide earth of beryl, a reflection occurring due to the complete purity of the beryl, wherein the abode of the Thirty-Three, along with Śakra, lord of the gods, and his Palace of Victory, could be seen. [F.279.b] Wishing for the state of Śakra, they would then offer gifts and make merits. They would take up discipline and abide by that. They would then dedicate the roots of what is wholesome toward birth in that reflection of the abode of the Thirty-Three.

“Mañjuśrī, in that wide earth of beryl there would, of course, be no abode of the Thirty-Three, and neither would there be a Palace of Victory, or Śakra, lord of the gods. However, due to the purity of the great beryl, the abode of the Thirty-Three along with the Palace of Victory and Śakra, lord of the gods would all be visible. Non-existent, non-arisen, and non-ceased, their reflections would be seen because of the purity of the great beryl. [26]

“In the same way, Mañjuśrī, it is due to the complete purity of the mind, as well as due to proper cultivation, that sentient beings see the body of a tathāgata. Mañjuśrī, it is due to the power of the Tathāgata that sentient beings see him. And still he remains non-existent, non-arisen, and non-ceased. He is neither existence nor non-existence, neither visible nor invisible, neither worldly nor unworldly, neither an object of thinking nor not an object of thinking, neither existent nor non-existent.

“It is so, Mañjuśrī, that sentient beings focus on the reflection of the Tathāgata and offer it flowers, perfumes, garments, and jewels while making this aspiration: ‘May we also become like the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha.’ Wishing for a buddha’s awareness, [F.280.a] they offer gifts and make merit. They take up discipline and abide by it. Then they dedicate that root of what is wholesome toward obtaining a tathāgata’s awareness. [28]

“It is as follows: Mañjuśrī, the reflection of Śakra, ruler of the gods, on that wide earth made of beryl does not move. Nor does it think, elaborate, construct, or conceptualize. It is not a construct, not a

concept, inconceivable, and not a mental placement. It is peaceful and cool, non-arising, non-cessation, not seen, not heard, not smelt, not tasted, not touched, not a sign, not a cognition, and not something that can be made known.

“In the same way, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha does not move. Nor does he think, elaborate, construct, or conceptualize. He is not a construct, not a concept, inconceivable, not a mental placement. He is peaceful and cool, non-arising and non-cessation, not seen, not heard, not smelt, not tasted, not touched, not a sign, not a cognition, and not something that can be made known.

“Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata is in the realm of non-arising. On the other hand, he appears in the world as a reflected image. According to the beliefs of sentient beings he displays diverse appearances and diverse lifespans. He appears among sentient beings who have become fitting receptacles for awakening thanks to their maturation and belief. These sentient beings then hear the Dharma according to their dispositions and beliefs. According to their dispositions they understand the three vehicles [F.280.b], and according to their dispositions they obtain belief.

“It is as follows: Mañjuśrī, a great Dharma drum for making sounds of Dharma, which come about through the force of merit of the gods of the Thirty-Three, is placed in the atmosphere above the Vaijayanta Palace, beyond visible range. The divine scions cannot see it or behold it.

“However, Mañjuśrī, it is a great Dharma drum. Sometimes the gods in the heaven of the Thirty-Three become so intensely and continuously oblivious from playing with, enjoying, and delighting themselves with their divine pleasures that they fail to enter the divine hall called Sudharma to jointly chant the Dharma. And, Mañjuśrī, Śakra, lord of the gods, becomes so intensely and continuously oblivious from playing with, enjoying, and delighting himself with his divine pleasures that he fails to sit on his Dharma seat to speak of the

Dharma. [32]

“Mañjuśrī, at such times, that great Dharma drum, not to be seen or beheld, hanging in the atmosphere beyond visible range, plays a Dharma sound that addresses all the gods in the heaven of the Thirty-Three: ‘Friends! Form, sound, smell, flavor, and touch are impermanent; do not be careless. Do not quickly fall down from this abode! Friends, all co-producing factors are suffering! Friends, all co-producing factors are without self! Friends, all co-producing factors are empty! Do not become careless: for those who die and fall from here, to take birth here once again is difficult. So chant the Dharma together, and delight in the pleasant joy of Dharma. Remain with Dharma as your essence, being inclined toward the Dharma, with Dharma pouring like rain, recollecting and placing the Dharma in the mind. [F.281.a] You shall not then have to part from these divine enjoyments and delights in games of pleasure.’ [34]

“At that time, Mañjuśrī, due to the sound of that great Dharma drum—invisible, formless, inconceivable, not a mental construct, out of sight, unborn, unceasing, beyond the way of words, and devoid of mind, mentality, and consciousness—all the gods in the heaven of the Thirty-Three are roused, scared, alarmed, and very distressed. They enter the divine hall called Sudharma and remain there, delighting in the pleasant joy of Dharma. They make the Dharma their essence, they become inclined toward the Dharma, with Dharma pouring like rain, recollecting and keeping the Dharma in mind. When they die and fall from that abode, they will again reach excellent places. Śakra, the king of the gods, then enters Sudharma, the divine hall, takes a seat on the Dharma throne, and teaches the Dharma.

“Mañjuśrī, when the demigods battle against the gods, whenever the gods of the heaven of the Thirty-Three are being defeated, the Dharma drum emits a sound that makes the demigods so frightened, alarmed, agitated, and distressed that they flee. [36] Nevertheless, Mañjuśrī, that great Dharma drum does not have a producer, nor does it have a body. Mañjuśrī, that Dharma drum is invisible, not to be beheld, not true, not real, with no mind, without intention, signless,

formless, voiceless, immaterial, non-dual, and out of sight.

“Nevertheless, Mañjuśrī, for those gods in the heaven of the Thirty-Three who have previously purified themselves, a sound comes forth from the great Dharma drum. [F.281.b] It occurs to pacify all the misfortunes, troubles, and afflictions of the gods of the Thirty-Three.

“Mañjuśrī, in the same way that from that great Dharma drum, a sound issues forth—invisible, bodiless, not to be beheld, not true, not real, with no mind, without intention, signless, formless, voiceless, immaterial, non-dual, and out of sight—due to the maturation of previous karma of those gods in the heaven of the Thirty-Three, to pacify all their misfortunes, troubles, and afflictions, and prompts the careless gods, and in the same way as that sound of Dharma occurs to pacify all the misfortunes, troubles, and afflictions of the gods of the Thirty-Three, [38] so, too, Mañjuśrī, although the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha is invisible, not to be beheld, bodiless, not true, not real, with no mind, without intention, signless, formless, voiceless, non-dual, non-existent, and out of sight, nevertheless, Mañjuśrī, sentient beings perceive the voice of Dharma due to the maturation of previous karma, according to their individual aspirations and interests. And that sound of Dharma occurs to pacify all misfortunes, troubles, and afflictions of all sentient beings. Being the voice of Dharma, it is regarded in the world as the voice of the Tathāgata.

“Mañjuśrī, there is no Tathāgata. However, the designation ‘Tathāgata’ comes about in the world because of the voice of Dharma. [F.282.a] It is exclusively due to the maturation of sentient beings’ previous wholesome karma that they perceive the voice of the Tathāgata. That voice emerges in order to produce happiness for all sentient beings and to prompt those who are careless. Mañjuśrī, as those sentient beings hear that sound, they form the concept of a tathāgata, thinking, ‘This is the Tathāgata’s body.’

“The speech of the Tathāgata is heard so that beginner bodhisattvas and all immature, ordinary people may generate roots of what is wholesome by taking the Tathāgata as their reference point. However,

Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata should be known to be non-arisen and non-ceasing. [40]

“It is as follows: Mañjuśrī, at the end of summertime, during the first month of rains, due to the maturation of sentient beings’ previous karma, and to generate, out of the multitudes of seeds and elements, all the grass, thickets, medicinal herbs, and trees on earth, winds begin to blow in the atmosphere and the sky above; then water comes about due to that wind, and it falls on the great earth. Thus, the great earth is satisfied, and all sentient beings in Jambūdvīpa are joyful and happy. Referring to this, the notion of a ‘cloud’ comes about in the world.

“Mañjuśrī, whenever not much rain falls from the atmosphere and the sky above, all the sentient beings in Jambūdvīpa think, ‘Here there is not a cloud.’ But when, Mañjuśrī, a lot of rain falls on the great earth from the atmosphere and the sky above, they say: ‘Oh, a great cloud [F.282.b] is pouring down water, satisfying the great earth.’

“However, Mañjuśrī, when this happens there is neither a cloud, nor anything that can be designated as a cloud. Mañjuśrī, a large mass of water is generated by the wind, and then it falls from the atmosphere above. Mañjuśrī, the mass of water disappears in the atmosphere itself, due to the ripening of sentient beings’ previous karma. [42]

“Mañjuśrī, that cumulus of water above in the atmosphere, stirred by the wind and releasing water, is designated a cloud due to the maturation of sentient beings’ previous karma. However, Mañjuśrī, no cloud can be found there, nor anything that could be designated a cloud. Mañjuśrī, the cloud is non-arisen and non-ceasing; it does not enter the way of mind, and it is free from coming and going.

“In the same way, Mañjuśrī, for bodhisattva great beings who have accumulated previous roots of what is wholesome; for other sentient beings who wish for the awareness of a hearer or a *pratyekabuddha*; and for those sentient beings who have accumulated roots of what is wholesome and possess the causes to be shown the path to nirvāṇa, the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha with

unobstructed brilliance comes to be counted as arisen in the world.

“Whatever he says is thus (*tathā*), undistorted, thus and not otherwise. Therefore, he was given the name Tathāgata among gods and men. [44] Mañjuśrī, this word appears among gods and men: Tathāgata. However, Mañjuśrī, there is no Tathāgata to be found. The Tathāgata, Mañjuśrī, is not a sign, and he is free from signs. [F.283.a] He is not placed in any of the primary or intermediate directions. He is unreal, non-arisen, and non-ceasing.

“On the other hand, Mañjuśrī, the appearance of the Tathāgata satisfies and entertains this world, including the gods, through the Dharma. And then, due to the ripening of previous karma of beginner bodhisattvas and immature, ordinary people who are guided by means of nirvāṇa, it appears that the Tathāgata is no more to be seen. They think, ‘The Tathāgata has passed into complete nirvāṇa.’ However, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata neither arises nor ceases. The Tathāgata, Mañjuśrī, is non-arisen and non-ceasing. Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha is primordially in complete nirvāṇa.

“Mañjuśrī, when some water is taken as a point of reference for an unreal cloud that has not arisen nor ceased, and is non-existent, the designation “cloud” is established in the world. In the very same way, Mañjuśrī, when the teaching of the Dharma is taken as a point of reference for an unreal tathāgata who has not arisen nor ceased, and who is non-existent and primordially unborn, the designation “the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha” becomes established in the world. [46]

“It is as follows: Mañjuśrī, every day the great and unsurpassed Brahmā, who controls ten trichiliocosms, looks upon all the classes of gods, as far as the class of the gods of the Four Great Kings. At that time, Mañjuśrī, while the great Brahmā, who controls ten trichiliocosms, looks upon all the classes of gods, they all abandon their games of pleasure, delights, and enjoyments. [F.283.b] They stop playing their percussion instruments and halt their singing. Shifting

their attention from their games of pleasure and delights, they respectfully fold their hands and look toward the great Brahmā without blinking. For a moment, the great Brahmā offers sight of himself to all the classes of gods. At that time, the gods all long to be born in the world of the great Brahmā, and they dedicate their roots of what is wholesome toward taking birth in the world of the great Brahmā. [48]

“Moreover, Mañjuśrī, that great Brahmā, without falling down from that Brahmā Palace, empowers another great Brahmā as the controller of ten trichiliocosms, thanks to the power of his previous aspirations and due to the prior accumulation of virtue on the part of the gods.

“Mañjuśrī, that emanated great Brahmā looks upon all the classes of gods, as far as the class of the gods of the Four Great Kings. At that time, Mañjuśrī, among all the classes of gods, all the scions of the gods abandon their games of pleasure, delights, and enjoyments. They stop playing their percussion instruments and halt their singing. Shifting their attention from their games of pleasure and delights, they respectfully fold their hands and look toward the great Brahmā without blinking. For a moment, the great Brahmā offers sight of himself to all the classes of gods. At that time, the gods all long to be born in the world of the great Brahmā, and they dedicate their roots of what is wholesome toward taking birth in the world of the great Brahmā. [50]

“Still, Mañjuśrī, no Brahmā is there to be found. Mañjuśrī, Brahmā is empty, dependent, unreal, without syllables, without voice, [F.284.a] without place, and also not an existent thing. He is inconceivable, without signs, and free from mentality, mind, and consciousness. He is non-arisen and unceasing. And yet, Mañjuśrī, a semblance of him offering sight of himself appears among all the classes of gods, by the power of his own previous roots of what is wholesome and aspirations, and due to the previous accumulations of roots of what is wholesome on the part of those gods.

“Yet, Mañjuśrī, those gods do not think, ‘This Brahmā is an emanation. He is empty, dependent, unreal, without syllables, without

voice, without place, and also not an existent thing. He is inconceivable, without signs, and free from mentality, mind, and consciousness. He is non-arisen and unceasing.’

“Mañjuśrī, in the same manner the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha is empty, dependent, unreal, without syllables, without voice, without place, and also not an existent thing. He is inconceivable, without signs, and free from mentality, mind, and consciousness. He is non-arisen and unceasing.

“Still, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha is seen in the world. This is due to the power of his previous aspirations during his practice as a bodhisattva, and also due to the power of all the roots of what is wholesome of the beginner bodhisattvas, of those who set out on the vehicles of the hearers and the pratyekabuddhas, as well as of all the immature, ordinary people. He is seen in the world as a tathāgata adorned with hundreds of thousands of marks, like a reflected image; and he does not move from his place. [52]

“However, Mañjuśrī, the beginner bodhisattvas and all those who set out on the vehicles of the hearers and the pratyekabuddhas, as well as all immature, ordinary people, do not think, ‘The Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha is empty, dependent, unreal, without syllables, without voice, without place, and also not an existent thing. He is inconceivable, without signs, and free from mentality, mind, [F.284.b] and consciousness. He is non-arisen and unceasing.’

“Yet, Mañjuśrī, from the body of the Tathāgata, adorned with hundreds of thousands of marks, during all the empty postures of a tathāgata, a great Dharma teaching emanates for the sake of varied sentient beings with diverse beliefs.

“That Dharma teaching occurs to pacify all the troubles, harms, and afflictions of all sentient beings. In that regard, the Tathāgata is the same, neutral, without concepts, and does not make any distinctions. Thus, Mañjuśrī, through this explanation you should understand that ‘non-arising and non-cessation’ is an appellation of the Tathāgata.”

[54]

Then, at that time, the Bhagavat spoke the following two stanzas:

“The Tathāgata always has the quality of non-arising,
And all dharmas resemble the Sugata.
Yet immature minds, by their grasping at signs,
Roam the world among non-existent dharmas.

“The Tathāgata is a reflected image
Of the wholesome Dharma without outflows.
Yet here there is no tathatā and no Tathāgata,
While an image is seen in the entire world.” [56]

“It is as follows: Mañjuśrī, here in Jambūdvīpa the rays of the sun only shine at first on the great king of mighty mountains. After that, they shine on the Cakravāḍa and Mahācakravāḍa ranges. After that, they shine on the elevated regions of the earth. After that, they shine on the low-lying regions of the earth here in Jambūdvīpa.

“Yet those sun rays, Mañjuśrī, do not form mental constructs or concepts. They do not think or ponder. The rays of the sun, Mañjuśrī, are free from mentality, mind, and consciousness; they are unborn and unceasing, without characteristics, free from characteristics; [F.285.a] without mental placement, free from mental placement; without elaboration, free from elaboration; without torment, free from torment; not abiding hither, not abiding thither; not high, not low; not bound, not liberated; not knowing, not ignorant; not afflictions, not free from afflictions; not speaking the truth, not speaking falsely; not over there, not here; not on dry land, not in the stream; not the domain of reasoning, not the domain of non-reasoning; neither with form, nor formless. Yet, Mañjuśrī, due to the distinction of higher, middling, and lower places on the earth, the light shines differently, at higher, middling, and lower degrees causing varied shades. [58]

“In the same way, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha does not form mental constructs or concepts. He does not think or ponder. Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata is free from

mind, mentality, and consciousness. He is unborn and unceasing. He is without characteristics, free from characteristics; without mental placement, free from mental placement; without elaboration, free from elaboration; without torment, free from torment; not abiding hither, not abiding thither; not high, not low; not bound, not liberated; not knowing, not ignorant; not afflictions, not free from afflictions; not speaking the truth, not speaking falsely; not over there, not here; not on the shore, nor on the non-shore; not on low land, nor on non-low land; not on dry land, nor on non-dry land; not in the stream, nor in the non-stream; not on the plains.

“He is not omniscient, not non-omniscient; [F.285.b] not reasoning, not non-reasoning; not acting, not non-acting; neither behavior nor non-behavior; neither mindful nor unmindful; neither with intention nor free from intention; neither mind nor without mind; neither originated nor unoriginated;²⁵ neither name nor no name; neither form nor no form; neither verbal expression nor non-verbal expression; neither a possible object of imputation, nor not a possible object of imputation; neither visible nor invisible; neither a conducive way nor not a conducive way; neither leading along the way, nor not leading along the way; neither having obtained the result, nor not having obtained the result; neither a concept, nor not a concept; neither free from concepts, nor not free from concepts. [60]

“Similarly, Mañjuśrī, the rays of awareness from the round sun of the Tathāgata shine brilliantly in the three realms, unimpeded throughout the dharmadhātu with neither edge nor center. Once they shine, they first descend upon the bodies of bodhisattvas, whose aspirations are like the great lord of mountains. After that, they descend upon the bodies of those who set forth on the Vehicle of Pratyekabuddhas. Then they descend upon the bodies of those who have set forth on the Hearers’ Vehicle. After that, they descend upon the body of sentient beings with wholesome aspirations, according to their specific inclinations. After that, the rays of awareness from the round sun of the Tathāgata even descend upon the body of those sentient beings with mental continua that are stuck in what is wrong.²⁶

The rays assist all these beings by producing causes for what will come later, and increase their wholesome dharmas.

“In that respect, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata [F.286.a] is everywhere the same, neutral, without concepts, and does not make any distinctions. Moreover, Mañjuśrī, the round sun of the Tathāgata’s awareness does not think, ‘I will teach this person the vast Dharma, but I will not teach that one.’ Neither does it have the concept, ‘This person has vast beliefs, that one has middling beliefs. This one has belief in the Hearers’ Vehicle. This one has wholesome aspirations while that one is low, with wrong aspirations.’ [62]

“Mañjuśrī, the round sun of the Tathāgata’s awareness does not think, ‘This sentient being has vast beliefs, so I will teach him the Great Vehicle. This one has middling beliefs, so I will teach him the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle. This one has belief in the Hearers’ Vehicle, so I will teach him the Hearers’ Vehicle. I shall come to understand the aspirations of sentient beings with either wholesome or unwholesome aspirations, then purify them and straighten up their view. Even for sentient beings stuck in what is wrong, I shall teach a fitting dharma.’

“The light of the rays of awareness from the round sun of the Tathāgata does not have any such concepts. And why? Because the light of the rays of awareness from the round sun of the Tathāgata has cut off all constructs, concepts, and elaborations. On the other hand, Mañjuśrī, because of variations in sentient beings’ inclinations to wholesome intent, the light of the rays of awareness from the round sun of the Tathāgata is varied too.” [64] [B.2]

“It is as follows: Mañjuśrī, in the great ocean there is a great, precious jewel called Fulfilling All Wishes. When it is attached to the top of a banner and a sentient being [F.286.b] makes a wish, sentient beings will perceive corresponding words coming forth from the jewel. However, that great, precious jewel does not form mental constructs or concepts. It does not think or ponder. It is inconceivable, free from what can be conceived, and free from mind, mentality, and

consciousness.

“In the very same way, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha does not form mental constructs or concepts. He does not think or ponder. He is inconceivable, free from what can be conceived, and free from mind, mentality, and consciousness. He is non-grasping, the act of not holding on. He is not obtained, not obtainable. He has eliminated arbitrary truths as well as attachment, aversion, and delusion. He is neither true nor false, neither permanent nor impermanent, neither shining nor not shining, neither worldly nor non-worldly. He is without deliberation or analysis. He is non-arisen and unceasing. [66]

“He is inconceivable, imponderable, essence-less, and not possibly an essence. He is empty of non-existence; he is free from striving or giving anything up. He cannot be clung to. He is not a conventional expression; he is the cutting off of conventional expressions. He is not bliss, he is free from bliss; he is the destruction of bliss.

“He cannot be counted; he is free from counting. He is not movement, he has reached non-movement; he has cut off all movement and has cut off all conventional expressions.

“He cannot be seen or beheld, he is ungraspable. He is not space, not lack of space. He is not visible, not to be described, not an assemblage, and not a non-assemblage. He is neither mentally constructed nor not mentally constructed. He is not established, shown, [F.287.a] afflicted, or purified. He is not name, not form, not sign; not karma, not the maturation of karma. He is not past, not future, not present. He is nothing whatsoever. He is without impurity, without syllables, without voice, beyond a voice, not speech. He is not a characteristic, he is free from all characteristics; not perceived inside, outside, or in between.

“And Mañjuśrī, the awareness jewel of the Tathāgata is completely pure in its intent, and is fixed at the top of the banner of great compassion. According to his or her inclinations and beliefs, a sentient being perceives a Dharma teaching issuing forth from that jewel.²⁷ And in this respect, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata is the same, neutral, without

concepts, and does not make any distinctions. [68]

“It is as follows: Mañjuśrī, sentient beings perceive an echo issuing forth as the intimation of someone else’s speech.”²⁸

“But that echo is not past, future, or present. It cannot be perceived inside, outside, or in between. It is non-arisen and unceasing. It is not cut off, not permanent; it is not endowed with awareness, nor is it without awareness. It is neither wisdom nor not wisdom, neither knowledge nor ignorance, and neither liberation nor not liberation.

“It is neither blameworthy nor free from blame, neither recollection nor non-recollection, neither placed nor unplaced, and neither sitting nor not sitting. It is not the earth element, not the water element, not the fire element, and not the wind element. [F.287.b] It is neither co-produced nor unproduced, neither free from elaboration nor with elaboration, neither speech nor not speech, and neither visible nor invisible.

“It is without syllables, free from non-syllables, without voice, beyond voice, without comparison, beyond comparison, not a characteristic, and free from characteristics. It is neither peace nor not peace, neither long nor short, neither sentient nor insentient, and neither mental nor not mental. It is neither to be beheld, nor not to be beheld. It is empty of the nature of seeing. It is non-recollection, and non-mental-placement. It is not deliberation, not analysis, and free from mind, mentality, and consciousness. In all regards it is the same, neutral, without concepts, and does not make any distinctions. It is beyond the three times. However, Mañjuśrī, the echo, the voice of many sounds, comes forth for sentient beings with varied inclinations, as the intimation of the voice of many sounds, and sentient beings perceive it to be just that way. [70]

“In the very same way, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha is not past, future, or present. He cannot be perceived inside, outside, or in between. He is non-arisen and unceasing. He is not cut off, not permanent; he is not endowed with awareness, nor is he without awareness. He is neither with wisdom

nor without wisdom. He is neither knowledge nor ignorance, neither liberation nor not liberation.

“He is neither blameworthy nor free from blame, neither with recollection nor without recollection, neither placed nor unplaced, and neither sitting nor not sitting. He is not the earth element, [F.288.a] not the water element, not the fire element, and not the wind element. He is neither co-produced nor unproduced, neither elaboration nor non-elaboration, neither speech nor not speech, and neither visible nor invisible.

“He is without syllables, without voice, beyond voice, without comparison, beyond comparison, not a characteristic, and free from characteristics. He is neither peaceful nor not peaceful, neither long nor short, neither sentient nor insentient, and neither mental nor not mental. He is neither to be beheld, nor not to be beheld. He is empty of the nature of seeing. He is non-recollection and non-mental-placement. He is not deliberation, not analysis, and free from mind, mentality, and consciousness. In all regards he is the same, neutral, without concepts, and does not make any distinctions. He is beyond the three times. Yet, Mañjuśrī, sentient beings with varied beliefs perceive the speech of the Tathāgata, issuing forth in accordance with their manifold inclinations. [72]

“It is as follows: Mañjuśrī, it is through having the earth as their basis and support that all grass, thickets, herbs, and trees grow to become sizeable. But, Mañjuśrī, the earth does not form mental constructs or concepts. With respect to everything it is the same, free from concepts, free from distinctions. It is free from speculations and free from mind, mentality, and consciousness.

“In the same way, Mañjuśrī, it is through having the Tathāgata as their basis and support that all the roots of what is wholesome of all sentient beings grow and become sizeable. [F.288.b] Whether it is the roots of what is wholesome of those on the Vehicle of the Hearers, on the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle, or on the Great Vehicle; or of all *tīrthikas* such as the Carakas, Parivrājakas, Nirgranthas, and so forth;

or of any others, down to the roots of what is wholesome of those stuck in what is wrong; it is through having the Tathāgata as their basis and support that they grow and become sizeable.

“However, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata does not form mental constructs or concepts. Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha has cut off all mental constructs, concepts, points of reference, and mental engagement. He is free from mind, mentality, and consciousness; he is neither speculation nor the domain of speculation. He is invisible, not to be beheld, not an object of thought or deliberation. He is without mental engagement, free from thought, and free from mind, mentality, and consciousness. With respect to all, he is the same, neutral, without concepts, and he does not make any distinctions. [74]

“It is as follows: Mañjuśrī, space is everywhere the same, free from concepts and distinctions. It is non-arisen and unceasing; it is not past, future, or present. It is indefinable, non-elaborate, and formless; it cannot be shown or made known. It is without contact, without dwelling, not comparable, and beyond compare. It has no simile and is beyond all similes. It has no basis; it is ungraspable and beyond visible range. It is free from mind, mentality, and consciousness. It has no characteristic; it is without syllables, voice, and mental engagement. It has no striving or giving up; no removal, no addition. It is beyond the realm of words. It reaches and enters everywhere. And still, Mañjuśrī, sentient beings experience space as being low or high, according to whether the place is low, middling, or high. [76] [F.289.a]

“In the same way, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha is everywhere the same, free from concepts and distinctions. He is non-arisen and unceasing, he is not past, future, or present. He is indefinable, non-elaborate, and formless; he cannot be shown or made known. He is without contact, without dwelling, not comparable, and beyond compare. He has no simile and is beyond all similes. He has no basis, he is ungraspable and beyond visible range. He is free from mind, mentality, and consciousness. He has no

characteristic; he is without syllables, voice, and mental engagement. He has no striving or giving up; no removal, no addition. He is beyond the realm of words. He reaches and enters everywhere. And still, Mañjuśrī, according to whether sentient beings are low, middling, or high, they see the Tathāgata as low, middling, or high.

“Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata does not think: ‘This sentient being has low inclinations and beliefs, so I will show him a low perfection of the form body. This sentient being has middling inclinations and beliefs, so I will show him a middling perfection of the form body. This sentient being has vast inclinations and beliefs, so I will show him a vast perfection of the form body.’ [78]

“Mañjuśrī, this is also what you should understand regarding how the Dharma is taught. Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata does not think: ‘This sentient being has low beliefs, so for him I shall make a speech relating to the Hearers’ Vehicle. This sentient being has middling beliefs, [F.289.b] so for him I shall make a speech relating to the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle. This sentient being has vast beliefs, so for him I shall make a speech relating to the Great Vehicle.’

“Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata does not think: ‘This sentient being has belief in giving, so for him I shall make a speech related to giving.’ Nor does he think so for discipline, forbearance, diligence, or concentration.

“Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata does not think: ‘This sentient being has belief in the perfection of wisdom, so for him I shall make a speech related to the perfection of wisdom.’ Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata does not think in that way. And why is that? Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata is the dharmakāya. Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata is utterly non-arisen.²⁹ [80]

“Mañjuśrī, for the Tathāgata, a consciousness chasing after names, forms, and etymological explanations does not occur. Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata does not form mental constructs or concepts. Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata is momentary, and his characteristic is to be inexhaustible. He is fixed at the pinnacle of non-exhaustion, the pinnacle of reality. Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha

is the pinnacle of the sameness of all dharmas, the pinnacle of their non-duality, and the pinnacle of their utter non-arising.³⁰ In all regards he is the same, free from concepts, and free from distinctions. He is not low, nor middling, nor high.

“Mañjuśrī, just in the same way, all dharmas are the same, free from concepts, and free from distinctions. They are not low, nor middling, nor high. And why? It is because no dharmas are perceived. Mañjuśrī, [F.290.a] this non-perception of all dharmas is their sameness. Their sameness is their remaining fixed. Remaining fixed means that they do not move; not moving means being without any abode.³¹ [82]

“For someone with no abode in any dharma, the mind has no place to stand. For a mind that stands nowhere, there will be non-arising. And for someone who sees in this way, no distorted mind and mental states come about; someone whose mind is undistorted will have authentic attainment.

“Whoever has authentic attainment will not form elaborations. Someone who does not form elaborations does not move about. When one does not move about, one does not wander. When one does not wander, one does not become distracted. One who does not become distracted does not oppose the *dharmatā*. One who does not oppose the *dharmatā* is in conformity with everything. One who is in conformity with everything does not move from the nature of the dharmas. One who does not move from the nature of the dharmas obtains the nature of the dharmas. One who obtains the nature of the dharmas does not form any elaboration. Why is that? Because he is born due to conditions and causes. [84]

“Whoever is born from conditions and causes is utterly unborn. Someone utterly unborn has gained certainty. Whoever has gained certainty does not dwell with any mental engagement in the dharmas. When one does not dwell with any mental engagement in the dharmas, one does not dwell with the dharmas. When one does not dwell with the dharmas, one does not come into existence or go out of existence. When one does not come into existence or go out of existence, one

becomes fixed and has obtained the Dharma.

“When one becomes fixed and has obtained the Dharma, one applies oneself to the proper dharma. When one applies oneself to the proper dharma, no dharma whatsoever is not a buddhadharma. And why? Due to the realization of emptiness. The realization of emptiness is awakening.

“It is awakening, because in this way one realizes emptiness, no-sign, no-wish; [F.290.b] no-effort, no-dwelling, no coming about; no object of apprehension and no-abode. Awakening is proper application. [86]

“What is called proper application is to neither remove nor add. It is the application of not doing and not changing, and it is not connected. It is the non-liberated application, the application of neither oneness nor plurality, and the application of what has yet to come. This is proper application.

“In that respect, there is no application, no measure, and no direct realization of a result. And why? Because mind is by nature luminous. It is afflicted by adventitious afflictions, but its nature is not afflicted.

“Luminosity by nature is non-affliction. With respect to non-affliction there is no counteragent—a counteragent by which the destruction of the afflictions may occur. And why? Because what is pure does not become pure; it just is pure.

“That which is pure is non-arising. Non-arising is faultless. What is faultless is the destruction of joys, whereby all attachments cease. Where all attachments cease, that is non-arising. And non-arising is awakening. [88]

“Awakening is sameness. Sameness is the tathatā. All dharmas, co-produced and unproduced, abide in the tathatā. With respect to the tathatā there is neither something co-produced nor something unproduced; there is no designation of duality. Where there is nothing co-produced or unproduced, and no designation of duality, that is the tathatā.

“The tathatā is nothing else but the tathatā. Nothing else but the tathatā is the unchanging tathatā. The unchanging tathatā [F.291.a] is

the non-coming tathatā. The non-coming tathatā is the tathatā that does not go. The tathatā that does not go is the authentic tathatā. The authentic tathatā is the not-at-all-tathatā. The not-at-all-tathatā is not afflicted and is not purified. That which is neither afflicted nor purified neither arises nor ceases. That which neither arises nor ceases is the same as nirvāṇa. That which is the same as nirvāṇa neither roams within saṃsāra nor passes into complete nirvāṇa. That which neither roams within saṃsāra nor passes into complete nirvāṇa is not past, future, or present. That which is not past, future, or present is not low, middling, or high. That which is not low, middling, or high is the tathatā.

What we call tathatā is an expression meaning tattva. What we call tattva is tathatā itself. Tathatā being the same as tattva is called tathatva.³² Thus, the tathatā and the self are not two, they are non-dual. The meaning of non-duality is awakening, in the sense of becoming awake. [90] The meaning is explained as the awareness that enters the three gates of liberation with respect to all the Dharma teachings. The awareness is explained as engaging in the sameness of the three times with respect to all dharmas. The meaning of the inseparability of all dharmas is what is explained as the meaning. It is voiceless, ineffable, inexpressible, and cut off from any expressions. Awareness is explained as the awareness that understands the meaning and understands consciousness; this is explained as awareness. The meaning is explained as the meaning that is established by the awareness that understands the meaning of tattva, and by the awareness that understands consciousness. [F.291.b] That itself is the dharmatā. And the dharmatā is the meaning.

“The dharmatā is the fixity of the dharmas, the regularity of the dharmas; it does not occur within a dharma. The non-occurrence of the dharma and the sameness of meaning and expression are the same with respect to the non-dual meaning. Sameness is the meaning. It is sameness according to the understanding of the meaning; it is the

sameness of awareness, entering the gate of non-duality.

“The sameness of the interpretable meaning and the definitive meaning is their common meaning, which is emptiness. The sameness of the person is the same as the common meaning. The sameness of the dharmas is the same as the sameness of persons. The sameness of liberation is the same as the sameness of the dharmas. Realization according to the sameness of liberation is awakening. [92]

“Mañjuśrī, for those who have attachment to form, the eye is attachment. Knowing the nature of form and of the eye is non-attachment.

“For those who have attachment to views, one’s own body is attachment. For those who have done away with all views, the awareness of one’s body’s natural emptiness is non-attachment.

“For those who are stuck in their attachment to improper mental placement, the appearance of dharmas is attachment. Discerning the dharmas through proper mental placement, the awareness of emptiness by nature and emptiness of essence is non-attachment.

“For those who are stuck in their attachment to the stain of doubt, liberation is attachment. The authentic awareness of belief and liberation is non-attachment.

“For those who are stuck in their attachment to the stain of laziness, having present diligence toward realization is attachment. [F.292.a] The realization of dharmas as they are is non-attachment.

“For those who are stuck in their attachment to the hindrances, the limbs of awakening are attachment. Liberation through unobstructed awareness is non-attachment.

“Being by nature completely pure, all dharmas occur due to an assemblage of causes and conditions. With respect to that, a bodhisattva should understand well the cause of affliction and the cause of purification. He should neither abide with the purity of the cause of affliction, nor with the purity of the cause of purification. [94]

“Elevating self is a cause of affliction. Forbearance in one’s engagement with the selflessness of dharmas is a cause of purification.

“The view of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ is a cause of affliction. Inner pacification and outer non-movement is a cause of purification.

“Thoughts of desire, ill will, and harm are a cause of affliction. Forbearance in one’s dealings with impure things, in one’s practice of friendliness, compassion, rejoicing, equanimity, and with dependent dharmas, is a cause of purification.

“The four distortions are a cause of affliction. The four placements of mindfulness are a cause of purification.

“The five hindrances are a cause of affliction. The five faculties are a cause of purification.

“The six entrances are a cause of affliction. The six remembrances are a cause of purification.

“The seven false dharmas are a cause of affliction. The seven limbs of awakening are a cause of purification.

“The eight wrong modes are a cause of affliction. The eight right modes are a cause of purification.

“The nine causes of antagonism are a cause of affliction. The absorptions into nine successive abodes are a cause of purification.

“The ten unwholesome courses of karma are a cause of affliction. [F.292.b] The ten wholesome courses of karma are a cause of purification.

“In brief, all unwholesome mental engagements are a cause of affliction; all wholesome mental engagements are a cause of purification. [96]

“In that respect, whether a cause of affliction or of purification, all dharmas are by nature empty, without a sentient being, without a living being, without one who nourishes, without a soul or a person, without a master, without appropriation, without activity, comparable to an illusion, without characteristics, pacified from within.

“Moreover, pacified from within they are utterly pacified. Utterly pacified, they are their intrinsic nature. Their intrinsic nature is not being perceived. Not being perceived is to have no abode. That which has no abode is thatness.³³ Thatness is space. One cognizes all dharmas as the same as space. One engages conventionally in the

purification of afflictions, yet does not abandon the dharmatā of space. And why? Mañjuśrī, no dharma whatsoever can be found for which there may be arising or cessation.” [98]

Mañjuśrī said, “How then, Bhagavat, did the Tathāgata obtain awakening?”

The Bhagavat said, “Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata obtained an awakening that has no root and no ground to stand upon.”

Mañjuśrī asked, “Bhagavat, what root would that be, and what ground to stand upon?”

The Bhagavat said, “Mañjuśrī, that root would be the transitory collection, and that ground to stand upon the imagination of what is not there.³⁴ Then, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata knows the sameness of all dharmas through the sameness of awakening. Therefore it is said, Mañjuśrī, that ‘the Tathāgata realized an awakening that has no root and no ground to stand upon.’ [100]

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, is to be at peace, utterly at peace. [F.293.a] In that respect, what is peace, and what is utter peace? Inside there is peace; outside there is utter peace. Why is that?

“The eye, Mañjuśrī, is empty of a self and what belongs to a self; such is its nature. This is called *peace*. Thoroughly understanding that the eye is empty, one does not run toward forms. Thus it is called *utter peace*.

“In the same way, the ear is empty of a self and what belongs to a self; such is its nature. This is called *peace*. Thoroughly understanding that the ear is empty, one does not run toward sounds. Thus it is called *utter peace*.

“The nose is empty of a self and what belongs to a self; such is its nature. This is called *peace*. Thoroughly understanding that the nose is empty, one does not run toward smells. Thus it is called *utter peace*.

“The tongue is empty of a self and what belongs to a self; such is its nature. This is called *peace*. Thoroughly understanding that the tongue is empty, one does not run toward flavors. Thus it is called *utter peace*.

“The body is empty of a self and what belongs to a self; such is its nature. This is called *peace*. Thoroughly understanding that the body is empty, one does not run toward touchable things. Thus it is called *utter peace*.

“The mind, Mañjuśrī, is empty of a self and what belongs to a self; such is its nature. This is called *peace*. Thoroughly understanding that the mind is empty, one does not run toward dharmas. Thus it is called *utter peace*. [102]

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, is by nature luminous, because the mind is by nature luminous; that is why it is said to be luminous by nature. The nature is not afflicted; it is the same as space, it has the nature of space, it goes together with space, it is comparable to space. The nature is utterly luminous.

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, is without striving or giving anything up. In that respect, how is it without striving, and how is it without giving anything up? Without striving [F.293.b] means not to grasp at any dharma. Without giving anything up means not to abandon any dharma. In that respect, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata, without striving or giving anything up, crossed the stream. He crossed it in such a way that he does not see this shore or the other shore of tathatā. Therefore, the Tathāgata realized all dharmas to be free from this shore or the other shore. Thus he is called the Tathāgata. [104]

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, is without sign or reference point. In that respect, what is signlessness, and what is the lack of reference point?

“That the eye-consciousness does not perceive, Mañjuśrī, is signlessness. That form is not seen is the lack of reference point.

“That the ear-consciousness does not perceive is signlessness. That sounds are not heard is the lack of reference point.

“That the nose-consciousness does not perceive is signlessness. That smells are not smelt is the lack of reference point.

“That the tongue-consciousness does not perceive is signlessness. That flavors are not tasted is the lack of reference point.

“That the body-consciousness does not perceive is signlessness. That touchable things are not touched is the lack of reference point.

“That the mind-consciousness does not perceive is signlessness. That dharmas are not cognized is the lack of reference point.

“This, Mañjuśrī, is the scope of the noble ones. That which is not the scope of the three realms, Mañjuśrī, is the scope of the noble ones. [106]

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, is not past, not future, not present. It is the same in the three times, and is cut off from the three spheres. In that respect, Mañjuśrī, what does it mean to be cut off from the three spheres? The mind in the past is not perceived. Consciousness does not run toward the future. [F.294.a] Mental placement does not occur in the present. One who does not abide in mind, mentality, and consciousness does not form mental constructs or concepts. Not forming mental constructs or concepts, one does not create the past and does not think of the future; one does not elaborate about the present.

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, is bodiless and unproduced. In that respect, Mañjuśrī, bodilessness is what cannot be cognized by the eye-consciousness, what cannot be cognized by the ear, nose, tongue, body, or mind consciousness. Mañjuśrī, that which cannot be cognized by mind, mentality, and consciousness is unproduced. The unproduced is explained this way: where there is no arising, no abiding, no passing away, that is called the *unproduced purified of the three spheres*. The co-produced should be understood just like the unproduced. And why? The essence of all dharmas is no-essence; in that respect, there is no duality. [108]

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, is a basis of non-division. In that respect, what is non-division, and what is the basis? No-notion is non-division. The tathatā is the basis. No-ground-to-stand-upon is non-division. The dharmadhātu is the basis. Non-multiplicity³⁵ is non-division. The true limit is the basis. Non-apprehension is non-division. Non-movement is

the basis. Emptiness is non-division. No-sign is the basis. Non-deliberation is non-division. No-wish is the basis. Non-solicitation is non-division. Being without a sentient being is the basis. Non-essence of a sentient being is non-division. Space is the basis. Non-perception is non-division. Non-arising is the basis. Non-cessation is non-division. The unproduced [F.294.b] is the basis. No moving about is non-division. Awakening is the basis. Pacification is non-division. Nirvāṇa is the basis. Non-development is non-division; non-birth is the basis. [110]

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, is not realized by the body nor by the mind. And why? The body, Mañjuśrī, is inert, motionless, and insentient. It is similar and comparable to grass, logs of wood, walls, or clay.³⁶

“The mind, on the other hand, can be compared to an illusion. It is hollow, void, unreal, and unproduced. Mañjuśrī, to realize the body and mind in this manner is explained as awakening. This is based on conventional usage, but it is not in the ultimate sense. And why? Mañjuśrī, awakening cannot be explained in terms of the body, the mind, or dharma, non-dharma, real, unreal, truth, or falsity. [112]

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, cannot be expressed through any dharma. And why? Mañjuśrī, awakening does not have the slightest location that allows it to enter conventional usage. Mañjuśrī, space has no location; it is unproduced, non-arisen, unceasing, and cannot be expressed. In the same way, Mañjuśrī, awakening has no location; it is unproduced, non-arisen, unceasing, and cannot be expressed. Mañjuśrī, when searching for the real space, it cannot be explained through any dharma. In the same way, Mañjuśrī, when searching for the real awakening, it cannot be explained through any dharma. And why? Mañjuśrī, with respect to what is real, no words can be found, because it is non-arisen and unceasing. [114]

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, means to be ungraspable and to have no abode. In that respect, Mañjuśrī, what is it to be ungraspable, [F.295.a] and what is it to have no abode? The thorough cognition of the eye,

Mañjuśrī, is to be ungraspable. The non-perception of form is to have no abode. The thorough cognition of the ear is to be ungraspable. The non-perception of sound is to have no abode. The thorough cognition of the nose is to be ungraspable. The non-perception of smell is to have no abode. The thorough cognition of the tongue is to be ungraspable. The non-perception of flavor is to have no abode. The thorough cognition of the body is to be ungraspable. The non-perception of touchable things is to have no abode. The thorough cognition of the mind is to be ungraspable. The non-perception of dharmas is to have no abode. In this way, the Tathāgata has realized awakening, ungraspable and without abode.

“Once that has been realized, by not grasping at the eye and not perceiving form, the eye-consciousness has no ground to stand upon.³⁷ Not grasping at the ear and not perceiving sounds, the ear-consciousness has no ground to stand upon. Not grasping at the nose and not perceiving smells, the nose-consciousness has no ground to stand upon. Not grasping at the body and not perceiving touchable things, the body-consciousness has no ground to stand upon. Not grasping at the mind and not perceiving dharmas, the mind-consciousness has no ground to stand upon. Therefore, as his consciousness has no ground to stand upon, he comes to be counted as the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfect and Complete Buddha. [116]

“Mañjuśrī, there are four grounds for the minds of sentient beings to stand upon. Which four? Form is a ground for the mind of sentient beings to stand upon. Similarly, Mañjuśrī, feeling, notion, and co-producing factors are grounds for the minds of sentient beings to stand upon. Moreover, Mañjuśrī, these four grounds for the mind to stand upon are known by the Tathāgata [F.295.b] to be non-arisen and unceasing.

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, is an appellation for emptiness. Mañjuśrī, the emptiness by which awakening is empty is also the emptiness by which all dharmas are empty. And the Tathāgata realized them, precisely in the way in which they are empty. Mañjuśrī, it is not that

emptiness is realized through emptiness. On the other hand, Mañjuśrī, there is one single method: emptiness, or awakening. Mañjuśrī, where there is no emptiness, there is no awakening. In that respect, Mañjuśrī, there is no duality by which emptiness and awakening could be made into two. And why? Mañjuśrī, all dharmas are non-dual, without characteristics, not made into two, without names, without signs, free from mind, mentality, and consciousness, non-arisen and unceasing, not acting, not moving forth, not occurring, without syllables, and without speech. [118] [B.3]

“Moreover, Mañjuśrī, that which is called empty is an appellation for no attachment and no grasping. On the other hand, Mañjuśrī, in the ultimate sense, no dharma called empty is there to be perceived. Mañjuśrī, the sky is called sky, yet the sky cannot be expressed. In the same way, Mañjuśrī, we say ‘empty, empty’ as an entrance to inexpressible, empty things.

“All dharmas are nameless, Mañjuśrī; yet all dharmas are described through names. Mañjuśrī, a name is not placed in either a primary or an intermediate location. The Tathāgata realized the dharmas to be precisely that way. As for the Dharma expressed through a name, that dharma too is not placed in either a primary or a secondary location. [F.296.a]

“Thus, Mañjuśrī, all the dharmas are known by the Tathāgata to be, from the very beginning, unborn, non-arisen, unceasing, without characteristics, free from mind, mentality, and consciousness, without syllables, and without voice. They are known to be just free. Mañjuśrī, it is not that they are first bound and then freed. [120]

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, is the same as the sky. The sky is neither even nor uneven. Awakening, too, is neither even nor uneven. And why? Mañjuśrī, a dharma with no real perfection cannot be spoken of as either even or uneven. Therefore, Mañjuśrī, all dharmas are realized by the Tathāgata as neither even nor uneven. They are realized in such a way that not even an atom is made even or uneven. Dharmas are cognized just as they are.

“And how does that accord with the awareness of reality? Mañjuśrī, all dharmas, non-arisen and unceasing, come into being after having not existed. Then, having existed, they disperse. They come into existence without a master and without being owned; and, Mañjuśrī, without a master and without being owned, they disperse. In this way, Mañjuśrī, they come into existence and go out of existence. They come about within the dharma of dependence, and there is no one here that causes them to come about. Thus it is said that the Tathāgata teaches the Dharma for the sake of cutting off the dharmas. [122]

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, is a consistent basis. In that respect, Mañjuśrī, what is a consistent basis? Mañjuśrī, just like awakening, so also form does not swerve from the tathatā. Just like awakening, so also feeling, notion, co-producing factors, and consciousness [F.296.b] do not swerve from the tathatā. Just like awakening, so also the earth element does not swerve from the tathatā. Just like awakening, so also the water element, the heat element, and the wind element do not swerve from the tathatā.

“Just like awakening, so also the eye-base, the form-base, and the eye-consciousness-base do not swerve from the tathatā. Just like awakening, Mañjuśrī, the ear-base, the sound-base, the ear-consciousness-base, the nose-base, the smell-base, the nose-consciousness-base, the tongue-base, the flavor-base, the tongue-consciousness-base, the body-base, the touchable-base, the body-consciousness-base, the mind-base, the dharma-base, and the mind-consciousness-base do not swerve from the tathatā.

“And dharmas can be designated just as this: the aggregates, the bases, and the entrances. And this entire set has been realized by the Tathāgata as consistent: as it is before, so also is it later, and in between. It is unborn in the prior limit, not transferred at the later limit, and isolated in the middle. In this way, for all those things there is a ‘consistent basis.’ Just as one is, so are all; just as all are, so is one. And in this respect, Mañjuśrī, neither oneness nor plurality is perceived. [124]

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, enters the aspect-less by entering an aspect. In that respect, Mañjuśrī, what is an aspect, and what is the aspect-less? The aspect, Mañjuśrī, is explained as taking up all wholesome dharmas. The aspect-less is explained as the non-perception of any dharmas. The aspect is explained as the stabilization of an unstable mind. The aspect-less is explained as the gate to liberation of the samādhi of no-sign. [F.297.a] The aspect is explained as thinking, comparing, counting, and thorough consideration of all dharmas. The aspect-less is explained as transcending comparison. What is transcending comparison? It is that with respect to which there is no function of consciousness. The aspect is explained as the thorough consideration of the co-produced. The aspect-less is explained as the thorough consideration of the unproduced. [126]

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, is without outflows and without clinging. In that respect, Mañjuśrī, how is it without outflows, and how is it without clinging? Being without outflows, Mañjuśrī, is explained as the absence of the four outflows. Which four? They are: the outflow of desire, the outflow of existence, the outflow of ignorance, and the outflow of views. These are the four outflows.

“Being without clinging is explained as the absence of four types of clinging. Which four? They are: clinging to desire, clinging to views, clinging to one’s attachment to discipline and vows, and clinging to positing a self. These are the four types of clinging.

“Beings are blinded by ignorance. Craving disturbs them. They develop mutual attachment and cling to each other. In that respect, Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata thoroughly understands that the root of clinging is the positing of a self. Through self-purity, he understands the purity of all sentient beings. The purity of self is the purity of all sentient beings. The purity of all sentient beings is non-dual, not divided into two. And the meaning of non-duality is non-arising and non-cessation. [128]

“With respect to non-arising and non-cessation, Mañjuśrī, mind, mentality, and consciousness do not come about. In that respect there

is no mental construct by which one may place the mind improperly.³⁸ [F.297.b] Whosoever engages in proper mental placement does not give rise to ignorance. Not giving rise to ignorance means not giving rise to the twelve limbs of existence. Not giving rise to the twelve limbs of existence means no birth. No birth is the fixed rule. The fixed rule is the definitive meaning. The definitive meaning is the ultimate meaning. The ultimate meaning means to be devoid of a person. The meaning of being devoid of a person is the ineffable meaning. The ineffable meaning is the meaning of dependent arising. The meaning of dependent arising is the meaning of the Dharma. The meaning of the Dharma is the meaning of the Tathāgata. Hence it is said, ‘One who sees dependent arising sees the Dharma; one who sees the Dharma sees the Tathāgata.’ And he sees in such a way that, when he searches, he does not see anything whatsoever. In that respect, Mañjuśrī, what is anything whatsoever? It is the mind and the point of reference. When one does not see the mind and the point of reference, one then sees reality. In this way, the Tathāgata has realized, through their very sameness, that all these dharmas are equal. [130]

“Awakening, Mañjuśrī, is pure, stainless, and without disturbance. In that respect, Mañjuśrī, what is purity, what is meant by stainless, and what is non-disturbance? Emptiness, Mañjuśrī, is purity; no-sign is stainless; no-wish is non-disturbance. Non-birth is purity; non-effort is stainless; non-arising is non-disturbance. The nature is purity; complete purity is stainless; luminosity is non-disturbance. No elaboration is purity; freedom from elaboration is stainless; the pacification of elaborations [F.298.a] is non-disturbance. The tathatā is purity; the dharmadhātu is stainless; the pinnacle of reality is non-disturbance. Space is purity; the sky is stainless; the atmosphere is non-disturbance.

“To thoroughly cognize inside is purity;³⁹ not to move forth on the outside is stainless; non-perception inside and outside is non-disturbance. To thoroughly cognize the aggregates is purity; the essencelessness⁴⁰ of the bases is stainless; putting away the entrances

is non-disturbance. To cognize past destruction is purity; to cognize future non-arising is stainless; to cognize the present abiding of the dharmadhātu is non-disturbance. [132]

“In this way, Mañjuśrī, purity, the stainless, and non-disturbance are collected within a single basis: the peaceful basis. That which is peaceful is very peaceful. That which is very peaceful is utterly peaceful. That which is utterly peaceful is utter pacification; utter pacification is called the sage. Thus, Mañjuśrī, just like space, so is awakening. Just like awakening, so are the dharmas. Just like the dharmas, so are sentient beings. Just like sentient beings, so are the fields. Just like the fields, so is nirvāṇa. Therefore, Mañjuśrī, it is said that all dharmas are the same as nirvāṇa. Since this is their ultimate mode, there is no counteragent. Because there is no counteragent, they are primordially pure, primordially stainless, and primordially without disturbances. It is thus, Mañjuśrī, that the Tathāgata realized all dharmas to be; as he observes the sphere of sentient beings, a pure, great compassion that is free from disturbances, called play, comes about toward those sentient beings. [134]

“Mañjuśrī, how does a bodhisattva practice within the conduct of a bodhisattva? [F.298.b] Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva does not think of destruction, arising, non-destruction, non-arising, and the utter destruction of destruction; nor is he disturbed by utter non-arising. It is in this way, Mañjuśrī, that he practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva. Furthermore, Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva does not practice by thinking, ‘The past mind is destroyed;’ he does not practice by thinking, ‘The future mind has yet to be obtained;’ he does not practice by thinking, ‘The present mind abides.’ He is not stuck in the past, future, or present mind. As he practices in this way, Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva. [136]

“Mañjuśrī, giving, awakening, and sentient beings and, on the other hand, the Tathāgata: these are non-dual, they are not divided into two.⁴¹ Practicing in this way, a bodhisattva practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva. Mañjuśrī, discipline, awakening, and

sentient beings and, on the other hand, the Tathāgata: these are non-dual, they are not divided into two. Practicing in this way, a bodhisattva practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva.

“It is the same way with forbearance, awakening, and sentient beings, and, on the other hand, the Tathāgata; diligence, awakening, and sentient beings, and, on the other hand, the Tathāgata; concentration, awakening, and sentient beings, and, on the other hand, the Tathāgata; and similarly, wisdom, awakening, and sentient beings, and, on the other hand, the Tathāgata. These are non-dual, they are not divided into two. Practicing in this way, a bodhisattva practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva.

“Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva may practice thinking that ‘form is not empty’ and also ‘not non-empty.’ Practicing in this way, Mañjuśrī, that bodhisattva practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva. And why? He thinks, ‘Form itself is empty of the essence of form. In the same way, [F.299.a] feeling, notion, co-producing factors, and consciousness are empty.’ He practices thinking in this way and also thinking that ‘they are not non-empty.’ Practicing in this way, Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva practices within the conduct of a bodhisattva. And why? Because mind, mentality, and consciousness are not perceived. [138]

“Mañjuśrī, there is no dharma whatsoever that could be thoroughly cognized, dispelled, cultivated, or directly realized. Mañjuśrī, that which is understood as destruction is simply the destruction of extremes. And that which is completely destroyed is not something one should cause to be destroyed. As it is indestructible and not destroyed, it is without destruction. And why? It conforms to destruction; and conforming to destruction is the destruction of nothing whatsoever. And that, wherein there is no destruction of anything whatsoever, is unproduced. With respect to the unproduced, there is no arising and no cessation.

“Therefore it is said: ‘Whether the tathāgatas arise or not, this dharmatā is invariable; it is the invariability of the dharmas, the dharmadhātu.’ Just like the invariability of the dharmadhātu, the

Tathāgata’s awareness is neither occurring nor ceasing. Entering the Dharma method in this way, the outflows do not arise and do not cease. The destruction of the outflows, Mañjuśrī, is a conventional expression, speech, syllables, a sign, and a designation. Here no dharma whatsoever arises or ceases.” [140]

Then the youthful Mañjuśrī rose from his seat, folded his upper robe, and placed his right knee on the ground. Folding his hands in the direction of the Bhagavat, he praised him with these verses:

“You have no color, sign, or shape,
No cessation or origination,
No root and no ground to stand upon,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you! [F.299.b]

“You have no ground to stand upon,
No striving or giving up.
You are unplaced and free from the six entrances,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“You are not situated in any dharma,
Bereft of existence or non-existence.
You obtained the sameness of co-producing factors,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you! [142]

“Free from the three world spheres,
You have attained the sky’s own sameness.
You are not defiled by desires,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“You always remain in samādhi,
As you move, stand, or lie down—
Whichever your posture may be.
You are free of any point of reference:

I bow to you!

“You arrive evenly and go evenly,
Remaining well placed in sameness.
You are not disturbed at sameness,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“You are absorbed in sameness,
In samādhi within all dharmas.
Absorbed in the signless,
You are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you! [144]

“Unplaced, without point of reference,
Your samādhi is the peak of wisdom.
You have become the lord of Dharma,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“In one instant, you see
The forms, voices, and postures
Of all sentient beings.
You are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“Free from name and form,
You cut off all causes and aggregates.
You are the entrance into the aspect-less,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“You are free from signs
And bereft of their aspects.
You are the entrance into the signless,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you! [146]

“You do not form concepts,

And your mind has no ground to stand upon.
You have no recollection or mental placement,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“Space is without abode;
It is free from elaboration and stainless.
Your mind is the same as space,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“Space is without edge or center,
And so, too, is the dharmatā of the buddhas.
You have gone beyond the three times, [F.300.a]
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“The buddhas have the characteristic of space,
And space has no characteristics.
You are free from effect and cause,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you! [148]

“Like the moon in the water, you cannot be grasped:
You are not placed in any dharma.
You have no sense of ‘I’ and no voice,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“You are not dwelling in the aggregates,
The bases, or the entrances.
You are free from distortions,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“Free from the two extremes,
You cut off the view of ‘self.’
You obtained sameness with the dharmadhātu,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“You are free from form and number,
And bereft of any false dharmas.
You neither cling to, nor abandon,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you! [150]

“You have gone beyond the faults of Māra
And reached the path of the dharmadhātu.⁴²
You have the feature of non-obscuration,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“Those who understand the meaning,
Do not say ‘he exists’ or ‘he does not.’
You are not in the realm of words,
And you do not take up anything.
You are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“Not relying on duality,
You cut down the banner of pride.⁴³
You are free from duality and non-duality,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you! [152]

“You have subdued all mental flaws,
And the four flaws of the body.
You are inconceivable, without compare,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“You conduct yourself effortlessly,
And you are bereft of any flaws.
Awareness precedes all your actions,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“Your recollection has no outflows:
It is subtle and conforms to what is real and unreal.

You have no abode and no thoughts,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“With your mind free of a point of reference,
You understand well the mind of all,
While having no notion of ‘self’ and ‘others.’
You are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“Taking up points of reference
Makes everyone’s mind bewildered.
You remain unobscured,
As you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you! ⁴⁴ [F.300.b] [154]

“And a mind without a point of reference
Cannot essentially be found.
You obtained inconceivable sameness,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“With your unplaced awareness,
You see all the fields,
And the conduct of all beings.
You are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“The buddhas do not apprehend the mind,
In any way, ever;
Yet, you know everything about all dharmas.
You are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“Illusion-like are all dharmas,
Yet the illusion itself cannot be found.
You are free from the dharma of illusion,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you! [156]

“Perfect Buddha, you act in the world,
Not dwelling upon worldly dharmas,
And you do not form concepts about the ‘world.’
You are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“In what is empty, you move in accordance with emptiness;
In accordance with emptiness, your domain is what is empty.
You declare what is empty as empty,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“Through great powers and illusory samādhi,
You perform miracles.
You are absorbed into freedom from multiplicity,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“You are neither one, nor many;
You are neither far, nor near.
You neither remove, nor add,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you! [158]

“Through the diamond-like samādhi,
You obtained supreme awakening in one instant.
You are absorbed into non-appearance,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“You know nirvāṇa to be unmoving in the three times.
You are a guide endowed with many methods,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you!

“You are expert in understanding which methods,
Even indirect, are appropriate for sentient beings.
You know nirvāṇa to be unmoving,
And you are free of any point of reference:

I bow to you!

“You are free from signs, effortless,
Free from elaboration, and untainted.
Free from appearance, free from a ‘self,’
You are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you! [160]

“Free from concepts, free from what belongs to a self,
You yourself know the self as it is.
You are omniscient with respect to everything,
And you are free of any point of reference:
I bow to you! [162] [F.301.a]

“I salute you, who have ten powers and have crossed the stream.
I salute you, the fearless one who bestows fearlessness.
You obtained certainty in the unshared dharmas:
Guide for the entire world, I salute you.

“I salute you, who break the bondage of fetters,
I salute you, who reached the other shore and remain on dry ground.
I salute you, guide for the exhausted world.
I salute you, who go to saṃsāra and remain unplaced.

“I salute you, who even when dwelling with sentient beings,
Keep your mind aloof, in all realms of rebirth.⁴⁵
You are untainted, like a lotus by the waters it grows in;
Sage, Buddha, you practiced emptiness! [164]

“Isolation is the unexcelled state of the Teacher;
I salute you, who are free from a point of reference and crossed the
great stream.
You have thoroughly eliminated all signs,
And you wish for nothing whatsoever.

“I salute the inconceivable Buddha of great power,
Who is the same as space and without abode.
I salute you, supreme holder of all good qualities.
I salute you, whose glory rises up like Meru.” [166]

Then the Bhagavat praised the youthful Mañjuśrī: “Good, Mañjuśrī, that is good! You have spoken well, Mañjuśrī. It is just as you said. Mañjuśrī, the buddhas should not be seen through form, through dharmas, through characteristics, or through the dharmadhātu. The buddhas do not stay by themselves nor do they reside among many people. The buddhas have not been seen by anyone, nor heard, nor worshipped, nor are they being worshipped now. The buddhas do not make oneness or plurality out of any dharma.

“The buddhas did not obtain awakening. The buddhas are not increased by any dharma. No dharma has been seen by the buddhas, nor has it been heard, recollected, [F.301.b] cognized, or known. The buddhas have not spoken or expressed anything. They do not speak or express anything. They will not speak or express anything. The buddhas do not gain supreme realization. The buddhas do not supremely realize any dharma. The buddhas’ afflictions have not been destroyed. Buddhas have not directly realized purification. Buddhas have not seen any dharma, nor heard it, smelt it, tasted it, touched it, or cognized it. And why? Because of the primordial purity of all dharmas. [168]

“Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva may establish as many sentient beings as there are atomic particles in a great trichiliocosm into the state of a pratyekabuddha, but he may still have no belief in this Dharma teaching. Another bodhisattva, Mañjuśrī, who believes in this Dharma teaching engenders much more merit than the first. All the more so for one who writes down this Dharma teaching or makes others write it—such a person engenders even more merit. [170]

“Mañjuśrī, there are many sentient beings to be found in the great trichiliocosm, whether born from an egg, born from a womb, born from moisture, or born suddenly; some with form, others formless; some with notions, others without notions; some without feet, others with two feet, and some with four feet, or with many feet. Now, imagine that all of them obtain a human body, without precedent, but not their last. Once they obtain a human body, they give rise to bodhicitta. Having given rise to bodhicitta, each and every one of

those bodhisattvas attends as many buddhas, together with bodhisattvas and hearers, [F.302.a] as there are atomic particles in buddhafields as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges. Each bodhisattva offers them robes, alms-food, bedding, seats, herbs that counteract illness, and provisions, and he collects all the necessities for their happiness. Furthermore, he builds stūpas for those buddhas who have already reached complete nirvāṇa, for as many eons as the number of grains of sand in the Ganges. He constructs them out of precious substances, one hundred yojanas high, encircled by jeweledvedikās, beautified with festoons of gems, pearls, and jewels, with raised umbrellas, standards, and flags, and covered in nets of the precious vaśirāja gem. [172]

“Now imagine another bodhisattva, with the right inclination, who listens to this Dharma teaching, *The Ornament of the Light of Awareness That Enters the Domain of All Buddhas*, and then believes in it, engages with it, trusts it, realizes it, or teaches at least one of its stanzas. Compared to the bodhisattvas first mentioned, he would engender even more uncountable merit that would lead him to follow the awareness of a buddha. Compared to the merit he would produce, the production of merit in the first instance, consisting of the bodhisattvas’ acts of giving, would not even amount to a hundredth part. It would not even count for one thousandth or one billionth of it. It would not even count as any part, any number worthy of consideration, simile or approximation of any kind. [174]

“Mañjuśrī, imagine a householder bodhisattva who attends as many buddhas and bodhisattvas, together with their saṅgha of hearers, as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, for eons as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges. He would offer them robes, alms-food, bedding, seats, remedies for exhaustion, medicinal herbs, and provisions. But another ordained bodhisattva, disciplined and with the right inclination, [F.302.b] may give a morsel of food to a single sentient being born as an animal. Compared to the merit he would produce, the production of merit in the first instance would not even amount to a hundredth part. It would not even count for one

thousandth or one billionth of it, up to, as before, any approximation of any kind. [176]

“Mañjuśrī, imagine as many bodhisattvas as there are atomic particles in the great trichiliocosm, all of them ordained, disciplined, and pure in their inclinations. Each bodhisattva would attend as many buddhas and bodhisattvas, together with their saṅgha of hearers, as there are grains of sand in the Ganges. He would offer robes, alms-food, bedding, seats, remedies for exhaustion, medicinal herbs, and provisions, for eons as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges. All those bodhisattvas would thus produce merit through their acts of giving. But another bodhisattva, pure in his inclinations and disciplined, whether householder or ordained, may listen to this Dharma teaching and believe in it, trust it, write it down, or make others write it down. Compared to the merit he would produce, the production of merit in the first instance, consisting of the bodhisattvas’ acts of giving, would not even amount to a hundredth part. It would not even count for one thousandth or one billionth of it. It would not even bear approximation of any kind. [178]

“Mañjuśrī, imagine that a bodhisattva great being were to fill the great trichiliocosm with seven precious substances and offer it as a gift to the buddhas, the bhagavats. Offering in this way, he would give this gift for as many eons as there are atomic particles of dust in a great trichiliocosm.

But another bodhisattva may teach just a four-line stanza from this Dharma method [F.303.a] to another bodhisattva. Compared to the merit he would produce, the production of merit in the first instance would not even amount to a hundredth part. It would not even count for one thousandth or one billionth of it. It would not even bear approximation of any kind. [180]

“Mañjuśrī, consider that the production of merit of someone giving offerings were to continue for as many eons as there are atomic particles in a great trichiliocosm. Mañjuśrī, bodhisattvas as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges would be there; each bodhisattva would cover as many golden buddhafiels as the number of grains of

sand in the Ganges, and also all their trees, with divine clothes, and then cover them in nets of gems and jewels shining in all possible ways. He would then fill them with high palaces made of precious vaśirāja gems and surrounded with vedikās of the precious vidyutpradīpa gem. Once filled, he would give them as a gift, with raised parasols, standards, and flags, to as many buddhas as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, each and every day. In this way, he would offer such gifts for eons as numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges. But another bodhisattva may believe in this Dharma teaching and teach just a single four-foot stanza from it to another bodhisattva. Compared to the merit he would produce, the production of merit in the first instance, consisting of the bodhisattvas' acts of giving, would not even amount to a hundredth part. It would not even count for one thousandth or one billionth of it. It would not even count as any part, any number worthy of consideration, simile or approximation of any kind. [182]

“It is as follows: Mañjuśrī, if all sentient beings included in the three world spheres were to be born in the hells, or as animals, [F.303.b] or as pretas in the world of Yama, a householder bodhisattva may pull all of them out from those hells, the animal realm, and the preta world of Yama and establish them in the state of a pratyekabuddha. But another ordained bodhisattva may just give a morsel of food to one sentient being born as an animal. Compared to the first, the second would engender a greater merit, an uncountably greater merit. [184]

“Mañjuśrī, imagine that there were as many ordained bodhisattvas in the ten directions as there are atomic particles in ineffably numerous, tens of quintillions of buddhafiels. Each bodhisattva, everywhere within the ten directions, would then see as many buddhas, as many bhagavats, as there are atomic particles in ineffably numerous, tens of quintillions of buddhafiels. He would then attend upon each tathāgata, and the corresponding bodhisattvas and hearers, for as many eons as there are atomic particles in ineffably numerous, tens of quintillions of buddhafiels. He would offer them robes, alms-

food, bedding, seats, remedies for exhaustion, medicinal herbs, and provisions. To each tathāgata, each and every day, he would offer as many world spheres as there are atomic particles in ineffably numerous, tens of trillions of buddhafiels, after filling them with the precious vaśirāja gems. But another bodhisattva, with firm belief in this Dharma teaching, may give just one morsel of food to a sentient being born as an animal. Compared to the merit he would produce, the production of merit in the first instance, consisting of the bodhisattvas' acts of giving, would not even amount to a hundredth part. It would not even count for one thousandth or one billionth of it. It would not even count as any part, any number worthy of consideration, simile or approximation of any kind. And why? [F.304.a] The seal of non-returning bodhisattvas is to hear this Dharma teaching. [186]

“Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva might establish the sentient beings of all the world spheres in the ten directions in the state of one who follows out of conviction. But another bodhisattva might establish a single sentient being in the state of one who follows the meaning. In that case, the latter would engender incalculably greater merit.

“Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva might establish the sentient beings of all the world spheres in the ten directions in the state of one who follows the meaning. But another bodhisattva might establish a single sentient being in the state of one who follows the Dharma. In that case, the latter would engender incalculably greater merit.

“Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva might establish the sentient beings of all the world spheres in the ten directions in the state of one who follows the Dharma. But another bodhisattva might establish a single sentient being in the result of attaining the stream. In that case, the latter would engender incalculably greater merit. [188]

“Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva might establish the sentient beings of all the world spheres in the ten directions in the result of attaining the stream. But another bodhisattva might establish a single sentient being in the result of a once-returner. In that case, the latter would engender incalculably greater merit.

“Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva might establish the sentient beings of all the world spheres in the ten directions in the result of a once-returner. But another bodhisattva might establish a single sentient being in the result of a non-returner. In that case, the latter would engender incalculably greater merit.

“Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva might establish the sentient beings of all the world spheres in the ten directions in the result of a non-returner. But another bodhisattva might establish a single sentient being in the result of an arhat. [F.304.b] In that case, the latter would engender incalculably greater merit. [190]

“Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva might establish the sentient beings of all the world spheres in the ten directions in the result of an arhat. But another bodhisattva might establish a single sentient being in the result of a pratyekabuddha. In that case, the latter would engender incalculably greater merit.

“Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva might establish the sentient beings of all the world spheres in the ten directions in the result of a pratyekabuddha. But another bodhisattva might establish a single sentient being in bodhicitta. In that case, the latter would engender incalculably greater merit.

“Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva might establish the sentient beings of all the world spheres in the ten directions in bodhicitta. But another bodhisattva might establish a single sentient being in the state of irreversibility. In that case, the latter would engender incalculably greater merit. [192]

“Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva might establish the sentient beings of all the world spheres in the ten directions in the state of irreversibility. But another bodhisattva, believing in this Dharma teaching, might make others write it down, might shed light on it, or at least cause a single sentient being to engage with this Dharma teaching. In that case, the latter would engender incalculably greater merit.” [194]

Then, at that time, the Bhagavat spoke the following verses:

“In the final times of decay, a bodhisattva
May uphold the good Dharma of a hundred million buddhas.
Yet, if another listens with reverence to this sūtra,
His merit will be great, and exceed the former.

“By using one’s own special powers,
Someone may travel through the ten directions,
And worship a hundred million buddhas.
Eliciting compassion, not craving for any pleasure,
He may then salute all of those sacred persons. [F.305.a]

“Yet if for just a brief moment,
Another teaches others this sūtra,
That points to the Dharma of the victorious ones,
And keeps his mind well disposed toward the Sugata’s teaching,
The fruit of his merit will exceed the former. [196]

“The Sugata taught this sūtra, a lamp for gods and men:
Whoever makes this visible to others
Will have sharp wisdom and great strength
And quickly reach the level of the buddhas.

“A person might hear and then tell someone else
The news that the buddhas, the best among men,
Have attained complete nirvāṇa,
Without any remainder.

“He may establish tall and beautiful stūpas,
Beautified with fine gems to the summit of existence;
With parasols, standards, and the sound of bells,
They would rise to the summit of existence. [198]

“Yet, when hearing this very sūtra, a bodhisattva
May form the wish to establish it well,
Either within his body or within a book.
Then the fruit of his merit exceeds the former.

“If a bodhisattva upholds this Dharma,
Removing all stains of miserliness and being without fear,

His merit will indeed be immeasurable,
And he shall obtain awakening, in accordance with his wish.

“This sūtra is extolled by the sugatas,
And upheld by many bodhisattvas.
Here the body of the tathāgatas,
Like the space-element, is shown to all.” [200]

Thus spoke the Bhagavat joyfully. The bodhisattva Ārya Mañjuśrī and the bodhisattva great beings, who had assembled from all the infinite, limitless world spheres of the ten directions, along with the great hearers and the world with its gods, humans, demigods, and gandharvas, rejoiced at the Bhagavat’s teachings.

This completes the Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra “The Ornament of the Light of Awareness That Enters the Domain of All Buddhas.”

Sanskrit Colophon

*The Tathāgata spoke of the cause and cessation,
Of those dharmas that come about through causes.
That is how the Great Śramaṇa speaks.*

This is an offering on the part of the monk Śīlādhvaja, who takes the excellent Great Vehicle as his vehicle. May the merit produced hereby go toward the obtainment of the fruit of supreme wisdom, for all sentient beings, with the ācārya, the upādhyāya, and my mother and father going in front. This was written down by the servant Cāṇḍoka in the kingdom of the supreme king of great kings, the glorious Gopāladeva, in the 12th year of the Samvat, on the 30th day of Śrāmaṇa. May there be splendor!

Tibetan Colophon

This was translated, edited, and finalized by the Indian scholar Surendrabodhi, the translator-editor Bhande Yeshe De, and others.

Notes

- 1 Mañjuśrī praising the Buddha in The Ornament of the Light of Awareness. *anālayaṃ yathākāśaṃ niḥprapañcaṃ nirañjanam / ākāśasamacitto 'si nirālamba namo 'stu te || 13 ||*
- 2 *etacchrutamayodārajñānālokādyalamkṛtāḥ | dhīmanto'vatarantyāśu sakalam buddhagocaram ||4.79||*
- 3 It is by now common to translate *prajñā* as “wisdom,” and more precise alternatives (such as “superior cognition”) may appear cumbersome or odd. However, it is useful to keep in mind that *prajñā* is also a synonym for *abhidharma* (a higher understanding of the dharmas), *dharmaṃpravacaya* (the grouping or analysis of the dharmas), and of *vipaśyanā* (special insight into the nature of things). This also helps explain the sūtra’s interest in discrete classifications, especially in the last sections.
- 4 [...] *sūnyatālakṣaṇā anutpannā aniruddhā* [...] See Vaidya (1961): 98. Note also that “non-cessation, non-arising” are the first words of Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*; the *Jñānālokālamkāra* is quoted in Candrakīrti’s commentary to the “Examination of the Tathāgata” section, where emptiness (hence, non-arising and non-cessation) is the logical ground to prove the fundamental equality between the Tathāgata and all the dharmas. The same quote appears in Kamalaśīla’s commentary to the *Vajracchedikā*, and in Rongzom Mahāpaṇḍita’s explanation of *dharmatāyukti* (reasoning in terms of the nature of the dharmas). See Köppl (2008): 117.
- 5 JAA, below.
- 6 A number of Indian and Tibetan masters have referred to the JAA to highlight that, from the perspective of the non-arisen *dharmatā*, there is no difference between the buddhas and anything else.
- 7 The question of the precise difference between *jñāna* and *viññāna* is of course complex. *Jñāna* can be either a synonym of *viññāna*, or a synonym of *prajñā*, or—and this is the sense that we are referring to in the present context—a non-referential, liberating “awareness.” The structure of the Sanskrit words helps in remembering the intended sense: *viññāna* is the cognition of a point of reference or object (*viśaya-prativijñapti*). What is absent in *jñāna* is the point of reference or object (the *vi*). Within the context of the JAA, when referring to an exalted or desirable state, we always find *jñāna* and never *viññāna*: “These bodhisattvas have come looking for awareness” (*samāgateme bahubodhisattvā jñānārthinah*);

“Mañjuśrī, you should rely on awareness” (*jñānapratisaraṇena ca te mañjuśrīr bhavitavyam*); “They wish for a buddha’s awareness [...]” (*te buddhajñānābhilāṣiṇo*); “They dedicate their roots of merit toward obtaining the tathāgata-awareness” (*kuśalamūlaṃ tathāgatajñānapratilambhāya pariṇāmayanti*); “Awareness is explained as the entrance in the sameness of the three times” (*jñānam ucyate / tryadhvasamatāvatāraḥ sarvadharmeṣu*); “For those endowed with attachment to form, Mañjuśrī, the eye is attachment; the awareness of the nature of form and the eye is non-attachment” (*rūpasāṅgasamyuktānāṃ mañjuśrīś cakṣuḥ saṅgaḥ / rūpacakṣuḥprakṛtijñānam asaṅgaḥ*); “Awareness precedes all your actions, and you are free of any point of reference: I bow to you!” (*anābhogapravṛtto 'si sarvadoṣavivarjitaḥ / jñānapūrvāṅgamā ceṣṭā nirālamba namo 'stu te*). “Awareness” thus seemed the English term that (like *jñāna*) best covers both the cognition of objects, as well as soteriologically more crucial types such as the “non-conceptual awareness beyond the world” (*lokottaranirvikalpajñāna*) and so forth.

- 8 *Vyākhyā* on 1.5. Whether we consider the verses and commentary as the work of the same author or not, it does not seem necessary to term the *Vyākhyā* a commentary, since its terminological choices make it clear that this is how it presents its own relationship to the root verses.
- 9 *Ratnagotravibhāga* 1.5: *asaṃskṛtam anābhogam aparapratyayoditam | buddhatvaṃ jñānakāruṇyaśaktyupetaṃ dvayārthavat*. Strictly speaking, the *Vyākhyā* quoting the JAA in this section relates to the following explanatory verses as well, and starts after verse 8.
- 10 The quotations as found in the *Vyākhyā* differ from the precise wording of the JAA as we have it, but some differences are clearly due to textual corruptions, while others may indicate a different manuscript tradition. It is clear, in any case, that the passages are meant as quotations and not mere paraphrases.
- 11 The *Ratnagotravibhāga* inverts the order of the last two examples.
- 12 See Almogi (2009).
- 13 See Prasannapadā on MMK (De la Vallée Poussin, 1913: 12.16) and also Kamalaśīla’s commentary on the *Vajracchedikā*, in the glosses preceding the sentence “all dharmas are Buddhadharmas” (*sarvadharmā buddhadharmā iti*).
- 14 See Study Group on Buddhist Sanskrit Literature (2004b): 87.
- 15 See Sferra (2006).
- 16 The Tibetan translation of this verse in the *Sekoddeśaṭīkā* differs from the Degé Kangyur. Notably, the Degé version translates *jñāna* by *mkhyen pa*, while the translators of the *Sekoddeśaṭīkā* used *ye shes*. See also Sferra (2006): 173.
- 17 See Tatz (1987).

- 18 *Advayavajrasaṃgraha: Pañcatathāgatamudrāvivarāṇa* (p. 25); *Caturmudrā* (p. 34); *Amanasikārādhāra* (p. 60).
- 19 This is particularly true of the writings of Rongzom Mahāpaṇḍita (*rong zom mahāpaṇḍita*, 11th century). See Köppl (2008) and Almogi (2009).
- 20 Vaipulya could refer to a category of teachings, the Mahāyāna as a whole, the Ratnakūṭa as a whole, or specifically, the Kāśyapaparivarta.
- 21 It appears that *nāyakāḥ* is here singular (the verses are not in classical Sanskrit and plurals in *āḥ* are attested even by Edgerton). The Tibetan has only 'dren pa; hence, it does not force us to take it as plural.
- 22 The manuscript transcription has *bhagavāṇ* rather than the edited text's *Bhagavat*. We prefer the first Vibhakti reading for syntactical reasons.
- 23 Translated based on the Tibetan.
- 24 "With joined palms" according to the Tibetan.
- 25 Translated based on the Tibetan.
- 26 Translated based on the Tibetan, which suggests the Sanskrit could have been *mityātvaniyatasantānānām satvānām kāye*.
- 27 It seems that *tataḥ* here means "from that," which the gender indicates as referring to "that jewel."
- 28 We have here translated *viññapti* as "intimation," as it seemed the only possible term to capture both possible senses of coming to know an object (*viṣayaprativijñapti*) and vocal or bodily information (*vāgvijñapti*, *kāyavijñapti*).
- 29 The Tibetan adds, "and non-ceasing" (*ma 'gags pa*).
- 30 Translated based on the Tibetan.
- 31 Compare this passage to chapter 2 of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*; the force of the passage is precisely in its elliptic reference to taking movement and abiding as an empty, interdependent pair.
- 32 We are here following the Tibetan, that would plausibly correspond the following Sanskrit sentences: *tathatā nāmocyate | tattvārthādhivacanam etat | tattvam nāmocyate tathataiva | | tathatātattvam tathatvam ucyate |* This is an explanation of synonyms and etymology. *Tathatā* could be rendered as 'thus-ness'; *tattva* as 'that-ness' (both the suffix *-tā* and *-tva* have a similar value in Sanskrit). *Tathatva* would again be 'thus-ness', but here the Sūtra explains that it is rather a phonetic abbreviation of *tathatā+tattva*. The difficulty of this passage is that the available Sanskrit text needs to be emended following the Tibetan, while the Tibetan translation does not distinguish phonetically between the suffix *-tā* and the suffix *-tva* (making the implied etymological abbreviation difficult to perceive). Hence, this is a good example of a passage where we need both the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts to offer a plausible reading.

- 33 This reading follows the Tibetan, which has *de kho na nyid*, probably translating the Sanskrit *tattvam*. The transcribed manuscript has *kham*.
- 34 In Yogācāra texts, *abhūtaparikalpa* is taken as a sixth *vibhakti tatpuruṣa*, rather than a *karmadhāraya*. “What is not there” is the pair of perceiver/perceived (*grāhya/grāhaka*); hence it is not “false imagination,” as *abhūta* does not function as a qualifier for *parikalpa*. See the first chapter of the *Madhyāntavibhāṅgabhāṣya* for a representative instance.
- 35 The Sanskrit here is *nanatvam* but the Tibetan reading, *tha dad pa nyid med pa*, clearly makes more sense.
- 36 We believe that here *pratibhāśopama* does not mean “comparable to the appearance of” but rather it is both *pratibhāśa* and *upamā*—a “similitude” and a “comparison”; it is an emphatic restatement through synonym, not uncommon in sūtras.
- 37 This section might appear counterintuitive. However it becomes more comprehensible when we keep in mind that the eye is the basis (*āśraya*) and visible form is the point of reference (*ālambana*) that make the arising of visual consciousness possible.
- 38 The reading of the transcribed manuscript is *manasi* rather than *'manasi* and is consistent with the Tibetan.
- 39 The Tibetan *nang yongs su shes pa ni dag pa 'o* suggests that the Sanskrit should be *adhyātmaparijñā śuddhiḥ*. The edited text has *adhyātmaḥ pariśuddhiḥ*, and the manuscript transcription has *adhyātma pariśuddhiḥ*.
- 40 The Sanskrit has *svabhāva* but the following phrases suggest that the Tibetan reading (implying *asvabhāvo*) is preferable.
- 41 The Tibetan suggests *punar aparaṃ mañjuśrī bodhisattvo dānaṃ ca bodhiś ca sattvās ca tathāgataś cādvayam etad advaidhikāram*. The Tibetan also contains *byang chub sems dpa '* before *sbyin pa* and all the other *pāramitās*; however, the Sanskrit text does not contain *bodhisattva* in any of those instances. It seems that in this case, the Tibetan translators may have been using a different text.
- 42 Here the Tibetan differs, suggesting perhaps *māranāmasamatikrāntaḥ* and *dharmasaṃkalpaṃ veditvā*. The expression *dharmadhātugatimṅgataḥ* appears in the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*.
- 43 Here the Tibetan differs. It reads *theg pa 'i rgyal mtshan kun tu btsugs*, which would correspond to something like *yānadhvajasaṃucchritaḥ*, or “having well raised the banner of the vehicle.”
- 44 Here the Tibetan differs. It would perhaps suggest: *avārambanam avālamba sarvacittāna mohana | anāvaraṇadharmo 'si nirālamba namo 'stu te*. The verse may appear odd, but it becomes perhaps more comprehensible when we recollect that a mind (*citta*) needs a point of reference (*ālambana*) in order to exist in the first place (a point of significant importance for the whole sūtra).

45 Here the Sanskrit text seems rather corrupt. Following the Tibetan, we would propose *vandāmi satvasamāvāsa pi gatam | sarvāsu gatīṣu viviktamānasam*.

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