Vasubandhu’s Āryabhadracaryāpraṇidhānaṭīkā: A Contextual Study and Translation 

(Final Draft)

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Abstract

This thesis is a study and translation of the Āryabhadracaryāprāṇidhānaṭīkā ('Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gvi 'grel pa, hereafter the Ṭīkā)—in English, the *Commentary on the Aspiration for Good Conduct*. The Ṭīkā is a commentary to the Āryabhadracāryapraṇidhānarāja ('Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gvi rgyal po, hereafter the *Rāja*)—in English, *The King of Aspirations: Aspiration for Good Conduct*. It is attributed to the great Indian Buddhist philosopher Vasubandhu (4th–5th century CE). The Ṭīkā is a canonical text within the Tibetan Buddhist tradition as it is one of the five Indian commentaries to *Rāja* included in all the main Tibetan bstan 'gyur collections.

This thesis has two main parts: contextualization and annotated critical translation. Part one—Contextualization—explores the Ṭīkā in various historical, intellectual, and doctrinal contexts. The balance of this part is structured in terms of the three ways of exploring the *Rāja* and the Ṭīkā: (1) Within the context of genre definition and the suages of the term prāṇidhāna in Mahāyāna Buddhism; (2) Within the Indian and Tibetan historical contexts and commentarial tradition on the *Rāja*; and (3) Within the context of works attributed to Vasubandhu. The thesis explores the Ṭīkā within these three interrelated fields creating a contextual framework for the critical translation in part two.

This thesis thereby contributes to the Mahāyāna philosophical and linguistic research in general, to the narrower topic of Vasubandhu’s literary corpus, and to the further advancement of scholarship on the *Rāja* in particular.
**Conventions and Abbreviations**

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<tr>
<td>Dpe</td>
<td>Bstan 'gyur dpe bsdur ma</td>
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<td>DSBC</td>
<td>Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon</td>
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<td>Pe</td>
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| Rāja         | Āryabhadracaryāpraniḍhānarāja  

(P'hags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi rgyal po) |
| Sde          | Sde dge bstan 'gyur |
| Skt.         | Sanskrit |
| Snar         | Snar thang bstan 'gyur |
| Tib.         | Tibetan |
| Ṭīkā         | Āryabhadracaryāpraniḍhānaṭīkā  

(P'hags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi 'grel pa) |
Introduction

Aim and scope of the thesis

This thesis is a study and translation of the Āryabhadracārya-prāṇidhānaṭīkā ('Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi 'grel pa,\(^1\) hereafter Ṭīkā)—in English, the Commentary on the Aspiration for Good Conduct. The Ṭīkā is a commentary to the Āryabhadracārya-prāṇidhānarāja ('Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi rgyal po,\(^2\) hereafter Rāja)—in English, The King of Aspirations: Aspiration for Good Conduct. It is attributed to the great Indian Buddhist philosopher Vasubandhu (4th–5th century CE). The Ṭīkā is a canonical text within the Tibetan Buddhist tradition as it is one of the five Indian commentaries to Rāja included in all the main Tibetan bstan 'gyur collections. It is an outstanding text due to its literary form and content. As to the Rāja, it is considered one of the most important Mahāyāna aspiration prayers that is found twice in the Tibetan bka' 'gyur collections—once as an independent dhāraṇī text, and again as the final part of the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra (Sdong pos brgyan pa), a Mahāyāna sūtra that also features in the larger Buddhāvataṁsaka-sūtra (Sangs rgyas phal po che) as its final chapter.

The Ṭīkā closely follows the content of the Rāja and is divided into ten main parts that describe common and uncommon methods of the bodhisattva practice. Among the common methods, there are the seven Mahāyāna branches of paying homage, making offerings, confessing wrongdoings, rejoicing in merit, requesting to turn the wheel of Dharma, asking tathāgatas to remain and dedicating the roots of virtue—these make the topics of the first seven parts. Then the eighth part—the “Detailed analysis” —is further divided into fifteen sections that present fifteen special aspects of the bodhisattva’s practice, such as engagement with

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\(^1\) See bibliography for editions of the 'Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi 'grel pa.

\(^2\) See bibliography for editions of the 'Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi rgyal po.
tathāgatas and their sphere of activity, strengthening the power of bodhisattva’s aspirations, applying the antidotes to overcome negativities, etc. The Ṭīkā concludes with explaining the extent of the Rāja and its benefits.

There are currently no published Western-language translations nor research focused on the Ṭīkā. This is a notable absence, given that both the figure and works of Vasubandhu, and also the root text of the Rāja have been the subject of many studies.

Summary of the thesis

This thesis has two main parts: contextualization and annotated critical translation. Part one—Contextualization—explores the Ṭīkā in various historical, intellectual, and doctrinal contexts. The balance of this part is structured in terms of the three ways of exploring the Rāja and the Ṭīkā: (1) Within the context of genre definition and the usages of the technical term pranidhāna in Mahāyāna Buddhism; (2) Within the Indian and Tibetan historical contexts and commentarial tradition on the Rāja; and (3) Within the context of works attributed to Vasubandhu. This thesis explores the Ṭīkā within these three interrelated fields creating a contextual framework for the critical translation in part two.

This thesis begins with a consideration of the respective genres of the Rāja and Ṭīkā. It then provides information regarding the available versions and recensions of each text—in Tibetan as well as other major Buddhist languages. It then briefly details the major research

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methodologies employed in this thesis, and concludes with a sustained discussion of the various contexts in which the Ṭīkā can be productively engaged: as a piece of early Mahāyāna literature and as a work of Vasubandhu. Part Two of this thesis—for which a separate introduction is also provided—consists primarily in an annotated English translation of the Ṭīkā, including the Rāja as an embedded root-text.

The genre of the Rāja and the Ṭīkā

The Rāja itself is a collection of 62 verses, originally composed in either Sanskrit or Prakrit sometime before the 5th century CE. This is a devotional text that recounts in the first person a bodhisattva’s—but, I will argue below, not Samantabhadra’s—aspiration to become enlightened for the benefit of all beings. By approximately the 8th century CE, these verses were incorporated as the conclusion of the tremendously influential Mahāyāna scripture Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra. By virtue of this inclusion, the Rāja gained popularity throughout the entire Mahāyāna Buddhist world—albeit, as a part of the Gaṇḍavyūha rather than as a discrete text. In the Indian and Tibetan traditions, the Rāja is referenced in numerous literary sources and appears in Sanskrit and Tibetan inscriptions, for example in the Ancient Indian University of Nālandā.6

As for the genre of the Ṭīkā, it can be classified as mainly a “word commentary” (tshig ’grel). In other words, the Ṭīkā is a commentary in which lexical components of the Rāja, such as obscure words, are explained. It also contains some elements of a “commentary on difficult points” (paññikā, dka’ ’grel) that elucidates the meaning of some passages that are difficult to understand.

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5 See in detail 1.2. Is Āryabhadracāryapranidhānarāja an independent dhāraṇi or part of Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra?
Methodology

To briefly describe my research methodologies: for the purpose of textual interpretation, this thesis addresses the key concepts discussed in the Ṭīkā, and the way the text engages them. The thesis also tries to draw thematic parallels between the Ṭīkā and other texts that are attributed to Vasubandhu. For this purpose, I primarily approach Vasubandhu’s Bodhicittotpādasūtra-śāstra, his commentary to the Sūtra on generating bodhicitta, since in this treatise Vasubandhu analyzes in detail the bodhisattva path. One treatise of particular interest in this regard is the Daśabhūmikasūtra-nirdeśa, Vasubandhu’s commentary to the Daśabhūmika-sūtra. However, a necessarily thorough analysis of this text falls beyond the scope of this thesis.

Finally, expanding beyond the inter-textual approach, this thesis contextualizes the Ṭīkā in terms of the intellectual history, culture, and institutions in which the text was produced. For this purpose, I mainly rely on the method of new historicism. Unlike new criticism—a preceding movement that viewed literary sources as self-sufficient objects that can be properly interpreted only in isolation from their contextual background—historicism, and especially new historicism, argues that any literary source is a product of its time, that we cannot disregard the knowledge of a source’s historical context, and that the meaning of a text can only be discovered by fitting it around other discourses from the same period.

In part two—Translation—both texts, the Rāja and the Ṭīkā, are analyzed and translated from Tibetan into English with reference to existing Sanskrit manuscripts of the Rāja. Although there are many English translations of the Rāja currently available, translating the Ṭīkā required a new translation of the root text because—as a word commentary—making sense of the Ṭīkā necessitates a very literal translation that these previous translations do not

8 The two Sanskrit editions are used: Asmussen’s (opus cit.) and of Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon.
provide. For this reason, while this thesis is primarily focused on the Ṭīkā, both texts are central to this project.

This English translation of the Ṭīkā is based on the Sde dge bstan ‘gyur⁹ edition. The Sde dge edition was compared with the editions in Pe cin bstan ‘gyur¹⁰ and Snar thang bstan ‘gyur¹¹ as attested in the Bstan ‘gyur dpe bsdur ma.¹² As for the general translation methodology, between the two traditional strategies of “word-for-word” vs. “sense-for-sense,”¹³ I use “word-for-word” translation, as necessitated by the nature of the Ṭīkā as a word-commentary. This strategy primarily emphasizes reliance on the literal meanings of lexical compounds; basing myself primarily on this, I then utilize a “sense-for-sense” translation strategy—that is to say I analyze words within the context trying to argue the preferable, translation options. This method is also described in hermeneutics where it is called a “hermeneutic circle.”¹⁴

Moreover, with the method of content and textual analysis, I attempt to assess textual difficulties in the Ṭīkā and their influences on the meaning of the text. The specific features, and at times complexity, of the Tibetan text of the Ṭīkā could be explained by several reasons. First of all, its Sanskrit archetype is no longer available. Thus, when the Tibetan text is not clear, we can rely only on the Sanskrit editions of the Rāja, as well as other Indian and Tibetan commentaries. The second reason is due to the Ṭīkā’s Sanskritised Tibetan syntax that often obscures the meaning of individual words as well as larger units of meaning. Another

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⁹ ‘Phags pa bzang po spyod pa’i smon lam gyi ’grel pa, Sde dge bstan ‘gyur: [D. No.] 4015, mdo ’grel, nyi 252a5-269a7.
¹⁰ Bzang spyod ’grel pa slob dpon dbyig gnyen gvis mdzad pa bzhus so, Pe cin bstan ‘gyur: [P. No.] 5516, mdo tshogs ’grel pa, nyi, 288a3-308a8.
¹¹ Bzang spyod ’grel pa slob dpon dbyig gnyen gvis mdzad pa bzhus so, Snar thang bstan ‘gyur: [N] nyi 290a6-312.
significant translation issue is that the original Sanskrit version(s) of the Ṭīkā likely deployed a much vaster range of synonyms to explain lexical compounds in the Rāja than the Tibetan translators had access to in the target language. Thus, in order to render the Ṭīkā correctly in English, the translation work aimed to using synonyms in places when Tibetan simply reproduces words and phrases.\textsuperscript{15}

In conclusion, the unique features of the Ṭīkā, such as the multitude of its contexts and complexity of its meanings, provides for a fascinating research and translation project. It invites the reader to look at the extraordinary influential Buddhist masterpiece—the Rāja, King of Aspirations—from a new perspective of an ancient Indian word commentary, which, I hope, will help to fill in some gaps in the Mahāyāna studies on the bodhisattva ideal in general and Vasubandhu’s literary corpus in particular. And with that as an introduction, let us proceed to the first main part—exploration of the Ṭīkā in various historical, intellectual, and doctrinal contexts.

\textsuperscript{15} See in detail: Part II. Translation. 1.1. Introduction to the critical annotated translation
Part I. Contextualization

1. Āryabhadracāryapraṇidhānarāja and Āryabhadracaryapraṇidhānaṭīkā: importance of genre definition

In the first place, it is important to define the literary genre of the Ṭīkā characterizing its style and format. Eric Hirsch defines literary genre as “that sense of the whole by means of which an interpreter can correctly understand any part in its determinacy.”\(^\text{16}\) Being unaware of the differences in genres may lead to the risk of misreading a text because, as Hirsch says, “All understanding of verbal meaning is necessarily genre-bound.”\(^\text{17}\) In our case, the text that is subject to analysis and translation is a commentary. The genre of a commentary may be defined by (1) the root text upon which it is a commentary; (2) philosophical doctrines associated with that root text and the author of the commentary; and (3) the format in which the commentary is written. Following this threefold contextualization, in this part we will first look at the genre of the Rāja as a separate dhāraṇī and as a part of the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra, then at the Mahāyāna philosophical doctrines related to pranidhāna, and finally put it all in the context of the Ṭīkā’s genre. As for the philosophical doctrines associated with the author of the Ṭīkā, they will be discussed in the part devoted to Vasubandhu.

1.1. Is Āryabhadracāryapraṇidhānarāja an independent dhāraṇī or part of Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra?

The Rāja is preserved in Sanskrit in two versions: as an independent text, as well as part of the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra. Regarding the first: there are twelve independent manuscripts


\(^{17}\) Hirsch, 76.
of the Rājā listed in the catalogue of the Nepal-Germany Manuscript Cataloguing Project, five of which are complete. Of these, one is in Devanagari and four are in Newari script.\textsuperscript{18} During the first millennium the text was also translated into Chinese, Japanese, Khotanese, Korean, Old Turkish, Tangut (Xi-xia), Tibetan, Uyghur and Vietnamese, all of these are also available. In the 20th century, the Rāja was translated in many European languages.\textsuperscript{19} The Rājā has been the focus of a considerable number of modern studies as an independent text in Sanskrit, Chinese, Khotanese and Tibetan. It has also featured in the research and translation of the Gandavyūha and Buddhāvatamsaka.\textsuperscript{20}

The independent text of the Rāja in the Dhāraṇī Section of the Tibetan bka' 'gyur collections does not have a colophon, however, the colophon of the Buddhāvatamsaka-sūtra (Sangs rgyas phal po che) in the Sde dge bka' 'gyur, which contains same text of the Rāja as the Dhāraṇī Section, names Indian paṇḍitas Jinamitra and Surendrabodhi, and Tibetan editor-translator (zhu chen) lotsāwa Ye shes sde (8–9 century). Taking in consideration the fact that lotsāwa Ye shes sde composed his own commentary on the Rāja,\textsuperscript{21} and seems to be well-engaged into its textual interpretation, for that reason I believe that he is the most important figure in the Tibetan translation of this text.

\textsuperscript{18} See bibliography for detailed list of preserved Sanskrit manuscripts of the Rāja.
\textsuperscript{19} See Kaikoku Watanabe, \textit{opus cit.}; Hōkei Izumi, \textit{opus cit.}; Jes Peter Asmussen, \textit{opus cit.}, etc.
\textsuperscript{21} See 2.3. Āryabhadracāryapraṇidhānarāja and Āryabhadracāryapraṇidhānaśīkā in the Tibetan historical context and commentarial tradition.
This thesis treats Ārya-bhadracaryā-praṇidhāna-rāja\textsuperscript{22} as the full title of the Rājā; that said, it must be noted that the text is also known by a litany of other Sanskrit names, the most common of which are:

- Ārya-bhadracarī-praṇidhāna-rāja\textsuperscript{23}—King of aspirations for the noble good conduct;
- Ārya-samantabhadra-caryā-praṇidhāna-rāja\textsuperscript{24}—King of aspirations for the conduct of noble Samantabhadra;
- Samantabhadra-caryā-praṇidhānam\textsuperscript{25}—Aspiration for the conduct of noble Samantabhadra;
- Samantabhadra-caryā-praṇidhāna-rāja\textsuperscript{26}—King of aspirations for the conduct of Samantabhadra;
- Bhadracarī-paraṇidhāna-ratna-rāja\textsuperscript{27}—Precious King: great aspiration for good conduct;
- Bhadracarī-praṇidhāna-gāthā\textsuperscript{28}—Verses of aspiration for good conduct;
- Bhadracarī-praṇidhāna\textsuperscript{29}—Aspiration for good conduct;
- Bhadracaryādeśanā\textsuperscript{30}—Instruction of good conduct;
- Mahāprəṇidhāna\textsuperscript{31}—Great aspiration;

\textsuperscript{22} 'Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi rgyal po (Āryabhadracaryāpraṇidhānarrāja), Pe cin bka' 'gyur: [P. No.] 5924, ngo mtshar bstan bcos, mo, 288b6-292a7 (vol.150, p.235-237); Sde dge bka' 'gyur: [D. No.] 4377, sna tshogs, nyo 300b1-303b3; Snar thang bka' 'gyur: [N] mo 281a5-284b6.


\textsuperscript{24} Osto (2010), 1.

\textsuperscript{25} Samantabhadracaryāprəṇidhānam, Sanskrit manuscript in Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Cannon, http://www.dsbcpproject.org/canon-text/content/40/362

\textsuperscript{26} Alex Wayman, “The Buddhist Theory of Virtue (Parināmana)” in Untying the knots in Buddhism, Selected Essays (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1997): 428.

\textsuperscript{27} Bhadracarīmahāprəṇidhānaratnarāja, Sanskrit manuscript (NGMCP, Reel No. A 131/18, Inventory No. 6980, Newari Script, 446 words, 6 folios, complete), http://ngmcp.fdm.uni-hamburg.de.


\textsuperscript{29} Bhadracarīparaṇidhāna, Sanskrit manuscript (NGMCP, Reel No. E 2572-9, Newari Script, 102 words, 9 folios, complete).

\textsuperscript{30} Asmussen, 5.

\textsuperscript{31} Mahāprəṇidhāna, Sanskrit manuscript (NGMCP, Reel No. A 113-1, Inventory No. 33310, Devanagari Script, 543 words, 25 folios, complete).
- **Bhadracaryā**—Good conduct;
- **Bhadracarī**—Good conduct.

Such a variety of Sanskrit names is due to the popularity of the *Rāja*—attested by its spread to every major (and, possibly, every single) country in which Mahāyāna was a major form of Buddhist praxis. It is even called the most popular devotional text in the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition. Some of these names, such as *Bhadracaryā* or *Bhadracarī* are shortened, while some, in contrast, are beautified by additional epithets, i.e., *Bhadracarī-mahāpranidhāna-ratna-rāja*—“Precious King: great aspiration for good conduct.” Even now this text is easily recognized among Newari Buddhists in Nepal by the short name *Bhadracaryā* or *Bhadracarī* (two feminine Skt. nouns, both meaning “good conduct”). Similarly, among Tibetans, *Bzang spyod smon lam* (“Aspiration for good conduct”) is the name recognized and not associated with any other text. It is to note that in the list of names the *bhadracaryā* (the “good conduct”) is replaced with *Samantabhadra-caryā* (“conduct of Samantabhadra”). It refers to the association of the aspiration with the bodhisattva Samantabhadra. I chose *Ārya-bhadracaryā-pranidhāna-rāja* as the full name of this text primarily because it is the Sanskrit name indicated in all the Tibetan *bka’ gyur* collections, and, secondly, because I doubt connection between the *Rāja* and bodhisattva Samantabhadra, as I argument it below.

The *Rāja* is a collection of verses composed in the Dodhaka classical Sanskrit meter. Dodhaka refers to a type of syllabic meter (*vṛtta*), in which the first, the fourth, the seventh the tenth and the eleventh syllables of a foot (*pāda*) are heavy (*guru*), while the rest of the syllables are light (*laghu*):  ⎼⎼|⎼⎼|⎼⎼|⎼⎼|⎼⎼|⎼⎼|⎼⎼|⎼⎼|⎼⎼|⎼⎼|⎼⎼ In terms of Greek poetics, this consists

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32 Wayman, 429.
33 Osto (2010), 1.
34 Osto (2010), 1.
35 Asmussen, 5.
in three dactyls and a spondee (i.e., dactylic tetrameter). For example, the first stanza of the *Rāja* reads:\textsuperscript{36}

\begin{verbatim}
yāvata keci daśad-diši loke
sarva-triayadva-gatā nara-simhāḥ
tān ahu vandami sarvi aśeăn
kāyatu vāca manena prasannāḥ
\end{verbatim}

As for the literary genre of the *Rāja*, first of all it is a prāṇidhāna (smon lam), an aspiration. Prāṇidhāna is an important separate genre of Mahāyāna sūtric literature. Its status as a discrete genre is clear, in the Tibetan tradition at least: the end of the *Dhāraṇī* (Gzungs 'dus) section of the *Sde dge bka' 'gyur* makes use of smon lam (prāṇidhāna) as a separate category. This sub-section of the *Bka’gyur* includes fifteen texts of aspirations and dedications. Of these, two—Maitreya’s *Aspiration* (Byams pa’i smon lam) and *Aspiration for Sublime Action* (Mchog gi spyod pa’i smon lam)—do not appear elsewhere in the *Bka’gyur*. Others appear in other sections as independent texts or (as in the case of the *Rājā*) as part of larger sūtras. Thus, *Rāja* is found twice in the Tibetan *Bka’gyur*: once as an independent dhāранī text, and again as the final part of the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*. In this way it offers an excellent illustration of the multiple meanings and uses of religious texts. Apart from its devotional importance, the *Rāja* may have had importance for other reasons. Schopen points out that the *Rāja* verse from Nālandā is “the only passage from a Mahāyāna text so far known to occur in an Indian inscription.”\textsuperscript{37} The only exception that Schopen mentions is a number of dhāranīs. This may suggest that the *Rāja* may have been considered a dhāranī with its verse inscription viewed as spiritually powerful.

\textsuperscript{36}Asmussen, 8.
\textsuperscript{37}Schopen, 150.
In our attempt to further categorize the genre of the Rāja as a dhāraṇī, we may refer to the classification proposed by Braarvig who states that “dhāraṇī is described as both remembrance itself (yā) and the faculty or means of retaining in memory the words and teachings of the buddhas (yayā).” He says that “dhāraṇī in this context may be translated as “the power of retaining in memory,” or simply “memory,” though memory of extraordinary power.” Referring to the Bodhisattvabhumi-sūtra, he divides dhāraṇīs into four types, dharmadhāraṇī, arthadhāraṇī, mantradhāraṇī and dhāraṇī to attain the patience, kśānti, of a bodhisattva. Among these, the Rāja can be classified as dharmadhāraṇī, by recitation of which the bodhisattva acquires the power of recollection (smṛti) and wisdom (prajñā) related to the bodhisattva conduct.

Furthermore, Yukai Matsunaga has identified two specific meanings of the word dhāraṇī in the Buddhist context. The first is in the sense of “a memorized text,” and the second is as “a magical spell.” The liturgical use of the Rāja may have generated an understanding of it as a dhāraṇī in the first sense—as a text to be memorized. This in turn may indicate that it was also a dhāraṇī in the second sense—a magical spell. Williams and Tribe point out the connection between the two meanings when they say, “The link between this and the second meaning is found in the idea that a memorized dhāraṇī contains the power of the word of the Buddha, which is able to protect one from harm and overcome enemies.” Thus, Rāja could be considered as a text endowed with special powers that are accessed by means of its recitation and memorization.

The Rāja apparently was also related to ritual practice aimed at the attainment of liberation through bodhisattva conduct. This utility of the text is consistent with Davidson’s

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39 Braarvig, 19.
40 See Osto (2010), 7.
arguments about the polysemic nature of the term dhāraṇī—and, by extension, dhāraṇī texts such as the Rāja. Davidson points out that, among the many meanings of dhāraṇī, it is a term for a discrete genre of prayers, aspirations, ritual programs and concluding summaries of benefits. The main idea is that the memorization and recitation of such prayers and aspirations creates merit, which leads to various beneficial consequences. This power of the Rāja is clearly declared by the text itself in verses 49 and 54:

Whoever makes this Aspiration for Good Conduct,
That one will abandon all the lower realms,
That one will abandon bad friends
And also quickly see Buddha Amitābha. (49)

Whoever will keep, teach or also read
This Aspiration for Good Conduct—
The Buddha knows the maturation of this.
Don’t have doubts in the supreme enlightenment! (54)

Here we see clearly that the Rāja casts itself as a profoundly useful text—not only is it beneficial to read and teach, but even keeping possession of it is (in the text’s own estimation) a direct cause for the attainment of the ultimate Mahāyāna goal of Buddhahood.

According to Van Schaik and Doney—writing specifically about the Dunhuang collections of the Rāja manuscripts, “It is likely that these collections [Rāja verses] were assembled for group recitation and ritual practice. These collections strongly suggest a ritual function for the prayer, as they often contain ritual dhāraṇī texts like the Pūjāmegha dhāraṇī.” Thus, due to this specific feature, Rāja has also influenced the Tibetan Buddhist tantric tradition. It is not viewed just as a sūtra to read, but also as a sādhana—a spiritual exercise to accomplish the ultimate Mahāyāna goal—complete and perfect awakening for the benefit of all beings.

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The Rajā and the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra

And now, let us come back to the exploration of the Rajā’s relationship with the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, which leads us to the connection with the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra. The name Bhadracaryā-pranidhāna (Bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam) means “Aspiration for good conduct” and does not imply a direct relation with the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra (Kun tu bzang po). However, the linguistic connection between Samantabhadra (“All Good”) and the bhadracaryā (“the good conduct”) being evident, bhadra started to be interpreted as part of Samantabhadra’s name. Thus, apparently such titles as Samantabhadra-caryā-pranidhāna—Aspiration for the conduct of Samantabhadra appeared. And although the Rāja seems to have been composed as a separate text which was considered a dhāraṇī—a text that can lead to accomplishment of one’s wishes upon recitation, sometime prior to the 8th century CE the two—Bodhisattva Samantabhadra and the Rāja verses—became associated with each other in the sense that Samantabhadra came to be understood as the embodiment of the aspirations contained in the verses. Thus, Rāja was incorporated as the conclusion of the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra as the verses recited by Samantabhadra.

However, such association of the two texts is problematic for two reasons. The first has to do with the style. Although Samantabhadra is the supposed speaker of the Rāja, in three verses (42, 50, 55) he refers to himself in the third person. Even if we grant the unlikely possibility that Samantabhadra is referring to himself in the third person in the first two cases—

The chief son of the jinas  
Is called Samantabhadra.  
So that I could act like this Skillful One,  
I fully dedicate all these merits. (42)

Such ones will obtain supreme gain and live happily.  
Also in this life everything will go well for them.  
And before long,  
They will become just like Samantabhadra. (50)—

verse 55 is extremely difficult to explain:
Just as the hero Mañjuśrī knows,  
Just so also does Samantabhadra.  
In order to train in their footsteps,  
I completely dedicate all this virtue. (55)

Rather than trying to argue that the great bodhisattva is declaring that he will follow both Mañjuśrī's example and his own, it would seem preferable to accept that Samantabhadra is not speaking this verse. By extension, it might be argued that he should not be considered the speaker at all, and that the close association of the Rāja with Samantabhadra is a product of the text's title rather than its content.

Another argument that the Rāja first arose as an independent text and was later absorbed into the Gaṇḍavyūha has to do with doctrine. The Rāja mentions Buddha Amitābha and his buddhafield in four verses. However, nowhere else in the Gaṇḍavyūha are there any references at all to Amitābha or rebirth in his buddhafield. As Osto states, at a later stage in China, Rāja became one of the central texts of the Pure Land cult.44 Thus, apparently the Rāja was appended to the Gaṇḍavyūha not for its stylistic or doctrinal consistency with the narrative, but for its religious use. The liturgical employment of the Rāja continued to develop beyond its relation to the Gaṇḍavyūha, transforming and modifying with the emergence of Buddhist Tantra and the development of the Amitābha cult in East Asia. Overall, everything mentioned above gives us clues about the evolution of the text and its reception—specifically, that the Rāja was an autonomous text that then became incorporated into the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra.

1.2. Mahāyāna philosophical doctrines related to prañidhāna

The Sanskrit word prañidhāna (Tib. smon lam) carries the meaning of resolve, wish, commitment, effort, prayer, aspiration, vow, endeavor, et al. Within Mahāyāna, this term is closely associated with the bodhisattva’s resolve to become enlightened. That said, prañidhāna

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is not a strictly Mahāyāna—nor even a strictly Buddhist—concept. For example, Īśvaraprayāṇāna, “prayāṇāna toward Śāyana,” is one of the five niyamas (Skt., virtuous habits, behaviors, ethical observances) of the Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali. In that context, prayāṇāna carries the primary sense of “commitment” toward a deity. It is worth mentioning that Śāyana has a wide range of meanings that depend on the school of Hinduism. In the Yoga school, it refers to īṣṭa-devatā, literally “cherished deity”—the most venerated personal god, while in Shaivism it is an epithet of Śiva.

In the Buddhist context, the origin of prayāṇāna can be traced back to Mahāvastu, a text of the Lokottaravāda school of Early Buddhism (2nd century BCE–4th century CE). Mahāvastu contains Jātaka and Avadāna tales, accounts of the earlier lives of Śākyamuni Buddha and other bodhisattvas that describe prayāṇāna-caryā, the “conduct of resolution”, as one of the four conducts of the bodhisattava. These four types of conduct are (1) prakriti-caryā—conduct on which natural qualities of the bodhisattva are manifested; (2) prayāṇāna-caryā—conduct of resolution towards enlightenment; (3) anuloma-caryā—conduct of conformity to this resolution; and (4) anivartana-caryā—conduct in which falling back from the bodhisattva path is impossible.45 Although Lokottaravāda school predates Mahāyāna Buddhism, prayāṇāna-caryā—conduct of resolve to achieve enlightenment—is one of the central aspects of its doctrine.

In Mahāyāna Buddhism, prayāṇāna features as a bodhisattva ideal and as a crucial component of the path to Buddhahood. Specifically, mahābodhi prayāṇāna (byang chub chen por smon pa) —the “resolve for the great awakening” generated by a bodhisattva—is a central concept in Mahāyāna Buddhism. It is the last and the most important of the ten great aspirations of a bodhisattva:

1) Venerate the buddhas;
2) Retain the sacred Dharma;
3) Manifest bodily forms (rūpakāyas);
4) Enter into all realms;
5) Perfect the pāramitās (pha rol tu phyin pa);
6) Bring sentient beings to maturation;
7) Purify the realms;
8) Abide by the experience that accords with all bodhisattvas;
9) Be meaningful in all modes of behavior;
10) Attain the great enlightenment.

These ten aspirations are understood as the essence of the aspirations and deeds of all past, present and future buddhas. Thus, pranidhāna is best understood as an earnest wish rather than a vow or resolution. However, the concept and the meaning of pranidhāna changes in different contexts, and in certain contexts the term does mean “resolution” or “vow,” which is an altruistic task and ideal of the bodhisattva to achieve complete and perfect enlightenment for the sake of all beings.

As a component of the bodhisattva path, pranidhāna is the eight of the ten pāramitās (daśa pāramitā, pha rol tu phyin pa bcu) — pranidhānapāramitā (smon lam), transcendence of aspiration, that is perfected on the eighth bhūmi called Acālabhūmi (Mi g.yo ba), “Immovable.” Although bodhisattvas make aspirations throughout all the bodhisattva path, on the eighth bhūmi the pāramitā of aspiration becomes preeminent because it is on this ground that “the aspirations made from the first ground onward are utterly cleansed of all adverse factors. Countless hundreds of thousands of aspirations are completely purified on this ground, and this

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This pāramitā consists of the aspiration to never be separated from bodhicitta and always engage in the practice of skillful means for the benefit of beings. It also includes dedication of all virtuous actions of body, speech, and mind to the perfect Buddhahood of all sentient beings.

Moreover, different types of pranidhāna can be classified into three groups in relation to the agents who perform them. The first is the “original resolution” of the present buddhas (such as Śākyamuni, Amitābha, Akṣobhya, etc.) in the time of them being bodhisattvas. This pranidhāna is often combined with the prophecy on their future enlightenment (vyākaraṇa, lung du bstan pa). Thus, the story of Buddha Śākyamuni counts that many lifetimes before his eventual enlightenment he was an ascetic called Sumedha who met Dīpaṃkara Buddha and offered him his own body to walk over and at that time made a vow to become a Buddha that was confirmed by Dīpaṃkara Buddha through a prophecy.

The second pranidhāna group is that of the great bodhisattvas (such as Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī, Samantabhadra, etc.). It is characterized by their compassionate aspiration to liberate all beings from suffering and lead them to enlightenment. For this purpose, instead of entering nirvāṇa these bodhisattvas make aspirations to remain in saṃsāra in order to bring all uncountable beings to complete and perfect Buddhahood. Such aspiration prayers made by bodhisattvas are much more than a simple wish, because their ultimate goal is always the ultimate benefit of all beings—their perfect Buddhahood.

The third group of pranidhāna is “determination” or “aspiration” that is no longer limited to the great bodhisattvas but is a component of the bodhisattva path. In the sense of wishing for the ultimate goal that all sentient beings will attain perfect Buddhahood, the most

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basic aspiration prayer in the Mahāyāna is the bodhicitta of aspiration (also called bodhisattva vow). It is a mere aspiration of generating the resolve to lead all beings to enlightenment, while the bodhicitta of application implies active engagement in the practice of paramitās in order to achieve this goal. Thus, bodhisattvas who train in the bodhicitta of aspiration and application should have the three noble aspirations of goal, skillful means, and marvelous activity: “(1) I shall attain enlightenment for the benefit of all beings (the aspiration to achieve the goal); (2) In order to attain enlightenment, I shall enter the path of awakening (the aspiration to apply skillful means); and (3) I shall fulfill the hopes of all beings (the aspiration to engage in marvelous activity).”49 Apart from these general aspirations, bodhisattvas on the bhūmis also make special aspirations and take vows that they will fulfill at the time of their great awakening. For example, Bhaiṣajyagurubuddha, the Medicine Buddha, vowed as a bodhisattva to be able to completely free all sentient beings from sufferings, illnesses and poverty, and in relation to this made twelve special aspirations.50

Pranidhāna is a very important component of the bodhisattva path because the accomplishment of the path depends on the aspirations. The three main activities of a bodhisattva (rdzogs smin sbyang gsum)—(1) completing the two accumulations of merit and wisdom, (2) maturing (or ripening) beings, and (3) purifying perception (or realms)—are conditioned by the complete perfection of the power of aspirations. This lead to the bodhisattvas’ (1) ability effortlessly bring benefit to beings while resting in one-pointed equipoise within dharmatā; (2) ability to display countless manifestations to bring beings to maturation; and (3) ability to purify buddhafields.51 On the tenth bhūmi, that is considered beyond the path of bodhisattva training, it is by virtue of their previous aspirations that

bodhisattvas are equal to buddhas in their ability to display various bodily forms (rūpakāyas) and perform enlightened activities to benefit beings in all possible ways. Also, once bodhisattvas attain perfect enlightenment, they acquire a unique quality of a buddha that is the omniscience through aspiration. This implies that buddhas know everything as it is (ji lta mkhyen pa) and in its entirety (ji snyed mkhyen pa) by virtue of their previous aspirations to be able to do so. This wisdom manifests unceasingly, spontaneously and without any effort in order to bring all beings, as many as there are, to perfect Buddhahood.

Overall, the significance of prāṇidhāna—its scope, power, functions, and results both within the framework of the bodhisattva path and at the time of attaining Buddhahood—cannot be overestimated. Bodhisattvas earnestly dedicate themselves to aspirations because all their achievements and qualities arise in accordance with their aspirations. With this, let us conclude our exploration of the importance of the Rāja—mahāprāṇidhāna, the great spiration of the bodhisattvas, and proceed to its commentary—the Ṭīkā.

1.3. Defining the genre of Āryabhadracāryāprāṇidhānaṭīkā

There are neither published translations nor research on the Ṭīkā as such. This may be partly the case because the text is currently not available in Sanskrit and is accessible only in Tibetan. According to the colophon in the Sde dge bstan 'gyur, it was composed by ācārya Vasubandhu (Slob dpon dbyig gnyen) and translated into Tibetan by the Indian pañḍita ācārya Ānanda (Rgya gar gyi mkhan po paN+Di ta a tsaR+Ya a nan+da) and lotsāwa bhikṣu Bhadrapāla (Lo tsA ba dge slong b+ha dra pA la). I will argue below that the text was most probably translated in the 11th century during the period of later spreading of the Dharma in Tibet (phyi dar).

52 See 2.3. Āryabhadracāryapraṇidhānarāja and Āryabhadracāryapraṇidhānaṭīkā in the Tibetan historical context and commentarial tradition.
We define the Ṭīkā as a commentary to the Rāja. With that said, it is to note that there is not a single word for “commentary” in Sanskrit, where we have a list of different terms:

- **avacūrikā**—short commentary;
- **bhāṣya**—annotation, explanation or exposition;
- **padabhaṅjikā**—commentary which separates, analyses or explains words;
- **paṇjikā**—perpetual commentary which explains and analyses every word;
- **pradīpaka**—commentary that “illuminates” the meaning;
- **prabandha**—explanation of the subject matter;
- **ṭīpāṇikā**—gloss, commentary;
- **ṭīkā**—gloss, commentary;
- **upadarśana**—commentary that “exhibits” the meaning;
- **vārttika**—explanation;
- **vibhāṣā**—great commentary;
- **vivarana**—gloss, exposition, elucidation, interpretation;
- **vṛtti**—gloss, commentary.

Thus, Sanskrit authors created a varied set of texts which we all bring to a single category of a “commentary.” Some of these texts are line-by-line or word-by-word explanations, some entail elaborate philosophical analyzes, while others provide just brief comments. So when we try to answer the question what makes text a “commentary,” the only criterion that unites all the cases mentioned above is that a commentary always remains in a close dialogue with a root text. The depth of its engagement with the root text, however, may substantially vary.

Now, as to the meaning of the Skt. word ṭīkā, according to Ganeri, ṭīkā is a commentary whose function is to elucidate obscure or otherwise tricky words in the root text, “The Śabdārthacintāmani defines a ṭīkā as ‘an explanation of difficult words [in the root text]’
(viṣamapadavyākhyāyām).”  

Ganeri further compares the ṭīkā with the Oxford English Dictionary definition of the English *gloss*: “A word inserted between the lines or in the margin as an explanatory equivalent of a foreign or otherwise difficult word in the text; hence applied to a similar explanatory rendering of a word given in a glossary or dictionary. Also, in a wider sense, a comment, explanation, interpretation.” He concludes that the ṭīkā, like *gloss*, is also used in a more general sense, as a synonym of *vr̥tti* or *vivarana*.

In order to further define the genre of the Ṭīkā, let us consider the Tibetan tradition of classification of Indian commentaries. Bu ston (Bu ston rin chen grub, 1290–1364) enumerates five main types of classical Indian commentaries (*Bka' la mi brten pa'i bstan bcos*) in his *History of Buddhism* (*Chos 'byung*):

- Elaborate commentary (*rgya cher 'grel ba*) that elucidates both the words and the leaning of the root text;
- Word commentary (*tshig 'grel*) that explains lexical components (words and syllables) of the root text;
- Commentary on difficult points (*dka' 'grel*) that elaborates on aspects of the text that are difficult to understand;
- Commentary that summarizes the meaning of the root text (*bsdus don gvi 'grel pa*);
- Commentary merely on the verbal significance of the root text (*ngag don tsam gvi 'grel pa*).

According to this taxonomy, I argue that the Ṭīkā can be classified as mainly a word commentary (*tshig 'grel*) in which lexical components of the Rāja—e.g., obscure words, are explained. It also contains some elements of the commentary on difficult points (*dka' 'grel*) that elucidates the meaning of some passages that are difficult to understand.

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54 Ganeri, 110.


56 Bu ston, 22a.4-7.
Although Bu ston’s category of word commentary is used by Tibetan commentators, there is a more technical term within the Tibetan commentarial tradition: the “commentary of annotations” (*mchan 'grel*). If the *Ṭīkā* was a text developed within the Tibetan commentarial tradition it could be classified as a *mchan 'grel*. With that said, it is to notice that *mchan 'grel* typically is a commentary in which words of a root text are printed either with small circles under them or in a larger size than the surrounding text of the commentary that is an expansion on the root text. Although the *Rāja* is an integral part of the *Ṭīkā*, incorporated within its text in form of direct quotes, the words of the root text are not highlighted in any way in the commentary.

Thus, following Ganeri’s and Bu ston’s approach, it is safer to classify the genre of the *Ṭīkā* as mainly a “word commentary” that provides explanatory rendering of difficult words contained in the *Rāja*. It is also an interpretation in a general sense, some sort of a reading transmission, in which the author talks the listener through the *Rāja*. The *Ṭīkā* follows the text of the *Rāja* very closely—so much so that it gives an impression of an oral commentary that was written down, rather than an intentional written composition. This is indicated, for example, by the sheer volume of repetition in the *Ṭīkā*. The depth of the commentary also significantly varies: sometimes it merely glosses words in the root text where the meaning is obvious, and sometimes it goes into deep explanations even using references to sūtras.⁵⁷ For example, the part 8.13. Antidotes of the *Ṭīkā* contains a profound explanation of how realization of selflessness of phenomena uproots negative karma, and how generation of bodhicitta purifies downfalls of bodhisattvas. It takes the reader (listener) quite far from the *Rāja*, and then immediately returns to glossing terms in the root text.

Revisiting the discussion of the relation of the *Rāja* with the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra and the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* from the perspective of the *Ṭīkā*, it it to note that

⁵⁷ See, for example, 8.12 Power and 8.13 Antidotes parts of the translation.
the Ṭīkā begins with an homage to the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. However, most probably this is the homage of Tibetan translators rather than of the Ṭīkā’s Indian author. Then the commentary itself opens up with the sentence “The ten topics that summarize in a genuine way the great aspiration of Samantabhadra’s conduct are as follows…”, and further on the text uses five times the “Aspiration for Samantabhadra’s conduct” (kun tu bzangpo’i smon lam) as an alternative for “Aspiration for good conduct” (bzang spyod smon lam). However, with the Sanskrit of the Ṭīkā being unavailable, it is difficult to judge on whether the Tib. kun tu bzang po is just “all-good” emphasizing the goodness of the conduct, or actually refers to the name of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra.

This uncertainty is related to the Tibetan contextualized interpretation: by the time Dharma spread in Tibet in the 8th century, the Rāja was already incorporated into the Gaṇḍavyūha, it came to Tibet as part of the Gaṇḍavyūha and its narrative, and was translated as such.58 Thus for Tibetan translators of the Ṭīkā there was no alternative but to read the Ṭīkā in the light of the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra and the narrative of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. As to the Gaṇḍavyūha, the Ṭīkā never mentions the Rāja as its integral part. It mentions Gaṇḍavyūha once as a separate text and also makes a reference to Maitreyavimokṣa (Byams pa’i rnam par thar pa), the Liberation of Maitreya Sūtra, that now makes a separate chapter of the Gaṇḍavyūha.

Finally, further specifying the mentioned above aspect of the Rāja as a dhāraṇī or a liturgical text, it is worth noting that the Ṭīkā combines contemplative practices and philosophy, and also makes a statement that these two should go together. This is uncommon in Indian and Tibetan Buddhist commentarial traditions, where philosophical treatises are generally treated as separate from rituals or meditation manuals—in terms of being different

58 See 2.3. Āryabhadracāryapranidhānarāja and Āryabhadracaryapranidhānaṭīkā in the Tibetan historical context and commentarial tradition.
texts, studied or practiced at different times and in different contexts, perhaps even by different people. However, in the context of the Rāja and the Ṭīkā, they are intertwined to the extent that it is impossible to separate them. It highlights the importance of bodhisattva practice and its intimate relation to the Mahāyāna philosophical thought.

With that, let us conclude exploration of the genre of the Ṭīkā by means of characterizing the Rāja, the root text upon which it is a commentary, analyzing philosophical doctrines associated with the Rāja, as well evaluating the style and format of the Ṭīkā. We will proceed now to the second important aspect—historical contextualization.
2. Āryabhadraçāryapraṇidhānarāja and Āryabhadracaryapraṇidhānaṭīkā in the historical context

This section of the thesis investigates the Rāja and the Ṭīkā in their historical contexts. The primary goal of this investigation is to lay out what is currently known about these texts’ origins and development as well as their extant manuscripts, textual witnesses, and scholarly research. Since the textual history of the Rāja and the Ṭīkā throughout all of Asia is far too broad a topic to cover here, this discussion is limited to the texts’ Indo-Tibetan historical contexts, along with brief references to the earliest datable translations in other Buddhist languages.

The importance of historical contextualization cannot be overestimated, since placing a literary source within the context of the time in which it was produced is crucial for any in-depth evaluation and interpretation of the text’s usages, meanings, and evolution. When exploring the Rāja and the Ṭīkā within the Indian and Tibetan historical contexts, I use methodological framework introduced by the new historicism. Such historical contextualization involves attention to possible creators of the source, the time in which it was produced, historical, political, economic, religious, etc. processes, tendencies, beliefs or trends of the time, and how they may have influenced the production of the source. In brief, new historicism views history as textual and has “a reciprocal concern with the historicity of texts and the textuality of history.”\(^{59}\) It also involves attempts to understand how the source’s language, concepts and terms could possibly be interpreted within that particular historical context. As Abrams defines it, “In place of dealing with a text in isolation from its historical context, new historicists attend primarily to the historical and cultural conditions of its

production, its meanings, its effects, and also of its later critical interpretations and evaluations.”

In particular, applying the new historicism approach to the field of research on the Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit Ṭīkā, I refer to Tymoczko who stated that translation research can be approached “from two directions: from the macroscopic direction, by looking at the big picture, ...; or from the microscopic direction, by looking at the particularities of the language of a translation.” While the microscopic approach focuses on the language of translation, such as its syntax, grammar, semantics, etc., the macroscopic investigation aims at understanding a literary source through the variety of its contexts: “relationship of textual practices and textual systems to many other cultural and social contexts.”

Olohan further specifies two approaches to the translation history research: “translation as history” and “translation in history.” The former aims to deepen the understanding of translation “as a historical object in itself” and focuses on “what translation is and how it works.” The latter considers translation as “an approach to a given historical subject” and deals with the role of translation in “histories of an episode, period or phenomenon (other than the phenomenon of translation itself).” In regard to that, I look at the Rāja and the Țīkā within the methodological framework of “translation as history” in order to contextualize it as important historical objects within the field of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

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60 Abrams, 182-183.
62 Tymoczko, 13.
65 Olohan, 9.
66 Rundle, 4.
67 Olohan, 9.
2.1. Dates for Āryabhadracāryapraṇidhānarāja and Āryabhadracaryāpraṇidhānaṭīkā

The *terminus post quem* for the composition of the *Rāja* can be established based on the dates of its Chinese translations. There are three datable Chinese translations of the *Rāja*, the earliest of which is attributed to Buddhabhadra and dated to between 418–420 CE. This text was translated under the title of *Maṇjuśrīpraṇidhānasūtra* (*Wên shu shih li fa yūan ching*)—*the Sūtra of the Aspiration of Maṇjuśrī*. Unlike the later versions that contain 62 verses, this translation has only 44 verses. The second translation was by Amoghavajra, and dates between 763-779 CE. Amoghavajra also treats *Rāja* as an autonomous text. It is only in the third Chinese translation—which dates to 796 CE and is attributed to a Kashmiri monk called Prajñā—that the *Rāja* is found as part of *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*. Of the two eighth century translations, Amoghavajra’s translation most closely corresponds to the surviving Sanskrit version and Tibetan translation.

When considering Buddhist translations into Chinese, it is important to avoid the assumption that the original Indic text was a single written document, which was then translated into a corresponding Chinese-language document. This is often not the case. Although written texts certainly did exist in India from at least 100 CE, there is historical evidence that early translations of Buddhist manuscripts in China were mainly based on oral transmission or teachings given by foreign monks. Therefore, this initial translation of the *Rāja* into Chinese does not, by itself, prove that the text existed in the form of a discrete Sanskrit manuscript. In fact, Asmussen's assessment of the Khotanese translation of the *Rāja*

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68 Asmussen, 6.
69 See Osto (2010), 2; Asmussen, 6.
70 Osto (2010), 2.
suggests that this was not the case. He notes: “...the Khotanese Bhadracaryādeśana is a rather free rendering of the BSkrt. original, in some cases more a paraphrase than a translation.”

This suggests it may have existed in the Uygur kingdom of Khotan only in oral form, leaving open the possibility that it was also transmitted orally elsewhere. In any case, we can conclude that the terminus post quem of the Rājā as a discrete, written document is 420 CE.

Unfortunately, the Ṭīkā cannot be dated with anywhere near the same degree of certainty. If we accept the attribution of its authorship to Vasubandhu, this suggests that it would have been composed during his lifetime. That said, given that this attribution is not certain—and, moreover, Vasubandhu’s dates are disputed around 4th–5th CE— we can only speculate about the dates of the text composition. A more reliable terminus post quem is its translation, which is explored below in the section devoted to the Ṭīkā in Tibet.

2.2. Āryabhadracāryapraṇidhānarāja and Āryabhadracaryāpraṇidhānaṭīkā in the Indian historical context and commentarial tradition

Along with its uncertain origins as a discrete text, we can also contextualize the Rājā in terms of its relationship to Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra. Although the Gaṇḍavyūha is most commonly engaged as the last chapter of Buddhāvatamsaka-sūtra (Sangs rgyas phal po che, hereafter Avatamsaka), there is significant evidence that it was originally an independent text. For example, it is listed as such in the Tibetan Ldan dkar ma catalogue (sdong po bkod p'ai mdo, no 24). Its translation into Tibetan is also treated as a separate entry in Mahāvyutpatti (Bye brag rtogs byed), an early 9th century Tibetan dictionary of Sanskrit Buddhist terminology.

72 Asmussen, 6.
73 See 3.1. Vasubandhu’s life and times.
More generally, the *Gaṇḍavyūha* is quoted by name in numerous Indian treatises. Therefore, it is justifiable to limit discussion of the *Rāja’s* context to the *Gaṇḍavyūha*.

According to the version of the sūtra in the Tibetan *bka’ gyur* collections, the bodhisattva’s conduct (*bodhisattvacaryā*) is the central topic of the *Gaṇḍavyūha*. According the story told in the sūtra: on the advice of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, a young man called Sudhana sets out to visit fifty-two virtuous friends (*kalyāṇamitra*) in order to learn how to carry out the *bodhisattvacaryā*, the bodhisattva conduct. In the end of his journey, he has a visionary experience of the bodhisattva Samantabhadra who recites the verses of the *Rāja* as his teaching on the *bodhisattvacaryā* to the young man.

However, scholarship of the Chinese translations of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* shows that only the fourth and final Chinese translation of the sūtra completed in 798 by the Kashmiri monk Prajñā under the name of *Acintyavimokṣa-gocarapraveśana-samantabhadracryā-pranidhāna* that was based on an expanded and no longer extant Sanskrit version belonging to the king of Orissa contains the *Rāja* verses as found in the existing Sanskrit manuscripts. Previous Chinese translations—the earliest of which was completed in 420 by Buddhhabhadra—end with a short dedication. As Osto states, “This demonstrates a general trend toward an expansion of the Gv [*Gaṇḍavyūha*] over time. (…) When the *Bhad* [*Rāja*] became a liturgical text sometime between the end of the 7th and the end of the 8th centuries it was incorporated as the final verses of the Gv [*Gaṇḍavyūha*] (which seemed to have maintained the status of an independent sūtra from *Avatāmsaka* in India).”

Based on references in other works, Schopen argues that the *Rāja* was known to a number of Indian Buddhist scholars, such as Bhavya (6th century), Śantideva (8th century),

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and Kamalaśīla (late 8th century). Moreover, Schopen has conducted a research on a Sanskrit verse from the Rāja found carved into the base of a small stūpa at the great north Indian monastic Buddhist site of Nālandā dating to the 10th century. According to Schopen, this is “the only verse of the Bhadracarīpranidhāna known to occur in an Indian epigraph, and its occurrence establishes the fact that the Bhadracarī was known and actually used in the 10th century at Nālandā.” This is the only concrete evidence available regarding the provenance of the Rāja in ancient India, and we do not know anything at all about the Ṭīkā. The only ancient Indian context we can attribute to the Ṭīkā is due to the authorship of Vasubandhu. Otherwise, with its Sanskrit text not available, the Indian origins of the Ṭīkā can be justified only by the Sanskritized grammar of its Tibetan translation.

**Witnesses of the Ṭīkā in Indian commentaries**

Exploration of Indian and Tibetan witnesses of the Ṭīkā provides us with the context of intertextuality, in other words, of how our text is related to other texts. As for the Rājā, no surprise that it is widely commented on in both India and Tibet. As for the Indian commentaries considered canonical within the Tibetan tradition, Tibetan bstan ’gyur collections currently contain five such texts:

- Āryabhadracaryamahāpranidhānarājanibandhana (’Phags pa bzang po spyod pa’i smon lam gyi rgyal po chen po’i bshad sbyar) attributed to Nāgārjuna;
- Samantabhadracaryāpranidhānārthaṃgraha (Kun tu bzang po’i spyod pa’i smon lam gyi don kun bsdus pa) attributed to Dignāga;
- Āryabhadracaryāpranidhānarājaṭīkā (’Phags pa bzang po spyod pa’i smon lam gyi rgyal po’i rgya cher ’grel pa) attributed to Śākyamitra;
- Āryabhadracaryāpranidhānarājaṭīkā (’Phags pa bzang po spyod pa’i smon lam gyi rgyal po’i rgya cher ’grel pa) attributed to Bhadrāpaṇa; and

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78 Schopen, 156.
79 Schopen, 150.
80 See Bibliography for editions of this and other four Indian commentaries in the bstan ’gyur collections.
1. *Āryabhadracāryāprāṇidhānaṇīkā* ('Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi 'grel pa) attributed to Vasubandhu.

Vasubandhu’s *Ṭīkā* is the shortest among the five Indian commentaries. Although no witnesses of the *Ṭīkā* were found in the other four Indian commentaries, it must be noted that the commentaries attributed to Nāgārjuna, Dignāga and Vasubandhu are strikingly similar, which probably reflects the scholarly tendency of the time. This interesting topic is unfortunately beyond the scope of this thesis; further exploration in a separate study is certainly a desideratum.

2.3. *Āryabhadracāryapraṇidhānarāja* and *Āryabhadracāryapraṇidhānaṇīkā* in the Tibetan historical context and commentarial tradition

The Rāja in Tibet

The concept of *praṇidhāna* seems to have played a role early on in the Tibetan Empire, which flourished from the 7th through the 9th century CE. *Mahāvyutpatti* (*Bye brag rtogs byed*) contains seven entries\(^81\) in relation to *praṇidhāna*:

- *praṇidhānabalam*—smon lam gyi stobs (entry key 764) — the power of aspirations;
- *praṇidhānavaśitā*—smon lam la dbang ba (entry key 778) — mastery over aspiration;
- *sarvapraṇidhānaniśrayavigataḥ*—smon lam la gnas pa thams cad dang bral ba (entry key 820) — free from all the abiding in the aspiration;
- *asaṃkhyeyakalpapraṇidhānasusamārabdhāḥ*—bskal pa grangs med par smon lam shin tu brtsams pa (entry key 847) — thorough cultivation of the aspiration for innumerable kalpas;
- *buddhakṣetravyūhānantapraṇidhānaprasthānaparigṛhitāḥ*—sangs rgyas kyi zhing gi bkod pa mtha’ yas par smon pa la ’jug pas yongs su gzung ba (entry key 859) — thorough apprehension of engaging into aspiration to establish buddhafields infinitely;

- praniḍhānapāramitā—smon lam gyi pha rol tu phyin pa (entry key 921)—pāramitā of aspiration;
- ātmanah samyakpraniḍhānam—bdag nyid kyis yang dag pa'i smon lam btab pa (entry key 1606)—making authentic aspiration by oneself.

Although the Mahāvyutpatti does not contain a separate entry for any variant of the Rāja’s name, the present entries still indicate that the concept of praniḍhāna along with its components—e.g., the power of aspiration, pāramitā of aspiration, aspiration to create buddhafields—were in use in the imperial time Tibet.

The Rāja is listed as ‘Phag pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi rgyal po in the Smon lam sna tshogs (Various aspirational prayers) section of the 9th century Tibetan imperial ‘Phang thang ma catalogue. The ‘Phang thang ma lists four commentaries on the Rāja in the section Mdo sde sna tshogs kyi 'grel pa (Commentaries on various sūtras):

- Bzang po spyod pa smon lam gyi 'grel pa by Bhadravaha (Slob dpon rgyan bzang po);
- Bzang po spyod pa smon lam gyi 'grel pa by Dignāga (Slob dpon phyogs kyi glang po);
- Bzang po spyod pa smon lam gyi rgya cher 'grel pa (elaborated commentary) by Śākyamitra (Slob dpon śaκya bzhes gnyen); and
- Bzang po spyod pa smon lam gyi bhad sbyar (connected explanation) by Guṇaprabha (Slob dpon yon tan 'od).

There is also, in the section Mdo sde dang bstan bcos kyi tīkā (Commentaries on sūtras and śastras), a commentary ‘Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi brjed byang by Lotsāwa Ye shes Sdes (Slob dpon ye shes sdes).

The Rāja is listed as Bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam kyi rgyal po in the Smon lam sna tshogs (Various aspirational prayers) section of the 9th century Tibetan imperial Lhan kar ma

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83 Dkar chag 'phang thang ma, 37.
84 Dkar chag 'phang thang ma, 55.
The commentaries listed in the *Theg pa chen po'i mdo de'i tīkā* (Commentaries on Mahāyāna sūtras) of this catalogue are:

- *Bzang po spyod pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa* by Śākyamitra (Śakya gshes gnyen) (no. 559);
- *Bzang po spyod pa'i 'grel pa* by Guṇaprabha (Yon tan ‘od) (no. 560);
- *Bzang po spyod pa'i 'grel pa* by Dignāga (Phyogs glang kyi glang po) (no. 561);
- *Bzang po spyod pa'i 'grel pa* by Bhadravaha (Rgyan bzang po) (no. 562); and
- *Bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi 'grel pa bzhi'i don bsdus nas brjed byang* by Lotsāwa Ye shes sdes (no. 563).  

There is no commentary attributed to Vasubandhu in neither the 'Phang thang ma nor the Lhan kar ma catalogue. This suggests that the Tīkā may have been translated into Tibetan later than the 9th century.

Another source for editions of the *Rājā* is the Dunhuang manuscripts dating from late 4th to early 11th centuries. According to Van Schaik and Doney, there are over forty copies of the *Rāja* in Tibetan: either on their own or in collections of several texts. There are also Tibetan translations of Indic commentaries on the prayer. Among all these texts, the one of utmost importance is a Tibetan manuscript (PT 149) dated from the late 9th to late 10th century that provides a concrete evidence of the *Rāja* presence within the Tibetan cultural space. The first third of the manuscript is a condensed version of the Gaṇḍavyūha narrative, describing Sudhana’s story. Here, the young man’s quest is specifically for the *Rāja* rather than the general concept of *bodhisattvacarya* as it is in the Gaṇḍavyūha itself. The remaining two thirds of the manuscript tell the story of how Dba’ dpal byams, the commitment holder (* thugs dam pa*) to the king Khri srong lde brtsan, received and passed on the transmission of the *Rāja* in Tibet.

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85 Lalou, 330.
86 Lalou, 332.
87 Van Schaik and Doney, 185.
The name Dba' dpal dbyangs is of considerable significance in Tibetan history. This is the name and, I believe, this is that figure of the first and foremost of the “Seven men to be tested” (sad mi mi bdun), i.e., the first Tibetans to be ordained as monks. Thus, this name is closely associated with the establishment of monasticism in Tibet. By means of reciting the Rāja, Dba' dpal dbyangs and his two disciples attain Amitābha’s buddhafield Sukhāvatī (Bde ba can). As Van Schaik and Doney argue that “structurally, the text makes Dba' dpal byams equivalent to Sudhana himself. By placing the Indian and Tibetan narratives next to each other in chronological order, PT 149 [the Dunhuang manuscript] becomes a history of the transmission of Āryabhadracaryāprāṇidhāna from India to Tibet. However, the story does not establish an unbroken lineage between India and Tibet, which is one of the functions of many later lineage histories.”

The Ṭīkā in Tibet

According to its colophon in the Sde dge bstan ’gyur, Ṭīkā was composed by ācārya Vasubandhu and translated into Tibetan by the Indian paṇḍita ācārya Ānanda (Tib. rgya gar gyi mkhan po paN+Di ta a tsaR+Ya a nan+da) and lotsāwa bhikṣu Bhadrapāla (Tib. lo tsA ba dge slong b+ha dra pA la). Its given title is ’Phags pa bzang po spyod pa’i smon lam gvi ’grel pa. The identity of this Bhadrapāla is difficult to establish, as this is the only translation attributed to him in the bka’ ’gyur and bstan ’gyur collections. It is possible that the name Bhadrapāla is the Sanskrit reconstruction of Bzang skyong. While there is one lotsāwa Bzang skyong who is dated to the 9th century, it is unlikely that this is the same figure because paṇḍita Ānanda is a Kashmiri scholar who lived circa 11th century. Thus, Lotsāwa

88 Van Schaik and Doney, 193.
89 TBRC Resource ID P4256: primary name—bzang skyong, primary title—lo tsA ba bzang skyong, early translator, 9th cent.
90 TBRC Resource ID P8252: primary name—Ananda, primary title—kha che'i paNDita a nan+ta/ a nan+ta/
Bhadrapāla probably is not the same translator as the 9th century lotsāwa Bzang skyong. Also, as it was mentioned, there is no commentary on the Rāja attributed to Vasubandhu listed in the 9th century imperial 'Phang thang ma and Lhan kar ma catalogues. This strongly suggests that the text was probably translated in the 11th century during the later spreading of the Dharma in Tibet (phyi dar). Apart from this, nothing else was found in relation to the story of the Ṭīkā in Tibet.

**Witnesses of the Ṭīkā in Tibetan commentaries**

Among the Tibetan commentaries on the Rāja, the most important for this thesis is Bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi 'grel pa bzhi'i don bsdus nas brjed byang by lotsāwa Ye shes sdes that is a synthetic commentary based upon the four Indian commentaries attributed to Dignāga, Śākyamitra, Buddhakīrti and Bhadravaha. Recall that the Tibetan imperial catalogues of the 9th century list four Indian commentaries on the Rāja: by Dignāga, Śākyamitra, Bhadravaha and Guṇaprabha. It is therefore interesting that Ye shes sde cites the commentary attributed to Buddhakīrti, that is not listed as an existent translation by the imperial catalogues, rather than Guṇaprabha listed as translated. The early translated commentaries attributed to Buddhakīrti, Bhadravaha and Guṇaprabha currently are not part of the Tibetan bstan 'gyur collections. However, the two of Nāgārjuna and Vasubandhu, which are not listed in the imperial catalogues and thus are later translations, are part of the Tibetan bstan 'gyur collections and considered canonical. This is an interesting development, especially in relation to the attribution of the longest commentary to Nāgārjuna, which is very problematic primarily due to Nāgārjuna’s dates—ca. 2nd century CE. However, this falls beyond the scope of the thesis and needs further exploration.

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Among other Tibetan commentaries there are:

- 'Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi 'grel chung by Lo chen d+harma shrl ngag dbang chos dpal rgya mtsho (1654-1717);
- Smon lam gyi rgyal po bzang po spyod pa'i don 'grel khog phug bde ba can du bgrod pa'i lam bzang by 'Jam mgon a myes zhabs ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams (1597-1659);
- 'Phags pa bzang spyod smon lam gyi rnam bshad kun tu bzang po'i dgongs pa gsal bar byed pa'i rgyan by Lcang skya rol pa'i rdo rje ye shes bstan pa'i sgron me (1736-1796);
- Bzang spyod smon lam gyi 'grel pa sras kyi spyod pa rgya mtsho'i gnad don gsal bar byed pa'i nyl ma by Co ne bla ma grags pa bshad sgrub (1675-1748);
- 'Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi 'bru 'grel by A 'dzom rgyal sras rig 'dzin 'gyur med rdo rje (1895?-1959?);
- 'Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i tshig don gyi 'grel pa legs bshad kun las btus pa by Bkra shis rin chen grags pa rgyal mtshan (1824-1865); and
- Bzang spyod smon lam gyi 'grel pa/ mkhan chen a pad rin po ches mdzad pa by Mkhan chen a pad rin po che yon tan bzang po (1927-2010).

The list of these commentaries demonstrates that the Rāja has continued to be seriously studied within the Tibetan tradition until the present day.

Furthermore, the Rāja greatly inspired the 11th century Indian master Atiśa who included its part on the seven branches of merit accumulation in his famous Bodhipathapradīpa (Byang chub lam gyi sgron ma), A Lamp for the Path to Awakening, that is considered a foundation of the lam rim (Stages of the path) tradition in Tibet. All schools of Tibetan Buddhism teach and practice these seven branches as a skillful means of accumulating merit.

No witnesses of the Ṭīkā were found in these Tibetan commentaries. The most-commented Indian commentary in Tibet seems to be Dignāga’s Samantabhadracaryāpranidhānārthasamgraha (Bzang po spyod pa'i 'grel pa). The reasons for the popularity of Dignāga’s commentary in Tibet fall beyond the scope of this thesis and are to be further explored. At this we conclude exploration of the Rāja and the Ṭīkā within the Indian and Tibetan historical contexts and proceed to the last aspect of contextualization—that of Vasubandhu’s authorship.
3. Vasubandhu as the author of Āryabhadracaryāpraṇidhānaṭīkā

While it cannot be proven beyond doubt that Vasubandhu authored the Ṭīkā, it is nonetheless useful to discuss that text in terms of other works attributed to this seminal Mahāyāna figure. This is partly due to the sheer paucity of available data: apart from it being attributed to Vasubandhu, nothing is known about the composition or reception of the Ṭīkā. But it is also important to acknowledge that, in Tibet, Vasubandhu is considered its author. This bestows the text with a great deal of implicit significance that influenced its reception in the Tibetan tradition. Indeed, attribution to Vasubandhu may be a major reason why the Ṭīkā is part of all bstan 'gyur collections and thus is considered a canonical text. Thus, bracketing the question of whether the historical Vasubandhu composed the Ṭīkā, it is worth considering this text through the lens of Vasubandhu as “author function.”

According to its definition, the author-function is not a direct analog for the person or individual we call the author. Rather, it is our understanding of how text is produced, distributed, and consumed. The author-function renders irrelevant such questions as: “Who is the real author?” and “Have we proof of his authenticity and originality?” replacing them with new questions, such as: “What are the modes of existence of this discourse?”, “Where does it come from; how is it circulated; who controls it?”, etc. It would be impossible to prove whether the Ṭīkā was actually composed by Vasubandhu. That being the case, it is more useful to engage Vasubandhu as the author-function: what does it mean for the Ṭīkā to be attributed to Vasubandhu? In order to explore this, we will next discuss Vasubandhu’s enormous prestige in Indian and Himalayan Buddhist traditions.

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3.1. Vasubandhu’s life and times

Vasubandhu holds an immense significance for Himalayan intellectual traditions; he is considered to be one of the “Six Ornaments” (rgyan drug), the six great Indian commentators on the Buddha’s teachings. According to Paramārtha’s *Life of Vasubandhu,* Vasubandhu was born in Gandhāra. He initially joined and established his fame in Sarvāstivāda school that was one of the influential Buddhist school of the time, well-known throughout Kashmir and Gandhāra. After thorough study of Sarvāstivādin doctrine, Vasubandhu composed his *Treasury of the Abhidharma* (*Abhidharmakośakārikā*), and then also wrote a commentary on it to clarify the meaning. The result was the famous *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* that is critical of Sarvāstivādin philosophy and favors the philosophy of the Sautrāntika school. Then Vasubandhu was converted to Mahāyāna through the guidance of Asaṅga, his half-brother. Consequently, Vasubandhu became a great exponent of the Yogācāra school, and ever since is considered as such despite all the diversity and complexity of his philosophy. A great number of works covering an extraordinarily wide range of intellectual activities are attributed to Vasubandhu. Because of this there are suspicions that they could not have been the achievement of a single historical person.

The date of Vasubandhu is highly controversial because different sources refer to different dates spanning far beyond any human lifespan. Two dates have been, nevertheless, established: one around the middle of the 4th century and the other the early part of the 5th century. Thus, Vasubandhu lived during the Gupta dynasty which lasted almost three hundred years with its zenith from approximately 319 to 550 CE. The imperial court of the Gupta dynasty generously sponsored open public debates that created atmosphere of constant

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challenge for the intellectual life in the capital city of Ayodhyā where Vasubandhu mostly worked and was famous as a great scholar and orator.

The philosophy of Vasubandhu is complex because he seemed to incorporate various doctrines that were favored by him. At times it may appear that he alternated his philosophical positions to suit different texts on which he was commenting. His intellectual activities cover an incredibly wide range of philosophy. Vasubandhu contributed important texts to three Buddhist scholastic traditions: Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, and Yogācāra. He also composed many treatises on a number of Mahāyāna sūtras. Vasubandhu’s most important work on Abhidharma is his Treasury of the Abhidharma (Abhidharmakośakārikā), with its commentary Abhidharmakośabhāṣya. After these, his best known works are his concise Yogācāra syntheses: the Twenty Verses (Viṃśatikākārikā) with its commentary Viṃśatikāvṛtti, the Thirty Verses (Triṃśikā), and the Exposition of the Three Natures (Trisvabhāvanirdeśa).

Since it is not unusual in the Indian context to attribute one’s work to a well-known scholar as an expression of reverence, it is quite possible that some of the works attributed to Vasubandhu may have been the composition by someone else. However, attribution of any work to Vasubandhu renders it very important in the history of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Therefore, for the Ṭīkā to be attributed to Vasubandhu, means to be considered a classical Indian treatise composed by one of the greatest Buddhist philosophers of all times.

3.2. Āryabhadracaryāpraṇidhānaṭīkā within Vasubandhu’s literary corpus

The Ṭīkā does not contain sufficient philosophical content to allow for any meaningful comparison with Vasubandhu's philosophical works. That said, it is similar to compositions attributed to Vasubandhu that elucidate the practical part of the Mahāyāna doctrine. For example, his Dasabhūmika-bhāṣya, commentary on the Daśabhūmika-sūtra, (Sūtra on the ten bodhisattva grounds), extent only in Chinese; Aparimitāyus-sūtra-śāstra, a short treatise on
the Aparimitāyus-sūtra (Sūtra of infinite life), one of the major Pure Land sūtras, extent only in Chinese; Bodhisattva-samvara-vimśaka (Twenty verses on the bodhisattva vows) and especially to the Bodhicittotpādasūtra-śāstra, the treatise on the Sūtra on giving rise to bodhicitta, that has a chapter devoted to bodhisattva’s prañidhāna.

Bhikshu Dharmamitra, translator of Bodhicittotpādasūtra-śāstra from Chinese into English, makes a statement about importance of Vasubandhu for the Mahāyāna tradition: “Vasubandhu’s writings on the Great Vehicle were so compelling that the Chinese Buddhist tradition universally refers to him as ‘Vasubandhu Bodhisattva’.” 95 Bodhicittotpādasūtra-śāstra is extent only in Chinese translation by Kumārajīva (343/344–413). Since Vasubandhu is generally assigned to the early 4th century, while Kumārajīva lived in the late 4th and early 5th century, there is a relatively short period between composition and initial translation. It is worth noticing that Vasubandhu’s approach to giving rise to the bodhicitta contrasts somewhat with that taken by Śāntideva (8th century) in the first four chapters of his Bodhicaryāvatāra.

The third chapter of this treatise—the “Establishment of Vows”—contains a section that is of particular interest for the present purposes. Specifically, this chapter discusses “The Ten Great Vows,” summarized as follows:

- May I always dedicate the roots of virtue for the supreme enlightenment of all beings, and may these roots of virtue never wane;
- May I be always reborn in the lands where there are buddhas and be able to make offerings to them;
- May I be never separate from the buddhas and always serve them;
- May I receive teachings from the buddhas and perfect the five higher knowledges of a bodhisattva;
- May I realize relative and ultimate truth and attain perfect knowledge of the Dharma;
- May I teach Dharma to beings and bring them all to enlightenment;
- May I travel to all the buddhafields to make offerings to the buddhas and receive Dharma teachings;
- May I turn the Wheel of Dharma so that beings give rise to bodhicitta;
- May I always selflessly protect beings; and

May my practice be always in accord with the way of the bodhisattvas.\textsuperscript{96}

Thus, the spirit and topics expanded in the \textit{Bodhicittotpādasūtra-śāstra} are in great concordance with the spirit and topics of the \textit{Tīkā}. This is particularly the case with the first “Great Vow,” which Bhiksu Dharmamitra translates as follows:

Regarding those roots of goodness I have planted in previous lives and in this present body, I pray that all of these roots of goodness may be bestowed upon all of the boundlessly many beings and dedicated to the unsurpassable bodhi. May it be that these vows of mine shall grow in each succeeding thought-moment, shall be produced again in each successive lifetime, shall always be bound to my mind, shall never be forgotten, and shall be guarded and retained by \textit{dhāraṇīs}.\textsuperscript{97}

It is important to note that Kumārajīva’s translations are known as “sense translations” and should not be treated as a literal rendering of an Indic precursor. Thus, Bhikshu Dharmamitra’s English translation is probably a product of an alarming number of transitions from one language medium to another, and as a result is of little help to anyone wishing to reconstruct the source language, nevertheless it contains an interesting reference to the vows to be guarded and retained by \textit{dhāraṇīs}. By such a \textit{dhāraṇī} the author might have meant recitation of the \textit{Rāja} or similar texts.

Summing it up, all that was presented above cannot in any way prove that the \textit{Tīkā} was composed by Vasubandhu. However, it does show that the topics explained in the \textit{Tīkā} are not alien to other writings on the Mahāyāna attributed to him. This part of his literal corpus is yet to be researched and translated. And with this, let us conclude the first part of the thesis—that of Contextualization in which we have explored the \textit{Tīkā} in various historical, intellectual, and doctrinal contexts—and move on to the second part—the critical annotated translation of the \textit{Tīkā} from Tibetan into English.

\textsuperscript{96} Vasubandhu’s \textit{Treatise on Resolving to Become a Buddha}, 39-43.

\textsuperscript{97} Vasubandhu’s \textit{Treatise on Resolving to Become a Buddha}, 39.
Part II. Translation

1.1. Introduction to the critical annotated translation

This English translation of the Ṭīkā (’Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi ’grel pa) showed that there is little variation among the three editions of Sde dge bstan 'gyur, Pe cin bstan 'gyur and Snar thang bstan 'gyur, so it is relatively safe to assume that they stem from a single edition. Footnotes in the translation indicate substantial variations among the editions.98

The alterations in a text are basically of two types: unintended alterations, for example, scribal mistakes, mechanical loss of text, mistakes caused by the change of scripts, etc.; and deliberate alterations, for example, the emendation of an intelligent scribe or an editor who wrongly suspects a corruption.99 In the case of the Ṭīkā, alternations among the three editions are insignificant, and all the three Tibetan editions are for the most part intelligible. I opted to rely on the Sde dge as the main source, and follow Pe cin or Snar thang editions only when the Sde dge was obviously corrupted. Thus in case the translation follows Pe cin or Snar thang instead of Sde dge, it is explicitly mentioned so in the respective footnotes: “Translated according to Pe and/or Snar.”

As for the general translation methodology, I use a combination of “word-for-word” (i.e. “literal”) translation that primarily emphasizes reliance on the literal meanings of lexical compounds with the “sense-for-sense” analyzing words within the context. This method is also described in hermeneutics where it is called a “hermeneutic circle”—as Eric Hirsch explains, “in its classical formulation [this circle] has been described as the interdependence of part and whole: the whole can be understood only though its parts, but the parts can be understood only

98 Substantial are variations that affect the meaning while insubstantial are minor spelling variations, etc.
through the whole.”¹⁰⁰ This approach is of utmost importance for understanding the text as a whole—as one living body, which is ruled by inner (lexical, i.e. words-to-words, ontological, i.e. words-to-meaning, etc.) and outer (intertextual, i.e. text-to-text, and contextual, i.e. text and its time, text and its author, etc.) interdependence.

As was already mentioned, the Ṭīkā functions primarily as a “word commentary” (*tshig 'grel*) in which lexical components of the Rāja, such as obscure words, are explained. It also contains some elements of the commentary on difficult points (*dka* 'grel) that elucidates the meaning of some passages that are difficult to understand. Since the Rāja is an integral part of the Ṭīkā, incorporated within its text in form of direct quotes, it was also analyzed and translated from Tibetan into English—taking existing Sanskrit editions into account whenever warranted. The English translation of the root text of the Rāja is primarily based on the *Sde dge bka’ ’gyur*¹⁰¹ edition, consulting the *Snar thang bka’ ’gyur*¹⁰² and *Pe cin bka’ ’gyur*¹⁰³ editions as attested in the *Bka’ ’gyur dpe bsdur ma*.¹⁰⁴ For the Sanskrit, Asmussen’s edition¹⁰⁵ is taken primarily, and compared with the edition in the *Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Cannon* edition¹⁰⁶ as necessary.

For the sake of clearly understanding of the commentary, complete stanzas of the Rāja are numbered, italicized and inserted in square brackets before the respective sections of the Ṭīkā. In the Tibetan text of the Ṭīkā, the words of the Rāja are highlighted by particles that indicate quotes—e.g. *zhes bya ba, ces pa ni, zhes bya ba la sogs pa*, etc. These words are

¹⁰¹ ’Phags pa bzang po spyod pa’i smon lam gyi rgyal po, Sde dge bka’ ’gyur: [D. No.] 4377, snas tshogs, nyi 300b1-303b3.
¹⁰² ’Phags pa bzang po spyod pa’i smon lam gyi rgyal po, Snar thang bka’ ’gyur: [N] mo 281a5-284b6.
¹⁰³ ’Phags pa bzang po spyod pa’i smon lam gyi rgyal po, Pe cin bka’ ’gyur: [P. No.] 5924, ngo mtsher bstan bcos, mo, 288b6-292a7.
¹⁰⁵ Asmussen, 8-39.
¹⁰⁶ *Samantabhadracaryāprāṇidhānam*, Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Cannon/ [http://www.dsbcproject.org/canon-text/content/40/362](http://www.dsbcproject.org/canon-text/content/40/362)
italicized in English in order to distinguish the words of the root text from the commentary itself.

I have opted to reconstruct common Buddhist terms from Tibetan into Sanskrit—for example, *de bzhin gshegs pa* (*tathāgata), *chos kyi dbyings* (*dharmadhātu*). I have elected to do this in lieu of translating them into English, due to the exceptionally wide variety of English translations of many of these terms. For example, *chos kyi dbyings* (*dharmadhātu*) is variously translated as “expanse of phenomena,” “basic space,” “all-encompassing space,” “totality of existents,” “absolute expanse,” among many others. This plurality of English terms only serves to create confusion and complicate the recognition of these important terms by readers who rely on English. Explanation of the meaning of these reconstructed terms and some common English translations are provided in footnotes. All Sanskrit terms—even those that have entered the English lexicon—are used with diacritics (e.g., samsāra).

For ease of understanding, I have included a topical outline of the *Ṭīkā* as an appendix. The major topic headings of the outline are included in the root text in bold without brackets, while the outline numbers were inserted into the main body of the text in square brackets.

The specific features, and at times complexity, of the Tibetan text of the *Ṭīkā* could be explained by several reasons. In places where the Tibetan of the root text is not clear, I rely on the Sanskrit editions of the *Rāja* along with other Indian and Tibetan commentaries. Thus a caveat to the reader is merited: my translation is not an English rendering of “the *Ṭīkā*.” Rather, it is a translation of a Tibetan text that is itself a translation of an unavailable Sanskrit original.

Similarly, when referring to the Sanskrit editions of the *Rāja*, we must not presume that these texts are identical with whatever version the Tibetan translators of the *Rāja* might have had access to. For this reason, we can use them to support our interpretation of difficult passages in the Tibetan text; but this is not to argue that these Tibetan passages are “corruptions”—nor do I presume to be identifying a “Sanskrit original.”
As for the Ṭīkā, I post that by the time of Ṭīkā’s translation, the translation of the Rāja was already extant and well-known such that it was considered as a “standard.” As it was already mentioned in the first part of the thesis, it is due to the fact, that the Rāja was translated into Tibetan by the 9th century during the earlier spreading of the Dharma in Tibet (snga dar), while the Ṭīkā was most likely translated no less than two centuries later—in the 11th century during the later spreading of the Dharma in Tibet (phyi dar). The Ṭīkā’s translators were diligent in reproducing direct quotes from the Rāja in accordance with the “standard” translation of the time. There are few variations between the Rāja’s text in current bka’ ’gyur editions and the one quoted in the Ṭīkā, but they are mostly insignificant. Thus, it might be asserted that the translators of the Ṭīkā used the same Tibetan translation of the Rāja that we have now.

The second reason that explains the Ṭīkā’s complexity relates to the somewhat unorthodox syntax of the available Tibetan translations. Specifically, the Tibetan translators seem to have tried to maintain the word order of the Sanskrit original—an unorthodox and in many case unfortunate decision that significantly (and needlessly) complicates the meaning of the Tibetan. Being an inflected language, Sanskrit syntax is not bound by word order; by contrast, classical Tibetan—which is agglutinated rather than inflected—keeps a relatively strict word order which plays a significant role in the interpretation of words, phrases, and sentences. Thus the translators’ decision to opt for a sort of “Sanskritised Tibetan syntax” often obscures the meaning of individual words as well as larger units of meaning.

Another significant translation issue is that the original Sanskrit version(s) of the Ṭīkā likely deployed a much vaster range of synonyms to explain lexical compounds in the Rāja than the Tibetan translators had access to in the target language. To be specific: many sentences in the Tibetan translation gloss the meanings of words through simply repetition. To give some
examples: 'gro ba zhes bya ba ni 'gro ba ste\textsuperscript{107}—“The so-called wandering beings are ‘wandering beings’”; lha la yod pa’i skad ni lha'i skad do\textsuperscript{108}—“The languages that gods have are ‘the languages of gods’.” The resulting Tibetan looks so simple that someone might well wonder why a great Indian philosopher such as Vasubandhu would even bother with such trivial explanations; these read in a similar way to “this is called “carrot soup” because there are carrots and there is soup.”

If we accept that something more than this simple re-statement was going on in the original Sanskrit something more needs to be added to the English rendering of the Ėṭīkā. For example, instead of simply re-statements, we can presume that synonyms, grammatical indications, and other are in play in the commentary even where the Tibetan simply re-produces words and phrases. For example, lha is “god,” but also “god realm,” thus Lha la yod p'ai skad ni lha'i skad do could also be understood as “…the languages that exist in the god realm are the languages of gods.” Or: 'gro ba is a noun (“wandering being”), as well as a verb (“to wander, to transmigrate”). Therefore 'gro ba zhes bya ba ni 'gro ba ste can be rendered as follows: “So-called “wandering beings” are those who transmigrate.” And with that as an introduction, let us proceed to the actual English translation.

\textsuperscript{107} Dpe, 1442.
\textsuperscript{108} Dpe, 1449.
1.2. English translation of the Āryabhadracaryāpranidhānaṇīkā

Explanation of the Noble Aspiration for Good Conduct

In the language of India: Āryabhadracaryāpranidhānaṇīkā.

In the language of Tibet: 'Phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi 'grel pa.

Homage to the noble Samantabhadra! Homage to the noble Tārā!

The ten topics that summarize in a genuine way the great Aspiration of Samantabhadra’s Conduct are as follows: [1.] Homage to the tathāgatas; [2.] Making offerings to them; [3.] Confessing wrongdoings; [4.] Rejoicing in merit; [5.] Requesting to turn the wheel of Dharma; [6.] Asking to remain without passing into nirvāṇa; [7.] Dedicating the roots of virtue; [8.] Detailed analysis [of the Rāja]; [9.] Its extent; and [10.] Its benefits.

1. Homage to the tathāgatas

[1. As many as there are, whomever of those in the worlds of ten directions, Tathāgatas of the three times, lions among humans, To all of them without exception I pay homage with my body, speech and mind filled with faith.]

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109 Pe and Snar contain different short titles of the text. Pe: Bzang spyod 'grel pa slob dpon dbyig gnyen gyis mdzad pa bzhugs, and Snar: Bzang spyod 'grel pa slob dpon dbyig gnyen gyis mdzad pa bzhugs so—“Explanation of the [Aspiration for] good conduct composed by Ācārya Vasubandhu”, however Skt. and Tib. names in the text itself are same as in Sde: Dpe, v. 67, 1482.

110 Sde: zhugs su gsol ba; Pe, Snar: bzhugs su gsol ba: Dpe, v. 67, 1482. Translated according to Pe and Snar.

111 As many as there are, whomever of those in the worlds of ten directions (Skt. yāvata keci daśaddiśi loke, Tib. ji snyed su dag phyogs bcu’i ’jig rien na): although Skt. kecid, Tib. su dag is an interrogative plural pronoun “who?” it was translated as “whomever of those” (Tib. gang su dag) due to the context and the following explanation in the commentary.

112 Tathāgata (Skt., Tib. de bzhi gnhegs pa)—literally “Thus Gone”, is an epithet of the Buddha.

113 Lion among humans (Skt. narasimha, Tib. mi yi seng ge) is an epithet of the Buddha.

114 I pay homage with my body, speech and mind filled with faith: although the Tib. lus dang ngag yid dang bas phyag bgyi’o can be read that the body, speech and mind are filled with faith (dang ba), in Skt. kāyatu vāca manena prasannah, the prasannah (filled with faith) is nominative and modifies the subject “I”. However, the commentary speaks about the body, speech and mind being filled with faith, and thus the root verses were also translated accordingly.
The first [topic], if stated in general without specifying, is paying homage with one’s body, speech and mind to the buddhas–bhagavāns\textsuperscript{115} who dwell in buddhafields\textsuperscript{116} in all directions throughout the three times. With regards to the quote As many as there are, this as many means “as many as there are in number.” It also determines measurement and thus can be illustrated by a general term “innumerable” buddhas–bhagavāns. Whomever of those indicates that their number is uncountable. Ten directions refers to “in the ten directions.”\textsuperscript{117} Worlds means “states of rebirth” [of the six classes of beings]\textsuperscript{118} whereas all Tathāgatas in the three times means “those who have reached [enlightenment] in the three times” in [the one] among the three worlds, which is the middle world [that of humans].\textsuperscript{119}

In the quote lions among humans, why are they called lions? This is because everyone is afraid of them yet they themselves do not fear anything. It is also because in this world, including gods, it is the buddhas–bhagavāns who are like [lions]. Since they are like lions, they are taught to be supreme among human beings. Since they are humans as well as lions, they are lions among humans, thus referring to the buddhas–bhagavāns. I pay homage to them means “I bow down.” All means those that in terms of speech and thought are, on one side, perceived as all sounds and visible objects without exception. It is said I pay homage with my body, speech and mind filled with faith because the supreme faith has arisen. Since they are

\textsuperscript{115} Bhagavān (Skt., Tib. bcom ldan ’das)—an epithet of the Buddha. In Tibetan tradition, is usually explained according to its literal meaning in Tibetan as “the transcendent one (Tib. ’das) who has vanquished the four māras (Tib. bcom) and possesses the six qualities (Tib. ldan).” The Sanskrit word carries the sense of possessing fortune (Skt. bhaga). The term has been translated into English as “Blessed One,” “Lord,” or, following the Tibetan, “Transcendent and Accomplished Conqueror.”

\textsuperscript{116} Buddhafield (Skt. buddhakṣetra, Tib. zhing kham or sangs rgyas kyi zing) or pure realm (Tib. dag pa’i zning)—a pure realm manifested by a buddha or a great bodhisattva. Beings born into a buddhafield may travel the path towards enlightenment without falling back into the lower realms.

\textsuperscript{117} Ten directions (Skt. daśadiga, Tib. phyogs bcu)—the four cardinal directions, the four intermediate directions, zenith and nadir.

\textsuperscript{118} Worlds mean “states of rebirth” [of the six classes of beings] (Tib. ’jig rten zhes pa ni ’gro ba’o): Skt. loka, Tib. ’jig rten refers to both the world as a world-system and the beings who inhabit it (Tib. ’gro ba, Skt. jagat).

\textsuperscript{119} The middle world of humans (Tib. bar mi’i ’jig rten) is one among the three worlds (Tib. ’jig rten gsum): 1) the upper world of gods (Tib. steng tha’i ’jig rten); 2) the middle world of humans (Tib. bar mi’i ’jig rten); and 3) the lower world of nāgas (Tib. ’og klü’i ’jig rten).
moved alone by the mind completely filled with faith, the body and speech are [also] fully filled with faith.

Now, it [the Rāja] distinguishes them individually and describes the homage with one’s body, speech and mind. The first is the homage with one’s body.

[2. By the power of this aspiration for good conduct, All the jinas\textsuperscript{120} are directly perceived\textsuperscript{121} by my mind. Bowing down\textsuperscript{122} with as many bodies as there are particles in buddhafields I prostrate to all the jinas.]

In the quote By the power of this aspiration for good conduct..., the good means “virtuous.” Since it is good and also conduct, thus it refers to “the bodhisattva conduct.” In that sense, aspiration means a “wish to pursue an aspiration or purpose.” Its power means that it is not overcome by māras\textsuperscript{123} and the like, and is victorious over opposing factors. For this reason, [the quote] says by its power. Other than such a type [of aspiration] nothing else will accomplish its task.

Since one focuses on a single buddha with one’s mind, then how does the mental praising turns the body, which is equal in number to particles in buddhafields, into something else, such as homage [with one’s body]? All the jinas are directly perceived by my mind means that all, each and every, tathāgata is directly present before the mind. As many as there are particles in buddhafields means I prostrate with the bodies equal [in number] to the particles in buddhafields. As many as is a synonym of “equal to.” That means to prostrate with bodies

\textsuperscript{120} Jina (Skt., Tib. rgyal ba)—literally “The Victorious One,” an epithet of the Buddha.

\textsuperscript{121} Directly perceived (Skt. abhimukhī, Tib. mngon sum).

\textsuperscript{122} Bowing down (Skt. karomi pranāmam, Tib. btud pa).

\textsuperscript{123} māra (Skt., Tib. bdud)—obstructive forces that create obstacles on the spiritual path. In the sūtra context, the four māras are: (1) the māra of the aggregates (Skt. skhandamāra, Tib. phung po’i bdud), which symbolizes clinging to forms, perceptions, and mental states as real; (2) the māra of the afflictions (Skt. kleśamāra, Tib. nyon mongs kyi bdud), which symbolizes being overpowered by afflictions; (3) the māra of the Lord of Death (Skt. mṛtyumāra, Tib. chi bdag gi bdud), which symbolizes both death itself, which cuts short precious human life, and also fear of change, impermanence and death; and (4) the māra of the son of gods (Skt. devaputramāra, Tib. tha’i bu’i bdud), which symbolizes craving for pleasures and peace.
equal in number to particles in the fields of all buddhas dwelling in ten directions throughout the three times without differentiation—to all of them without exception.

In the quote I prostrate to all the jinas, it is said that jina means “victorious over enemies,” that is [victorious over] afflictions or māras. As it is said, the Bhagavān uttered these words: “I am victorious over wrongdoing and unvirtuous dharmas. Therefore, it implies I am a Jina [Victorious One].” I prostrate to all the jinas dwelling throughout the three times.

[3. On one particle there are as many buddhas as there are particles
Seated amidst sons of buddhas.]
In this way, I imagine the entire dharmadhātu without exception
Is filled with buddhas.]

Likewise, as for the homage with one’s mind, in the quote On one particle..., the on one particle means “on the tip of one particle.” As many buddhas as particles, since they are not specified, this refers to sugatas equal in number to the particles in the fields of all buddhas who dwell throughout the three times, without exception. Amidst sons of buddhas is explained to mean that one imagines each of them dwelling in the midst of the gatherings of limitless bodhisattvas. Just how one sees them on top of a single particle, one should, according to the same logic, also view the rest of them.

124 Sde: sgra—sound; Pe, Snar: dgra—enemy, Dpe 1438-11. Translated according to Pe and Snar.
125 Nyer 'gro understood as nye bar 'gro—“it implies,” “it undergoes.” Possible Skt. upaiti.
126 The only similar quote to the mentioned here sangs rgyas becom ldan 'das la de skad du brjod do// ji skad gsungs pa/ sdig pa mi dge'i chos las nga brgyal te/ de bas nyer 'gro nga ni rgyal ba yin// was found in the Mngon par 'byung ba'i mdo (Skt. Abhinirakramanāsūtra, Eng. Sūtra o n Going Forth) (Toh 301), Sde dge bk'a 'gyur, 72-1-58b-3: sdig pa'i chos ni ngas becom pas/ de bas nyer 'gro nga rgyal ba'o//
127 Sons of buddhas (Skt. buddhapatra, Tib. sang rgyas sras)—an epithet for bodhisattvas.
128 Dharmadhātu (Skt., Tib. chos kyi bhyings)—literally “expanse of phenomena”, “expanse of reality”, etc. Here Tibetan reads rnams: chos kyi bhyings rnams that can be understood as a plural particle or as “all”, “many”, etc. Since Skt. dharmadhātu is not pluralized, and the commentary does not refer to the pluralized meaning, the rnams was translated as “entire” and dharmadhātu kept singular.
129 Sugata (Skt., Tib. bde bar gshegs pa)—literally “Gone to Bliss,” an epithet of the Buddha.
As for the dharmadhātu, since it is the self-nature of all phenomena, the dharmatā, the expanse of tathātā [suchness], it is called the dharmadhātu [the expanse of phenomena]. Through such an appearance like this alone, one should imagine with their mind each of the buddhas—bhagavāns resting atop a particle while being surrounded by immeasurable gatherings of awakened bodhisattvas in the dharmadhātu [the expanse of phenomena] filling it completely and uninterruptedly. One should imagine with the mind the actions of speech and mind. Since all the actions of body and speech are influenced by the mind, [the Rāja] teaches in between [body and speech actions] the actions of the mind.

[4. [Saluting] them with the ocean of inexhaustible praises, With all sounds of the ocean of melodious attributes, I proclaim qualities of all the jinas And praise all sugatas.]

Now, it [the Rāja] describes homage with one’s speech. In the quote [Saluting] them with the ocean of inexhaustible praises..., them means “to imagine them [buddhas] same as before,” and as for the ocean of inexhaustible praises that is without deterioration, limitation, or exhaustion, it refers to the ocean of qualities, which is the ocean of their inexhaustible praises. Here the word praises is an alternate for “qualities”, and the word ocean should be considered to be a gathering of multitudes. Thus it is the inexhaustible ocean of their qualities. In the quote With all sounds of the ocean of melodious attributes, the word attributes

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130 Dharmatā (Skt., Tib. chos nyid)—the nature of phenomena, the true nature of reality, etc.
131 Thatātā (Skt., Tib. de bzhin nyid)—literally “as it is,” “just like that,” suchness, thusness, etc.
132 This sentence is absent in Sde. Added according to Pe and Snar: lus dang nag gi las ni yid kyis mos par bya’o, Dpe, 1439-6.
133 Them (Skt. teṣu (m. pl. loc. of tad), Tib. de dag)—refers to the buddhas.
134 Sounds of the ocean of melodious attributes (Skt. sarvasvarāṅgasamudrarutebhīḥ, Tib. dhyangs kyi yan lag rgya mtsho’i sgra): according to the commentary, can be also translated as “sounds of the ocean of melodious (or voice) qualities.”
135 Sde: zag pa med pa—without contamination; Pe, Snar: zad pa med pa—without exhaustion, Dpe, 1439-9. Translated according to Pe and Snar.
136 Alternate (Tib. rnam grang).
137 Gathering of multitudes (Tib. mang po’i tshogs).
here is an alternate for “qualities.” Why is that so? It is because in the vehicle of śrāvakas\textsuperscript{138} it is taught that what is called the speech of the Bhagavān is endowed with five attributes, and in the great vehicle it is taught to be endowed with sixty attributes, hundred thousand [attributes], as well as with immeasurable qualities. As for that, it is also to understand that it is what is called “endowed with five attributes.” As for the all, it refers to the sound endowed with the ocean of melodious qualities, which are these melodies.

As for the quote I proclaim qualities of all the jinas, the qualities of all the jinas refers to the bodhicitta they have generated, as well as the nature of immeasurable uncommon body, speech and mind. I proclaim means “I completely or utterly glorify.” In front of each sugata, I praise all of them. The [I proclaim qualities of all the jinas] and the ocean of inexhaustible praises have a common ground\textsuperscript{139} with it [ocean of inexhaustible praises] being a particular quality. It means “I\textsuperscript{140} proclaim praises of the ocean of inexhaustible qualities of sugatas.”

2. Making offerings

[5. Perfect flowers and perfect garlands, Supreme musical instruments, perfumes and parasols, Supreme butter lamps and perfect incense
I will offer to the jinas.

6. Perfect garments and supreme scents
Aromatic powders equal to Mount Meru\textsuperscript{141}
Arranged in most exalted way
I will offer to the jinas.]

\textsuperscript{138} Śrāvaka (Skt., Tib. nyan thos)—literally “hearer,” a follower of the foundational vehicle who strives to attain the level of an arhat.

\textsuperscript{139} Common ground (Tib. gzhi mthun pa), also common locus, being of shared or synonymous meaning. Possible Skt. samānādhikarana.

\textsuperscript{140} Sde: dag, Pe, Snar: bdag, Dpe, 1440-2. Translated according to Pe and Snar.

\textsuperscript{141} Meru (Skt., Tib. ri rgyal po ri rab) is the sacred five-peaked mountain of the Buddhist cosmology considered to be the center of all the physical, metaphysical and spiritual universes.
It [the Rāja] mentions two kinds of offerings: surpassable\textsuperscript{142} and unsurpassable offerings to the buddhas–bhagavāns. Among these two kinds [of offerings], these two stanzas are dedicated to surpassable offerings. \textit{Perfect flowers}, etc., as it is said, are the supreme things: \textit{perfect flowers, perfect garlands} and \textit{perfect musical instruments}. The \textit{supreme perfumes} are sandalwood, saffron, and so forth. [The offering includes] supreme \textit{parasols, supreme butter lamps, supreme incense}, and supreme \textit{garments}. \textit{Supreme scents} are various fragrant compounds. \textit{Aromatic powders} are sandalwood, saffron, camphor, and essence of agar wood equal [in amount] to the Mount Meru. \textit{Arranged in most exalted way} means being “the most supreme of arrangements.” The word \textit{arrangement} here is an alternate for “multitude.”

Endowed with all the supreme things of gods and humans—all these \textit{I will offer to the jinas}.

Then it [the Rāja] speaks about the unsurpassable offerings.

\begin{quote}
\textit{[7. Whatever unsurpassable vast offerings—}
\textit{With devotion to all the jinas,}
\textit{Through the power of faith in the good conduct,}
\textit{I pay homage and make offerings to all the jinas.]}
\end{quote}

In the quote \textit{Whatever unsurpassable vast offerings...}, those are whichever kinds of unsurpassable offerings that arise through the power of samādhi\textsuperscript{143} of bodhisattvas and are spread throughout all the buddhafields. Within the supreme dharmadhātu, I make offerings to all the jinas with a particularly devoted mind.

\textit{Through the power of faith in the good conduct} means through the power of inspiration and particular devotion, trust and certainty in the good conduct. Here the \textit{good conduct} is like the phrase “such offerings are made by bodhisattvas” that one hears in many sūtras. Now, in the following words, comes the conclusion of homage and offerings, \textit{I pay homage and make offerings to all the jinas} means “I prostrate and make offerings to all the victorious ones.”

\textsuperscript{142} Surpassable (Tib. \textit{bla dang bcas pa})—although the word “surpassable” is not common, it was used in order to render the Tib. meaning and keep the opposition with the “unsurpassable” (Tib. \textit{bla na med pa}).

\textsuperscript{143} Samādhi (Skt., Tib. tīng nge ’de’zin) is often translated as “meditative absorption” or “concentration.” It can refer to both the practice and the state of meditation.
3. Confessing wrongdoings

[8. Under the power of attachment, anger and delusion,
   With my body, speech and likewise with my mind,
   Whatever negative deeds I have committed
   I confess them all, each and every one.]

It [the Rāja] describes confessing negative deeds through three aspects: reason, mode and nature. As for Under the power of attachment, etc., what is the reason? The reason is [that we have] attachment, anger and delusion. What is the mode? The mode is [the deeds committed] by the body, speech and mind. And as to the nature, any negative deeds that I have committed, that I encouraged and rejoiced in, in this life or in other lives, I confess them all in the momentary instant with a mind full of dread in front of jinas together with their sons, and I promise not to commit them again.

4. Rejoicing in merit

[9. Jinas and Buddha’s sons in the ten directions
   Pratyekabuddhas,144 those of learning145 and no more learning,146
   And any merit of wandering beings as well—
   In all this I rejoice.]

Now, it [the Rāja] describes rejoicing in merits. In the quote Jinas and Buddha’s sons in the ten directions, I rejoice in the immeasurable accumulations of mundane and supramundane merit and the inconceivable sphere of primordial wisdom throughout the three times belonging to the buddhas–bhagavāns who dwell throughout the three times, and of each and every [bodhisattva], from those who have nominally generated bodhicitta up to those who have reached the bhūmis and pārāmitas; and in the mundane and supramundane merit of any

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144 Pratyekabuddhas (Skt., Tib. rang sangs rgyas)—literally “solitary awakened,” are followers of the foundational vehicle who attain the level of a pratyekabuddha arhat by themselves, without relying on a teacher.
145 Refers to the path of learning (Skt. śaikṣmārga, Tib. slob pa’i lam)—stages of the path before the path of no-more-learning that include the first four of the five paths. While on the path of learning, the practitioner hears, contemplates, and meditates the teachings in order to realize and integrate the view.
146 Refers to the path of no-more-learning (Skt. aśaikṣamārga, Tib. mi slob pa’i lam)—the fifth of the five paths, synonym of Buddhahood. So called because at this stage there is nothing more to learn or train in.
pratyekabuddhas of the two kinds: those who act alone like rhinoceros, and those who act in assembly; and in the merit of the seven types of individuals [engaged in] learning and all the arhats of no more learning; and in the merit of all the wandering beings in the ten directions, whichever merit they have accumulated by means of the nature of generosity, discipline and meditation throughout the three times—in this merit in a momentary instant, I rejoice in all of it.

Since the term “wandering beings” is an all-inclusive word, if the merit of those who are [engaged in] learning is included in it, why is it taught separately? That is not the case. So called “wandering beings” are those who transmigrate, which means they wander in samsara by force of strong craving. Hence it denotes “wandering beings.” Among them, some do not transmigrate at all. It is said, that these ones, since they don’t transmigrate, are not called by the term “wandering beings.” The difference is taught to be so.

5. Requesting to turn the wheel of Dharma

[10. All the beacons of the worlds in the ten directions
Who gradually traversed the stages of awakening and attained the non-attachment, Buddhahood. All the protectors, I exert you

147 Traditionally, there are two types of pratyekabuddhas distinguished: those like rhinoceros, which refers to the image of a rhino, a solitary animal, and those like the flock of birds.

148 The Nikāyas stipulate stages through which a person passes on the way toward the attainment of nirvāṇa. These are: (1) one practicing for the realization of the fruit of stream-enterer (Skt. śrōṇāpanna, Tib. rgyun zhugs pa); (2) the stream-enterer; (3) one practicing for the realization of the fruit of once-returner (Skt. sakrdāgāmin, Tib. lan cig phyir 'ong ba); (4) the once-returner, (5) one practicing for the realization of the fruit of non-returner (Skt. anāgāmin, Tib. phyir mi 'ong ba); (6) the non-returner, (7) one practicing for the realization of the fruit of arhat (Skt., Tib. dgra bcom pa); (8) the arhat. The first seven types of individuals are collectively known as Skt. saikṣa, Tib. slob pa, learners, trainees or disciples in the higher training; the arhat is called the Skt. aśaikṣa, Tib. mi slob pa, non-learners, the ones beyond training.

149 Beacon of the world (Skt. lokapradīpa, Tib. 'jig rten sgron ma) is an epithet of the Buddha.

150 Non-attachment (Skt. asaṅga, Tib. ma chaags)—Tib. ma chaags pa often means not only non-attachment as such but also everything that is to be abandoned—the two obscurations: afflictive obscurations (Skt. kleśa-varaṇa, Tib. nyon sgrīb) and cognitive obscurations (Skt. jñeyavaraṇa, Tib. shes sgrīb).

151 Buddhahood (Skt. bodhivibuddha, Tib. sangs rgyas)—Skt. literary reads “those who awakened to the awakening” with bodhi being a noun, vi—intensifier and buddha—verb.
To turn the unsurpassable wheel of Dharma.]

Now, it [the Rāja] describes the request to turn the wheel of Dharma. In the quote All\textsuperscript{152} the beacons of the worlds of the ten directions, the beacons of the worlds of the ten directions are the beacons for wanderings beings. Since they clear away the multitude of outer and inner natures of darkness, the buddhas–bhagavāns are beacons of the worlds. The attainment of awakening is the direct and authentic realization of the unsurpassed, perfect and complete awakening. The attainment of non-attachment means to completely know the aspects of all things without exception through the power of awakening without attachment, and therefore having genuinely cleared away all the afflictions to realize the profound Dharma. Those endowed with concern for the benefit of others, etc., will realize what is difficult [to realize the profound Dharma].

All those who sit in front of the bodhi tree, the sole protectors of the world, whoever of them does not want to explain the Dharma in the many world realms, I plant my knee on the ground and join my palms, beseech them to turn the unsurpassable wheel of Dharma that shines the light of unsurpassable wisdom for wandering beings covered by the darkness of ignorance. This request should be made in front of them, to each and every one, in this way.

6. Asking to remain without passing into nirvāṇa

[11. Those who wish to manifest nirvāṇa,\textsuperscript{153}]

For the sake of benefit and happiness of all the wandering beings,
For kalpas as many as there are particles in the universe
With palms joined, I ask you to stay.]

\textsuperscript{152} Sde, Pe and Snar versions of the Rāja read gang rnam\textsuperscript{s} and the commentary quotes it as gang yang.

\textsuperscript{153} Manifest nirvāṇa (Skt. nīrṇītī darsītukāmāḥ, Tib. mya ngan 'd' ston)—the Skt. reads nīrṇītī instead of nirvāṇa, both are translated as mya ngan 'd' ba or mya ngan las 'das pa in Tibetan—"transcendence from pain"—with 'd' in the future tense and 'das'—past tense. Skt. nīrṇītī is not exactly same as nirvāṇa since it apparently has stronger implicit meaning of abandonment or disengagement.
As for asking them to remain without passing into nirvāṇa, as it [the Rāja] says: *Those who wish to manifest nirvāṇa*, etc. *Those who* in the quote is non-specific, but since it immediately follows [the previous section] it is connected to *All the beacons of the worlds in the ten directions*. Any buddhas–bhagavāns of the worlds in the ten directions who have passed beyond suffering and wish to display the passing into complete nirvāṇa, all those I ask, *with palms joined*, to remain for long time. For how long? For a duration of kalpas equal in number to all the particles throughout the three times. For what purpose? *For the sake of benefit and happiness of wandering beings* who utterly lack protection. Their benefit means genuine happiness, that is, accomplishing the path of passing beyond suffering (nirvāṇa). *Happiness* here means the attainment of higher realms.

7. Dedicating the roots of virtue

[12. Through homage, offering, confession, Rejoicing, requesting and asking— The smallest virtue that I have accumulated— All of it I dedicate to enlightenment.]

Now comes the dedication of the heap of merit accumulated by means of homage, etc.—the content that has been explained previously. As for the quote *Through homage, offering, etc., whatever merit that I have gathered and generated by homage, offering, confessing negative deeds, rejoicing in merit, requesting the tathāgatas [to turn the wheel of Dharma] and asking tathāgatas [not to pass into nirvāṇa]—all of it I dedicate to the unsurpassable, perfect and complete awakening.*

8. Detailed analysis

Now, the eighth part—detailed analysis. This is the section that makes a part in the *Samantabhadra’s Aspiration*. It has sixteen divisions: [8.1.] Intention; [8.2.] Not forgetting bodhicitta; [8.3.] Untainted application; [8.4.] Benefitting beings; [8.5.] Armor [of dedication];
8.1. Intention

The first division is intention, which can also be further divided into three sections.

8.1.1. Intention to fulfill the intent to make offerings to the tathāgatas

The first is the intention to fulfill the intent to make offerings to the tathāgatas.

[13. To the buddhas of the past and to those who are dwelling now
In the worlds of the ten directions, I make offerings.
May all those who have not come yet, quickly
Fulfill their intentions and gradually awaken to Buddhahood.]

As for the quote To the buddhas of the past, etc., to all the previous buddhas—bhagavāns who have passed into nirvāṇa, all those who are living and prospering now in various world realms throughout the ten directions benefiting wandering beings, and likewise those who abide as a cause for the supreme happiness—may they be presented with unsurpassable offerings. May all those who are to appear in the future fulfill the objective they wish for in their minds and attain the awakening of the Buddhahood extremely quickly. The first half [of the stanza] shows the intention to make offerings to the tathāgatas and the latter half the fulfillment of their wishes.
8.1.2. Intention to purify buddhafields

[14. As many fields as there are in the ten directions,
May they become vast and utterly pure.
May they be filled with jinas who came to sit
In front of the mighty bodhi trees,\textsuperscript{154} as well as with the Buddha’s sons.]

It [the Rāja] teaches the following about the intention to purify buddhafields. In the quote \textit{As many fields as there are in the ten directions, etc., as many as there are} means “may all the buddhafields that exist throughout the ten directions be pure and as vast as Sukhāvatī,\textsuperscript{155} and may each of them vastly remain as uncountable world realms.” In the quote \textit{May they be filled with jinas who came to sit in front of the mighty bodhi trees} means to fill [the fields] with the buddhas–bhagavāns who \textit{sit in front of mighty bodhi trees} as well as with bodhisattvas, equally and incessantly pervading them [the fields].

8.1.3. Intention to bestow happiness upon sentient beings

[15. As many sentient beings as there are in the ten directions—
May they always be healthy and happy.
May all the wandering beings be in accord with righteous aims,\textsuperscript{156}
And likewise may their hopes be fulfilled.]

It [the Rāja] teaches the following about the intention to bestow happiness upon sentient beings. In the quote \textit{As many sentient beings as there are in the ten directions}, etc., means may all beings of the six classes,\textsuperscript{157} as many as there are, that could be condensed into the four modes of birth\textsuperscript{158} in the world realms throughout the ten directions, actualize happiness in the

\textsuperscript{154} Bodhi tree (Skt. \textit{bodhidruma}, Tib. \textit{byang chub shing})—the “tree of awakening” under which, according to Mahāyāna, all buddhas attain awakening.

\textsuperscript{155} Sukhāvatī (Skt., Tib. \textit{de ba can})—“Blissful” buddhafIELD of Buddha Amitābha.

\textsuperscript{156} Righteous aims (Skt. \textit{dharmiku artho}, Tib. \textit{chos kyi don rnams})—Tib. unlike Skt. pluralizes “aim”; refers to beings following the righteous path of Dharma teachings.

\textsuperscript{157} Six classes of beings (Skt. \textit{sadgati}, Tib. ‘\textit{gro drug or rigs drug}’)—the major modes of existence within saṃsāra, each caused and dominated by a particular affliction (Skt. \textit{kleśa}, Tib. \textit{nyon mongs}): (1) hell beings—anger; (2) hungry ghosts—greed; (3) animals—stupidity; (4) human beings—desire; (5) demi-gods—jealousy; (6) gods—pride.

\textsuperscript{158} Modes of birth (Skt. \textit{yonī}, Tib. \textit{skyi gnas})—all forms of birth fall into one of four categories: (1) womb birth; (2) egg birth; (3) birth from warmth and moisture; (4) miraculous birth.
form of supreme uncontaminated happiness. May they be without physical and mental illnesses. *Always* means may they be so continuously. Also, may they gain livelihood,\(^{159}\) that accords [with the Dharma] following the example [of buddhas and bodhisattvas]. Through the *righteous* intention alone may all wandering beings always be prosperous.

8.2. Not forgetting bodhicitta

[16. *May I practice the conduct for awakening*  
*And remember my births in all states of existence.*\(^{160}\)  
*In all my successive lives, throughout both death and rebirth,*\(^{161}\)  
*May I always go forth.*\(^{162}\) ]

17. *May I train in the footsteps of all the jinas*  
*And completely perfect the good conduct.*  
*May my disciplined conduct be stainless, utterly pure,*  
*Always not weakening and flawless.*

18. *In the languages of gods, nāgas,*\(^{163}\) *and yakṣas,*\(^{164}\)  
*Also in the languages of kumbhāṇḍas*\(^{165}\) *and humans,*  
*In the languages of all wandering beings, as many as there are—*  
*In all languages, may I teach Dharma.*

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\(^{159}\) Livelihood (Tib. *rnyed pa'i yon*), Pe, Snar: *snyed pa'i yon tan*, Dpe 1446-5, 1446-6. *Rnyed pa*—acquisition, property, goods, gain, profit, and *yon tan*—qualities, valuables, property, rewards, gifts, wages, etc., in the context, translated as “livelihood.”

\(^{160}\) States of existence (Skt. *gati*, Tib. 'gro ba)—six realms (hells, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, demi-gods and gods) wherein a being may be reborn.

\(^{161}\) Throughout both death and rebirth (Skt. *cyutyupapatiḥ (cyuti-upapattī)*, Tib. 'chi 'pho skye ba). Skt. *cyuti*—fall away, die; *upapatti* is the nom. (acc. and voc.) dual form of upapatti—arise, be born, rebirth. Since it is a dual Skt. form, it was rendered as “both”.

\(^{162}\) To go forth (Skt. *pravrajita*, Tib. *rab tu byung ba*)—to go forth from the home life into homelessness (Tib. *khyim nas khyim med par rab tu byung ba*), to become ordained as a monk or a nun.

\(^{163}\) Nāga (Skt., Tib. *klu*)—serpent spirits classified as one of the eight classes of gods and demons, or as animals or demi-gods. They live beneath the surface of the earth or in the water and are believed to be endowed with magical powers and wealth.

\(^{164}\) Yakṣa (Skt., Tib. *gnod sbyin*)—class of semi-divine beings associated with woods and mountains that has two interpretations: (1) regarded as of a benevolent and inoffensive disposition; (2) regarded as malicious demons.

\(^{165}\) Kumbhāṇḍa (Skt., Tib. *grul bum*)—a class of demons said to dwell in cemeteries.
19. May I be gentle, strive in pāramitās,
And never forget bodhicitta.
Whatever negative actions that obscure me—
May all of them, without exception, be purified.

Now, it [the Rāja] teaches the following about the two kinds of not forgetting bodhicitta in four verses, which explain the abandoning of non-conducive factors. They start from May I practice the conduct for awakening and go until May all of them, without exception, be purified. The awakening here refers to the unsurpassable, complete and perfect awakening. The training for that purpose is the conduct for awakening. The practice of that is [to say] “may I realize it [awakening] and not forget all wandering beings.” The quote In all my successive lives, through both death and rebirth, etc. means “may I always go forth, throughout both death and rebirth.” This is to be actually understood as referring to the state between birth and death. This is the first reason to not forget bodhicitta.

In the quote May I train in the footsteps of all the jinas, etc., the training in the precepts of the jinas dwelling throughout the three times refers to the good conduct. In And completely perfect good conduct, to completely perfect means “to make it excellent.” How is this done? It is, as it is said, May my disciplined conduct be utterly pure and stainless! Always not weakening and flawless. It is like, for example, a precious wish-fulfilling jewel not covered by adventitious stains. Since it lacks stains it is stainless. Since it is not covered by defects, such as rust, it is naturally utterly pure. For that very reason it is without flaws of weakening, it fulfills in an excellent way all wishes, completely pacifies all miseries, clears away all illnesses, and averts untimely death. It engages solely in accomplishing excellent benefit of others exclusively.

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166 Gentle (Skt. peśalu, Tib. des). The DSBC Skt. edition has ye khalu instead of peśalu; Tib. des pa—gentle, peaceful, chaste, noble, etc.

167 Pāramitā (Skt., Tib. pha rol tu phin pa)—six “transcendent perfections” (generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditative concentration and wisdom) that comprise the training of a bodhisattva, which is bodhicitta of application. The sixth pāramitā can be further divided into four (skillful means, strength, aspiration and primordial wisdom), resulting in ten pāramitās.
Likewise, here too, the jewel which resembles the precious discipline of a bodhisattva, being free from adventitious stains and the stains of karma and afflictions, it is *stainless*. This is because it is free from the rust-like defects of attitudes of the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha vehicle. If it did not have them, they would not arise, therefore it is the nature of this precious attitude, omniscience. *Utterly* means “completely.” *Pure* means “utterly pure.” Because one strives in all the precepts of a bodhisattva, one’s precepts, which have not been tainted by infractions, have not degenerated. Therefore, they are *not weakening*.

If the discipline of a bodhisattva is not pierced even in the slightest by the needle of craving throughout the three times—the origination of craving related to the past objects, which have been experienced, craving which delights in attachment to the future and this life, or craving which clings to what appears now—it is *flawless*. Like the earth, it is the basis of the qualities of all buddhas and bodhisattvas and therefore it abundantly fulfills the wishes of all wandering beings. It clears away torments, pacifies all illnesses, renders life of gods and humans boundless—it exclusively engages in solely accomplishing abundant benefit of others alone. According to its [discipline of a bodhisattva] contextual meaning, it clears away all the torments of body and mind. That which is called discipline here, is thus called because it soothes\textsuperscript{168} [torments]. Since one conducts themselves with discipline, it says a *disciplined conduct*. *Conduct* means “to conduct oneself.” It is until awakening that one continuously conducts oneself in this very manner, with the *disciplined conduct*, which is *stainless, utterly pure, not weakening and flawless*.

Now, the second reason for not forgetting bodhicitta is as follows. In the quote *In the languages of gods*, etc., the languages that exist in the god realm are the languages of gods. The *languages of yakṣas, nāgas, kumbhāṇdas and humans* are their respective languages. In

\textsuperscript{168} Discipline here, is thus called because it soothes [torments] (Tib. *tshul khrims zhes pa ni bsil bar byed pas na tshul khrims te*). The Tibetan does not reflect the Sanskrit relation Vasubandhu draws here between *śīla* (*tshul khrims*, discipline) and *śītī* (*bhavati*), “being cooled”.

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brief, in *languages of all the wandering beings*, however many there are, in such and such [languages] I will teach Dharma to each and one of them until the essence of enlightenment.

As for the third reason, *May I be gentle*, etc., *gentle* means “pliable” and “peaceful.” The *parāmitas* refer to generosity, etc., the ten [parāmitas]. *Striving* in them means I will persevere in them with tireless mind in all circumstances. What *I will not* refers to bodhicitta that I will [not forget] even in the slightest. *I will not forget* means it will not be forgotten until the essence of enlightenment.

The three and a half lines have taught about obscurations concerning giving rise to bodhicitta and their antidotes. Now, the fourth reason: the two lines teach about abandoning non-conducive factors. In the quote *Whatever negative actions that obscure me*, etc., *whatever negative actions that obscure me* are those that hinder bodhicitta. May all of them in their entirety be completely exhausted and abandoned without any exception.

### 8.3. Untainted application

[20. *From karma, afflictions and the work of Māra,*

*May I be freed and also act for the wanderers of the world*

*Like the lotus unpolluted by [muddy] water,*

*Like the sun and the moon unobstructed in the sky.*]

Now, the third part of untainted application. It is taught [by means of three questions]: from what, where, and like what. In the quote *From karma, afflictions*, etc., “from what” [one is liberated] refers to abandoning *karma*, *afflictions* and the path of Māra. *Karma*, since it is not specified, held to be threefold, specifically virtuous, unvirtuous and non-transferable.\(^{169}\) Among those, liberation from non-virtuous *karma*, *afflictions* and the path of Māra is to always conduct oneself without being stained by them. Where [the conduct is to be practiced]? In the

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\(^{169}\) Refers to the three types of karma: (1) virtuous (Tib. *bsod nams kyi las*), (2) unvirtuous (Tib. *bsod nams min pa’i las*), and (3) non-transferable (also unwavering) karma (Tib. *mi g.yo b’ai las*). The third one refers to abiding in very subtle states of meditation that lead to rebirth in the two highest realms—form and formless realm, and there is no flexibility for it to ripen in any other way.
world: god realms, etc. Like what [is this conduct]? Like the lotus unpolluted by [muddy] water. Although the lotus grows from [muddy] water it is not stained by the water. Like that, I will engage in the conduct that is not stained by affictions, the path of Māra and worldly concerns. Likewise, since it [the conduct] is not stained by the results of ripening of virtuous, unvirtuous and non-transferable karma, it is the acting exclusively for the benefit and happiness of others. So called bodhisattva conduct originates from the depth of one’s heart. What it is like? In the quote Like the sun and the moon unobstructed in the sky, since the moon and the sun are like a wish-fulfilling jewel in the world, it is an engagement solely for the benefit of others. Since it is not stained even in the slightest by the [concern for] one’s own benefit, it is like the movement [of sun and moon] day and night in the sky. As for this, the so-called Māra is whatever cuts one’s [advancement] towards virtue and hinders the path of awakening. It casts one back from the genuine path. As for the etymology, since it is the reason that cuts the life force of Dharma, it is a demon, and so it is called Māra. Hindering this path, the beneficial things, it is deceptive in this life and in all other lives.

8.4. Benefitting beings

[21. Throughout the extent and directions of the universe, however many there are, I will completely pacify sufferings of the lower realms. I will lead all wandering beings to happiness, And act for the benefit of all the wanderers.]

Now, the fourth part: it [the Rāja] teaches the following about benefiting beings. In the quote I will completely pacify sufferings of the lower realms, etc., all sufferings of wandering beings refer to the suffering of the lower realms, which means births into the lower realms, I will completely pacify them. For which reason the text speaks only about thoroughly pacifying

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170 Worldly concerns (tib. ’jig rten p’ai chos)—eight samsaric preoccupations: (1-2) hope for happiness and fear of suffering; (3-4) hope for fame and fear of insignificance; (5-6) hope for praise and fear of blame; (7-8) hope for gain and fear of loss.

171 Snar: sgyu yi bslu ba —deceptive, Dpe, 67-145. Translated according to Snar.
sufferings of the lower realms? That is because they are explicitly taught to be the very essence of extreme suffering. It is to be understood that I will also pacify all sufferings of samsāra. I will also establish all wandering beings in the unsurpassable happiness. How will I do it? By joining [them] through the intention of [leading them to] happiness, and not doing anything else as long as they will not attain unsurpassable primordial wisdom, acting so with the mind that is never weary. For how long? Throughout the extent and directions of the universe, however many there are. The however many there are means “however big is the extent of the universe.” As long as the continuation of buddhafields does not change from one kalpa\textsuperscript{172} into the next. The directions mean “I will act in the ten directions,” as many as that. So is this connection.

8.5. Armor [of dedication]

Now, it [the Rāja] teaches the following about the fifth part—the armor [of dedication]. It can be also further divided into three sections: [8.5.1.] Confirming with the ways of beings; [8.5.2.] Bringing the Buddhadharma to absolute perfection; [8.5.3.] Teaching clearly the sublime Dharma.

8.5.1. Confirming with the ways of beings

[22. I will bring the conduct of awakening to perfection. Confirming with the ways of beings\textsuperscript{173} I will thoroughly teach [them] the good conduct, And do so in all the future kalpas.]

\textsuperscript{172} Kalpa (Skt., Tib. bskal pa)—an aeon, a vast period of time related to the different phases of the life of the universe.

\textsuperscript{173} Confirming with the ways of beings (Skt. sattvācārīṃ anuvartayamāno; Tib. sens can dag gi spyod dang mthun par 'jug)—the Skt. anuvartate and Tib. rje su 'jug pa might have the connotation of serving beings in accordance with their needs.
Confirming with the ways of beings\textsuperscript{174} refers to the following: life after life of the sentient beings, naturally, undeceitfully and thoroughly knowing the defilements [that obstruct their attainment] of happiness, their frame of mind and conduct, I will confirm [with them] means “I will be in accord with them.” In the quote I will bring the conduct of awakening to perfection, the conduct of awakening is “conducting oneself for the sake of awakening.” Bringing it to perfection means “[do it] until qualities of Buddhahood are unfolded.” As it was said [in the second stanza], Through the power of the aspiration for good conduct, here as well, the good conduct means “naturally apprehending Dharma teaching.” With intention to expound [the Dharma teaching], to explain the good conduct in the words of what is called the Excellent Speech.\textsuperscript{175} And to do so until the very end of the future kalpas with one’s mind never discouraged.

8.6. Befriending companions who are bodhisattvas and wish to benefit [others]

[23. Those whose conduct is like mine,  
May I always befriend.  
By means of body, speech and also mind,  
May we practice same conducts and aspirations.]

It [the Rāja] teaches the following about the sixth part—befriending companions who are bodhisattvas, and making the conduct of one’s body, speech and mind similar to theirs. In the quote Those whose conduct is like mine, etc., those whose conduct is like mine means “bodhisattvas.” The conduct means “conducting oneself in a similar way, being together with them and befriending [them] until enlightenment.” By means of body, speech and also mind means “to utter together with them the unique aspirations of the bodhisattvas and abide without afflictions.”

\textsuperscript{174} Sde, Pe and Snar have this line as the second line of the stanza, while both Skt. editions have the respective Skt. line as the first line of the stanza.

\textsuperscript{175} Excellent Speech (Skt. pravacana, Tib. gsung rab)—Dharma discourse.
8.7. Pleasing virtuous friends

[24. Friends who wish to benefit me,  
And who teach me the good conduct,  
May I always meet.  
May I never let them down.]

It [the Rāja] teaches the following about the seventh part—reliance on virtuous friends who teach oral instructions with intention to benefit [me]. *Friends who wish to benefit me*, etc., refers to any *virtuous friends who wish to benefit [me]*, who perfectly *teach me the good conduct*, and give [other] Dharma teachings, may I always be like them and befriend them.

8.8. Contemplating directly the tathāgatas

[25. The lords, surrounded by the buddha’s sons,  
May I always directly see those jinas.  
Without being discouraged in all the future kalpas,  
May I also worship them in a vast manner.]

It [the Rāja] teaches the following about the eighth part—contemplating directly the tathāgatas without fatigue as to the time, retinue and the act of worship. In the quote *The lords, surrounded by the buddha’s sons*, etc., all the lords—jinas, buddhas–bhagavāns throughout the ten directions, surrounded by bodhisattvas—the only friends of wandering beings, may I always see them with unobscured eyes. May I also *worship* each of them individually every moment with all the supreme kinds [of offerings], which are *vast*, similar to the expanse of the sky, and filling the [entire] dharmadhātu. For how long? Till the end of all the future kalpas, with the mind that is never discouraged.

8.9. Upholding the sublime Dharma

[26. May I uphold the sublime Dharma of the jinas  
And illuminate\(^\text{176}\) the good conduct.

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\(^{176}\) Illuminate (Skt. *paridīpayamānaḥ*, Tib. *snang bar byed*). The commentary explains it as *rab tu gsal bar byed*—“to make it perfectly clear.” The Skt. *paridīpayamāna* also has the root of *dīpa*—light.
May I also completely purify\textsuperscript{177} the good conduct
Practicing so in all the future kalpas.]

It [the Rāja] teaches the following about the ninth part—upholding the sublime Dharma by means of apprehension and exposition. *May I uphold the sublime Dharma of the jinas*, etc., means may I teach the Dharma, that which was spoken by all the jinas of the three times—the twelve branches of the Supreme Speech—and uphold it through the power of apprehension doing so persistently. May I also perfectly clarify the nature of the taught Dharma—the good conduct—for the wandering beings. Clarifying it means “teaching it authentically and clearly.”

Here as well that what is expressed by the words “teaching it clearly” refers to the so called “conduct of awakening.” In the quote *May I also completely purify the good conduct*, the good conduct is the “bodhisattva conduct.” This completely purify means “to make it stainless.” As for that, having cleanse it entirely, to do so for a long time—*Practicing so in all the future kalpas* means “doing it persistently.”

8.10. Apprehending genuinely the inexhaustible treasury

[27. *Wandering through all states of existence*
May I gain inexhaustible merit and primordial wisdom.
Of skillful means, wisdom, samādhi and liberation—
Of all the qualities, may I become an inexhaustible treasury.]

It [the Rāja] teaches the following about the tenth part—apprehending authentically the inexhaustible treasury of merit, wisdom and so forth. *Wandering through all states of existence*, etc., means in all the states of existence, such as desire realm, etc., under the power to benefit beings, to be born again and again in the samsāra and become genuinely endowed with inexhaustible accumulation of merit and likewise with skillful means and wisdom, the sky-

\textsuperscript{177} Completely purify (Skt. viśodhayamānaḥ, Tib. rnam par sbyong ba). Although Tib. sbyang ba may be understood as “to train,” the commentary explains it as *dri med par bya ba*—“making it stainless.”
treasure samādhi, stainless mudrā, etc., and likewise with the great liberating compassion of bodhisattvas that [views] objects as illusory, etc. In this way, with ordinary and extraordinary qualities of bodhisattvas—inehaustible treasury, which means “a treasure of inexhaustible qualities”—may I become the cause of benefit and happiness for all beings without exception.

8.11. Engagement

The eleventh part—the engagement—also has eight divisions: [8.11.1-8.11.2] Two divisions on engagement with seeing the buddhafields; [8.11.3] Engagement with the speech of the buddhas; [8.11.4] Engagement with the turning of the wheel of Dharma; [8.11.5] Entering into the duration of kalpas; [8.11.6] Seeing the tathāgatas and engagement with their sphere of activity; [8.11.7] Seeing and entering the arrays of buddhafields; and [8.11.8] Going into the presence of sugatas.

8.11.1-8.11.2 Two parts on engagement with seeing the buddhafields

[28. On one particle, there are buddhafields equal in number to particles. In these buddhafields there are inconceivable buddhas Seated in the midst of the sons of the buddhas. May I see them and practice the conduct of awakening.

29. Just so, also in all the directions without exception In the space, equal in size to a hair, there is an ocean of buddhas

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178 Sky-treasure samādhi (Tib. nam mkha’ mdzod kyi ting nge ’dzin, possible Skt.??)—meditative absorption state attained by bodhisattvas on the first bhūmi.
179 Stainless mudrā (Tib. dri ma med pa’i phyag rgya, possible Skt. vimala mudrā??)—In Mahāyāna, mudrās are usually associated with Buddha images—e.g., bhūmisparśana-mudrā – “mudrā of touching the ground” and dharmacakrapravartana-mudrā—“mudrā of turning the Wheel of Dharma.” Here, the use of “mudrā” is unclear.
180 In this way (Tib. ji srid du)—usually ji srid du is “as long as,” etc., but in the context probably is translation of Skt. yathā—“in this way,” “in this manner,” “as it is said,” etc.
181 Both Skt. editions have bālapatheṣu triyadhvapramāṇān for this line with bāla—“simple minded,” “childish,” “foolish,” etc., and patha—“road,” “way,” which makes “on the ways of the childish beings.” It is not reflected in any way in the Tibetan translation, however, the commentary speaks about Tib. blo zhan—“beings of small intelligence” (Dpe, 1456).
Of the three times and an ocean of buddhafIELDS.
May I engage into the conduct for an ocean of kalpas.]

In respect to this, it [the Rāja] teaches in two verses the two parts on engagement into seeing the buddhafIELDS. In the quote On one particle, etc., there are buddhafIELDS means on top of one particle there are fields of the buddhas of the ten directions throughout the three times equal in number to particles. Also as for that, what is called buddhafIELDS are various realms.\textsuperscript{182} Inconceivable means those which are not embraced by the mind and beyond the mind buddhas–bhagavāns and the sons of the buddhas, which means “bodhisattvas.” Those [buddhas] are seated in the midst [of the bodhisattvas] which means they abide [there]. May I practice the conduct of awakening means “may I perform the awakened actions,” do them after realizing them. May I see means “may I engage into the act of seeing.”

If one thinks that such an aspiration is impossible because the bodhisattva’s aspiration does not have a result—as for that, why [it is said so] if, when distinguished, it is impossible to see even one buddhafIELD on top of a particle, in this way also [it is impossible to see buddhas] dwelling throughout the three times in all the buddhafIELDS equal in number to particles, as well as countless buddhas–bhagavāns seated in the midst of the retinue of bodhisattvas filling them [buddhafIELDS] completely? Does the aspiration say that one should see them individually distinguished on the top of one particle? It does not. Just like there are various worldly realms [created through] inconceivable magical activities, distinct—above, below and on the same level—since they [buddhafIELDS] are a magical creation of the inconceivable primordial wisdom, why it will be impossible [for them to be] on the top of one particle? The following is also taught about the inconceivable:

That, which is something amazing,
Is unseen by the wise of the world

\textsuperscript{182} Various realms (Tib. de la yang zhing zhes pa ni zhing dang zhing ngo)—literally “there are fields and fields.”
And is actualized by the mighty.\textsuperscript{183} What is amazing in that?

Those who dwell in dhyāna,\textsuperscript{184} karma and nāgas,
The great nature of the Buddha’s power,
The Lord Protector of the world—
These four are taught to be inconceivable.\textsuperscript{185}

In the same way, it is said that those of small intelligence should thus understand the impossible meaning of the speech of all the buddhas and utterly have faith in it, as well as keep it clearly established [in their mind]: “Whoever gives rise to doubts in regard to the hidden meaning of the Buddha’s speech, that one should, with trust, apply oneself to [realizing] the emptiness.”\textsuperscript{186} In this way also in the world, in a very small vessel completely filled with pure water, planets and shooting stars that adorn the sky, etc.—all of them are seen. For this very reason the Bhagāvan said that all phenomena are like an echo, clouding of the sight, dream attributes, magical illusions, mirages and cities of gandharvas.\textsuperscript{187}

Then it [the Rāja] also elucidates in the following verse arranging buddhafields of all of them [buddhas] of the three times. In the quote Just so, also in all the directions without exception, etc., likewise on the top of one particle there are all buddhafields without exception of all directions in their entirety. In the space equal in size to a hair means “a tip of a hair.” Explaining what is taught here: in the space equal in size to a tip of a hair there is an ocean of buddhas—bhagavāns dwelling throughout the three times and an ocean of their buddhafields.

\textsuperscript{183} Actualized by the mighty (Tib. dbang pos mgon du gyur pa nyid)—the Tib. dbang po has many meanings and can also be “faculties,” “capacities,” “lord,” etc. However, in the context was translated as “mighty” because was understood as an epithet of the buddhas.

\textsuperscript{184} Those who dwell in dhyāna (Tib. bsam gtan pa)—possible Skt. dhyāyin, the one who achieved one of the four levels of meditative concentration.

\textsuperscript{185} Apparently this is a quote in two stanzas. The source was not found. \textsuperscript{Source}??

\textsuperscript{186} Apparently this is a three-line quote. The source was not found. \textsuperscript{Source}??

\textsuperscript{187} Here are listed six out of the usual eight similes of illusion (Tib. sgyu ma’i dpe brgyad): dream, magical illusion, clouding of the sight, mirage, echo, city of gandharvas, reflection and apparition.
The so called conduct\textsuperscript{188} means “to engage in all the activities [listed] above for an ocean of kalpas.”

8.11.3 Engagement with the speech of the buddhas

[30. Through an ocean of sounds within the qualities of a single speech, The purity of qualities of the voice of all the jinas, The voice that accords with the thoughts of all the wanderers, May I always engage with the speech of the buddhas.]

It [the Rāja] also teaches the following about the engagement with the speech of the buddhas. In the quote Through an ocean of sounds within the qualities of a single speech, etc., when buddhas teach the Dharma with a single speech, countless beings instantaneously hear the speech endowed with an ocean of immeasurable qualities of the voice that benefits them in various specific ways and [is heard] in various words and various syllables. The utterly pure immeasurable qualities of the voice of all the jinas dwelling throughout the three times in the ten directions teach the Dharma in accordance with the wishes of beings who listen to it, and just so they hear the speech of the buddhas without obstruction. With respect to that, may I always engage with the voice of each tathāgata that is [endowed with] the qualities of an ocean of sounds and remember it. It is also said,

Isn’t it of great marvel?  
It is truly of great marvel!  
Those numerous who stay near,  
Under the power of their intentions,  
Although this taught essence  
Is explained in one word,  
Many beings, will hear it  
In manifold meanings.\textsuperscript{189}

Likewise, it is said in the Maitreyavimokṣa\textsuperscript{190} [chapter of] the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra,

\textsuperscript{188} Sde, Pe and Snar read spyod pa, the commentary quotes it as spyang pa.
\textsuperscript{189} The source of the quote was not found. \hyperlink{source??}{Source??}
\textsuperscript{190} Maitreyavimokṣa (Skt., Tib. byams pa'i rnam par thar pa)—the Liberaiton of Maitreya Sūtra, a chapter of the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra (Skt., Tib. sdong po bkod pa'i mdo).
May I remain like those of great abilities who dwell on the single seat of the cloud of Dharma of sugatas throughout the ten directions unobstructedly drinking the ocean [of Dharma] for myriads of kalpas with my mind never satiated.\(^{191}\)

The first half of this stanza\(^{192}\) speaks about the great nature of the teacher, while the second half teaches about the great nature of the student. \textit{Those} is in the seventh case, singular form.\(^{193}\) In the quote \textit{Through an ocean of sounds within the qualities of a single speech, sounds should be seen as supplemental [to ``speech'']}.\(^{194}\)

### 8.11.4 Engagement with the turning of the wheel of Dharma

\begin{quote}  
\textit{Who turn the wheel of all aspects—}  
\textit{With the inexhaustible vocal sounds of their speech,}  
\textit{May I engage through the power of mind.}  
\end{quote}

It [the \textit{Rāja}] teaches the following about the engagement with the turning of the wheel of Dharma. In the quote \textit{All the jinas gone in the three times}, those are \textit{all the jinas} dwelling throughout the \textit{three times} who engage into the turning of the wheel of Dharma endowed with \textit{inexhaustible vocal sounds} beyond enumeration. \textit{Through the power of mind} means “through the nature of the power of primordial wisdom,” to \textit{engage} with it [the speech] instantaneously means “to get involved with it”—to teach the Dharma with various skillful means to whomever in whatever time and whatever place, in accordance with various inclinations of sentient minds.

\(^{191}\) Stanza 20 of the \textit{Maitreyavimokṣa}: \textit{ye dharmamegha sugatāna daśaddīśāsu/ ekāsane sthita pibanti asaṃpramūdhāḥ| aparāntakalpanītyaḥvāpyacitāḥ/sahabuddhisāgarasamānānmayam vāhāḥ} (DSBC: \url{http://www.dsbcproject.org/canon-text/content/40/361})

\(^{192}\) Although the Tib. translation is in prose, the Skt. is a four-line stanza (see previous footnote).

\(^{193}\) \textit{Those} is in the seventh case, singular form (Tib. \textit{gang zhes pa ni bdun pa ste/ gcig gi tshig tu brjod pa'o// Dpe, 1457-20}). Note that the \textit{ye} in the first line of the stanza—\textit{ye dharmamegha sugatāna daśaddīśāsu} (see previous footnote)—is the plural first case (nominative) of \textit{yah}. Its singular seventh case (locative) would be \textit{yasmin}. It is possible that Vasubandhu is relying on a different edition than those currently available. The only seventh singular form in available editions of this verse is \textit{ekāsane}; it is possible that the original Sanskrit referred to this word, or could be an error on the part of the translators.

\(^{194}\) \textit{…sounds should be seen as supplemental [to ``speech''] (Tib. \textit{sgra kun gyis zhes pa ni tshig gi kla skong du bla bar bya'o // Dpe, 1458-1}).
beings, wanderers to be tamed. This is to be understood so. The vocal sounds here also have the meaning of supplements.

8.11.5 Entering into the duration of kalpas

[32. Like [the wisdom\textsuperscript{195}] entering all the future kalpas, May I also instantaneously enter them. Into the limits of any kalpa of the three times, May I enter in a fraction of one instant.]

It [the Rāja] teaches the following about entering into the duration of kalpas. In the quote Like [the wisdom] entering all the future kalpas, it refers to an instant of primordial wisdom dwelling throughout the ten directions that enters the future kalpas. Thus, in brief, may I continually enter kalpas one after another. Into the limits of any kalpa of the three times, means in an instant [entering] into the limits of all those various countless [kalpas] of the three times. One refers to an aspect of one instant of the primordial wisdom. Enter means “to become included within it.”

8.11.6 Seeing the tathāgatas and engagement with their sphere of activity

[33. Gone ones in the three times, those lions among humans, May I see them in one instant. In the sphere of their activity, always, May I engage through the illusory power of liberation.]

It [the Rāja] teaches the following about seeing the tathāgatas and engaging with their sphere of activity. In the quote Gone ones in the three times, those lions among humans, etc., any buddhas–bhagavāns, lions among humans, dwelling in the ten directions throughout the three times, in one instant, through my wisdom, may I see them, which means “may I behold” them. Their sphere of activity refers to their location. In the quote May I engage through the

\textsuperscript{195} Wisdom was inserted based on the explanation in the commentary.
illusory power of liberation, the illusory refers to the nature of liberating primordial wisdom of bodhisattvas—may I engage into the continuum of its power.

8.11.7 Seeing and entering the arrays of buddhafields

[34. All the arrays of pure realms of the three times, May I directly realize on a single particle. In this way, in all the directions without exception, May I enter the arrays of pure realms of the jinas.]

It [the Rāja] also teaches the following about the arrays of buddhafields. In the quote All the arrays of pure realms of the three times, etc., all the arrays of the three times refers to the multitude of buddhafields. Directly realize them means through magical power [to see them] on the tip of a particle. In this way, in all the directions without exception means same [as before]: in this way, to enter many arrays of buddhafields in all the directions without exception on the tip of a particle through an instant of wisdom. Thus, also in this way, is it impossible to specify in detail momentarily on the tip of one particle the nature of buddhafields, their dimension, color, shape—each of them individually? And also why when differentiating the nature, etc., of fields of the buddhas dwelling throughout the three times in the ten directions, individually distinct, one should realize on the tip of one particle there are [fields of the buddhas] of the ten directions who dwell there, each and every one, without interruption?

It is said here one should believe in that because all phenomena are not truly established. They don’t have a real essence. They are like illusions and dreams: unborn, unceasing, similar to a tangle of hair. They are peace from the very beginning, and they are nirvāṇa by nature. In this way, a merely conceptual faith appears. As for various manifold entities, by means of samādhi of various multiple ways of familiarizing oneself, after a special faith spreads in an inconceivable way, practice experiences are clearly realized naturally through the meditation activity. Also in the world, the power that arises from any activity of thorough purification is seen like an amazing magical illusion able to perform various magical displays. For this reason,
it is said, one should have trust in all these teachings and not to have a slightest doubt towards them.

8.11.8 Going in the presence of sugatas

[35. All those beacons of the world who are yet to come, Those who will gradually attain enlightenment, turn the wheel of Dharma, And demonstrate the final perfect peace of nirvāṇa— May I go in the presence of all the protectors.]

As for the eighth part, engagement into going in the presence of sugatas, it [the Rāja] teaches the following. In the quote All those beacons of the world who are yet to come, etc., those who are yet to come dwelling in the ultimate the beacons of the world, buddhas–bhagavāns in various realms throughout the ten directions up to the limits of space, endless in number, may they through the sphere of activity of awakened primordial wisdom in one momentary instant actualize the complete and perfect enlightenment. Likewise, others will instantaneously turn the wheel of Dharma. And likewise, others will manifest nirvāṇa. Therefore, it [the Rāja] speaks about those who will attain enlightenment, etc. Those refers to those who will actualize enlightenment so that they also turn the wheel of Dharma.

Likewise, others who will manifest nirvāṇa, all the protectors of the world, may I go in their presence instantaneously with the speed of mind, and through the miraculous power that reaches everywhere, spread body-clouds throughout the ten directions, fill the sky with clouds of offerings, make offerings to all of them, each and every one, especially to the uncountable noble ones, each and every one, praise them and circumambulate them to the right direction hundred thousand times till the end of saṃsāra. Go refers to approaching them in one moment. Enlightenment refers to the actualization of enlightenment and manifestation of nirvāṇa. This one [nirvāṇa] is called the final peace, which is said to be supplemental, an

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196 Body-clouds (Tib. lus kyi sprin), Dpe, 1461.
illustration by means of a synonym, that is an expression of their excellency. Nevertheless, at
the time of dwelling in Tuṣita\textsuperscript{197} that is like a reflection of the moon in the water, manifesting
descent [from Tuṣita], dwelling in the womb, birth, veneration by gods, manifesting skills in
arts, escaping from the palace, renouncing the world, practicing austerities, going to the place
of enlightenment, having seated upon the lion throne under the royal Bodhi tree and
overcoming māras\textsuperscript{198}— going there and instantaneously [appearing] in their presence, this is
what is meant here. It is also said,

In the different world realms,
In which there are immeasurable beings,
If you think “I will not momentarily realize [their mind streams],”
Do not get discouraged.\textsuperscript{199}

\section*{8.12. Power}

\begin{quote}
[36. Through the power of all-swift magical displays, 
\textit{Through the power of the Vehicle facing in all directions,}
\textit{Through the power of conduct of all qualities,}
\textit{Through the power of all-pervasive love,}

37. Through the power of all-virtuous merit,
\textit{Through the power of primordial wisdom free from afflictions,}
\textit{Through the power of wisdom, methods and samādhi,}
\textit{May I genuinely accomplish the power of enlightenment.}]
\end{quote}

The tenth part, the power, also has ten divisions taught in two stanzas. In the quote

\begin{quote}
Through the power of all-swift magical displays, etc., all refers to bodhisattvas who do not go
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{197} Tuṣita (Skt., Tib. \textit{dga’ ldan})—“Joyous realm”, one of the celestial heavens of the six heavens of the desire
realm. The Buddha resided here until the time came to take rebirth in the human realm.

\textsuperscript{198} The twelve deeds (Skt. \textit{dvadaśabuddhakārya}, Tib. \textit{mdzad pa bcu gnyis}) listed here are different from the
traditional sequence carried out by a buddha: (1) the descent from Tuṣita (Tib. \textit{dga’ ldan gyi gnas nas ’pho ba});
(2) entering the mother’s womb (Tib. \textit{lhums su zhugs pa}); (3) taking birth (Tib. \textit{sku bllams pa}); (4) becoming
skilled in arts (Tib. \textit{bzo yi gnas la mkhas pa}); (5) delighting in the company of royal consorts (Tib. \textit{htsun mo’i
\‘khor dgyes rol ba}); (6) renouncing the world (Tib. \textit{rab tu byung ba}); (7) practicing austerities (Tib. \textit{dka’ ba
spya\‘ad pa}); (8) going to the place of enlightenment (Tib. \textit{byang chub snying por gshags pa}); (9) overcoming
māras (Tib. \textit{bdud btul ba}); (10) becoming fully enlightened (Tib. \textit{mgon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa}); (11)
turning the wheel of Dharma (Tib. \textit{chos kyi ‘khor lo bskor ba}); (12) passing into nirvāṇa (Tib. \textit{mya ngan las ‘das
pa}).

\textsuperscript{199} Apparently this is a quote in one stanza. The source was not found. Source??
to other places, but through the power of all-swift magical display they instantaneously “go” throughout the ten directions, which is like actual going. The magical display refers to an excellent magical display. Thus, [it refers to] performing posited in this way excellent magical display. How the magical display is to be understood? That which makes happy each being is called magical display. The power of it refers to its having significance. Therefore, it is the power of magical display.

As for the quote Through the power of the Vehicle facing in all directions, etc., if someone asks why it [the Vehicle] is called facing in all directions? It means that [the vehicle] is not of some small or temporary [benefit]. Nor is it the case that when there is no reference point, that means that bodhicitta has not arisen, nor that there is no wish to bring benefit and happiness to all beings. As for that, one should look it up in the Gocarapariśuddhi-sūtra.201

The power of the Vehicle refers to the power of the Great Vehicle, Mahāyāna. Through this, since [beings] are led by it, it is a Great Vehicle. Since it is a vehicle and it is great, it is the Great Vehicle. It is great because it is the vehicle of buddhas and bodhisattvas, thus it is the Great Vehicle. If one asks what is its nature? It is the Great Vehicle that teaches the path towards the enlightenment of the Buddha, the accumulation of merit and primordial wisdom. The ten bhūmis in the context of Prajñāpāramitā are the Great Vehicle. Its power is what overcomes discordant factors.

The conduct of all qualities refers to the virtue in the beginning, middle and end. The power of conduct, since it is not specified, refers to the powers of the two conducts—the power of the bodhisattva conduct and also the power of the Aspiration for Good Conduct. The all-

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200 Facing in all directions (Skt. samantamukha, kun nas sgo) is an epithet of the thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara and might also be related to a wish-fulfilling jewel, which benefits despite not having reference to recipients.

201 Gocarapariśuddhi-sūtra (Skt., Tib. spyod yul yongs su dag pa'i mdo), Purification of the sphere of activity, chapter 16 of the Avataṃsaka-sūtra (Skt., Tib. mdo phal po che), Toh 44-16.

202 Prajñāpāramitā (Skt., Tib. shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa)—“Transcendent wisdom,” in this context apparently refers to the class of Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras, Buddhist teachings that were mainly discovered by Nāgārjuna in the 2nd century. Their central topic is śūnyatā (Skt., Tib. stong pa nyid), emptiness.
pervasive means “that which goes throughout the ten directions.” The power of love refers to the wish to make all realms of beings happy. The power of merit refers to the merit that is purified or the merit of genuinely coming into contact with the supreme attainment. Its power grows from generating and cultivating bodhicitta. It is said,

If the merit of giving rise to bodhicitta
Were to take a physical form,
It would fill the entire expanse of the sky
And still exceed it.  

Likewise, as for the Great Vehicle, it comes into being through genuine profound effort, upholding the vast sublime Dharma, the wish to study and teach it, and dedication of [merit] to the complete and perfect enlightenment by means of the two verses of the dhāraṇī. For this reason, the power of merit is called all-virtuous, which means it is born through the intent to bring benefit and happiness to all beings. Free from afflictions means free from defilements throughout the three times. The power of primordial wisdom refers to the primordial wisdom that knows all knowable objects as they are. The power of wisdom refers to the wisdom that realizes all meanings. As for the power of method, the method is a skillful means, which is practice. The power of it refers to its having significance.

As for the power of samādhi, when someone sustains meditative absorption this is samādhi, which is by means of the power of meditative concentration acting for the benefit of all the wandering beings, and actualizing it [benefit of all beings] through unobstructed qualities, such as clairvoyance, etc., that is the power of samādhi. As for the power of enlightenment, enlightenment refers to the unsurpassable complete and perfect enlightenment. The power for that purpose means potency. To completely perfect it means to establish oneself in its accumulation.

203 A famous quote from Vīradattapariprcchā-sūtra (Tib. khyim bdag dpas byin gyis zhus pa'i mdo)—Sūtra requested by the layman Vīradatta, Toh 72.
204 May refer to the Dhāraṇī for the fulfillment of aspirations (Tib. smon lam 'grub pa'i gzungs): kon mchog gsum la phyag tshal lo/ tadyathā pañcendriyāvabodhaniye svāhā/
8.13. Antidotes

[38. May I thoroughly purify the power of karma,  
    Completely overcome the power of afflictions,  
    Make powerless the power of māras,  
    And perfect the power of the good conduct.]

The thirteenth part, the power of antidotes. In this regard, it [the Rāja] teaches the following about the three discordant factors: karma, afflictions and the power of Māra. In the quote May I thoroughly purify the power of karma,205 since it is not specified, it refers in particular to the three types of karma: virtuous, unvirtuous and non-transferable. As for that, the unvirtuous karma will be certainly experienced and in this way it is endowed with power to immerse [someone] into the three lower realms. Thoroughly purifying it refers to abandoning it and restraining from it through the power of antidotes, etc. It is said,

  Committing [unvirtuous] deeds is very dreadful.  
  When I despise myself [because of them], they become smaller.  
  By means of confession and restraint,  
  They will be extracted from the very core, I say.

Through the power of antidotes, it will be thoroughly purified. In this way, a girl Maitri206 who committed an unwholesome deed towards the extraordinary field,207 her mother, by seeing the true nature of things has alleviated the result of the created unvirtuous karma, and it was produced just a little, and when she generated an extraordinary motivation by giving rise to the mind that aspires to benefit beings, it [the result] was completely eliminated.208 How to generate the mind that aspires to benefit beings? [Imagine] all these wandering beings, any

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205 Sde, Pe and Snar read las kyi stobs rnams yongs su dag byed cing, the commentary quotes it as ...yongs su rdzogs byed cing—“completely terminate/ end up/ fulfill the power of karma,” however, further on the commentary speaks of purifying the karma, which is in accordance with the Rāja, Dpe 1464.

206 Girl Maitri (Tib. bu mo byams ma) may refer to the daughter of Sinhasri, the king of the city Sinhabhujmita, protagonist of the Vajradhvajaparīṇāma-sūtra (Skt., skabs gsun pa rdo rje rgyal mthsan gvi bsngo ba’i mdo), Vajradvaja’s Dedication, chapter 30 of Avataṃśaka-sūtra (Skt., Tib. mdo phal po che), Toh 44-30.

207 Extraordinary field (Tib. zhiṅ khad pa can)—may refer to the Buddhist doctrine that one’s own parents, just like noble beings and spiritual friends, are a special field of accumulation of either virtue or non-virtue.

208 The passage refers to the story counted in Vajradhvajaparīṇāma-sūtra (Skt., skabs gsun pa rdo rje rgyal mthsan gvi bsngo ba’i mdo), Vajradvaja’s Dedication, chapter 30 of Avataṃśaka-sūtra (Skt., Tib. mdo phal po che), Toh 44-30.
sentient beings in the lower realms who have committed [negative] deeds just like I have also committed them. And then on top of one’s head [imagine] an orb that comprises all suffering of saṃsāra, and [make an aspiration]: “May I experience it [suffering] uninterruptedly, and all beings of saṃsāra do not experience even smallest [suffering].”

The following is also said about the power of support in the Sūkarikāvadāna-sūtra.²⁰⁹ At the time of death, a son of gods experienced birth in the womb of a sow actualizing the result of his karma. As soon as he took refuge in the Three Jewels, he got completely released [from the karmic result], was transferred to the Heaven of the Thirty-Three²¹⁰ and then reborn in Tuṣita. It is also said in the Karmāvaranaviśuddha-sūtra²¹¹ that authentic realization of selflessness of all phenomena completely uproots [karmic results]. One monk after committing sexual misconduct and killing a person—two major transgressions of vows—was tormented with remorse, his heart blazing with fire, like a madman he was going from temple to temple, from town to town roaming the country. When he was approaching different people [asking how] to purify these negative deeds, they were saying, “Ha-ha! You are a thief!” Through the power of being called a thief again and again, as well as through the power of confession, he abandoned [negative deeds] and diminished [negative] karma. Felling sad because of [what has happened to him], a bodhisattva endowed with the knowledge of karma of others taught him the profound Dharma. By this Dharma, after having purified all negative deeds, he genuinely realized selflessness of all phenomena and achieved acceptance of unborn phenomena. Since it clears away all remorse of downfalls and purifies all karmic obscurations, give rise to faith and inspiration towards this profound Dharma.

²⁰⁹ Sūkarikāvadāna-sūtra (Skt., Tib. phag mo′i rtags pa brjod pa zhes bya ba'i mdo)—The Account of Noble Deeds Concerning a Sow, Toh 345.

²¹⁰ Heaven of the Thirty-Three (Skt. Trāyastriṃśa, Tib. sum cu rtsa gsum) — second heaven of the desire realm, situated on the summit of Mount Meru and presided over by thirty-three gods of whom Indra is the chief.

²¹¹ Karmāvaranaviśuddha-sūtra (Skt., Tib. las kyi sgrīb pa rnam par dag pa'i mdo)—Sūtra on Purification of Karmic Obscurations, Toh 218, in which a monk Stainless Light is brought before the Buddha to confess his seduction by a prostitute. In response, the Buddha explains how bodhisattvas purify obscurations by generating an altruistic mind and realizing the empty nature of phenomena.
As it is said in the *Tathāgatakośa-sūtra*,\(^{212}\)

Kāśyapa, whoever kills one’s father who is also a pratyekabuddha, this is the heaviest deed among all killing. The heaviest among all taking what is not given is stealing offerings to the Three Jewels. The heaviest among all sexual misconduct, is sexual intercourse with one’s mother who is also an arhatī. The heaviest among telling lies is denigration of a tathāgata. The heaviest among divisive speech is causing discord in the sangha. The heaviest among all harsh talk is insulting a noble being. The heaviest among all idle gossip is distracting the one who yearns for the Dharma. The heaviest among all covetous mind is covetousness towards belongings of those genuinely engaged.\(^{213}\) The heaviest among all harmful states of mind is the mind committing deeds with immediate retribution.\(^{214}\) The heaviest among wrong views is the extremely obscured view. Similarly, all the ten deeds of unvirtuous karma together with great misdeeds, Kāśyapa, if someone rarely\(^{215}\) commits ten deeds of unvirtuous karma together with great misdeeds, even this being, if there are [right] causes and conditions and the Tathāgata teaches them genuine Dharma, will be liberated.

As for that, it is said that there is no at all, even slightest, “self,” “being,” “life force,” “individual,” “doer” or “experiencer.” If one contemplates and directly concentrates on the nature of phenomena that is illusory and free from afflictions, all phenomena will be naturally pacified. “Sentient beings who are endowed with faith and belief towards [the fact that] all phenomena are primordially pure will not be reborn in the lower realms, so I have said.” Why is it so? The aggregate of afflictions does not have substantial entity, which means all afflictions are born and destroyed. This birth that proceeds from coming together of the assembly of causes and conditions is ceased at the time of being born. When the mind, that is born, ceases, its afflictions also cease. Who has belief in that, does not remain in even slightest downfall or non-downfall. What does not have existence does not have time. In the unobscured existence, downfalls do not remain. Likewise, by means of earlier giving rise to bodhicitta, all the acts of downfalls, that the non-virtue causes to rise, will be ejected.

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\(^{212}\) *Tathāgatakośa-sūtra* (Skt., Tib. *de bzhin gsheg pa'i mdzod kyi mdo*)—Sūtra of Tathāgata treasury.

\(^{213}\) Those genuinely engaged (Tib. *yang dag par zhugs pa*)—beings who try to attain enlightenment following the path of various vehicles, i.e., Śrāvakayāna or Mahāyāna. Possible Skt. *samprasthita* (śrāvakayānasampārasātma/ mahāyānasampārasātma).

\(^{214}\) Deeds with immediate retribution—five crimes with immediate retribution (Skt. *pañcānantarīya*, Tib. *mtshams med pa lnga*): (1) killing one's father; (2) killing one's mother; (3) killing an arhat; (4) maliciously drawing blood from the body of a tathāgata; (5) creating a schism in the sangha.

\(^{215}\) Rarely (Tib. *brgya lam*)—*sems can gcig brgya lam na*, Dpe, 1466—the meaning of *brgya lam* here is not clear.
As it is said in the *Upālipariprcchā-sūtra*, if a bodhisattva commits a downfall in the morning, they should actualize bodhicitta at noon. Under these circumstances, bodhisattva should know that their heap of discipline is unerring. Likewise, if a bodhisattva commits a downfall at noon, they should actualize bodhicitta in the evening. Under these circumstances, bodhisattva should know that their heap of discipline is unerring.

It is also said in the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*, “Son of the noble family, the bodhicitta is like a fire of the great kalpa, it burns all the wrong-doing.” It is also said in the *Trisātikā*, “Subhūti, if a noble son or a noble daughter study this sūtra properly, memorize it, read it and correctly hold it in their mind, they will be utterly transformed and become thoroughly purified.” Why is it so? Any beings, having committed unvirtuous deeds in their previous life, will certainly be reborn in the lower realms. However, if they experience the dharmatā, the unvirtuous karma of their previous life will be exhausted. The karma of negative deeds that [otherwise] will be certainly experienced, will be thoroughly purified, it is said.

Some argue that [only] lesser and middling negative deeds will be uprooted by the power of remorse and others. As for that, if one asks whether all the heaviest deeds of immediate retribution will be also totally eliminated in this way, the following was said about it. The king Ajātaśatru and others who committed deeds with immediate retribution, if differentiate among small, middling and great [negative deeds], they would have to remain for kalpas in the Avīci hell, however they did not remain there even briefly or remained there only half of the time. This is because they felt strong remorse, and by force of the mental

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216 *Upālipariprcchā-sūtra* (Skt., Tib. upAlis zhus p'ai mdo)—Sūtra requested by Upāli.

217 *Trisātikā* (Skt., Tib. sum brgya pa)—*The Sūtra in the Three Hundred Lines*, an alternative title for the *Vajracchedikā-sūtra* (Skt., Tib. shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa rdo rje gcod pa)—*The Sūtra on the Perfection of Wisdom "The Diamond Cutter,"* Toh 16.

218 Ajātaśatru (Skt., Tib. ma skyes dgra), also Kunika (c. 492—c. 460 BCE) was a king of the Haryanka dynasty of Magadha in East India. He was the son of King Bimbisāra and was a contemporary of Buddha Śakyamūni. According to the historical account, he forcefully took over the kingdom of Magadha from his father and imprisoned him, which resulted in his father death.

219 Avīci (Skt., Tib. mnar med)—is the lowest level of the hell realm with the most suffering, into which beings who have committed grave misdeeds may be reborn.
torment, confession, etc., their [negative] karma was diminished, and they experienced the result of that karma only for the duration equal to the time needed for a ball to bounce [in and out]. [Question:] “Has been their karma not ripped out from the root until then?” [Answer:] When a single piece of crop is not cut entire crop does not become uncut.\(^{220}\) [Question:] “Is it that [only] the heap of uncertain karma will be exhausted in this way?” It does not make a difference bigger than a leg of a bee!\(^{221}\) It is so because by mere engagement with the antidote, bodhicicitta, it [the negative karma] will be exhausted.

[Question:] “If it is said,

Even for millions and millions of kalpas,
Karma will not go to waste.
At the time when [causes and conditions] are gathered,
The result will ripen in the beings,

Why then it is not certain [in this case]?” [Answer:] By the power of fully performed slander, etc., [negative] karma is purified and [the result] is not produced even in the slightest. The karma is to be viewed as it is [taught] in this teaching. Likewise, it is said,

Having committed only small negativity,
The unwise one will go to the lower realms.
Having committed even big negativity, the wise one,
Seeing its essenceless nature, eliminates its harm.

An iron ball, although small,
Drowns in the water.
If it is made in a form of a vessel,
Even big, it will float on the surface.

Negative actions, the results of which are uncertain, are innumerable throughout the three times. Furthermore, in all directions at any given time, beings experience birth in samsāra’s lower realms by the power of their [negative] actions. For the sake of their benefit and

\(^{220}\) When a single piece of crop is not cut entire crop does not become uncut (Tib. _zhing nyag ma gcig ma brngas pas zhir ma thams cad brngas par gyur pa ni ma yin no_), Dpe, 1468— **the meaning of the sentence is not entirely clear.** Alternative translation: “When a single piece of crop is not cut, none of the crop will be cut.”

\(^{221}\) It does not make a difference bigger than a leg of a bee (Tib. _sbrang bu'i r'kang p'ai lhag ma tsam gyi khyad par yang mi 'gyur ro_), Dpe, 1469)—apparently a metaphor indicating that it does not make any significant difference.
happiness, in accord with their needs and without discrimination as to their class, color, shape and size, one should ascertain the results of ripened actions.\textsuperscript{222}

Even virtuous actions have the power to bring about the result of further births, therefore these [virtuous actions] also must be thoroughly purified. In what way? Having cleared away completely ripened results [of past negative actions], one should ascertain them [virtuous actions] by means of thorough dedication with the power of aspiration to enlightenment.

In the form and formless realms, there is also the experience of non-transferring karma that is produced by the power of settling into equipoise and meditative concentration. Having eliminated these as well, through the power of karmic connection, one must definitely endeavor to benefit beings in accordance with their wishes. This is what is meant here by “joining with them.”

In the quote \textit{Completely overcome the power of afflictions, affictions} refer to the body and mind afflicted by attachment, etc. Its \textit{power} means “force.” In the very moment when it [attachment] overpowers beings, either wandering or non-wandering, those who benefit others and those who don’t, all the not knowing—light and heavy, etc.—when they contemplate repulsiveness, etc., is \textit{overcome} by the mundane path, which means “it is suppressed.” In brief, having overcome the \textit{afflictions}, [bodhisattvas] cultivate branches of enlightenment.\textsuperscript{223}

In the quote \textit{Make powerless the power of māras, māras} refer to the Māra of the son of gods and others. Their \textit{power} refers to the ability to hinder bodhisattva conduct. It is \textit{made powerless}, feeble and non-abiding by the power of primordial wisdom.

\textsuperscript{222} Negative actions, the results of which are uncertain (Tib. \textit{sdig pa'i las myong bar 'gyur bar ma nges pa, possible Skt. aniyatavedaniya}), Dpe, 1469—\textit{the passage is not clear}. It is interpreted as referring to the bodhisattvas who are not under the power of unvirtuous karma and who can choose where to be born in order to actualize their karmic ripenings for the benefit of beings.

And perfect the power of the good conduct means the non-conducive factors are suppressed and rendered ineffective by the power of the good conduct. I will perfect all [such powers] without exception.

It [the Rāja] teaches the ten powers,\textsuperscript{224} such as the power over miracles, etc., and by means of teaching those at the same time teaches the three antidotes.

\textbf{8.14. Activities}

Now, it [the Rāja] in detail teaches the following about the fourteenth part—the activities. There are eight such activities: purifying buddhafields, etc., which are taught in two verses.

\begin{itemize}
  \item [39.] May I purify oceans of fields,
  Liberate oceans of beings,
  Understand oceans of Dharma,
  And realize oceans of primordial wisdom.
  
  \item [40.] May I purify oceans of conduct,
  Perfect oceans of aspirations,
  Worship oceans of buddhas,
  And may I do so without weariness for oceans of kalpas.]
\end{itemize}

\textit{May I purify oceans of fields, etc.,} means may I in an instant purify oceans of fields, like Sukhavātī and Padmavātī. Likewise, may I, by means of both magical display and miraculous ability of expression,\textsuperscript{225} encourage the ocean of the bound beings, fettered by shackles of afflictions in the prison of saṃsāra, to generate faith and, through the miracle of teachings, purify them in an instant.

\textsuperscript{224} Ten powers (Tib. stobs rnam pa bcu)—usually Skt. daśavaśitā, Tib. dbang bcu—part of the immaculate qualities of the Buddha: (1) power over life (Tib. tshe la dbang ba); (2) power over mind (Tib. sms la dbang ba); (3) power over material things (Tib. yo byad la dbang ba); (4) power over action (Tib. las la dbang ba); (5) power over birth (Tib. skye ba la dbang ba); (6) power over aspirations (Tib. mos pa la dbang ba); (7) power over aspirations (Tib. smon lam la dbang ba); (8) power over miracles (Tib. rdzu ’phrul la dbang ba); (9) power over primordial wisdom (Tib. ve shes la dbang ba); (10) power over Dharma (Tib. chos la dbang ba).

\textsuperscript{225} Miraculous ability of expression (Tib. kun brjod p’ai cho ’phrul) may refer to the ability of mind-reading or thorough verbal expression, like ability to speak all languages.
Oceans of Dharma refers to the ocean of the Dharma of teachings and the ocean of the Dharma of realization, which is the seen in an instant by the eye of wisdom. Since the things to be known are infinite, the primordial wisdom is also infinite. For this reason, it is said oceans of primordial wisdom. Realize oceans of primordial wisdom in an instant means “may I cognize them with my subjective mind.”

Oceans of conduct refers to the ocean of bodhisattva conduct and the ocean of good conduct. Explaining both without going into detail, the conduct of enlightenment is the accumulation of primordial wisdom that makes Dharma flourish. The good conduct is accumulation of merit that generates benefit and happiness in all wandering beings. Furthermore, the good conduct is also the bodhisattva conduct itself because both of them lead to attaining enlightenment. However, there is a difference as to being direct and indirect [cause of enlightenment]. The oceans of conduct are purified in an instant by the power of clairvoyance, which implies making them stainless. Making instantaneously oceans of aspirations perfect by the power of discipline and samādhi. Oceans of buddhas refers to worshiping, in an instant, oceans of buddhas dwelling throughout the ten directions with clouds of offerings filling the space. And may I do so without weariness for oceans of kalpas means doing it with the mind that is not discouraged.

8.15. Perfect dedication for training

The fifteenth part is making dedication for training in emulating buddhas and bodhisattvas. It also has two parts. As for that, it [the Rāja] teaches the following about the dedication for emulating tathāgatas.

[41. Of all the jinas gone in the three times,
Who through good conduct attained Buddhahood of enlightened state,
Their special aspirations for the conduct of enlightenment,
May I perfect them all without exception.]
Of all the jinas gone in the three times refers to the bodhisattva conduct of all jinas dwelling throughout the three times. May I perfect all their special aspirations without exception means “may I make them accomplished.” The good conduct refers to “wholesome conduct.” The buddhahood of enlightened state is unsurpassable, complete and perfect enlightenment.

It [the Rāja] teaches in three verses the pure aspirations for the conduct of body, speech and mind, and purification of buddhafields, as well as dedication for training in emulating the noble bodhisattva Samantabhadra.

[42. The chief son of the jinas
Is called Samantabhadra.
So that I could act like this Skillful One,
I fully dedicate all these merits.

43. In order to purify my body, speech and my mind,
To purify my conduct and buddhafields,
To the one Skillful in the Good [conduct] and dedications,
Like that may I be also equal to him.

44. In order to perform all-virtuous good conduct,
May I undertake aspirations of Mañjuśrī.
In all the future kalpas without weariness,
May I perfect all his activities.]

The chief son of the jinas refers to the bodhisattva of all-good conduct [Samantabhadra].

In regard to the complete liberation of bodhisattvas and in regard to samādhi—in brief, in regard to all the bodhisattva’s qualities—the bodhisattva Samantabhadra is supreme among all, therefore he is called the chief. The chief son of the jinas called Samantabhadra, this bodhisattva is called the Skillful One. So that I could act like this Skillful One means “may my conduct be equal [to his].” Thus, the root of virtue taught in this way, in an instant I fully dedicate, which means I dedicate it thoroughly. Body, speech and mind\textsuperscript{226} refers to complete

\textsuperscript{226} Sde, Pe and Snar read yid, the commentary quotes it as sems, Dpe, 1473.
purification of body, speech and mind, as well as to purification of conduct and buddhafields. Like whom [one should dedicate them]? Like the one named here, just as he does, one should dedicate it. The one called “Skillful in the Good [conduct]” is the noble Samantabhadra, this is him who is skillful in the good [conduct]. Like that means “may I become similar to him in that.” Equal means “same as him.” Him refers to the noble Samantabhadra. Good conduct refers to the practice of what is wholesome. All-virtuous refers to being [virtuous] in the beginning, middle and end. Aspirations of Mañjuśrī refers to the aspiration practice of the noble Mañjuśrī. What are his aspirations like? This was stated in the [sūtra on] noble Mañjuśrī’s transformation into a Dharma king.\footnote{Noble Mañjuśrī uttered this when he got transformed into a Dharma king (Tib.’phags pa’jam dpal chos kyi rgyal por gyur pa na gsungs pa), Dpe, 1473. I am unsure of which text Vasubandhu is referring to. \textit{Source??}}

For as long as beings stay in samsāra—
From the very beginning until they abandon it—
For that long, for the benefit of beings,
May I practice [good] conduct.

and so on, he spoke at length. \textit{In all the future kalpas without weariness} means “in all the future kalpas without exception, may I do activities with the mind that is never exhausted.” May I \textit{perfect} those activities of buddhas and bodhisattvas, means “may I make them accomplished.”

\section*{8.16. Conclusion}

It [Rāja] teaches the sixteenth part in terms of distinctive aspects: immeasurability, joining, qualities, conduct and temporality.

\begin{quote}
[45. May these activities be immeasurable.  
May my qualities be immeasurable as well.  
Abiding in this immeasurable activities  
May I conceive all these miracles.]
\end{quote}
May these activities, etc. means “may my conduct become without limit.” May my qualities be immeasurable and my conduct be immeasurable, and abiding in the immeasurable qualities may I conceive all the miracles—miraculous powers, etc., everything that is extraordinary—of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas. These sixteen divisions comprise the eighth part.

9. Extent of the Aspiration

[46. Just as the limit of space
Is the limit of all sentient being without exception.
Just as the limit of their karma and afflictions
Is the limit of my aspiration.]

Now, the ninth part, the ultimate meaning, it refers to the ultimate [meaning] of Samantabhadra’s Aspiration. As for the extent of the aspiration for good actions, it [the Rāja] says Just as the limit of space, etc. It refers to the limits of the sky expanse, etc. Just as the limits of the sky expanse, so is the expanse of beings and the limits of their karma and afflictions, and until [these limits] may [reach] my Aspiration of Samantabhadra’s Conduct. Space neither has limits nor completion. Likewise, also may my aspiration have no limits and completion.

10. Benefits of the Aspiration

The tenth part is the benefits of the Aspiration. It has two parts: [10.1.] benefits of this lifetime and [10.2.] benefits beyond this life. The part of benefits of this life is further divided into four: [10.1.1.] Acquiring particular merit; [10.1.2.] Seeing tathāgatas; [10.1.3.] Befriending bodhisattvas; and [10.1.4.] Exhausting all the karmic obscurations.
10.1 Benefits of this lifetime

10.1.1 Acquiring particular merit

With respect to that—abundant and vast acquired things, buddhafields, and, especially, the exalted speech, which is the aspiration for enlightenment—it [the Rāja] teaches the following about the supreme intention and dedication of particularly exalted merit.\(^{228}\)

[47. If someone will be offering to the jinas,  
Limitless, adorned with jewels, buddhafields of ten directions,  
As well as supreme pleasures of gods and humans  
For kalpas as numerous as particles in buddhafields,

48. And someone else, having heard this king of dedications,  
Will yearn for the supreme enlightenment  
Or just once will generate faith,  
The sublime merit of the later will be superior.]

In the quote If someone will be offering to the jinas, etc., someone, son or daughter of the noble family, for kalpas equal in number to particles in buddhafields, will be offering to buddhas–bhagavāns various limitless and supreme buddhafields of the ten directions, as well as jewels, garments, canopies, parasols, victory banners, flags, musicals instruments, precious bells, rosaries, scents, flowers, garlands of butter lamps, ornaments that surpass those of gods and humans, particularly exalted food and drinks, etc. of gods and humans, endowed with five hundred tastes and able to engender supreme bliss. And someone else, having heard such a king of dedications, will just once give rise to a yearning, which means will believe that it is really so and generate certainty in it. What is [this yearning]? Will yearn for the supreme enlightenment refers to [the enlightenment of] Mahāyāna. Moreover, the dedication will lead to attainment of particularly superior merit of good [conduct]. Will be refers to the scale of accomplishment, which means the merit of the later will be particularly superior.

\(^{228}\) De la rab tu mang bar gyur pa rgya che ba… (Dpe, 1475). The passage is not clear.
10.1.2. Seeing tathāgatas

[49. Whoever makes this Aspiration for good conduct,
That one will abandon all the lower realms,
That one will abandon bad friends
And also quickly see Buddha Amitābha.

50. Such ones will obtain supreme gain and live happily.
Also in this life everything will go well for them.
And before long,
They will become just like Samantabhadra.]

It [the Rāja] teaches the following about abandoning harmful bad friends and seeing tathāgatas. In the quote That one will abandon bad friends, bad friends refers to unvirtuous spiritual friends, such as śrāvakas, etc. At the time of death, one certainly will quickly see Bhagavān Tathāgata Amitābha. Who will see him? The one who will keep in mind the meaning of the essence text of such Aspiration for good conduct.

10.1.3. Befriending bodhisattvas

It [the Rāja] teaches that in this life one will meet friends, worthy of praise—bodhisattvas. In the quote Such ones will obtain supreme gain, etc., the gain is the gain of the incomparable precious aspiration. Supreme gain is gaining happy life and this precious aspiration. By this very essence also, in many [future] lives one will attain these things. Everything will go well for them refers to [obtaining] human birth. Whatever is the conduct of Samantabhadra, may [my conduct] be like that, and likewise may I quickly become just like him.

10.1.4. Exhausting all the karmic obscurations

[51. The negative deeds of five acts with immediate retribution,
Whoever commits them under the power of ignorance,
If they recite this Aspiration for good conduct,
They will be quickly thoroughly purified.]
It [the Rāja] teaches the following about the fourth benefit, thorough exhaustion of karmic obscurations. In the quote *The negative deeds of five acts with immediate retribution*, etc., the five deeds with immediate retribution, such as killing one’s own mother, etc., whoever commits them *under the power of ignorance*, ignorance refers to the root [of all afflictions.] Other afflictions, such as attachment, etc., are also underpowered by ignorance. If one, with the heart filled with moisture of faith in the recitation of this *Aspiration of Samantabhadra’s conduct* explained in these words, will recite it, teach it, have interest in it, read it, memorize it, contemplate it and practice, underpowered by fear day and night, will quickly completely exhaust the deeds with immediate retribution, which means will eliminate them.

### 10.2. Benefits beyond this life

The [benefits] beyond this life have two aspects: the cause and the effect of the [benefits] beyond this life. As for that, it [the Rāja] teaches the following about primordial wisdom, major and minor characteristics, and features of not being bound by factors that are not concordant with the disposition.

[52. *They will possess wisdom, form and marks, Good family and radiant appearance. They will be invincible by māras and tīrthikas And also worshiped by all the three worlds.*]

In the quote *They will possess wisdom, beauty and marks, wisdom* refers to the oceans of primordial *wisdom; form* of a being refers to the pleasing *form; marks* refer to the thirty-two major *marks* of a great being, such as the crown of their head is invisible, etc., as well as secondary marks. It is to understand that others do not possess them, but [this being] will be

\[\text{Source?}\]

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229 The crown of their head is invisible (Tib. *sphyi gtsug bktor mi mgon pa*)—may refer to the feature of Buddha’s *uṣṇīṣa* that goes so high up that its top is not visible. Source??
endowed with them. *Family* refers to the *brāhmaṇa*,\(^{230}\) *vaiśya*\(^{231}\) or other *family*. The so-called lineage\(^{232}\) refers to special realization, such as clairvoyance, etc. *Will* refers to “they will be born.” *Possess* means “to be endowed in an authentic way.” *They will be invincible by māras and tīrthikas* refers to the fact that hordes of *tīrthikas* and hordes of māras, both of them, will not overcome them, which means “will not suppress” them. They will be *also worshiped by all the three worlds*.

The result of memorizing, reading and teaching this *Aspiration for the Conduct of Samantabhadra*, if genuinely condensed, is as following: having gone to the place of enlightenment, to seat on the lion’s throne, conquer māras, actualize enlightenment and then to turn the wheel of Dharma, etc. It [the *Rāja*] teaches the following about its features.

[53. *They will quickly go beneath the Bodhi tree,*  
*Having gone there, they will sit for the benefit of beings,*  
*Attain enlightenment, turn the wheel of Dharma,*  
*And overcome Māra and his entire army.*]

As for the quote *They will quickly go beneath the Bodhi tree*, etc., whoever will genuinely comprehend this incomparable precious *Aspiration for Samantabhadra’s Conduct*, through accumulation of merit and wisdom, they will *quickly go*, which refers to the king tree of the enlightenment. *Having gone there*, they will sit cross-legged on the lion throne for the benefit and happiness of all beings. Having sat there, they will overcome hordes of Māra, then attain unsurpassable, complete and perfect enlightenment and turn the wheel of Dharma.

Also, in brief, it [the *Rāja*] teaches the following about mundane and supramundane benefits, sublime in their entirety.

[54. *Whoever will keep, teach or also read*  
*This Aspiration for good conduct,*]

\(^{230}\) *Brāhmaṇa* (Skt., Tib. *bram ze*)—the highest of the four castes or hereditary classes (Skt. *varṇa*), that of priests.

\(^{231}\) *Vaiśya* (Skt., Tib. *rje'u rigs*)—the third of the four castes or hereditary classes (Skt. *varṇa*) whose business was trade as well as agriculture.

\(^{232}\) Lineage (Tib. *rus*) may refer to the Skt. *gotra* of the second line of the stanza *vāraṇu gotraḥ bhotirupetaḥ*, Asmussen, 34. Tibetan translation only has *rigs* for *varṇa*. 
The Buddha knows the maturation of this.  
Don’t have doubts in the supreme enlightenment!

The quote Whoever will keep, teach or also read, etc., refers to the one who will hold, read and teach to others this Aspiration for Good Conduct, maturation of these actions is known by the venerable Bhagavān Buddha. Others, śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, etc., don’t know it. Which maturation of this precious aspiration does he know? The answer is: the result of the unsurpassable, genuine and perfect enlightenment, the supramundane, sublime in its entirety, realization of the supreme enlightenment and its benefits, it is to be understood so. If it did not exist, it would not arise. Consequently, it will lead to sublime worldly attainments. Therefore, one should not have doubts in this King of Aspirations.

Now, it teaches the dedicating [the merit of] reading [this aspiration].

[55. Just as the hero Mañjuśrī knows,  
Just so also does Samantabhadra.  
In order to train in their footsteps,  
I completely dedicate all this virtue.]

In the quote Just as the hero Mañjuśrī knows, etc., as the noble Mañjuśrī knows and also just so does the great bodhisattva Samantabhadra, training in their footsteps, I dedicate this heap of virtue like these bodhisattvas do.

Now, the second dedication, that of tathāgatas:

[56. All the jinas of the three times  
Praise the dedication as supreme.  
I also completely dedicate all the roots of virtue  
To the good conduct.]

In the quote All the jinas of the three times, etc., dwelling throughout the three times jinas–bhagavāns praise and compliment this dedication as supreme and unsurpassable, I also

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233 Sde, reads smon, and Pe and Snar—smin, 1478-5, Dpe, 1485. Translated to Pe and Snar as smin—maturation.
completely dedicate all the accumulated heap of merit to the unsurpassable conduct—the good conduct.

Now, it [the Rāja] in one half of the verse teaches the following about abandoning the obscurations, and in another half of the verse teaches about the pāramitās—upholding the practice in accordance with their essence.

[57. When it is time for me to die, 
May I clear away all obscurations, 
Directly see Amitābha, 
And go at once to that field of Sukhāvatī.]

In the quote When it is time for me, etc., time refers to death. At that time, which means at the time of death, whatever small obscurations there are, all of them without exception will be cleared away by the good conduct. Directly see refers to seeing Bhagavān Amitābha. That refers to that buddhafield of Sukhāvatī. Go refers to going there.

[58. Having gone there, may I also actualize 
All these aspirations without exception. 
May I fulfill each and every of them, 
And bring benefit to beings for as long as the world exists.]

Thus, having gone to that buddhafield, may I also actualize this kind of collection of aspirations taught in this way. In order to bring benefit to all beings without exception I will perfect all these [aspirations]. For how long? The answer: for as long as the world exists, which means “for as long as the world exists, [may I] benefit beings.”

[59. There, in the excellent and joyous mandala of jinas, 
May I be born in the sublime beautiful lotus flower. 
May from the jina Amitābha in person 
I obtain my genuine prophecy there.]

May I genuinely obtain the prophecy and act in a supreme way for the sublime benefit of beings. There, in the mandala of jinas, etc., there means “in that place.” The mandala of jinas refers to the mandala of the retinue of tathāgatas. Excellent refers to beautiful, enjoyable

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234 This explanation refers to Skt. kālakriyāṃ in kālakriyāṃ ca ahaṃ karamāṇo, which does not directly mention death, while Tib. bdag ni ’chi b’ai dus byed gyur pa na does.
and appealing. *Sublime lotus flower* is supreme lotus adorned with various jewels that is naturally beautiful and pleasing, as well as luminous and emitting various rays of light. *Born* means “I will appear.” *Prophecy* refers to making a prediction, which means to prophesize by this the following: at that time, in this or that world, tathāgata, arhat completely perfect buddha, called by this name, will appear—this kind of prophecy. And I will *obtain a prophecy from* the bhagavān *Amitābha*, having seen him in *person*.

[60. Having received the prophecy there, 
*Through billions of emanations,*
*Sent in ten directions by the power of mind,*
*May I bring a lot of benefit to beings.*]

*There* refers to obtaining the prophecy from the Bhagavān Amitābha, and then through a magical cloud of *billions of emanations*, that fill all the ten directions, I will instantaneously bring immeasurable benefit to beings. In brief, may I do it throughout the *ten directions* until saṃsāra is emptied, *by the power of mind*, which means through the power of my primordial wisdom, its great essence, without attachment.

All the merit obtained through composing

This explanation of the *King of Aspirations*

For the benefit of beings, I thoroughly dedicate

So that I may do this virtue again and again,

And offer it in accordance with its cause.

The explanation of the *Noble Aspiration for Good Conduct*, composed by ācārya Vasubandhu, is compete.

This was translated by Indian paṇḍita ācārya Ānanda and lotsāwa bhikṣu Bhadrapāla.
Conclusion

This study presents the results of exploration and translation into English of the Ṭīkā—the commentary to the Āryabhadracāryapraṇidhānarāja, The King of Aspirations—attributed to the great Indian Buddhist philosopher Vasubandhu. In the contextualization part, the thesis explored the Ṭīkā in three main contexts—that of genre definition and semantic field, Indian and Tibetan historical contexts and commentarial tradition, as well as the context of life and works of Vasubandhu. This provided for a contextual framework for the critical translation of the Ṭīkā in the second part.

Throughout the thesis I tried to show the importance of the Rāja, the great bodhisattva aspiration—the mahāpranidhāna. It may seem that this is primarily the importance of the Rāja that provides importance to the Ṭīkā—a commentary on its words and meanings. However, the opposite is also true—the attribution of the Ṭīkā to the great philosopher Vasubandhu shows that the Rāja is an important text that deserves his commentary. Both texts were read and translated side by side: explanations contained in the Ṭīkā influenced the translation preferences in regard to the Rāja, as well as the Tibetan and to certain extent Sanskrit texts of the Rāja contributed to the Ṭīkā’s translation.

As most Mahāyāna treatises, the Rāja and the Ṭīkā are concerned primarily with the usual triad of the bodhisattva view, meditation and conduct. These three can be accomplished by many means, all of which can be brought down to the bodhicitta of aspiration and application. The “aspiration” is understood as striving for desirable qualities—such as bodhisattva’s way of thinking, while “application” relates to the means of attaining the fruition of the complete and perfect enlightenment.

What makes the Rāja and the Ṭīkā so beautiful and inspiring is the immeasurable and inconceivable qualities of the bodhisattva’s aspirations. Since they arise from the cause that is
non-conceptual wisdom, such aspirations are the means for accomplishing all goals—one’s own relative and ultimate benefit, as well as that of others. Merely through the intention of bodhisattva’s mind the entire welfare of themselves and others is fulfilled. In this sense, bodhisattvas have two objectives—the perfect enlightenment for themselves and welfare for all beings. Among these two objectives, the latter is the most important, while perfect Buddhahood is just the most efficient state for accomplishing this welfare. Finally, the purity of bodhisattva’s aspirations is signified by the freedom from all characteristics, such as clinging to self or any sort of duality.

This research is just the first step in researching and translating the five Indian commentaries to the Rāja that are part of the Tibetan bstan 'gyur collections. It revealed many fields that have a potential for further exploration. On its own, this thesis contributes to the Mahāyāna philosophical and linguistic research in general, to the narrower topic of Vasubandhu’s literary corpus, and to the further advancement of the Rāja scholarship in particular.
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Annex

Topical Outline of the Āryabhadracaryāpraṇidhānaṅkā

1. Homage to the tathāgatas
2. Making offerings
3. Confessing wrongdoings
4. Rejoicing in merit
5. Requesting to turn the wheel of Dharma
6. Asking to remain without passing into nirvāṇa
7. Dedicating the roots of virtue
8. Detailed analysis
   8.1. Intention
      8.1.1. Intention to fulfill the intent to make offerings to the tathāgatas
      8.1.2. Intention to purify buddhafields
      8.1.3. Intention to bestow happiness upon sentient beings
   8.2. Not forgetting bodhicitta
   8.3. Untainted application
   8.4. Benefitting beings
   8.5. Armor [of dedication]
      8.5.1. Confirming with the ways of beings
   8.6. Befriending companions who are bodhisattvas and wish to benefit [others]
   8.7. Pleasing virtuous friends
   8.8. Contemplating directly the tathāgatas
   8.9. Upholding the sublime Dharma
   8.10. Apprehending genuinely the inexhaustible treasury
8.11. Engagement

8.11.1-8.11.2 Two parts on engagement with seeing the buddhafields

8.11.3 Engagement with the speech of the buddhas

8.11.4 Engagement with the turning of the wheel of Dharma

8.11.5 Entering into the duration of kalpas

8.11.6 Seeing the tathāgatas and engagement with their sphere of activity

8.11.7 Seeing and entering the arrays of buddhafields

8.11.8 Going in the presence of sugatas

8.12. Power

8.13. Antidotes

8.14. Activities

8.15. Perfect dedication for training

8.16. Conclusion

9. Extent of the Aspiration

10. Benefits of the Aspiration

10.1 Benefits of this lifetime

10.1.1 Acquiring particular merit

10.1.2. Seeing tathāgatas

10.1.3. Befriending bodhisattvas

10.1.4. Exhausting all the karmic obscurations

10.2. Benefits beyond this life