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Appearing Differently to All While Not Departing from Emptiness, the Essence of the True Nature of Things

Dharmatāsvabhāvaśūnyatācalapratisarvāloka

འཕགས་པ་ཆོས་ཉིད་རང་གི་ངོ་བོ་སྟོང་པ་ཉིད་ལས་མི་གཡོ་བར་ཐ་དད་པར་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་སྣང་བའི་མདོ།

’phags pa chos nyid rang gi ngo bo stong pa nyid las mi g.yo bar tha dad par thams cad la snang ba’i mdo

The Noble Sūtra Appearing Differently to All While Not Departing from Emptiness, the Essence of the True Nature of Things

Āryadharmatāsvabhāvaśūnyatācalapratisarvālokasūtra

· Toh 128 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 55 (mdo sde, da), folios 171.a–174.b
For referencing Tibetan sources, please see our Scholar’s Edition

TRANSLATED INTO TIBETAN BY

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Summary

s.1 This short philosophical discourse opens with the Buddha described as unmoving from the true nature of things. Although at this time he has no thought of teaching the Dharma, different members of the audience nevertheless believe that they have heard a teaching. On the basis of their differing perceptions, five distinct philosophical views concerning the true nature of things come to be held by different members of the audience. When Mañjuśrī, who is also in the audience, becomes aware that they are harboring these different understandings, he asks the Buddha why such different views have arisen, whether they are equally valid, and whether such differences will be a matter of dispute in the future. The Buddha replies that different understandings arise because of the different inclinations and aptitudes of people; that of the five views only the fifth is fully in accord with the experiential domain of all buddhas; and he predicts that in the future such differences in understanding will be argued about for a very long time. Mañjuśrī then asks one final question: if these differing views all have a single basis, what is that basis? The Buddha's answer is that although all experience is based on the aggregates, the constituents, and the sense fields, even these things must not be reified if one is to reach unsurpassed, complete, and perfect awakening.

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ac.1 Translated, introduced, and annotated by George FitzHerbert, in consultation with an incomplete draft translation by the Sakya Pandita Translation Group.

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Introduction

i.1 *Appearing Differently to All While Not Departing from Emptiness, the Essence of the True Nature of Things* concerns the emergence of different philosophical interpretations of the Buddha's teaching on the true nature of things. It illustrates the paradoxical nature of the Buddha's teaching and of reality itself insofar as both are simultaneously one and many.

i.2 This short and dense discourse has a narrative frame in which the Buddha is himself described as being unmoving from the true nature of things, and as such, does not form any thought about teaching the Dharma. Nevertheless, a teaching on the true nature of things is heard, but is heard differently by the various members of the audience, based on their different inclinations.[1] These different understandings are then delineated as five distinct philosophical views, or "analytic positions" or "ways of examining"[2] all things, some of which resemble well-known philosophical positions that emerged in classical Indian Buddhism.

i.3 When Mañjuśrī becomes aware that members of the audience are harboring these different understandings of the Buddha's teaching on the true nature of things, he decides to question the Buddha about it, inquiring as to why such differences have arisen, whether such diverse views are equally valid as means for achieving awakening, whether they will persist in the future, and whether such differences will be a source of dispute. The Buddha's replies indicate that although all the different analytic positions may all be seen as correct insofar as they go, the first four constitute something like progressive steps along the way to the fifth and final view, which alone is described as the unmistaken view that is in accordance with the experiential domain of all buddhas. The Buddha then offers a series of analogies by way of illustration. He also makes the prediction that these differing views will persist long after

his own *parinirvāṇa* and that in the future they will be exploited in competitive rivalries and disputes.

i.4 At the end of the sūtra, Mañjuśrī raises a final question: if these different viewpoints all concern a single basis for all things, what then is that basis? The Buddha's answer, which is reminiscent of teachings on emptiness found in the sūtras on the Perfection of Wisdom and elsewhere, is that although the basis of all experience is the aggregates, constituents, and sense fields, one must not reify even these if one is to reach unsurpassed, complete, and perfect awakening.

i.5 Though not made explicit in its title, the content and position of this sūtra in the General Sūtra section of the Degé Kangyur indicate that it is considered a Mahāyāna sūtra.[3] In the text itself there is mention of followers of the Lesser Vehicle and the Great Vehicle. Nevertheless, the discourse strikes a nonsectarian tone insofar as it gives some credence to a number of different views and explicitly offers a critique of needless dispute. At the same time, however, it does make the strong claim that there is one unmistaken, undistorted point of view.

i.6 As will be outlined below, the provenance of this sūtra is somewhat uncertain. This is noted by both Tibetan Kangyur scholars Chomden Raltri (1227–1305) and Butön Rinchen Drub (1290-1364) and, in recent times, Herrmann-Pfandt (2008, pp. 147–48) and Li (2021, p. 203).

i.7 In short, the complications arise from the fact that the Denkarma catalog, which was compiled in the early ninth century CE, includes a text it classifies as having been translated from Chinese that is very similar in title and length.[4] Nevertheless, there *is* evidence that the text existed in India in the eleventh century, since it is cited (though without a title) in a commentary translated into Tibetan that is attributed to Avadhūtipa, better known as Maitrīpa (ca. 1007–85).[5] The sūtra is also mentioned by name in a treatise by Atīśa Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna (982–1054), likewise extant only in Tibetan translation.[6] Later, in the thirteenth century, Chomden Raltri lists the sūtra among those

Tibetan translations whose attribution is unknown.[7] Therefore, it seems that Chomden Raltri had a version of the text in his possession, but that the translation lacked a colophon to identify its translators. However, a few decades later, when Butön compiled his *History of the Dharma*, he lists the same text among "thirty-six sūtras that have not been found." In the same passage Butön notes that this sūtra "was certainly translated previously, but these days it is not included in the Kangyur and cannot be located."[8] Since he assumed that it had gone missing, it follows that Butön did not have access to the text that Chomden Raltri listed.

i.8 Its disappearance cannot have lasted long, however, because a younger scholar in the next generation of Butön's lineage, the important Prajñāpāramitā specialist Yaktön Sangyé Pal (g.yag ston sangs rgyas dpal, 1350–1414), includes the entire sūtra verbatim, with intercalated comments of his own, in his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*.[9] Yaktön was quoting it soon after the first appearance of a complete Kangyur as a collection (the Tshalpa Kangyur was produced in 1347–51) and well before the production of the Themphangma manuscript in 1431.

i.9 The text did eventually make it into the Kangyur collections (in both Tshalpa and Thempangma recensions) that were compiled in the period following Butön. However, the text in the Kangyur now appeared with a translators' colophon stating that the translation was produced in the early ninth century by the Indian preceptor Dānaśīla and the Tibetan translator and editor Bandé Yeshé Dé.[10] If this colophon were correct, this would of course mean that the translation was made from Sanskrit, and not Chinese as stated in the Denkarma catalog.

i.10 Both Herrmann-Pfandt and Li note this discrepancy but suggest that the puzzle can be solved either by viewing the Denkarma catalog's attribution as erroneous (Herrmann-Pfandt, 2008, p. 148), or by assuming that the text in the Denkarma catalog is an altogether different text from the one that appeared in the

Kangyur collections after the fourteenth century (Li, 2021, p. 203). Li does, however, acknowledge that neither of these theories is fully convincing since they both fail to account for the observation of Chomden Raltri, who seems to have had in his possession a translation that lacked a translators' colophon. Nor do they explain how the version that was included in the Kangyur could reappear in the fourteenth century, after having gone unnoticed by the compilers of the imperial catalogs, as well as both Chomden Raltri and Butön, during the preceding five centuries since it had purportedly been produced.

i.11 Unfortunately, no extant parallel versions of the text, in either Chinese or Sanskrit, have been identified, which leaves the conundrum concerning its translation into Tibetan difficult to resolve conclusively. However, based on our work with the translation published here, we feel that one cannot rule out the possibility that the version of the text that we find included in the Kangyur is in fact, as stated in the Denkarma catalog, related to, or perhaps an edited version of, the translation that was produced from Chinese in the late eighth or early ninth century. If this theory is correct, the colophon that is attached to the text in the Kangyur would constitute a later, incorrect, editorial intervention, added at some point after the time of Chomden Raltri. To add a translators' colophon to a text, or to modify an existing colophon, or even to merge several preexisting colophons into one, was rather common practice in Tibet. Such editorial interventions had already begun in the ninth century and continued, until the period after Chomden Raltri and Butön, up until the end of the fourteenth century.[11]

i.12 In addition to the information found in the notes written by Chomden Raltri and Butön, the Tibetan and Sanskrit titles of the text, as found in the various sources, themselves also present some uncertainties. First, regarding the Tibetan title, half of the title has been more or less stable in all sources since the Denkarma catalog and up through the various Kangyurs, while the other half of the title has varied considerably. As such, the part of the title that we have here rendered "*While Not Departing from Emptiness, the Essence of the*

True Nature of Things" (*chos nyid rang gi ngo bo stong pa nyid las mi g.yo bar*), has remained more or less stable in the various sources, apart from the inclusion or absence of the word "emptiness" (*stong pa nyid*). The other half of the title, however, differs significantly in the different sources. First, the titles listed in the Denkarma catalog and Atīśa's text are shorter than the titles given in the Kangyur collections.[12] It is in fact only from the time of Chomden Raltri that we find the longer version of the title "*Appearing Differently to All*," and even in these later sources several minor variations are found. For example, in the Degé Kangyur the title given at the end of the text is different from the title page insofar as the word "emptiness" (*stong pa nyid*) is absent and there is no dative particle (or *la don*) after the word "all" (*thams cad*). The title given in this colophon accords more closely with the title found in the Stok Palace Kangyur and other Thempangma lineage Kangyurs.

i.13 In addition to these differences, the longer Tibetan title in the various Kangyurs also contains some grammatical features that make it difficult to interpret its meaning with certainty.[13] Avoiding these ambiguities, the sūtra is often referred to in later Tibetan sources by the simpler short title *The Sūtra of Not Departing from the True Nature of Things* (*chos nyid mi g.yo ba'i mdo*). The longer English title that we have presented here should therefore be seen as one interpretation among several other possibilities. Why and how the title came to vary in these ways is unclear to us at present and deserves further study.

i.14 The Sanskrit title as found in the Degé Kangyur also contains elements that make it an unlikely title for an Indian manuscript. For example, the title includes the word *āloka* ("light" or "illumination") which, despite being a plausible Sanskrit basis for the Tibetan translation *snang ba* had the content of the text been different, is difficult to map on to the most likely meaning of the Tibetan in this text, which is "appearing." Moreover, the Sanskrit word *prati* is not easily translated into Tibetan as *tha dad par*, considering the meaning that this Tibetan term occupies in this particular text—where it seems to carry the sense of "differently". More generally, the Sanskrit title does not seem viable as

a meaningful title, and, notably, the Stok Palace version also bears no Sanskrit title. It is, therefore, tempting to see the Sanskrit title as a later creation, back-translated and added to the text at some point during its history in Tibet.

i.15 Finally, there is also a feature in the Tibetan terminology used in this text that may further hint at this text being originally a translation from Chinese, even if it may subsequently have been edited. Of the eight sūtras in the Kangyur where we find the Tibetan term *rang gi ngo bo nyid*, four of these (if we include our text among them) are translations from Chinese (Toh 61, Toh 108, Toh 128, and Toh 135).[14] Considering the relatively small number of sūtras translated from Chinese compared to the hundreds of sūtras that were translated from Sanskrit, this could be yet another indication of the text's possibly Chinese origins. [15]

i.16 In light of all these considerations, one should perhaps not rule out the Denkarma catalog's classification of this text as a translation from Chinese, especially considering that the Denkarma catalog was produced shortly after the translation was made. The Denkarma catalog is a ninth century historical document and, therefore, seems a more reliable source than a translators' colophon of which there is no trace in any source until at least the fourteenth century.

i.17 Of course, neither the Tibetan or Sanskrit titles, the use of the term *rang gi ngo bo nyid*, or the classification of the Denkarma catalog, themselves constitute proof that this text was translated from Chinese. It is also possible that the original translation from the early ninth century might have been edited by later Tibetan scholars, perhaps with reference to the Sanskrit passages quoted by Maitrīpa. As such, the text in the Kangyur might be a result of editorial interventions produced over several centuries. For the time being, these questions cannot be resolved with certainty.

i.18 The sūtra might also seem to present some conundrums of chronology in terms of its doctrinal content. Its main theme is five "analytic positions" that, at first sight—to readers in any age later than the tenth or eleventh century—would

have looked like the summarized views of the four or five historically extant philosophical schools of thought (*grub mtha'*) constituting the doxography widely adopted in the commentarial literature of the later Madhyamaka. They are also given in the same progressive sequence as the doxography attributes to those schools of thought. Yet the narrative is set at the time of the Buddha, long before any of those schools came into being and even longer before they were categorized and ranked schematically. Early scholars, some of whom mapped the five positions on to the philosophical schools, may have legitimately wondered if the text might have been redacted to reflect that doxography despite the apparent anachronism. It could be that the remark attributed to Dānaśīla in the editorial note added—rather unusually—to the translators' colophon was intended to dispel any doubts regarding the sūtra's canonicity on those grounds.

i.19 On the other hand, it is worth pointing out first of all that none of the statements in this sūtra constituting the five "analytic positions" say anything that cannot be found in other sūtras. It is only the way they are set out in an explicitly progressive order that might be seen as a reference to a doxographical classification of views. Indeed, Dānaśīla's remark points to how doubts invoking an anachronism might actually be inverted. The sūtra's canonical status itself can be deployed to demonstrate that in it—documented as being witnessed and explained by the Buddha himself—the fact that people experienced different views as they tried to make sense of the phenomenal world with the guidance of his teachings was simply a natural manifestation of their different human propensities. In other words, this text might be the *locus classicus* of how a range of views should be (and later were) categorized into a doxography.

i.20 This approach is taken most directly by Amé Zhab (a myes zhabs ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams, 1597–1659) in a long commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*. He specifically equates the five "analytic positions" in the sūtra with the philosophical positions respectively of (1) the Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika (*don smra ba gnyis*), (2) the Cittamatra (*sems tsam*), (3) the general Madhyamaka (*dbu ma*

spyi), (4) the "illusion-like" Madhyamaka (*dbu ma sgyu ma lta bu*), and (5) the "nonabiding" Madhyamaka (*dbu ma rab tu mi gnas pa*). However, he also makes the important distinction between, on the one hand, these views arising in the minds of individuals as they are here recorded as having done in the sūtra and, on the other, their being adopted as views belonging to collective schools of thought. He reinforces his argument by citing instances in other sūtras and tantras featuring the terminology of these views: the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (Toh 107), *Sumaghadāvadāna* (Toh 346), *Hevajratantra* (Toh 417–418), *Ḍākārṇava* (Toh 372), and others.[16]

i.21 However, such assumptions that the five tersely stated views in the sūtra can be directly mapped on to the five well-known philosophical positions do not seem to have been universally accepted. Maitrīpa simply takes them all as a necessary, sequentially coherent, and sufficient set of steps in establishing a correct view, with little reference to names of schools other than Madhyamaka. Yaktönpa's commentary goes into considerable detail regarding the view, meditation, action, and result of the schools (naming not only the Sautrantika, Cittamatra, and Madhyamaka, but also some of their sub-schools), yet his approach uses the statements from the sūtra to structure and illustrate his exposition, rather than using his exposition to characterize the statements.

i.22 None of these commentators, therefore, interpret the five "analytic positions" in ways that could be adduced as anachronistic, and there appear to be no documented suggestions that the text could be apocryphal.

i.23 In any case, the fifth and final position upheld in this sūtra as the true and correct one—that all things are unborn, nonabiding, without all delimitations of action and activity, beyond conceptualization, and unelaborated from beginningless time[17]—has been cited and paraphrased by many Tibetan scholar-adepts over the centuries, particularly those associated with mahāmudrā or dzogchen. These include Gampopa Sönam Rinchen (1074–1153),[18] and Longchenpa Drimé Öser (1308–63),[19] among others.[20]

i.24 The sūtra has also been drawn upon by historians. Guru Tashi, the early nineteenth-century historian, while discussing the duration for which the teachings of the Buddha will persist, quotes the Buddha's prediction in this sūtra that for two thousand five hundred years after the Buddha's own passing there will still be those who follow and debate these different philosophical views.[21]

i.25 The sūtra does not appear to have attracted modern scholarly attention apart from a single short study in Japanese published in 1971,[22] and this is its first translation into English.

i.26 This translation is based primarily on the text in the Degé Kangyur, but in consultation with the variant readings recorded in the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) and in particular the Stok Palace Kangyur, which in several places was found to have preferable readings. Where the interpretation of the Tibetan text remains tentative, or where the variant readings have been preferred, this has been recorded in the notes.

The Translation

1.

The Noble Sūtra

Appearing Differently to All While Not Departing from Emptiness, the Essence of the True Nature of Things

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.

1.2 Thus did I hear at one time. At the Dharma Abode of the King of Deer,[23] upon a great throne of various precious substances arising from the qualities of his wisdom, the Blessed One was seated without departing from the essence of the true nature of things just as it is.

1.3 At that time, limitless, innumerable great bodhisattvas and a great host of gods, humans, asuras, and others were also assembled at that place. Those gathered there all made repeated circumambulations of and prostrations toward the Blessed One, then each took their place and, having paid respectful homage, given veneration, and made excellent offerings, with their heads bowed, they began to listen to the Dharma without weariness.

1.4 At that time, although the Blessed One formed no thought of teaching a formulation or elucidation of the Dharma, by the power of his compassion and vow, everyone in that audience heard him speak according to their own individual inclinations and attitudes. They thought, "The Blessed One is teaching the Dharma to me, not to others."

1.5 And so, some among that great gathering thought, (1) "He teaches the Dharma that things are just as they appear,"[24] and taking it as certain, they formed that notion.

1.6 Some thought, (2) “He teaches the Dharma that all things are nothing other than mind alone,”[25] and taking it as certain, they formed that notion.

1.7 Some thought, (3) “He teaches us the Dharma that even mind itself is unborn,”[26] and taking it as certain, they formed that notion.

1.8 Some thought, (4) “He teaches the Dharma that all things appear like illusions and, like illusions, do not exist,”[27] and taking it as certain, they formed that notion.

1.9 Some thought, (5) “He teaches the Dharma that all things are by nature unborn, by essence nonabiding, and being without all delimitations of action and activity,[28] transcend concepts and the objects of conceptualization, and are completely free of elaboration from beginningless time,” [29] and taking it as certain, they formed that notion.

1.10 Then, without departing from the essence of the true nature of things just as they are, the Blessed One took on a compassionate form,[30] and light rays called *clearing the darkness of conceptualization from those assembled who have different views* shone forth from his tongue. The light rays were visible in all ten directions, and this roused the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, who was there in that audience. Being aware that most of the audience held the five different understandings, the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī thought, “Why are there different views and beliefs regarding a single basis of all things? I will ask the Blessed One.”

1.11 When those light rays had gathered back again into the tongue of the Blessed One, the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī asked the Blessed One, “Although the Blessed One formed no thought of teaching a formulation or elucidation of the Dharma, why, Blessed One, do those assembled here have different beliefs and notions? Blessed One, are these five analytic positions concerning things[31] all correct, or are some correct and some incorrect? Are these five analytic positions concerning things equal when it comes to the attainment of complete

liberation, or, Blessed One, do these five analytic positions relate to different types of persons?[32] Is there some suitable analogy, Blessed One, for how these five analytic positions appear different? In the future, Blessed One, will there still be people who will understand things according to each of these five analytic positions? Blessed One, will people who train in these five analytic positions argue about what they do and do not mean? Blessed One, so as to banish the doubts of those gathered here, please explain."

1.12 This is what he said, and the Blessed One replied, "Mañjuśrī, you asked, 'Although the Blessed One formed no thought of teaching a formulation or elucidation of the Dharma, why do those assembled here have different beliefs and notions?' Regarding that, because of their purification through practice,[33] or lack thereof, there are those with greater or lesser degrees of understanding and aptitude. Because buddhas have purification and accumulation that is limitless, they remain at all times, effortlessly, without departing from the essence of the true nature of things just as they are. This is the experiential domain of all buddhas. Since those of greater purification and those of just a little purification similarly acquire that which is correct and that which is incorrect from their lineage, they will have different beliefs and notions.

1.13 "Mañjuśrī, you asked, 'Are these five analytic positions concerning things all correct, or are some correct and some incorrect?' Regarding that, when all of these five analytic positions concerning things are taken as correct, there are some who think that the Dharma that has been taught is that all things exist just as they appear. Why? This is because the four elements and what they produce exist like different illusions.

1.14 "There are also some who think that the Dharma that has been taught is that all things are nothing other than mind alone. Why? This is because the habitual tendencies of the mind to assign permanence to various imputed things make it appear that those things persist through time as a self or as a thing, even

though they are merely conventional designations that in reality are without intrinsic nature and do not exist beyond mere mind.

1.15 “There are also some who think that the Dharma taught to us is that even mind itself is unborn. Why? This is because it has no form or color, no past, present, or future, and no center or edges.

1.16 “There are also some who think that the Dharma that has been taught is that all things appear like illusions and, like illusions, do not exist. Why? This is because all things arise from causes and conditions.

1.17 “There are also some who think that the Dharma that has been taught is that all things are inherently unborn, essentially nonabiding, and, being without all delimitations of action and activity, they transcend concepts and the objects of conceptualization, and are completely free of elaboration from beginningless time. Why? This is because that is the essential nature of all things without any distortion.

1.18 “Mañjuśrī, there are also some who have not grasped the positions correctly. These are the understandings[34] of those of lesser purification, inferior aptitude, and poor discernment. There are also some of middling purification, aptitude, and discernment who have such understandings. The rest are correct in their understanding, which is excellent.

1.19 “Mañjuśrī, you asked, ‘Are these five analytic positions concerning things equal when it comes to the attainment of complete liberation?’ Regarding that, apart from the correct understanding of those whose discernment is excellent, the other four positions, though sequentially distinct in terms of their proximity to the correct understanding, may be seen as equal when it comes to the attainment of complete liberation.

1.20 “Mañjuśrī, you asked, ‘Are these five analytic positions concerning things for different kinds of people?’ Regarding that, once they have progressed through

four of the five analytic positions concerning things, both those who follow the Lesser Vehicle and those who follow the Great Vehicle will realize that only the last one reflects the correct, undistorted experiential domain of the buddhas.

1.21 "Mañjuśrī, you asked, 'Is there a suitable analogy for how these five different analytic positions concerning things appear?' Regarding that, the rising of the sun over Jambudvīpa is an analogy that illustrates how there are different understandings concerning the single basis of things. When the ascending sun rises over Jambudvīpa from the sky forty thousand yojanas away, everyone thinks that the sun is rising over their own town from their own mountain. In the same way, everyone present at this gathering has their own notions concerning the single basis of things. Everyone sees it in their own way, and everyone grasps it in their own way.

1.22 "Just as one cannot say without analysis that the sun does not rise from the mountain of one's own town, Mañjuśrī, in the same way, these other four analytic positions concerning things likewise appear—aside from the correct, undistorted experiential domain of the buddhas.

1.23 "Just as it is not the case that the sun truly rises from the mountain of one's own town, Mañjuśrī, in the same way, the four positions appear as stages of realization even though they do not convey the true meaning.

1.24 "How these five analyses are comparable with regard to attaining complete liberation, Mañjuśrī, may be illustrated by the analogy of valuable gems. For, with regard to valuing gems, too, there are those who rely on this work and those who do not.[35] People with no notions and those with wrong notions, who do not depend on the five analytic views concerning things, are like those people who do not do this work and so do not find anything valuable. Those who find no meaning in them do not think to examine them, and thus they will not be liberated from the three realms.

1.25 “As for those who do such work, however, there are those who are specialist collectors,[36] those who collect many, and those who collect just a few. Just as their gems will be valued in three tiers, so, too, may the correct and undistorted position, the other four positions, and the analyses of the Lesser Vehicle and Great Vehicle likewise be evaluated in three levels, as in the analogy.[37]

1.26 “An analogy to illustrate how I have expounded the twelve types of discourses[38] and the five analytic positions concerning things is the way that rivers descend in four directions from the great lake.[39] Although the four rivers, each with many tributaries, descend in four directions, they are united in descending[40] from the great lake, and thus the great lake is the foundation of all the rivers flowing in the four directions—it is what they have in common. In the same way, though the five analytic positions concerning things are different, they are reliant upon the twelve types of discourses that I have expounded, and thus the twelve types of discourses are their foundation—are what they have in common.

1.27 “Mañjuśrī, you asked, ‘In the future, will there still be people who will understand things according to each of these five analytic positions?’ Regarding that, if, while I am still teaching on the essence of things just as they are, there are those in the assembled audience who acquire different notions in this way, then, after I have passed beyond suffering, there will not only be such differences, there will be many more! Mañjuśrī, for five hundred years after I have passed beyond suffering, and for nine hundred, and for one thousand nine hundred, and for two thousand, and for two thousand five hundred years, there will still be successive generations of people with their own notions regarding these five analytic positions concerning things.

1.28 “Mañjuśrī, you asked, ‘Will people who train in these five analytic positions concerning things argue about what they do and do not mean?’ Indeed, in the future, once I have passed beyond suffering, they will argue for five hundred years. At that time, because of the greater or lesser level of people’s aptitude

and discernment, and irrespective of whether or not they have understood the undistorted meaning, they will be sure about what is not the true meaning, and having established what is and is not the meaning espoused by others, they will argue. And when they present their arguments in front of others, those who listen to them, even without intending to be adherents of positions, will become adherents of positions based on their regional affiliations and kinship.

1.29 "Even those who know the undistorted meaning will argue, not for the sake of teaching those who do not know, but for the sake of disheartening and dissecting the views of others. They will demand, 'Explain how you see the essence of your meaning!' Although the answers may not be wrong, they will be disputed based on other discourses, and with cries of, 'You said this,' they will proclaim the mistakes of others. They will think, 'How pleasant it is when others do not know, and I alone know.' They will proclaim such things not for the sake of enlightenment, but for the sake of material things."

1.30 This is what he said. Then Mañjuśrī asked, "Blessed One, if these five analytic positions concerning things, though different, rest on a single basis of things, then what is that basis of things? If whichever way one examines, one is still deluded, then what is the unmistaken essence?"

1.31 The Blessed One replied, "Mañjuśrī, the basis is the aggregates, the elements, the constituents, and the sense fields. However, one will be mistaken if one takes even these things as permanent and unchanging, since they too are like illusions and are merely conventional designations. If one examines what is inherently unborn without being clear about its appearance as a conventional designation, one will also be mistaken. The basis, the unmistaken essence, is the inherently unborn state of those things."[41]

1.32 Mañjuśrī asked, "If the basis of delusory sensory objects does not exist, then how is it that there is what is known as *the appearance of delusory sensory objects*?"

1.33 The Buddha replied, “Understand that things are like illusions, merely conventional designations that are perceived by the deluded mind as existing. Not apprehending this, and not understanding that things are inherently unborn, objects of perception that appear to the deluded mind as deluded perceptions are seized upon as permanent and unchanging things. Why must you understand this? Because one remains in saṃsāra if one takes things as permanent and unchanging. If one is in saṃsāra, the aggregates, the constituents, and the sense fields will exist. If these exist, there will be the experience of joy and sorrow. However, if one is aware that things are inherently unborn, and one has cleared away both the extremes—of permanent unchanging substantiality and of the nonexistence and negation of things—[42] then one will reach the highest perfect and complete awakening. With that, the attainments, the major and minor marks, and the buddhafields in their complete perfection will appear.

1.34 “In brief, Mañjuśrī, not understanding the inherently unborn nature of things, grasping to things as permanent and unchanging, and being in saṃsāra—this is what is known as *the perception of the deluded mind toward the appearance of things*. However, it is not the case that things appear from nothingness, like primordial space, by the power of the deluded mind alone. Even in the perception of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, by means of pure and impure vision, Mañjuśrī, the object of perception is known as *an appearance to the mind*.”

1.35 This is what he taught, and the audience gathered there rejoiced and greatly praised what the Blessed One had said.

1.36 *This concludes “The Sūtra on All Things Appearing Differently While Not Departing from the Essence of the True Nature of Things.”*[43]

Colophon

c.1 Translated, edited, and finalized by the Indian preceptor Dānaśīla and Bandé Yeshé Dé. It is said that Dānaśīla himself said that the *piṭaka* treatises and different views of Madhyamaka developed from this.[44]

Notes

1. This situation is not entirely dissimilar to the way the Buddha and his teachings are described in the early chapters of *The Secrets of the Realized Ones* (Toh 47).

2. The phrase used for these five philosophical views in versions of the text found in Kangyurs of the Tshalpa line is *chos la brtags pa'i mtha' lnga po*, which has been translated as "five analytic positions concerning things." However, in the Stok Palace Kangyur the phrase used is *chos la brtags pa'i thabs lnga po*, which could be translated as "five methods for analyzing things."

3. According to the Degé Kangyur catalog, all the works in this section of the *mdo sde* (Toh 94–286) are considered Mahāyāna sūtras.

4. Denkarma, fol. 300.b, *chos nyid rang gi ngo bo nyid las mi g.yo bar snang ba bstan pa*. It gives its length as 90 *ślokas*. This sūtra is not, however, listed in the Phangthangma, the other extant imperial catalog likely compiled some years earlier.

5. Avadhūtipa, folios 215.a–215.b. The author makes no mention of the title, saying simply "the sūtra," which he cites as the scriptural authority for a statement about nondual wisdom made in a Yogācāra text that invokes scriptural authority and reasoning as its basis.

6. Atīśa Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, folio 284.a. The title as cited by Atīśa is: *'phags pa chos nyid rang gi ngo bo nyid las mi g.yo bas tha dad par bstan pa'i mdo*.

7. In Chomden Raltri's survey, a sūtra called *chos nyid rang gi ngo bo nyid las mi g.yo bar tha dad par thams cad la snang ba* (exactly the title of the sūtra given in the colophons of the Kangyur version) is listed among those whose attribution is unknown (Tib. *sus byas mi shes par snang ngo*). Chomden Raltri, folio 67.a. Also transcribed in Schaeffer and van der Kuijp 2009, pp. 255–56.

8. Butön, chos 'byung, folio 154.a. Butön gives the title as *chos nyid rang gi ngo bo nyid las mi g.yo bar tha dad par thams cad la snang ba bstan pa* and, following the Denkarma, cites the length of the missing text as 90 *ślokas*.

9. The version of the sūtra that Yaktön cites (pp. 90–106), apart from some minor differences in punctuation and two brief passages in transposed order, is the same Tibetan translation as found in the Kangyurs; no Sanskrit title is given; in the Tibetan title, there is no *stong pa* and the *la don* after *thams cad* is present in both the initial title and the colophon title; the phrase for the five views (see n.31) is that of the Themphangma Kangyurs; and the translators' colophon attributing the text to Dānaśīla and Yeshé Dé is present but without the editorial note mentioning Dānaśīlā's comment.

10. The colophons of the Tshalpa Kangyurs also report a tradition that Dānaśīla himself considered this discourse to be the source of various philosophical treatises and the different views of Madhyamaka that later developed. This second line of the colophon is, however, absent from the Stok Palace Kangyur version, which was the only Thempangma-lineage Kangyur consulted for this translation.

11. On this topic, see Almogi 2008, especially pp. 115–18. See also Skilling 1994.

12. The Denkarma lacks the word "differently" (*tha dad par*) and Atīśa's text is missing "appearing" (*snang ba*). Both sources lack the word "all" (*thams cad*).

13. For example, the placement of *thams cad la* inside an adverbial construction is unnatural to Tibetan, as *thams cad* usually requires a preceding noun to qualify what is being referred to. Among all the titles in the Kangyur that contain the word *thams cad* (there are almost one hundred such titles), in only a handful is the term not preceded by a noun—and, of these, the title of this text is the only one belonging to a sūtra. Besides this oddity, it is also unusual to have an adverbial construction (*thad dad par… snang ba*) separated by an unrelated element (*thams cad*).

14. The other sūtras where this term is found are Toh 10, Toh 46, Toh 120, and Toh 287.

15. There are approximately forty sūtras in the Kangyur that were translated from Chinese, if one also includes those with uncertain status. See Silk 2019 and Li 2021.

16. The sūtra is mentioned in Amé Zhab, folio 55.b–56.a, but with several preceding folios of relevant discussion and the other citations mentioned.

17. *chos thams cad rang bzhin ma skyes pa/ ngo bo nyid kyis mi gnas pa/ las dang bya ba'i mtha' thams cad dang bral ba rtog pa dang rtog pa' yul las 'das pa/ thog ma med pa'i dus nas spros pa rnam par dag pa*. A further note on the phrase *las dang bya ba'i mtha' thams cad dang bral ba* is included where it occurs in the translation.

18. In his *Jewel Ornament of Liberation* (commonly known in Tibetan as the *dwags po thar rgyan*), Gampopa Sönam Rinchen (sgam po pa bsod nams rin chen, 1079–1153) quotes the text verbatim. Gampopa 2005, pp. 304–05. Ken Holmes translates the passage as "every phenomenon is, by its very nature, unborn, essentially nonabiding, free from the extremes of acting and action, and beyond the scope of thought and nonthought." Holmes, trans. 2017, p. 477.

19. In the first volume of the *Trilogy of Rest* (*rdzogs pa chen po ngal gso skor gsum*), Longchenpa (klong chen rab 'byams pa dri med 'od zer, 1308–64) paraphrases thus: *chos nyid mi g.yo ba'i mdo las/ chos thams cad rang bzhin gyis ma skyes pa/ ngo bo nyid kyis mi g.yo ba/ bya ba'i mtha' dang bral ba/ spros pa'i yul las 'das pa/ gzod ma nas mnyam pa nyid do zhes so*. Longchenpa 2005, p. 505. This text has been translated into English: Padmakara Translation Group, trans. 2017.

20. For example, Ngawang Drakpa (1520–80) quotes it verbatim in his *gdams ngag mdzod* [*Treasury of Instructions*]. In the collected works of Jatsön Nyingpo ('ja' tshon snying po, 1585–1656) (*'ja' tshon pod drug* vol. 1), it is found paraphrased (with *gter shad*) thus: *chos nyid mi g.yo ba'i mdo las chos rnams thams cad rang bzhin gyis ma skyes paṣ ngo bo nyid kyis mi gnas paṣ las dang bya ba'i mtha' dang bral baṣ rtogs ma rtogs pa'i yul las 'das paṣ ye nas spros pa thams cad rnam par dag pa'o*.

21. Guru Tashi 1990, p. 1037.

22. See Tsukinowa 1971, pp. 432–45.

23. *ri dags kyi rgyal po'i chos kyi khang pa na*. This locale does not appear to be attested in any other sūtra.

24. *ji ltar snang ba bzhin du yod pa*. This common-sense view might broadly be construed as resembling the philosophical realism later associated with Vaibhāṣika. Precisely how this sūtra should be understood in relation to the development of doxographical categories to describe different philosophical positions remains unclear.

25. *chos thams cad sems tsam las ma gtogs par gzhan med pa*. This second view bears resemblance to the Cittamātra (Tib. *sems tsam*, "mind only") position often associated with Yogācāra.

26. *sems nyid kyang ma skyes pa yin pa*. The third, fourth, and fifth views bear some resemblance to Madhyamaka views.

27. *chos thams cad sgyu ma bzhin du snang zhing sgyu ma bzhin du ma grub pa*. This fourth view brings to mind the Indian subclassification of Madhyamaka into the Māyopamavāda (Tib. *sgyu ma lta bur 'dod pa*) and Apratiṣṭhānavāda philosophical positions discussed in Almogi 2010.

28. The phrase *las dang bya ba'i mtha' thams cad dang bral ba* is unusual and could be interpreted in various ways. The words *las* and *bya ba* can translate the Sanskrit *karman* and *kriyā*, respectively "the act" and "the performance of the act." The Tibetan *bya ba*, as a future optative form of the verb "to do," can also denote "that which is to be done" or "duty," and often translates the Sanskrit words *kārya* and *kṛtya*. The Tibetan term *mtha'* is used to translate both the Sanskrit terms *anta* and *koṭi* and can cover a semantic range from "extreme" to "limit," "boundary," "scope," or "end." The term *mtha'* is also used in some contexts for "position" or "view," as in "the established position" (Tib. *grub mtha'*, Skt *siddhānta*), and this is a use also encountered in this text. The most likely interpretation here, in the context of the true nature of things, is to see in this a reference to the Sanskrit compound *kartṛkarmakriyā*, "the actor, the act, and the performance (of the act)." As such, the phrase is about the absence of duality: "without all (dualistic distinction between) the extremes of deed and doing."

29. *chos thams cad rang bzhin ma skyes pa/ ngo bo nyid kyis mi gnas pa/ las dang bya ba'i mtha' thams cad dang bral ba rtog pa dang rtog pa'i yul las 'das pa/ thog ma med pa'i dus nas spros pa rnam par dag pa*. This fifth and last position has been cited by several influential Tibetan figures, as mentioned in the introduction.

30. *snying rje dang ldan pa'i skur byas nas*. Translation tentative. The Yongle and Peking Kangyurs here have *bkur* ("praise") rather than the Degé Kangyur's *skur* ("in form/body").

31. *chos la brtags pa'i mtha' lnga po*. Here and passim the Stok Palace Kangyur has the alternative reading *chos la brtags pa'i thabs lnga po*, "five methods for analyzing things." Although this might be considered a preferable reading, for consistency we have followed the Degé reading.

32. *gang zag gi rigs ni [du] mchis lags sam*. The additional *du* is present in both the Narthang and Stok Palace Kangyurs.

33. *sbyangs pa dang ma sbyangs pa dbang las*. In Tibetan, the meaning of the verb *sbyong* (past: *sbyangs*) covers both "purify" (Skt. *viśodhana*) and "practice" (*abhyāsa*)." In the absence of an English equivalent with the same semantic field, we have opted here for "purification through practice" at first use, and then simply "purification" in what follows.

34. The Degé Kangyur reads *rtog pa*, "notions," but according to the Comparative Edition the most common reading in other recensions, as well as the Stok Palace version, is *rtogs pa*, "understanding," in common with the following lines. Therefore, we have opted for the latter.

35. The translation of this whole analogy is tentative. It is not clear what *bsten pa'i las* refers to here and passim. The interpretation adopted is that it refers to the work of evaluating gemstones. Tib. *rin po che de yang sems can rnams kyis bsten pa'i las byas pa dang ma byas pa yod de/ gang zag rtog pa med pa dang log par rtog pa rnams ni chos la brtag pa'i mtha' lnga la mi brten* [var.: *rten*; Stok: *sten*] *pa ste/ rin po che bsten pa'i las ma byas pa'i gang zag gis rin po che ma rnyed* [Yongle: *mi snyed*; Narthang, Lhasa: *mi rnyed*] *pa dang dgos pa mi 'byung ba* [+*de*] *bzhin du de dag la mi dpyod mi sems pas khams gsum las mi thar ba yin no/*.

36. *khyad par du bsags pa*. Here the Stok Palace version reads *khyam par du bsags pa*.

37. Translation tentative. *bsten pa'i las byas pa ni khyad par du bsags pa dang cher bsags pa dang cung zad bsags pa rnams la rin po che'i dgos pa yang rim pa gsum du 'byung ba bzhin du yang dag pa phyin ci ma log pa dang lhag ma bzhi po brgyud par brtag pa theg pa che chung rim pa gsum yang dpe rim pa bzhin no*.

38. *mdo sde bcu gnyis*. This appears to be a reference to the "twelve branches of the teachings" more commonly known in Tibetan as *gsung rab yan lag bcu gnyis* (Skt. *dvādaśāṅgapravacana*).

39. While the Degé Kangyur here reads *rgya mtsho la*, "to the ocean (or great lake)," which makes sense, the Stok Palace Kangyur reads *rgya mtsho nas*, "from the great lake." This latter reading has been preferred since the directional prepositions in the Degé reading seem internally contradictory later in the analogy, and the passage appears to allude to classical Indian cosmology whereby the four great rivers (Gaṅgā, Sindhu, Vakṣu, and Sītā) flow through Jambudvīpa from the great lake Anavatapta near its center. On this idea, see Sadakata 1999, p. 33.

40. The Degé Kangyur here reads *bab par 'dra bas*; however, the Stok Palace version, which has been preferred, reads *bab par 'dus pas*. The Stok Palace reading also more closely aligns with the readings found in the Narthang and Choné Kangyurs: *bab par'du pas*.

41. *de'i gzhi ma nor ba'i rang gis* [var.:*gi*] *ngo bo ni chos de dag gi rang bzhin skye ba med pa yin no*. Reading the variant *gi*, as found in the Yongle, Peking, and Lhasa Kangyur recensions of the text.

42. *chos rnams kyi dngos po rtag pa ther zug dang / med pa dang chad pa'i mtha' gnyis po bsal na*. A reference to the "two extremes of eternalism and nihilism," more commonly known in Tibetan as *rtag pa dang chad pa'i mtha' gnyis*, Skt. *śāśvatānta ucchedānta*.

43. *chos nyid rang gi ngo bo nyid las mi g.yo bar tha dad par thams cad snang ba'i mdo*. The title given here differs slightly from the title given at the beginning of the sūtra, as explained in i.12.

44. *sde snod kyi bstan bcos dang dbu ma'i lta ba tha dad rnams 'di las'phros pa yin*. The Stok Palace Kangyur does not contain the second sentence of the colophon. See n.10.

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Glossary

adherent of positions

phyogs ’dzin pa

ཕྱོགས་འཛིན་པ།

Followers of particular philosophical positions, who reject the philosophical positions of others.

aggregate

phung po

ཕུང་པོ།

skandha

asura

lha ma yin

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།

asura

A type of nonhuman being whose precise status is subject to different views, but is included as one of the six classes of beings in the sixfold classification of realms of rebirth. In the Buddhist context, asuras are powerful beings said to be dominated by envy, ambition, and hostility. They are also known in the pre-Buddhist and pre-Vedic mythologies of India and Iran, and feature prominently in Vedic and post-Vedic Brahmanical mythology, as well as in the Buddhist tradition. In these traditions, asuras are often described as being engaged in interminable conflict with the devas (gods).

Bandé Yeshé Dé

ban de ye shes sde

བན་དེ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྡེ།

Yeshé Dé (late eighth to early ninth century) was the most prolific translator of sūtras into Tibetan. Altogether he is credited with the translation of more than one hundred sixty sūtra translations and more than one hundred additional translations, mostly on tantric topics. In spite of Yeshé Dé's great importance for the propagation of Buddhism in Tibet during the imperial era, only a few biographical details about this figure are known. Later sources describe him as a student of the Indian teacher Padmasambhava, and he is also credited with teaching both sūtra and tantra widely to students of his own. He was also known as Nanam Yeshé Dé, from the Nanam (*sna nam*) clan.

blessed one

bcom ldan 'das

བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས།

bhagavān

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

constituent

khams

ཁམས།

dhātu

The eighteen constituents of experience are the six senses, the six objects of the senses, and the six consciousnesses that arise from the interaction of the six senses with their objects.

Dānaśīla

dA na shI la

དྷ་ན་ཤཱི་ལ།

dānaśīla

An Indian preceptor from Kashmir who was resident in Tibet during the late eighth and early ninth centuries. He translated many texts in the Kangyur in collaboration with Yeshé Dé.

Dharma Abode of the King of Deer

ri dags kyi rgyal po'i chos kyi khang pa

རི་དགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཆོས་ཀྱི་ཁང་པ།

Setting of this discourse. Eṇeya (sometimes Aiṇeya; Tib. *ri dags kyi rgyal po*) is the mythical king of ungulates, usually depicted as an antelope.

discernment

shes rab

ཤེས་རབ།

prajñā

In general, this is the mental factor of discerning the specific qualities of a given object and whether it should be accepted or rejected. As the sixth of the six perfections, also sometimes translated as wisdom or insight, it refers to the profound understanding of the emptiness of all phenomena, the realization of ultimate reality.

element

'byung ba

འབྱུང་བ།

bhūta

The four elements of material reality: air, fire, earth, and water.

experiential domain

spyod yul

སྤྱོད་ཡུལ།

gocara

Could also be translated as “sphere of experience” or “sphere of activity.”

god

lha

ལྷ།

deva

In the most general sense the devas—the term is cognate with the English *divine*—are a class of celestial beings who frequently appear in Buddhist texts, often at the head of the assemblies of nonhuman beings who attend and celebrate the teachings of the Buddha Śākyamuni and other buddhas and bodhisattvas. In Buddhist cosmology the devas occupy the highest of the five or six “destinies” (*gati*) of saṃsāra among which beings take rebirth. The devas reside in the *devalokas*, “heavens” that traditionally number between twenty-six and twenty-eight and are divided between the desire realm (*kāmadhātu*), form realm (*rūpadhātu*), and formless realm (*ārūpyadhātu*). A being attains rebirth among the devas either through meritorious deeds (in the desire realm) or the attainment of subtle meditative states (in the form and formless realms). While rebirth among the devas is considered favorable, it is ultimately a transitory state from which beings will fall when the conditions that lead to rebirth there are exhausted. Thus, rebirth in the god realms is regarded as a diversion from the spiritual path.

Great Vehicle

theg pa chen po

ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahāyāna

When the Buddhist teachings are classified according to their power to lead beings to an awakened state, a distinction is made between the teachings of the Lesser Vehicle (Hīnayāna), which emphasizes the individual’s own freedom

from cyclic existence as the primary motivation and goal, and those of the Great Vehicle (Mahāyāna), which emphasizes altruism and has the liberation of all sentient beings as the principal objective. As the term “Great Vehicle” implies, the path followed by bodhisattvas is analogous to a large carriage that can transport a vast number of people to liberation, as compared to a smaller vehicle for the individual practitioner.

Jambudvīpa

’dzam bu’i gling

འཛམ་བུའི་གླིང་།

jambudvīpa

The name of the southern continent in Buddhist cosmology, which can signify either the known human world, or more specifically the Indian subcontinent, literally “the *jambu* island/continent.” Jambu is the name used for a range of plum-like fruits from trees belonging to the genus *Szygium*, particularly *Szygium jambos* and *Szygium cumini*, and it has commonly been rendered “rose apple,” although “black plum” may be a less misleading term. Among various explanations given for the continent being so named, one (in the *Abhidharmakośa*) is that a jambu tree grows in its northern mountains beside Lake Anavatapta, mythically considered the source of the four great rivers of India, and that the continent is therefore named from the tree or the fruit. Jambudvīpa has the Vajrāsana at its center and is the only continent upon which buddhas attain awakening.

Lesser Vehicle

theg pa chung ngu

ཐེག་པ་ཆུང་ངུ།

hīnayāna

A collective term used by proponents of the Great Vehicle (*mahāyāna*) to refer to the hearer vehicle (*śrāvakayāna*) and solitary buddha vehicle (*pratyekabuddhayāna*). The name stems from their goal—i.e. nirvāṇa and personal liberation—being seen as lesser than the goal of the Great Vehicle, i.e. buddhahood and the liberation of all sentient beings. See also “Great Vehicle.”

Madhyamaka

dbu ma

དབུ་མ།

madhyamaka

Derived from the Sanskrit expression *madhyamapratipad*, meaning the "Middle Way" between the extremes of eternalism and nihilism, Madhyamaka is one of the most influential among the schools of Indian Buddhist philosophy since it emphasizes the deconstruction of all conceptual elaboration and the realization of emptiness. Various sub-schools evolved in India and Tibet, based on distinctions between relative and ultimate truth, the logical methodologies of reduction ad absurdum and syllogistic reasoning, and views concerning the nature of buddha attributes.

Mañjuśrī

'jam dpal

འཇམ་དཔལ།

mañjuśrī

Mañjuśrī is one of the "eight close sons of the Buddha" and a bodhisattva who embodies wisdom. He is a major figure in the Mahāyāna sūtras, appearing often as an interlocutor of the Buddha. In his most well-known iconographic form, he is portrayed bearing the sword of wisdom in his right hand and a volume of the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* in his left. To his name, Mañjuśrī, meaning "Gentle and Glorious One," is often added the epithet Kumārabhūta, "having a youthful form." He is also called Mañjughoṣa, Mañjusvara, and Pañcaśikha.

nirvāṇa

mya ngan las 'das

མྱ་ངན་ལས་འདས།

nirvāṇa

In Sanskrit, the term *nirvāṇa* literally means "extinguishment" and the Tibetan *mya ngan las 'das pa* literally means "gone beyond sorrow." As a general term, it refers to the cessation of all suffering, afflicted mental states (*kleśa*), and

causal processes (*karman*) that lead to rebirth and suffering in cyclic existence, as well as to the state in which all such rebirth and suffering has permanently ceased.
More specifically, three main types of nirvāṇa are identified. (1) The first type of nirvāṇa, called nirvāṇa with remainder (*sopadhiśeṣanirvāṇa*), is the state in which arhats or buddhas have attained awakening but are still dependent on the conditioned aggregates until their lifespan is exhausted. (2) At the end of life, given that there are no more causes for rebirth, these aggregates cease and no new aggregates arise. What occurs then is called nirvāṇa without remainder (*anupadhiśeṣanirvāṇa*), which refers to the unconditioned element (*dhātu*) of nirvāṇa in which there is no remainder of the aggregates. (3) The Mahāyāna teachings distinguish the final nirvāṇa of buddhas from that of arhats, the nirvāṇa of arhats not being considered ultimate. The buddhas attain what is called nonabiding nirvāṇa (*apratiṣṭhitanirvāṇa*), which transcends the extremes of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, i.e., existence and peace. This is the nirvāṇa that is the goal of the Mahāyāna path.
Also rendered here as “passed beyond suffering.”

parinirvāṇa

yongs su mya ngan las ’das pa

ཡོངས་སུ་མྱ་ངན་ལས་འདས་པ།

parinirvāṇa

See also “nirvāṇa.”

piṭaka

sde snod

སྡེ་སྣོད།

piṭaka

Literally, the “baskets,” or collections containing the Buddha’s teachings.

saṃsāra

’khor ba

འཁོར་བ།

saṃsāra

A state of involuntary existence conditioned by afflicted mental states and the imprint of past actions, characterized by suffering in a cycle of life, death, and rebirth. On its reversal, the contrasting state of nirvāṇa is attained, free from suffering and the processes of rebirth.

sense field

skye mched

སྐྱེ་མཆེད།

āyatana

The six senses plus the six objects of the senses.

three realms

khams gsum

ཁམས་གསུམ།

tridhātu

The three realms that contain all the various kinds of existence in saṃsāra: the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm.

true nature of things

chos nyid

ཆོས་ཉིད།

dharmatā

The real nature, true quality, or condition of things. Throughout Buddhist discourse this term is used in two distinct ways. In one, it designates the relative nature that is either the essential characteristic of a specific phenomenon, such as the heat of fire and the moisture of water, or the defining feature of a specific term or category. The other very important and widespread way it is used is to designate the ultimate nature of all phenomena,

which cannot be conveyed in conceptual, dualistic terms and is often synonymous with emptiness or the absence of intrinsic existence.

wisdom

ye shes

ཡེ་ཤེས།

jñāna

Direct knowledge of emptiness and the true nature of things.

yojana

dpag tshad

དཔག་ཚད།

yojana

A measure of distance sometimes translated as “league,” but with varying definitions. The Sanskrit term denotes the distance yoked oxen can travel in a day or before needing to be unyoked. From different canonical sources the distance represented varies between four and ten miles.