ཆོས་ཀྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་བསྐོར་ཚུལ་བཀའ་བསྡུའི་བྱང་བ་དང་བཅས་པ་ལེགས་པར་བཤད་པའི་ཡལ་འདབ་དང་པོ།

The First Well-Spoken Branch, “The Turning of the Wheel of Dharma Along with the History of the Communal Recitations of the Words of the Buddha”

· Toh 4568-1 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 103 (dkar chag, lakṣmī), folios 1.a–50.a

For referencing Tibetan sources, please see our Scholar's Edition



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Summary

s.1 In this catalog to the Degé Kangyur, the editor, the eighth Tai Situ Chökyi Jungné, contextualizes the collection, locating it within the larger framework of Indian Buddhist scholasticism. The *Catalog*'s first chapter has four parts that proceed with increasing specificity: a general description of the Dharma, a particular explanation of how the wheel of Dharma was turned, and an even more specific survey of the Dharma wheel of tantric Buddhism. The fourth and final section examines the communal recitations, often called Buddhist "councils." Each part, in turn, contains numerous subsections surveying the many scholastic categories through which Buddhist scriptures are defined and classified. The sheer breadth of the material Situ Panchen surveyed, his attention to linguistic issues, and his expertise in the complexities of Buddhist thought reflect his stature as the astute polymath able to undertake the extraordinary task of editing the Degé Kangyur.

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Introduction

i.1 The tradition of writing catalogs for collections of canonical Buddhist literature goes back to the beginning of Buddhism in Tibet with the three imperial catalogs that registered the officially sanctioned translations of Indian Buddhist works.[1] Later, in the thirteenth century, Chomden Rikpai Raltri (1227–1305) composed a catalog for a collection of Buddhist texts that can be thought of as a "proto-Kangyur." His *Sunlight Adorning the Flourishing of the Teachings* (*bstan pa rgyas pa rgyan gyi nyi 'od*) not only recorded titles of texts but also addressed topics such as the historical development of Buddhism in Tibet and the authenticity (or lack thereof) of scriptures. So it is that, by the time the *Degé Kangyur Catalog* was composed, this genre of works included far more than the English term *catalog* might suggest.

i.2 The author of the *Catalog*, the eighth Tai Situ Chökyi Jungné (1700–74, widely known as Situ Panchen), was an accomplished scholar-practitioner, a learned polymath, and the editor of the Degé Kangyur. In the *Catalog*, he displays an unusual degree of critical sensitivity to the historical development of the Buddhist teachings, while also again and again reminding the reader that both the method and content of the teachings are ultimately inconceivable. Situ Panchen's relatively sparse commentarial elaborations on his vast collation of Indian sources, while clearly informed by later Tibetan scholarship, nevertheless avoid controversial philosophical positions, instead favoring the most generally accepted views whenever possible. We might speculate that he took this conciliatory approach in the hopes that the *Catalog* would reach a broad audience regardless of their affiliations and philosophical persuasions.

i.3 In keeping with the literary conventions of classical Buddhist treatises, Situ Panchen begins his catalog to the Degé Kangyur with a series of opening homages (*mchod par brjod pa*) and a pledge to compose (*rtsom par dam bca' ba*). The first homage is especially elaborate, befitting its object of homage, the Buddha Śākyamuni. It is composed in Sanskrit and accompanied by scansion

and Tibetan translation, a testament to the Tai Situ's proficiency in Sanskrit poetics and his fame as a polymath. This single four-line stanza spans three folio pages in the woodblock print due to its inclusion of rañjanā calligraphy (Tib. *lany+dza*) and vignettes of the Buddha Śākyamuni, Mañjuśrīghoṣa, Sakya Paṇḍita, and Butön Rinchen Drup, in addition to other ornamental embellishments.[2] The next three stanzas offer homage to the Three Jewels—the Buddha as the three kāyas, the Dharma of realization and scripture, and the Saṅgha of bodhisattvas, solitary buddhas, and śrāvakas. The subsequent four stanzas pay homage to the paṇḍitas of India, the lotsāwas of Tibet, the Tibetan scholar-practitioners of old, and the Tibetan Dharma kings. These evocative homages thereby trace the transmission of the Buddhadharma from India to its establishment in Tibet, expressing gratitude to those without whom the Kangyur would not exist.

i.4 While reminding the reader that the teachings of the Buddha ultimately defy number and description, Situ Panchen nevertheless pledges to compose a catalog of the extant Buddhist scriptures in the Degé Kangyur collection. The outline of the *Catalog*'s five chapters that follows demonstrates how the genre of catalog (*dkar chag*) often consisted of far more than a simple list or table of contents. In the case of the Degé Kangyur, the *Catalog* comprises a comprehensive history of Buddhism's development in India, its reception in Tibet, and the process of producing the Degé edition, among a range of other topics.

i.5 The *Catalog* was completed in 1733, coinciding with the completion of the Degé Kangyur. The *Catalog* as it appears in the Degé Kangyur represents a truncated version of Situ Panchen's original composition, which can be found in his collected works. In his autobiography, Situ Panchen describes how, in compliance with a request from Tenpa Tsering—the king of Degé and this Kangyur's main initiator and sponsor—for a detailed and comprehensive catalog, he composed his work in eight chapters as an ode to the eight auspicious symbols. However, a certain "great abbot" (*mkhan chen*) criticized his work for being too long and prevented the first three chapters from being published in the Degé Kangyur.[3]

The contents of these three omitted chapters focus, respectively, on the world in which the Buddha reached awakening, along with its inhabitants, the past lives of the Buddha, and the twelve deeds of the Buddha. Aside from this omission, however, there are no other variances among the remaining five chapters. [4]

i.6 The *Degé Kangyur Catalog* is structured around a topical outline (*sa bcad*), a common feature of later Tibetan commentarial literature that may have derived from Chinese rather than Indian Buddhist literature.[5] The topical outline for chapter 1 is comprised of four main sections, which, in turn, are comprised of numerous subsections. The first three main sections proceed in order of increasing specificity, starting with a general description of the Dharma before turning to focus on the Dharma of scripture (as opposed to the Dharma of realization), and culminating in a presentation of the Dharma of tantric scriptures. The last of the four main sections offers an account of what we are calling "communal recitations" or "rehearsals," although this is often translated as Buddhist "councils" in contemporary scholarship.

i.7 The first main section, "Identifying the Sublime Dharma in General," brings together scriptural sources to answer the question of what exactly *is* the Dharma, which, after all, is the principal subject of the Kangyur. The Dharma is defined here as that which frees us from suffering and obscurations, and includes the Dharma of realization, which corresponds to the truths of cessation and the path, and the Dharma of scripture, which comprises the words of the Buddha and the commentarial treatises.

i.8 In Situ Panchen's discussion of the Sanskrit term *dharma*, he presents its etymology and discusses why it is often qualified as the "sublime" Dharma (*saddharma*). When he narrows his discussion to focus on the Dharma of scripture, he devotes particular attention to the concept of *buddhavacana* or the "words of the Buddha," as would be expected of a catalog of the Kangyur.[6] Although *buddhavacana* literally means the "Buddha's words," drawing on Indian

Mahāyāna tropes, Situ Panchen and other Tibetan luminaries had a broader understanding of what constituted the Buddha's word that went well beyond just what came out of his mouth. Instead, they opted for the influential tripartite division of the words of the Buddha into what the Buddha himself said, teachings inspired by the Buddha, and those approved by the Buddha. The *Catalog* goes on to cite sources for other important ways of organizing the Buddha's teachings, including the three baskets, the three trainings, the twelve branches of scripture, and the three Dharma wheels. In the course of contextualizing his Indian sources for these various divisions, Situ Panchen offers etymologies for keywords like *subhāṣita*, *piṭaka*, and *yāna*.

i.9 The second main section, "How the Dharma Wheel of Scripture Was Turned in Particular," focuses on the turning of the wheel of Dharma (*dharmacakra*), a figurative expression that likens the teaching of the Dharma to the turning of a wheel. Situ Panchen begins this section with a presentation of the Vaibhāṣika view that only the path of seeing constitutes the wheel of Dharma, along with their etymological justification for this claim, before turning to the Mahāyāna claim that all five paths are the wheel of Dharma. Situ Panchen nevertheless concludes that the expression "wheel of Dharma" can ultimately refer to any Dharma teaching.

i.10 Situ Panchen goes on to survey various metaphysical accounts of what constitutes a Dharma teaching, first presenting a particular Mahāyāna claim that scripture is a mental episode, induced by the Buddha's wisdom, in the continuum of disciples. He then contrasts this view with the Vaibhāṣika claim that scripture is neither physical nor mental, but rather a so-called "unassociated formation," and with the Sautrāntika view that it is simply sound and, therefore, a physical thing.

i.11 After a brief presentation of the etymology of the Sanskrit word *dharmacakra* and its synonym *brahmācakra*, Situ Panchen explains why the framework of the three wheels is necessarily threefold and recounts the doxographical dis-

agreements over which Dharma wheel is definitive. Situ Panchen first recounts a Yogācāra presentation, primarily based on the sūtra *Unraveling the Intent*, in which the three wheels correspond to three types of disciples who are to be guided by three types of methods or discourses. While both the Yogācāra and the Madhyamaka agreed that the first wheel is of provisional meaning, the Yogācāra maintained that the final wheel is definitive, whereas the Mādhyamika argued that it is the middle wheel that should be taken literally.

i.12 Situ Panchen then examines each wheel individually, beginning with Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika explanations of the Buddha's three repetitions of the four truths in the first turning of the wheel of Dharma. He condenses the content of the middle wheel into the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*'s rubric of eight realizations and seventy topics, and the final wheel into the three natures of Yogācāra philosophy. He also discusses the particular place and time of the three wheels, while acknowledging that a definitive account of where and when the latter two wheels were taught is beyond our ken.

i.13 Situ Panchen next surveys another common term in Buddhist literature, the "heaps of Dharma" or *dharmaskandha*. He begins with the well-known Abhidharma explanation that each heap of Dharma is a remedy to one of the 84,000 afflictions, while also surveying several other competing explanations. He then presents the claim that a heap of Dharma equals the number of scriptures that can fit on the back of Śakra's elephant, a position that Tibetan exegetes, the present author included, often saw as the default Mahāyāna position. Situ Panchen also draws on scriptural passages that poignantly underscore the fact that many of the Buddha's teachings no longer survive, without directly addressing whether the translations preserved in the Degé Kangyur amount to the 84,000 heaps of Dharma.

i.14 Situ Panchen then returns to focus more fully on the hermeneutic disagreement between Yogācāra and Madhyamaka thinkers over which teachings are definitive. In this context, he points out that not all interpretative sūtras are

Hīnayāna, nor are all definitive sūtras Mahāyāna. And, since it follows that the distinction between definitive and provisional is not what differentiates the two vehicles, Situ Panchen offers, in its place, first a Yogācāra and then a Madhyamaka account of what does. He then concludes this second main section by delving into the Mahāyāna apologetical arguments for why their sūtras are, indeed, genuine teachings of the Buddha, presenting and then countering five objections to their legitimacy.

i.15 The third main section, "How the Dharma Wheel of the Great Esoteric Vajra Vehicle Was Turned More Specifically," continues the discussion of the Dharma wheel but now in the context of tantra. Here, he explains some of the many names used for tantric Buddhism—Secret Mantra, the tantras, the Vajra Vehicle, the vidyādhara basket, and the Resultant Vehicle—while underscoring the importance of understanding that the Vajra Vehicle is not something outside of the Mahāyāna but, rather, is a form of Mahāyāna distinguished by its methods rather than its goal.

i.16 Situ Panchen then turns to the controversial question of what distinguishes tantric Buddhism from the Perfections Vehicle, organizing his discussion around an oft-cited verse from *A Lamp for the Three Modes*. This verse, which by the time Situ Panchen was writing was well established as the *locus classicus* on the subject, states that, even though it has the same goal and view as the Perfections Vehicle, tantra is superior because it is without confusion, rich in methods, free of difficulty, and taught for gifted disciples. In his commentary, Situ Panchen introduces the objection that this way of distinguishing the two vehicles fails to account for the extent to which these purportedly superior characteristics are also found in the Vehicle of the Perfections, and responds by further nuancing just what is distinctive about the tantric approach. In addition to this more well-known distinction, Situ Panchen also surveys an alternative tradition of distinguishing tantra through eleven aspects of skillful means.

i.17 It is here, in the context of his discussion of whether the tantric view is superior, perhaps more clearly than anywhere else, that we see Situ Panchen carefully and intentionally avoiding the polemics of his day, as was alluded to earlier. He initially presents the widely held position that tantra and Madhyamaka have the same view and result but concludes the section by acknowledging that he opted for this position because it was more standard, despite the many merits of the rival claim that tantra is also superior in its view and final result.

i.18 Situ Panchen then presents various ways in which the tantras were categorized in India, such as the seven, five, three, and two classes of tantra. He chooses to focus on the four classes of tantra as per the New Translation school (*phyi 'gyur gsar ma*)—that is, Action, Conduct, Yoga, and Unexcelled Yoga tantras—since this was the system most widely accepted in Tibet. Indeed, this is also the system around which the Degé Kangyur's Tantra section (*rgyud 'bum*) is organized. Though the Degé Kangyur would eventually include a section on the Old Tantras, Situ Panchen does not mention them in his *Catalog*.[7]

i.19 Situ Panchen collects several scriptural sources to demonstrate that what distinguishes the four classes of tantra is their relative degree of emphasis on either external rituals and conduct or internal yogic practices. He also provides sources illustrating how the fourfold classification of tantra corresponds to other fourfold classifications, such as the four types of sensual desire, four levels of disciples, four types of faculties, four types of afflictions, four divisions of time, and the four castes.

i.20 Each of the four classes of tantra contains its own internal divisions around which the texts in the Degé Kangyur's tantra collection are organized. These include, for example, the six or three families of Action tantra, the six or five families of Conduct tantra, the skillful means and wisdom tantras of Yoga tantra, and the father and mother tantras of Unexcelled Yoga tantra. While carefully attending to these subdivisions, Situ Panchen also reminds us that, beyond

these, there are also many other ways in which the tantras have been and can be organized.

i.21 Similar to the section on *dharmaskandha* or heaps of Dharma, Situ Panchen discusses the length of the tantras. He begins with the caveat that even though the Buddha's teachings are beyond measure, the tantras nevertheless "provide measurements to fulfill particular needs." So, for instance, the lengths of the internal divisions of the Action tantras are given in numbers of ślokas. Situ Panchen goes on to note that each level of tantra is exponentially larger than its predecessor, suggesting an unfathomable magnitude of higher tantras, but he also acknowledges that he has yet to encounter any textual source giving the lengths of the other classes of tantra beyond certain works that list the number of ślokas, such as the *Guhyasamāja* in one thousand verses.

i.22 The section on the divisions of the Vajra Vehicle concludes with a discussion of the teacher, time, recipients, manner, and location of the tantric teachings. The Tai Situ initially offers a general account of the profound way in which tantras are delivered before treating each of the four classes of tantra individually.

i.23 The final section of the *Catalog* examines the communal recitations (*saṃgīti*, *yang dag par bsdu ba*), often translated in English-language scholarship as "council."[8] This section begins with a narrative of the first recitation of the so-called "Śrāvakayāna," which is, in fact, an abridged version of the account given in the *The Minor Matters of Discipline.*[9] This is followed by a brief discussion of the communal recitation of the Mahāyāna sūtras, and then a discussion of the communal recitation of the four classes of tantra. In this context, Situ Panchen takes pains to demonstrate how it is that Vajrapāṇi can be both the reciter of the sūtras and the tantras.

i.24 The first chapter of the *Degé Kangyur Catalog* concludes in verse, with one nineteen-syllable stanza and four seven-syllable stanzas evoking the splendor

of the Buddha's teachings and cautioning the reader to approach the *Catalog* with an open mind.

i.25 The first chapter to the *Degé Kangyur Catalog* is impressive for the sheer breadth of material it surveys, much of which has generally been neglected by Tibetan commentators. More often than not, even his own commentary on the quotations is itself drawn from Indian sources, often verbatim. His rigorous attention to the Indian source material notwithstanding, Situ Panchen often respectfully acknowledges the views of earlier Tibetans, although at times he points to cases where he can find no Indic source for their opinions. He is also clearly relying on the writings of his predecessors, Butön's *History of Buddhism* most of all. While we are not in a position to fully assess what sort of influence the *Catalog* may have had, there are large sections of Jamgön Kongtrul's *Treasury of Knowledge* that reproduce Situ Panchen's explanations in the *Catalog* word for word. Whether Kongtrul was drawing directly from the *Catalog* or a source common to both texts awaits further research.

i.26 The present translation was produced based on the editions found in the Degé Kangyur and the Comparative Edition Kangyur, and the edition found in Situ Panchen's collected works was also used as a reference. The canonical texts quoted were checked against the Degé Kangyur and Tengyur and, whenever possible, Sanskrit editions were also consulted.

The Translation

The First Well-Spoken Branch:

The Turning of the Wheel of Dharma Along with the History of the Communal Recitations of the Words of the Buddha

p.1 *vapūrūpaṃ madhyedvigaṇa jalani dhyāvṛta ruciṃ*
sumeru śrīdīptaṃ kusumajala siktaṃ bhavatṛṣu |
prabhāsvadvyāñjanyaṃ ruciramayuterle pitasamaṃ
śiraḥ śākya śraiṣṭhaṃ bhavati jaya ketvarcitavadaṃ ||

p.2 Your form body that one never tires of gazing upon is the golden lord of mountains, sitting in the center
Of the churning ocean of the two accumulations, blazing with the glory of the major and minor marks.
Rinsed with saffron water, it shines throughout the three realms as if it were imbued with a hundred thousand morning suns.
O crown of the victorious ones, foremost lord of the Śākyas, I bow my head in devotion at your lotus feet.

p.3 *The prosody of the Sanskrit stanza above is samāvṛtta, specifically the seventeen-syllable atyaṣṭi meter. It is fixed in the prastāra as śikhariṇī, the 59,330th out of the 131,072 possible variants of the atyaṣṭi meter.*

p.4 Within the naturally pure dharmadhātu, without beginning, end, or middle, your body is perfectly complete in every aspect and spontaneously present. You have discovered the state of supremely immutable bliss far beyond the realms of conceptual marks and extraneous conditions.

From the perspective of the lord bodhisattvas on the ten levels, you are the perfectly complete body of universal enjoyment replete with the five certainties.
Like the sun and its light, you have emanations throughout infinite fields—to you, the well-gone ones, I bow down.

p.5 The primordially peaceful expanse is beyond the realms of thought and expression, free from the eight extremes of existence, nonexistence, and so forth;
The light of stainless nonconceptual wisdom is the great sun completely conquering the darkness of referentiality.
Yet they are expressed in the scriptures in terms of essences, causes, conditions, and results—
To these, the sublime Dharma, the great medicine that alleviates the fever of cyclic existence, I offer devoted reverence at all times.

p.6 Despising personal benefit from afar, always pursuing others' benefit exclusively, and donning the armor of great courage,
They engage in the ultimate purpose through illusory play in saṃsāra until the end of cyclic existence.
To the sprouts of the victors, the heirs of awakening, beautified by the qualities of knowledge and liberation,
And the solitary buddhas and śrāvakas, along with the eightfold entrants and abiders—I honor the oceanic host of noble beings of the three vehicles.

p.7 They upheld the glorious sun of the Muni's teachings here in this supreme continent adorned with rose apples, and further beautified them
With the fresh silhouette of the moon of their renown, leading benighted ascetics to the state of sublime light.
Upon the lotus feet of the great charioteers of supreme learning—the six ornaments,[10] four great masters, [11] two marvelous ones, [12]
And other unparalleled masters—I rest my head until awakening.

p.8 Brimming with the youth of irreproachable intellect, Paltsek and the other lords of speech cast sidelong glances at the many fields of logic,
Enticed again and again by the passionate amusement in the alluring movements of the goddesses of well-spoken exposition.
Recalling their kindness throughout all lifetimes, we ought to honor these eyes of the world[13] who imported the Victor's scriptures, the supreme wish-fulfilling gems,
on the craft of the Tibetan language.

p.9 Some were wise beings who drank insatiably from the ocean of learning in gulps of analysis
And mastered the skill of creating commentaries, thereby robbing the hordes of heretics of their arrogance.
Others were yogis who rested in meditation on the meaning of what they studied, thereby entering and rising from numerous samādhis.
To this infinite ocean of disciples of the son of the Śākyas, I bow my head in homage.

p.10 The lords of the land, born of a divine lineage here in the Land of Snows encircled by ranges of snow mountains,
Protected all creatures with the law of the ten virtues, had the power to carry upon their shoulders
The great, never-waning banner of the Victor's teachings, and remained steadfast with the courage of the Lord of the Guhyakas—
On these sprouts of the Victor, I single-pointedly focus my heart, anointed with the camphor of devotion.

p.11 Who is there that is capable
Of summarizing the ineffable gates of Dharma,
The indestructible vajra words, the secret speech
Of the compassionate one who accomplished all aims?[14]

p.12 Nevertheless, there are vast multitudes of well-spoken teachings
With exquisite flavors fit for suitable recipients
That remain in this world due to the comprehension
Of great arhats and the holders of secrets.

p.13 Among those, a few precious scriptures have arrived
Here in the northern land, due to the courage of beings
Imbued with stores of merit, stirred by
The billowing waves of the Victor's enduring compassion.

p.14 So that they may not vanish but flourish as a feast of Dharma,
I will use well-crafted words to string together a rosary
As beautiful as pearls in the form of a catalog
Of these scriptures transmitted by the technology of printing.

Outline

The following five chapters will be addressed in order:

How our teacher turned the wheel of Dharma along with a history of the communal recitations of the words of the Buddha

The extent of the teachings of the Buddha that circulated in India and Tibet and how they were preserved

The manner in which the Lord of Men commissioned their publication

[15] The actual catalog and index

The purpose and benefits of the Degé Kangyur complete with dedication prayers

Chapter 1: How Our Teacher Turned the Wheel of Dharma Along with a History of the Communal Recitations of the Words of the Buddha

This account of the classifications of Dharma wheels along with a history of the communal recitations of the words of the Buddha will cover (I) identifying the sublime Dharma in general; (II) how the Dharma wheel of scripture was turned in particular; (III) even more specifically, how the Dharma wheel of the great esoteric Vajra Vehicle was turned; and (IV) how these sublime Dharma teachings were communally recited by their respective redactors.

I. Identifying the Sublime Dharma in General

1.1 This section includes (A) a summary of the Dharma in terms of its essence and (B) a detailed explanation of the Dharma in terms of its etymology and divisions.

A. A Summary of the Dharma in Terms of Its Essence

1.2 Across oceans of immeasurable eons, our teacher and guide, the lord of the Śākyas, purified oceans of buddhafields, ripened oceans of beings, and brought oceans of aspirations to completion. In doing so, he gained the knowledge of the way in which the entirety of all phenomena without exception exist. Having fully awakened, he then turned the wheel of the sublime Dharma in every possible way for his disciples. Among all his awakened activities, this was the most eminent. What, then, is the sublime Dharma?

1.3 As it is said:

1.4 > "The sublime Dharma is that which eliminates
> All suffering and all obscurations."[16]

1.5 As stated here, the Dharma is a wholesome quality that, when properly focused on, acts as a method for embodied beings to remove their obscurations. Furthermore, it refers to the undefiled qualities (*dharma*) subsumed under the truths of cessation and the path, and to the authoritative words of the Buddha and the treatises. The former, [the truths of cessation and the path], are the signified, while the latter, the words of the Buddha and the treatises, are the signifier.

B. A Detailed Explanation of the Dharma in Terms of Its Etymology and Divisions

1. The Etymology of the Word *Dharma*

1.6 The word *dharma* generally has nine[17] different meanings. To quote *Principles of Exegesis*:

1.7 > "*Dharma* refers to objects of knowledge,
> The path, nirvāṇa, and mental objects;
> Merit, life, and scriptures;
> And nature, specific rules, and religious traditions."[18]

1.8 Examples from the sūtras in which the word *dharma* is used to refer to objects of knowledge are:

> "Some *dharmas* are conditioned, some unconditioned …"

and:

> "Understand all *dharmas* to be so."

1.9 An example in which *dharma* is used to refer to the path is:

> "Monks, wrong views are not *dharma*. The correct view is *dharma*."

1.10 An example in which *dharma* is used to refer to nirvāṇa is:

> "Going for refuge in the *dharma*…"

1.11 Examples in which *dharma* is used to refer to mental objects are terms like:

> "dharma constituents (*dharmadhātu*)…"

1.12 and:

> "dharma sense sources (*dharmāyatana*)…"

1.13 An example in which *dharma* is used to refer to merit is:

> "He practiced *dharma* with his harem of courtesans and young women."

1.14 An example in which *dharma* is used to refer to life is:

> "Childish beings cherish the *dharma* they see."

1.15 An example in which *dharma* is used to refer to scriptures is:

> "Monks, *dharma* refers to the sūtra section and the interspersed verse sections…"

1.16 Examples in which *dharma* is used to refer to nature are:[19]

> "The substance of conditioning entities is their *dharma*…"

and:

> "I am also not beyond the *dharma* of death or the reality (*dharmatā*) of death."

1.17 Examples in which *dharma* is used to refer to restraint (*niyama*) are:

> "The four *dharmas* of śramaṇas…"

and:

> "Monks, to take a life is not *dharma*. To abandon the taking of life is *dharma*."

1.18 Examples in which *dharma* is used to refer to traditions are:

> "Local *dharmas*…"

and:

> "the *dharma* of caste."[20]

1.19 The word *dharma* can also refer to another set of six meanings. These are good deeds, Yama, logic, nature, conduct, and nirvāṇa. To quote *Amarasiṃha's Dictionary*:

1.20 > "Dharma is meritorious deeds, Yama, and logic
> Nature, conduct, and the drinking of the moon (*somapāna*)"[21]

1.21 Why are they called *dharmas*? The word *dharma* comes from the verbal root *dhṛ*, meaning "to hold." Thus, these things are called *dharmas* because they hold, as it is said in *The Bountiful Cow*:

> "They are called *dharmas* because they hold everything."[22]

1.22 Well, what is it that they hold? Objects of knowledge hold both individual and general characteristics. Holding individual characteristics means, for instance, that earth is firm, water is wet, fire is hot, and wind is light and mobile.

1.23 Holding general characteristics is exemplified by the claim that:

> "All conditioned things are impermanent. All defiled phenomena are suffering. All phenomena are selfless. Nirvāṇa is peace."

1.24 The path and nirvāṇa hold one back from falling into saṃsāra. Mental objects hold the mind. Merit holds one back from falling to the lower realms. Life and vitality hold the body or its likeness. Scriptures hold unmistaken meaning. Nature holds the *dharmas* that are arising. Restraint holds what is to be restrained. Traditions uphold modes of conduct they deem appropriate. Logic holds one back from confused positions. One should further apply this to other contexts as appropriate.

1.25 Among the meanings of *dharma*, the most eminent forms of dharma are those that were defined above by presenting their characteristics. These are referred to as the *sublime* Dharma because they are the most supreme of all dharmas or

because they are the Dharma taught by the perfect Buddha who is the *sublime* one. Alternatively, it is because they are the Dharma that is practiced by *sublime* beings.

2. The Categories of Dharma

1.26 The sublime Dharma has two categories, namely, the sublime Dharma of realization that is the signified and the sublime Dharma of scripture that is the signifier.

1.27 To quote the *Treasury*:

1.28 > "The Teacher's sublime Dharma is of two types—
> That of scripture and that of realization."[23]

a. The Sublime Dharma of Realization

1.29 The sublime Dharma of realization is also of two types: The first is the truth of cessation toward which sublime beings proceed. This is the great peace beyond the realm of thought, attained through the power of realizing that which is characterized by nonduality. The second, the truth of the path, is the means by which sublime beings proceed. It is the nature of realization. Stainless and naturally luminous, it is an undefiled wisdom that, along with its subsidiary factors, acts as remedy to one's obscurations. The former, the truth of cessation, is the essence of freedom from attachment in which everything to be relinquished has been let go through the remedies present in the four noble ones' mindstreams. The latter, the truth of the path, is the nature of the remedies themselves, which act to free one from attachment.

1.30 This process is described in the *Sublime Continuum*:

1.31 > "Inconceivable, nondual, and nonconceptual;
> Pure, clear (*vyakti*), and an antidote (*vipakṣa*)—
> It is both the freedom from and that which frees from attachment.
> Such is the Dharma characterized by the two truths.

1.32 > "Freedom from attachment comprises
> The truths of cessation and the path.
> Understand them in due order
> As having these three qualities each.

1.33 > "Since it is unthinkable (*atarkya*), inexpressible,
> And known to the noble ones, it is inconceivable.
> Since it is peace, it is nondual and nonconceptual.
> With the three, such as purity and so forth, it is like the sun."[24]

b. The Sublime Dharma of Scripture

1.34 When categorized in terms of its essence, the sublime Dharma of scripture comprises the well-spoken words of the Buddha and the treatises that explain their intent.

1.35 To quote *The Sūtra of the Devaputra's Questions*:

1.36 > "All phenomena are contained within the Buddha's words and the treatises.
> These are the well-spoken teachings and the explanations of their intent."[25]

I) The Well-Spoken Words of the Buddha

1.37 Of the first, the words of the Buddha, the *Sublime Continuum* states:

1.38
> "Whatever speech is meaningful, is connected with the Dharma,
> Removes all the afflictions of the three realms,
> And reveals the benefits of peace
> Is the speech of the Sage, while others are not."[26]

1.39 As such, the content of the words of the Buddha are connected to the Dharma, which has meaning. Their function is to act as a method for ridding oneself of the afflictions of the three realms. They lead to, and arrive at, the result—the peace of nirvāṇa. Such speech comes from the perfect Buddha, its primary dominant condition.

1.40 Alternatively, *The Radiant* states:

1.41
> "The wise understand the Buddha's words
> To fully elucidate the three trainings,
> To be truly endowed with the three seals,
> And to be virtuous in the beginning, middle, and end."[27]

1.42 In terms of its etymology, *Principles of Exegesis* describes the word *subhāṣita* or "well spoken" this way:

> "They are well spoken because they are spoken unerringly and correctly."[28]

1.43 How, exactly, are the words of the Buddha well spoken then?

1.44 The same work states:

> “In what ways are they well spoken? In ten ways: by being correctly arisen, attuned, engaged, taught, categorized, supported, understandable, designated, timely, and replete with wholesome qualities.”[29]

1.45 In other words, following the order above, the words of the Buddha are well spoken because they were spoken by the perfectly awakened Buddha, because they were attuned to all types of beings, because they were spoken not sporadically but continuously, because the Teacher did not selfishly hold back any teachings, because they were taught in accordance with the attitudes of beings, because they were spoken with the five branches of melodious speech, because each melody pervaded infinite worlds, because they were understandable for everyone in the audience, because they described the path upon which the two extremes are relinquished, because they were taught to fully ripened disciples, and because they were spoken with the sixty qualities.[30]

1.46

> “The five branches of melodious speech are (1) deep like thunder; (2) sweet sounding and pleasing to the ear; (3) lovely and lovable; (4) clear and instructive; and (5) worth hearing and not inconsistent. These also possess five qualities such as vastness and so forth and thereby perform the five functions such as being audible and so forth.”

1.47 The master Vasubandhu describes these in the following eloquent words:

1.48

> “[The five branches of melodious speech] have five qualities,
> Namely, vastness, sweetness, and logical meaning,
> Being easily grasped, and varied according to preference.
> These five, in turn, also have the branches of
> Being audible and nondistracting,
> Liberating, conducive to understanding, and ripening—
> Such are the five branches of the great Sage’s speech.”[31]

1.49 The sixty branches of speech are glossed in *Abhayākaragupta*'s *The Ornament of the Sage's Intent* according to how they appear in the sūtra of *The Secrets of the Realized Ones*:

1.50 "The Buddha's speech is (1) *affectionate* because it demonstrates the roots of virtue according to the dispositions of beings. It is (2) *soft* because it leads one to touch pleasure in this very life. It is (3) *lovely* because it is of excellent meaning. It is (4) *agreeable* because it is excellently worded. It is (5) *pure* because it leads to transmundane attainments. It is (6) *immaculate* because it is devoid of all dormant afflictions and habitual tendencies. It is (7) *illuminating* because each expression and word is clearly indicated. It is (8) *sweet sounding* because it is imbued with the qualities of strength that vanquishes the views of all ignorant tīrthikas. It is (9) *worth hearing* because its practice leads to emancipation. It is (10) *invulnerable* because it cannot be harmed[32] by any opponents. It (11) *excites interest* because it inspires joy. It is (12) *restrained* because it acts as the remedy to desire. It is (13) *refined* because it is the easy means for conveying the trainings. It is (14) *smooth* because it guides one to true emancipation even if one transgresses the trainings. It is (15) *well disciplined* because it leads one to restraint by way of the three vehicles. It is (16) *pleasing to the ear* because it is the remedy to distraction. It is (17) *comforting to the body* because it induces states of samādhi. It is (18) *satisfying to the mind* because it fosters the deep joy of special insight. It is (19) *gladdening to the heart* because it severs doubts. It (20) *brings joy and happiness* because it definitively dispels error. It (21) *removes anguish*[33] because it leaves its practitioners without regrets. It is (22) *to be understood* because it is the support for the perfected insight that arises from hearing. It is (23) *to be ascertained* because it is the support for the perfected insight that arises from contemplation. It is (24) *clear* because it is the Dharma taught by a master who does not selfishly hold anything back. It is (25) *lovable* because it pleases those who have fulfilled their own purpose. It is (26)

worthy of praise because it exhilarates those who have fulfilled their own purpose. It is (27) *informative* because it genuinely reveals the inconceivable Dharma. It is (28) *instructive* because it genuinely shows the Dharma that should be contemplated. It is (29) *reasonable* because it does not contradict valid cognition. It is (30) *relevant* because it teaches disciples what is appropriate. It is (31) *free from the fault of redundancy* because it is never pointless. It (32) *has the force of a lion's roar* because it terrifies all tīrthikas. It (33) is *like the trumpet of a bull elephant* because it is noble. It (34) *reverberates like a peal of thunder* because it is deep. It (35) *sounds like a nāga lord* because it is to be accepted.[34] It (36) *sounds like the music of gandharvas* because it is melodious. It (37) *sounds like the calls of cuckoos* because it is sharp and sweet sounding.[35] It is (38) *like the declaration of the call of Brahmā's speech* because it resounds across great distances. It is (39) *like the declaration of the call of a pheasant's speech* because it is the auspiciousness that precedes all accomplishment.

1.51 "Here, the mention of *speech* is to make it understood that these are sounds that have the characteristic of expressing meaning. The mention of *call* is to make it understood that their speech is at a distance. The mention of *declaration* is to make it understood that the speech of their calls is instructive.

1.52 "[The Buddha's speech] (40) *sounds as sweet as the voice of the lord of the devas* because it is unsurpassable. It (41) *sounds like a drum* because it precedes victory over all māras and harmdoers. It is (42) *modest* because it is not afflicted by praise. It is (43) *superior* because it is not afflicted by criticism.[36] It (44) *conforms to all languages* because it adapts to every linguistic form in every system of grammar (*vyākaraṇa*).[37] It is (45) *free from bad language* because it is not spoken mindlessly. It is (46) *not deficient* because it adheres to the activities of the disciple at all times. It

> is (47) *undaunted* because it does not depend on personal gain or honor. It is (48) *irrepressible* because it is free from fear.[38] It is (49) *joyful* because it is without sorrow. It is (50) *comprehensive* because it has expertise in all fields of knowledge. It is (51) *friendly* because it provides abundant benefit for beings.[39] It is (52) *continuous* because it is uninterrupted. It is (53) *playful* because it assumes myriad forms. It (54) *completes all sounds* because it communicates in many languages with a single sound. It (55) *satisfies all the faculties* because it communicates many meanings with one utterance. It is (56) *irreproachable* because it does as it promises. It is (57) *unchanging* because it applies to all moments. It is (58) *unwavering* because it is not spoken in a rushed manner. It is (59) *accessible to all assemblies* because it can be heard equally by assemblies far and near. It is (60) *endowed with the best of all qualities* because it can transform every worldly situation into an illustrative teaching."[40]

1.53 Another way the sūtras describe the well-spoken teachings is with the expression "the sublime Dharma is good at the beginning, good in the middle, and good at the end, having excellent meaning and excellent words, and being unique, complete, pure, and wholesome."[41]

1.54 Of this, Master Asaṅga has said:

> "*Good at the beginning* means the well-spoken teachings instill deep joy in their listeners. *Good in the middle* means they correctly rely on the Middle Way path through which practitioners relinquish the two extremes with little difficulty. They are *good at the end* because they are utterly immaculate, complete throughout, and free from and always devoid of desire. They have *excellent meaning* because they bring about benefit and well being. *Excellent words* means that their phrases are eloquently composed and recitation of their words is distinguished. *Unique* means they are not shared by outsiders. *Complete* means they

> have no limitation, and hence are most supreme. *Pure* means their nature is that of liberation. *Wholesome* means their source is a liberated mind."[42]

1.55 Other descriptions from the sūtras include:

> "The Dharma of the Blessed One is well spoken, perceptible (*sāṃdṛṣṭika*), sound (*nirjvara*), immediate (*ākālika*), conducive (*aupanayika*), empirical (*aihipaśyika*), and to be experienced by yourself."[43]

and:

> "Monks, my Dharma is well spoken, clear, evident (*vivṛta*), unconstrained (*chinnaplotika*), and correctly taught to devas and humans."[44]

1.56 Vasubandhu has said in his *Principles of Exegesis* that the expression *well spoken* summarizes the Buddha's teachings while the latter descriptions elaborate upon them.

1.57 When, from among the numerous modes of classification, scriptures are categorized according to their primary condition, they are of three types. These are, namely, the words of the Buddha personally spoken by the Buddha, the words of the Buddha inspired by his blessings, and the words of the Buddha as authorized by him. An example of the first is *The Summarized Sūtra*, which relates how it was taught by the Blessed One. The second are inspired either by the blessings of body, speech, or mind.

1.58 The master Haribhadra explains this as follows:

> "Here, some scriptures such as *The Ten Bhūmis* are taught through the blessings of the thus-gone ones' physical actions, such as with their hands and so forth. Others are revealed through the blessings of speech, such as the sūtra *Eliminating Ajātaśatru's Remorse*, for instance. Still

> others are taught by blessings of mind, such as the sūtra *The Teaching on Samantabhadra's Practice*, for instance."[45]

1.59 The third includes the introductory formulas, transition phrases, and affirmations that the reciters of the Buddha's words placed at the beginning, in the main body, and at the conclusion of scriptures, respectively. This is described in *The White Lotus of Great Compassion*:

1.60 > "Ānanda, when those monks ask you such questions, present the teachings as such. Say, 'Thus have I heard at one time. After having first attained full awakening, the Blessed One was staying at the seat of awakening in the land Magadha…' " *up to* "…Present in detail the discourses that I have spoken with certain meanings, words, and letters by affixing them with introductory formulas, causes, conditions, excellent meaning, and excellent words. At the conclusions of the sūtras, write, 'When the Blessed One spoke these words, the entire gathering rejoiced and praised what the Blessed One had taught.' Ānanda, you should correctly codify the words of the Buddha according to these principles."[46]

1.61 The scriptures also state:

> "If you do not remember the location, mention any of the six cities."[47]

1.62 These and other quotations describe how the authorization [of the words of the Buddha] was granted.

1.63 In the context of [teachings] inspired by blessings, Tibetan scholars[48] divide those that were inspired by the blessing of the Buddha's mind into three categories, namely, those blessed by the samādhi of his mind, those blessed by the compassion of his mind, and those blessed by the power of the truth of his mind. These are respectively illustrated by the *Heart Sūtra*, vidyā mantras

uttered by yakṣas or other beings, and words of Dharma resounding in the sky or trees. Although positing these categories is perfectly reasonable, I have yet to encounter such an explanation among the scholars from the noble land of India.

1.64 Alternatively, based on their primary subject matter, the entirety of the words of the Buddha may be divided into the three baskets of scripture: Sūtra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma. The Sūtra basket is defined as scriptures that are included in the class that teaches the training of superior mind (*adhicitta)* as its principal subject. Likewise, the Vinaya basket is defined as scriptures included in the class that teaches the training of superior discipline as its principal subject. The Abhidharma basket is defined as scriptures included in the class that teaches the training of superior insight as its primary subject. These are respectively illustrated by *The Perfection of Wisdom in One Hundred Thousand Lines* and similar works, the four divisions of the Vinaya[49] and other such works, and the seven canonical Abhidharma works, among others.

1.65 The meaning behind the names of the three baskets is as follows. In general, the word *basket* comes from the Sanskrit *piṭaka*, which denotes a cluster or large measurements of grain. Thus, since the scriptural baskets contain a multitude of topics, akin to large measurements of grain, it is similar to how large measurements contain many smaller measurements.

1.66 Of this, master Asaṅga has said:

> "Why is it called a *basket*? This is because they *contain*; the scriptures contain everything that is to be known."[50]

1.67 And, as it says in the commentary (*vṛttibhāṣya*):

> "Why are the threefold or twofold collections of scriptures called 'baskets'?[51] They are so called because they contain things. Just as, for example, the receptacle in which ten *prasthas* of grain are contained is called a 'basket,' likewise the threefold or twofold collections are called

> ‘baskets’ because they hold the twelve branches of scripture with the entirety of their meanings and words. Alternatively, it can also be said that they are called ‘baskets’ because they contain all objects of knowledge such as the aggregates, elements, and sense sources, up to the kāyas, the wisdoms, and so forth.”[52]

1.68 In particular, the Sanskrit term *sūtra*, meaning “thread,” refers to threading together a summary of the meaning. This, in turn, has four components, as described in *The Ornament of the Sūtras*:

1.69 > “The sūtras are thus called because they thread (*sūcana*)[53]
> context, characteristics, phenomena, and meaning.”[54]

1.70 Accordingly, *context* means the sūtras thread the place where and the audience for whom the teachings were given. *Characteristics* means they thread the characteristics of the relative and ultimate truths. *Phenomena* means they thread the aggregates, elements, sense sources, and so forth. *Meaning* means they reveal the profound intended meaning.

1.71 The word *discipline* corresponds to *vinaya* and is described by *The Ornament of the Sūtras* as having two sets of four qualities:

1.72 > “The Vinaya is thus called because of
> Offenses, origin, remission, and absolution,
> As well as person, proclamation, divisions, and determination.”[55]

1.73 *Offenses* refers to the five types of offenses. The *origins*, that from which offenses originate, are ignorance, carelessness, excessive afflictions, and disrespect. *Remission* from offenses is restoring one’s restraint. *Absolution* from offences is accepting punishment, releasing, relieving, physical transmutation, correct discernment, and the attainment of the dharmatā. It is also called “Vinaya” because it teaches those four supports. Or, it is called “Vinaya” be-

cause it teaches the four aspects, which are the *person* concerning whom the regulation is proclaimed, the actual *proclamation* of the regulation, the *divisions* of that, and the *determination* of what does or does not constitute an offense.

1.74 The term *direct knowledge* comes from *abhi*. *The Ornament of the Sūtras* gives four reasons for this:

1.75 > "The Abhidharma is thus called because
> It is directed and thorough,
> It overcomes, and it brings understanding."[56]

1.76 Accordingly, the Abhidharma teaches the truth *directed* toward nirvāṇa and so forth; precisely classifying every phenomenon into categories such as form or formless, it teaches *thoroughly*; it is the Dharma that *overcomes* opposition; and it brings an *understanding* of the meaning of the sūtras.

1.77 What is the reason for presenting the Buddha's words in this particular framework of the three baskets? The three baskets are taught as antidotes to the main objects that seekers of liberation should relinquish: doubts about the higher paths, mistaken conduct on one's own path, and mistaken views. The first basket is taught to provide certainty about any topic that one has doubts about. The second contains teachings on the conduct that leads to the relinquishment of the two extremes. The first extreme, indulgence in desires, is relinquished by stopping blameworthy enjoyments, such as accumulating material goods out of greed and so forth. The other extreme, exhausting oneself, is relinquished by allowing blameless enjoyments including even such things as a heap of hundreds and thousands of garments, if they are acquired with pure discipline and without clinging. The third basket is taught to correctly demonstrate the individual and general characteristics of phenomena.

1.78 Alternatively, there are three baskets because their subject matter, the trainings, is restricted to three. This is either as defined above or as the Master Asaṅga has said:

> "The Sūtras teach the three trainings. The Vinaya accomplishes higher discipline as well as higher mind since one who is disciplined achieves samādhi, through the steps of being without regret and so forth. The Abhidharma accomplishes higher insight due to unmistakenly analyzing objects."[57]

1.79 Alternatively, there are three baskets of scripture since what is to be understood is threefold. For the three baskets were taught respectively to explain the Dharma and its meaning, to accomplish the Dharma and its meaning, and to ascertain the discourses that elaborate on the Dharma and its meaning. The phrase *Dharma and its meaning* is explained in *The Explanatory Commentary to the Ornament of the Sūtras*:

1.80 > "*Dharma* refers to phrases, words, and letters, and *meaning* refers to what they express, the aggregates, elements, and sense sources. Alternatively, *Dharma* can refer to the aggregates, elements, and sense sources, and *meaning* can refer to the four intentions[58] and four allusive intentions.[59] Alternatively, *Dharma* can refer to the ten virtues, the causes leading to the attainment of the higher realms, and *meaning* can refer to the thirty-seven factors of awakening and so forth, the causes leading to the attainment of nirvāṇa."[60]

1.81 Although the others are easily understood, the way the Vinaya accomplishes the Dharma meaning is described in the same work, as follows:

> "In reliance upon the Vinaya, one exerts diligence in disciplining the afflictions by contemplating uncleanliness and so forth. In doing so, one comes to realize the *Dharma*, defined by words and letters, and *meaning*, defined by aggregates, elements, and so on, or, alternatively, the *Dharma*,

> defined by higher realms, and *meaning*, defined by nirvāṇa. As such, through the Vinaya one actualizes the Dharma and its meaning."[61]

1.82 It is with this intention that *The Ornament of the Sūtras* states:

1.83 > "The threefold scriptural baskets, as well as the twofold,
> Are so called because they contain things. They are asserted for nine reasons."[62]

1.84 Alternatively, all the words of the Buddha can also reasonably be categorized into two baskets since, in the context of the person to be trained, there are the Śrāvaka Basket and the Bodhisattva Basket. Each of the Three Baskets that were just explained can be divided into these two sections, distinguished in terms of the teachings delivered from the perspective of those inclined to a lesser scope and the teachings delivered from the perspective of those inclined to a vaster scope.

1.85 Of this, the venerable Asaṅga has said, "In terms of the distinction between the Lesser Vehicle and the Supreme Vehicle, the Three Baskets are twofold, namely the Śrāvaka Basket and the Bodhisattva Basket."[63]

1.86 As stated here, it is the scope of their vehicle that actually makes the distinction, since those who have entered the Great Vehicle are called *bodhisattvas* and those who have entered the Lesser Vehicle are called *śrāvakas*. Though solitary buddhas are said in some sources to have entered a Middling Vehicle, here they are grouped into the Lesser Vehicle.

1.87 Generally speaking, the word *vehicle* comes from the term *yāna*, which has the sense of movement as it denotes palanquins, carriages, paths, and so on. The term also denotes the truth of the path and its subsidiary factors. For the truth of the path of someone in training is called a *vehicle* because it is the means by

which they proceed. And the truth of the path of one no longer training is called a *vehicle* because it is the point to which they have proceeded.

1.88 The Lesser Vehicle is said to be *lesser* since it is incapable of completely overcoming the two obscurations. It is also said to be *lesser* in contrast to the seven greatnesses. It is due to possessing the seven greatnesses that the Great Vehicle gets its name.

1.89 As the venerable Ajita has said:

1.90 > "Great is its basis (*ālaṃbana*),
> Twofold accomplishment,
> Wisdom, practice of diligence,
> As well as its skill in means.

1.91 > "It has great attainment,
> And great activity of awakening.
> Since it is endowed with these greatnesses,
> It is called the Great Vehicle."[64]

1.92 As stated above, the basis of the Great Vehicle is *great* because its vast teachings in the sūtras and so forth possess vast and immeasurable meaning. It has *great accomplishment* because it accomplishes the dual benefit of oneself and others. It has *great wisdom* because, at the moment of realization, the two types of selflessness, those of persons and phenomena, are understood. It has *great diligence* because it is to be practiced for three incalculable eons, and so forth, with the diligence of constant[65] application and devoted application. It has *great skill in means* for even though existence is not discarded, nevertheless, due to great compassion, the afflictions leave no stain. It has *great attainment* because it brings about the attainment of the strengths, the fearlessnesses, the unique qualities, and so on. It has *great activity* because it repeatedly reveals

the activities of complete awakening and great nirvāṇa, or because it spontaneously reveals activities without interruption.

1.93 One may argue that, when we discussed scriptural baskets, we failed to include the Vidyādhāra Basket, and, when discussing vehicles, we failed to include the Vajra Vehicle. While, in fact, they are indeed included in the Bodhisattva Basket and Great Vehicle, they will be presented separately in greater detail below since they contain secret aspects that elevate them far above the ordinary Bodhisattva Basket and Great Vehicle.

1.94 Alternatively, it is also reasonable to classify the words of the Well-Gone One according to their literary form into the twelve branches of scripture.

1.95 It is said:

1.96 > "The sūtra sections, interspersed verses, and explanations,
> Stanzas, inspired sayings, and origin narratives,
> Narrative discourses and parables,
> Past-life stories and extensive sayings,
> And marvels and instructions
> Make up the twelve branches of scripture."[66]

1.97 The first, the *sūtra* sections, are described as follows in *Differentiating the Compounded and Uncompounded*:

> "The sūtras are essentialized summaries given in prose."

1.98 Accordingly, the sūtras are the scriptures that use prose to present summaries of topics in the form of dialogue. They use dialogue on account of its ten benefits, which are described in *The Compendium*:

> "Seeing its ten benefits, the Thus-Gone One taught the Dharma by threading topics together. The benefits are that it is easily structured, easily explained, and easily retained. By instilling respect for the

> Dharma it swiftly completes the accumulations and leads to the swift realization of reality. It brings about insightful faith (*avetyaprasāda*) in the Buddha and insightful faith in the Dharma and Saṅgha. It leads one to the supreme state of happiness in this life. And, through the discernment coming from discussion, it delights the minds of the wise as they enter the ranks of the learned."[67]

1.99 *Interspersed verse* sections are to be chanted in meter either throughout the sūtra section or at its conclusion. They include sūtras of provisional meaning because they require further analysis. The *explanations* sections are revelations given to śrāvakas and so forth about their pasts and rebirths. And, in particular, they include sūtras of definitive meaning because they clarify the Buddha's intent. The *stanzas* sections are teachings delivered in metered verses of two to six lines. The *inspired sayings* sections are the teachings given not at the request of others, but from a heart of joy.

1.100 *The Two-Volume Lexicon* states:

> "*Inspired sayings* refers to inspired teachings not given for specific individuals but that are, rather, given to ensure that the Buddha's teachings remain for a long time, without anyone requesting or asking. For instance, the sūtras state, 'In the afternoon, the Blessed One rose from inner absorption and, seated on his seat, uttered this inspired aphorism to the saṅgha of monks.' "[68]

1.101 *Principles of Exegesis* similarly states:

> "*Inspired sayings* are not for particular individuals but rather solely to ensure that the teachings endure."[69]

1.102 The *origin narrative* sections are teachings given to specific individuals and teachings on the precepts along with their origins. Daśabalaśrīmitra explains them as follows:

> "*Origin narratives* are teachings that explain subtle origins."[70]

1.103 The *narrative discourse* sections are teachings given with illustrations. *The Two-Volume Lexicon* describes them as follows:

> "The *narrative discourse* sections draw on other previous accounts that have been given, elaborating upon them with illustrations to help those listening to the Dharma understand and gain realization."[71]

1.104 The *parables* section contains teachings of tales from the past. *Past-life stories* relate accounts of the deeds of the Bodhisattva, such as the past-life story of Viśvantara.[72] The *extensive sayings* section belongs exclusively to the Bodhisattva Basket and only presents Great Vehicle teachings. It is also called the *crushing* or *peerless* section, which *The Compendium* explains as follows:

1.105 > "They are called *extensive sayings* because they are a source of benefit and happiness for all beings and because they present vast, extensive, and profound teachings. Why are they called *crushing*? It is because they crush all the obscurations. Why are they also called *peerless*? It is because they are without equal."[73]

1.106 In this context followers of the Lesser Vehicle claim that their sūtras with extensive numbers of chapters are extensive sayings, not those belonging to the Great Vehicle.

1.107 The *marvels* sections are Dharma teachings about amazing and marvelous things such as the omniscience, miraculous powers, and blessings of śrāvakas, bodhisattvas, and buddhas. The *instructions* sections are teachings given to clarify the meaning of the sūtra section, and so forth, having laid out the definitions of dharmas above.

1.108 When the twelve branches of scripture are categorized into the aforementioned baskets, they should be understood as follows: The first five, the *sūtras* to the *inspired sayings*, should be understood as belonging to the śrāvaka sūtra basket. The next four, the *origin narratives* and so forth, belong to the Vinaya basket. The first of these, the *origin narratives,* is the chief branch since it teaches the offenses and regulations, whereas the later branches complement it. The next two, *extensive sayings* and *marvels*, belong to the Sūtra basket of the bodhisattvas since they have the distinction of being inconceivable and vast. The *instructions* alone belong to the Abhidharma basket of both vehicles.

1.109 Alternatively, it is also reasonable for all the words of the Buddha to be categorized according to the level of the student's faculties into the three Dharma wheels. As the sūtra *Unraveling the Intent* states:

> "In the deer park of Ṛṣivadana in Vārāṇasī, the Blessed One first set in motion the wonderful wheel of Dharma by teaching the four truths of the noble ones to those who were engaged in the Śrāvaka Vehicle. Not a single god or human in the world had previously ever turned such a wheel of Dharma.…Then, for those who were engaged in the Great Vehicle, you, the Blessed One, turned the second, even more wonderful, wheel of Dharma in the form of a teaching on emptiness: 'All phenomena are without an essence, unborn, unceasing, primordially in the state of peace, and naturally in the state of nirvāṇa.'…Then, for those who were engaged in all vehicles, you, the Blessed One, turned the third wonderful Dharma wheel of excellent discernment in reference to the statement, 'All phenomena are without an essence, unborn, unceasing, primordially in the state of peace, and by nature in the state of nirvāṇa.' "[74]

II) The Treatises That Explain the Intent of the Buddha's Words

1.110 In general, the Sanskrit word for treatises is *śāstra*. *Amarasiṃha's Dictionary* reads *nirdeśagranthayoḥ śāstraḥ*, which explains "treatise" as referring to "definitive explanations" and the "textual tradition."[75] *The Sections on the Levels* presents nine types of treatises:

1.111 > "Those that are meaningless or mistaken and those that are meaningful,
> Those that are misleading or heartless and those that relieve suffering,
> Those that stress study and debate and those that attach importance to practice—
> These are the nine types of treatises."[76]

1.112 Of these, the meaningful treatises, the treatises that relieve suffering, and the treatises that emphasize practice are the three that will be explained here. It is with reference to these three types of treatises that the *Sublime Continuum* defines a treatise as follows:

1.113 > "Whatever is explained by those with undistracted minds
> Who take the teachings of the Victorious One as authoritative,[77]
> And is conducive to the path leading to liberation,
> Should be revered just like the words of the Sage."[78]

1.114 As stated here, treatises are words of explanation by an author of undistracted intelligence who takes the speech of the Well-Gone One as authoritative, and which are in accord with the path that leads to liberation.

1.115 What is the etymology behind treatises with such characteristics? *Śāsana* means "to transform," whereas *traya* means "to protect." These are combined into *śāstra*, referring to that which transforms the afflictions in the minds of its

listeners and protects them from falling into the lower realms. This is why they are called treatises (*śāstra*).

1.116 *Principles of Exegesis* states:

1.117 > "That which transforms all the afflictions, one's adversaries,
> And protects against the terrors of saṃsāra are the treatises,
> Since they possess qualities of transformation and protection.
> These two qualities are not found in other traditions."[79]

1.118 This etymological explanation ultimately applies to the scriptures as well, as explained in the same work:

> "As such, only the words of the Buddha are ultimately treatises. One should therefore strive to grasp their meaning since they have the qualities of transformation and protection."[80]

1.119 When treatises are categorized in terms of their functions, they are said to be of three types: treatises that summarize vastness, treatises that unpack profundity, and treatises that organize the disorderly. The first includes treatises like *The Treasury of Abhidharma*, the second *The Ornament for Clear Realizations*, and the third *The Ornament of the Sūtras*.

1.120 In terms of the words of the Buddha they explain, treatises are of two categories: commentaries on the Buddha's words in general and commentaries on specific words of the Buddha. The first includes treatises on grammar such as *The Rules of the Kātantra System of Grammar* and *The Rules of the Cāndra System of Grammar* as well as treatises on logic such as the seven works of logic.

1.121 The second category includes abhidharma treatises that explain the view of the first wheel such as *The Detailed Explanation*[81] and so on, as well as vinaya treatises that explain the conduct of the first wheel such as *Aphorisms on Monastic Discipline* and so on. Treatises that explain the view of the middle wheel are

those that clarify its explicit teaching, the stages of emptiness, such as the collection of six Middle Way analytical texts, and those that clarify its hidden meaning, the stages of realization, such as *The Ornament of Realizations* and so on. Treatises that explain the conduct of the middle wheel include *The Compendium of Training* and other such works. Treatises that explain both the view and conduct of the middle wheel include *Entering into the Deeds of a Bodhisattva* and other such works. Treatises that explain the view of the final wheel include *The Ornament of the Sūtras*, the two discernments,[82] *The Sublime Continuum*, and so on. Treatises that explain the conduct of the final wheel include *A Commentary on The Twenty Vows of a Bodhisattva* and so on.

1.122 Alternatively, treatises can have three categories when classified in terms of their content: those that teach the range of phenomena, those that teach reality, and those that teach liberation and omniscience. Within those treatises teaching the range of phenomena, there are those that are ordinary and those that are supreme. The former includes treatises on political ethics and other such works, whereas the latter includes treatises on the five fields of knowledge, among which the treatises that teach inner knowledge include *An Exposition of the Five Aggregates* and other such works. Treatises that teach reality include *Entering the Two Truths*, *The Thirty*, *Ornament for the Middle Way*, and so on. Treatises that teach liberation and omniscience include *The Bodhisattva Levels*, *Ornament of the Sage's Intent*, and other similar works.

II. How the Dharma Wheel of Scripture Was Turned in Particular

The explanation of how the wheel of the Dharma of scripture was turned will cover in particular (A) the essence of the Dharma wheel, (B) its etymology, and (C) a detailed explanation of the categories of Dharma wheels.

A. The Essence of the Dharma Wheel

2.1 The expression *Dharma wheel* generally refers to any sublime Dharma that was taught by the Teacher and that has the power to overcome opposing factors. The Vaibhāṣikas claim that only the path of seeing constitutes the Dharma wheel.

2.2 As *The Treasury of Abhidharma* states:

2.3 > "The wheel of Dharma is the path of seeing.
> It travels quickly…d"[83]

2.4 The precious wheel of a wheel-turning king travels quickly to his desired destination, leaves behind one land while entering another, conquers unconquered cities and towns, inhabits the conquered ones, and ascends to some places while descending to others. In the same way, the wheel of Dharma also travels quickly since the truths are realized in fifteen moments (*kṣaṇa*). It leaves behind the uninterrupted path and enters the actualization of the path of liberation—or, alternatively, it leaves behind the focal object of one of the truths and enters another. With the uninterrupted path, one conquers the unconquered afflictions, such as the view of the transitory collection, by means of *cutting off possession* of these afflictions.[84] With the path of liberation, one attains the separation from the afflictions and, by means of arising simultaneously with it, inhabits what has been conquered. Focusing on the form and formless realms, it ascends; and, focusing on the desire realm, it descends. This is why they say the wheel of Dharma is exclusively the path of seeing. The source for this is described in *The Explanation of "The Treasury of Abhidharma,"* as follows:

2.5 > “Where did the statement that the path of seeing is the Dharma wheel come from? This is because the noble Kauṇḍinya, the path of seeing having arisen within him, cried, ‘The Dharma wheel has turned!’ ”[85]

2.6 Alternatively, we have the position of the venerable Ghoṣaka, as found in the remainder of the previous line of *The Treasury of Abhidharma*, which reads:

> “… and has spokes.”[86]

2.7 Ghoṣaka held that the path of seeing is called a “Dharma wheel” because the eightfold path of the noble ones resembles a wheel. *The Explanation of “The Treasury of Abhidharma”* explains this as follows:

> “Right view, intention, effort, and mindfulness resemble the spokes; right speech, action, and livelihood resemble the hub; and right concentration resembles the rim.”[87]

2.8 The Sautrāntikas claim that the three paths of seeing, cultivation, and no more training, together with the Dharma discourses that expound them, constitute the wheel of Dharma. As the Master Prince has said:[88]

> “That being the case, the Dharma discourses are also the wheel of Dharma since they expound upon the wheel of Dharma.”[89]

2.9 And:

> “The paths of seeing, cultivation, and no more training are also the wheel of Dharma. Since they spiral upward in the minds of beings who are to be guided, they are all called *wheels*.”[90]

2.10 According to our tradition of the Great Vehicle, all five paths, from the path of accumulation to the path of no more training, are the wheel of Dharma. As the Middle Way master Dharmamitra has said:

> “Some wheels of Dharma are the path of accumulation. Some are the path of preparation. Some are up to the uninterrupted path.”[91]

2.11 The path of liberation is the most supreme of all the Dharma wheels as stated in detail in *The Play in Full*:

2.12 > “Maitreya, the wheel of Dharma is profound because it cannot be grasped by the intellect. This wheel is hard to see because it is beyond duality. This wheel is hard to comprehend because it is not an object of conceptual investigation. This wheel is hard to discern because it is related to the sameness of wisdom and consciousness.

2.13 > “This wheel is without any blemishes because it leads to the attainment of liberation, which is free from any obscurations. This wheel is subtle because it cannot be exemplified. This wheel is essential because it leads to the attainment of vajra-like wisdom. This wheel is indestructible because it preexists its own turning.

2.14 > “This wheel is without mental elaboration because it is devoid of the sources of conceptual thinking. This wheel is undisturbed because of its infinite steadiness. This wheel encompasses everything because it is equal to the sky.

2.15 > “Maitreya, this wheel of Dharma has the nature of the essence of all phenomena. It is a wheel with the power to teach. It is a wheel beyond birth, cessation, and enduring. It is a wheel without the all-ground. It is a wheel of nonconceptuality in its full extent—the Dharma way.

2.16 > “It is a wheel of emptiness, a wheel of signlessness, a wheel free of any intent. It is a wheel of the unconditioned, a wheel of solitude, a wheel

without desire, a wheel of cessation, and a wheel that engages with the enlightened mind of the thus-gone ones.

2.17 “It is a wheel that is unconfused regarding the realm of phenomena, a wheel that is undisturbed concerning the authentic limit. It is a wheel without attachment and obscuration. It is a wheel free from the two extreme views in the understanding of interdependence. It is a wheel without disturbance within the realm of phenomena beyond center and edge.

2.18 “It is a wheel of the effortless and ceaseless activity of the Thus-Gone One. It is a wheel beyond activity and nonactivity. It is an utterly ungraspable wheel. It is a wheel beyond effort and effortlessness—an inexpressible wheel. It is a wheel that is like the nature of phenomena. It is a wheel of entering the sameness of all phenomena within a single sphere.

2.19 “It is a wheel that never reverses and continuously bestows guidance and blessings on sentient beings who are deprived of freedom. It is a wheel of entering the way of the ultimate truth, which assumes nonduality. It is a wheel that genuinely subsumes the realm of phenomena. This wheel is immeasurable because it transcends all limits.

2.20 “This wheel cannot be enumerated because it is beyond something that can be counted. This wheel is inconceivable because it is beyond the realm of conceptual mind. This wheel is unequaled because it is beyond equality. This wheel is inexpressible because it is beyond all paths of audible words.

2.21 > “It is limitless. It is without example because it is beyond exemplification. It is like the sky; it does not cease, yet neither is it permanent. Accepting interdependence does not disturb its peace; it is infinitely peaceful. It is reality itself. Its nature is none other than that, not like that, or neither.

2.22 > “It speaks the languages of all beings. It suppresses all demonic forces and defeats the extremists. It is an escape from cyclic existence. It is the entering into the realm of the buddhas. It is understood by noble beings and realized by solitary buddhas. The bodhisattvas embrace it. It is praised by all the buddhas. It is indivisible from all the thus-gone ones.”[92]

2.23 The fact that the scriptures that teach these paths are a Dharma wheel is also established by the quote from the sūtra *Unraveling the Intent* cited above. As the master Vasubandhu has also said:

> “The wheel whose nature it is to express relative phenomena is the wheel of Dharma.”

2.24 The learned scholar Dharmamitra has also said:

> “In the phrase ‘the great Muni’s wheels of Dharma without exception,’ ‘Dharma’ primarily refers to the Dharma that is taught.”

2.25 And, just as it is not contradictory for terms like *perfection of wisdom* or *Abhidharma* to also refer to their scriptural traditions, here in this context it is also logical for the term *Dharma wheel* to refer to scriptures.

2.26 Alternatively, another good way to explain it is that the actual Dharma wheel is the Dharma of realization and the paths of accumulation and preparation are

its branches, whereas the scriptures are called “the turning of the Dharma wheel” since they bring understanding to the minds of others.

2.27 The wheel of the Dharma of scripture, the topic of discussion here, is defined as a sublime teaching spoken by the Teacher that is an awareness appearing in the form of speech. It primarily expresses either the cause, result, or essence of nirvāṇa. It is represented by the cognizance of a disciple that appears in the form of phrases, words, and letters when the wisdom of the Buddha, the primary condition, and the pure mindstream of the disciple, the causal condition, converge. However, given that the Blessed One is devoid of the habitual tendencies that motivate speech and devoid of the ignorance that reifies internal cognizance as external words, the Well-Gone One does not ultimately give teachings through his own intentionality. Thus, this is what is intended by such Great Vehicle sūtras when they say that the Well-Gone One never spoke a single word of Dharma.

2.28 *An Illumination of “The Ornament for Clear Realizations”* also states:

> “The statement ‘the buddhas teach the Dharma’ has the following meaning: Conceptual thoughts operate by imputing their image as external, and one thereby grasps what is not as what is. When one is subject to something that, therefore, has the nature of ignorance, it is not possible to have eliminated all obscurations. Therefore, through the power of the gnosis that is the perfection of wisdom of the blessed buddhas who remain in meditative equipoise at all times, to the fortunate their own experience appears as teaching according to their inclinations. It is thus in keeping with this experience that it is presented as the blessed ones’ teaching to them.”

2.29 And:

> “Therefore, by virtue of the disciple’s cognition appearing as words, the teachings are nevertheless connected with those who hear them. They

> are the ‘Dharma teachings of the Buddhas’ because their arising is governed by the gnosis of the perfection of wisdom. As such, they are to be worshiped. In the same way, the teachings given by present-day teachers of the Dharma should also be worshiped since their arising is governed by the gnosis of the perfection of wisdom, owing to the continuous lineage, from one to the next, back to the Buddha.”

2.30 In this context, the Vaibhāṣikas and Sautrāntikas of the Lesser Vehicle do not define the Dharma of scripture in the same way, as it states in the *The Treasury of Abhidharma*:

2.31 > “Whatever the Muni spoke
> Were words or phrases
> Subsumed under form and formations.”[93]

2.32 Accordingly, the Vaibhāṣikas claim the nature of the scriptures to be the chain of language universals, the collection of phrases, words, and letters, and classify them as unassociated formations. The Sautrāntikas claim their nature is of particular sounds, classifying them as the form aggregate.

B. The Etymology of *Dharma Wheel*

2.33 In the Sanskrit word *dharmacakra*, the word *dharma* refers to the sublime Dharma of scripture and realization, for which the etymology was given above. The word *cakra* can refer to movement or collection. It is thus called a *cakra* or "wheel," because the wheel of the Dharma of realization appears to move into the minds of the disciples and because the wheel of the Dharma of scripture is the embodiment of the many heaps of teachings. As Dharmamitra has said:

2.34 > "As for the term *wheel*, either because it appears to move into the mind of the disciple or because it has the sense of a collection, it is close to the etymology of *cakra*."[94]

2.35 Another synonym is *the wheel of Brahmā*, described in *The Treasury of Abhidharma*:

2.36 > "The way of virtue or *śrāmaṇya* is the way of purity (*brāhmaṇya*)
> And it is the wheel of Brahmā, for it was turned by Brahmā himself."[95]

2.37 "The sūtras similarly refer to the Blessed One as Brahmā, or calm and cool."[96] Hence, the Blessed One himself can be referred to as Brahmā. The reason for his association with this name is explained in discussion of *brahmā* in *The Two-Volume Lexicon*:

2.38 > "In the term *brahmacarya*, *brahmā* conveys *brahmabhūta* and *śītabhūta*, which is to say it refers to being Brahmā or being cool. For this reason, *brahmā* in fact refers to nirvāṇa."[97]

2.39 *The Explanation of "The Treasury of Abhidharma"* likewise states:

> “The Blessed One is Brahmā on account of possessing the unsurpassable way of purity (*brāhmaṇya*).”[98]

2.40 And since the Master Prince has also explained the way of purity in terms of the undefiled path, it is called the *wheel of Brahmā* because it is turned by the great Brahmā.[99]

C. A Detailed Explanation of the Categories of the Dharma Wheel

This detailed explanation on the categories of the Dharma wheel includes (1) an explanation of the three divisions of Dharma wheels, (2) a presentation of the heaps of Dharma, and (3) classifying the Dharma wheels as provisional or definitive.

1. An Explanation of the Three Divisions of Dharma Wheels

2.41 This section includes a general and specific presentation of Dharma wheels. The first of these is the threefold framework of the turnings of the Dharma wheel of scripture described in the above quote from *Unraveling the Intent*. These are the first wheel on the four truths, the middle wheel on essencelessness, and the final wheel on correct discernment. The reason why such a division into three is logical is that the threefold division into types of individuals to be guided is definitive and reasonable. These three types are the individuals fixed in the Lesser Vehicle lineage, the individuals fixed in the Great Vehicle lineage, and the individuals not fixed in any particular lineage, since they can change based on conditions.

2.42 On account of this, a threefold division of methods for guiding beings is likewise definitive and reasonable. These are the first wheel that taught the four truths, the twelve links of dependent origination, and other such teachings from the perspective of the first type of person; the middle wheel that taught the profound topic of emptiness from the perspective of the second type of person; and the final wheel that taught phenomena to be mere consciousness and declared the thoroughly established nature to be ultimately real from the perspective of the unfixed type of individual so that they could relinquish their anxieties around topics of profundity.

2.43 Alternatively, *The Sūtra on the Questions of Dhāraṇīśvararāja* describes how the three Dharma wheels are taught through three discourses:

> "In the same way, son of noble family, when the tathāgatas know the character of completely impure beings, they cause beings who delight in saṃsāra to experience revulsion through discourses on impermanence, suffering, no self, and unattractiveness, which provoke revulsion. Then, they cause them to enter the Dharma of the noble ones, the Vinaya. But

> the efforts of the tathāgatas do not stop there. Next, they cause beings to comprehend the way of the tathāgatas through discourses on emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness. But the efforts of the tathāgatas do not stop there. Finally, they guide beings into the domain of the tathāgatas through discourses known as *The Irreversible Wheel of the Dharma* and *The Purification of the Triple Sphere*."[100]

2.44 As described here, the first was the discourse on renunciation for saṃsāra, the second was the discourse on the three gateways of liberation, and the third was the discourse on the irreversible wheel. The reason this framework is posited in this way is on account of the gradual stages that lead disciples to supreme awakening, as is illustrated in the sūtra above with an analogy of a skilled jeweler cleaning a gem.[101]

2.45 This is also described in the *Sublime Continuum*:

> "The apparition of the dharmakāya is the cause for entering the path of peace, becoming fully ripened, and receiving prophecies."[102]

2.46 As stated here, disciples attached to saṃsāra, urged by the discourses on renunciation, enter the path of peace. They are then fully ripened for the Great Vehicle by discourses on emptiness. Next, the discourses on the irreversible wheel help them to enter the domain of the thus-gone ones and receive great prophecies.

2.47 Alternatively, in Nāgārjuna's terminology, the first is the wheel that teaches the self, the second is the wheel that teaches selflessness, and the third is the wheel that refutes all views. Āryadeva was commenting upon what this means when he said:

2.48
> "In the beginning, nonmeritorious actions are averted.
> In the middle, the self is averted.
> In the end, the basis of all views is averted.

> Those who understand this are wise."[103]

2.49 As stated here, according to the noble father and son,[104] in order to make it possible to see the ultimate truth, first is the correct discrimination of what is to be taken up and avoided within the relative truth. The categorized ultimate truth that partially negates conceptual elaboration is then taught in order to refute clinging to the self. For this reason, they maintain that the third is teaching the actual ultimate truth devoid of all conceptual elaborations for the purpose of negating every basis for views of existence, nonexistence, and so forth. This division and ordering of the methods for guiding beings was made relative to those who are to be guided.

2.50 That being the case, the former categories and stages found in *Unraveling the Intent* and *The Dhāraṇīśvararāja Sūtra* were explained with the intention that the final wheel is the ultimate definitive meaning. In the latter system, however, what was previously the middle wheel is taught as the final wheel, since the master Nāgārjuna asserted that it is the wheel refuting all views.

2.51 The second section, the specific presentation, has three subsections. The first is the Dharma wheel of the four truths. This is defined as any sublime teaching given by the Teacher taught primarily for those of the Lesser Vehicle lineage with the intention of it being a step on the path to the Great Vehicle. It is represented by the scriptures of the Vinaya, Abhidharma, and Sūtras that are accepted by the śrāvakas, such as the four divisions of the Vinaya, and other such works. Why are these referred to as *the Dharma wheel of the four truths*? Because they teach the correct view and conduct primarily based on the four truths in order to guide those inclined to a lesser scope.

2.52 From the perspective of the shared perceptions of the lesser disciples in just this world, the main event of the first wheel occurred when the Teacher turned the wheel of Dharma for the group of five in the deer park of Ṛṣivadana in Vārāṇasī on the fourth day of the month of Āṣāḍhā, repeating the four truths

three times for a total of twelve instances. The Vaibhāṣikas assert this to have happened in the following way.

2.53 The first repetition was the teaching that identified each of the truths. The second repetition was the teaching that said, “Suffering should be understood. Its origin should be relinquished. Cessation should be actualized. The path should be practiced.” The third repetition was the teaching that said, “I have fully understood suffering. I have relinquished its origin. I have actualized cessation. I have cultivated the path.” At each of the three repetitions there occurred the following four: “The vision arose, and the insight, knowledge, and understanding arose.”[105] This makes a total of twelve.

2.54 The result of saṃsāra is suffering, its cause is the origin. Nirvāṇa, an effect that is a separation (*visaṃyogaphala*), is the truth of cessation, and its enabling cause (*kāraṇahetu*) is the truth of the path. All phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are subsumed within these four. The first repetition taught the path of seeing by ascertaining the essence of each of the four truths. The second taught the path of cultivation through the process of taking up one set of truths and discarding the other. The third taught the path of no more training through having completed this process of taking up and discarding. In the formula that was repeated four times per truth during the three repetitions. *Vision* refers to undefiled wisdom. *Insight* refers to the absence of doubt. *Knowledge* refers to true meaning. *Understanding* refers to pure intelligence. The commentaries to *The Treasury of Abhidharma* explain that these four were taught in order to distinguish from, respectively, the wrong view, doubt, ignorance, and defilement that constitute the outsiders’ arrogant presumption of having seen the truth.

2.55 One may argue, “If that is the case, there should be forty-eight aspects. This is because, when each truth is counted for the three repetitions, there are twelve instances, which are then multiplied by the four stages of vision and so forth, resulting in a total of forty-eight.” This is not a problem, however, because

there are twelve sets of concordant phenomena, as is described in the following sūtra, for instance:

2.56

> "Monks, I will teach you two things. Listen well and keep in mind what I explain. What are the two? They are *eyes and form*…up to *mind and dharma*."[106]

2.57 The Sautrāntikas reject this presentation of the Vaibhāṣika, saying, "If the three repetitions are as you say, then the Dharma wheel would not be repeated three times since, according to you, the Dharma wheel is exclusively the path of seeing and that was only uttered once on the initial repetition. Nor would there be twelve aspects since you have accepted that the fourfold *vision*, and so forth, which pertain to the path of seeing, are a single set."

2.58 When the Sautrāntikas put forth their own position, they say, "The first repetition focused on the essence of each of the four truths, the second repetition focused on the essence of their functions, and the third focused on their completion. What is repeated is the Dharma discourse on the four truths. Since in the three repetitions there are four aspects focusing on the individual essence, function, and result of the four truths, there is a total of twelve aspects."

2.59 For this reason, it is the Sautrāntikas' position that should be held as correct.

2.60 The immediate purpose of turning the wheel of Dharma in this way was for the group of five to become arhats and the eighty thousand devas to attain the path of seeing. The specific purpose was to counter the disciples' clinging to personal identity and lead them to one of the four results, whether that of a stream enterer, once-returner, non-returner, or arhat. Beyond this particular teaching, other teachings such as the Vinaya, miscellaneous teachings given in the six cities, and other various teachings not confined to a specific place or time also belong to the Dharma wheel of the four truths.

2.61 Second, the middle wheel is defined as the sublime teachings given by the Teacher that are based upon teaching profound emptiness to bodhisattvas with the intention of the actual path of the Great Vehicle. As it is said in *The Play in Full*:

2.62 > "The wheel of Dharma has been turned,
> Which is without an all-ground and beyond concepts,
> Unborn and without origination,
> Unique and empty of inherent nature.

2.63 > "The Buddha has turned the wheel
> That teaches the Dharma of equality,
> Without anything to accept and reject,
> Causeless and without characteristics."[107]

2.64 The middle wheel is represented by the Perfection of Wisdom sūtras and other similar works. Why are these referred to as *the Dharma wheel of the absence of characteristics*? This designation is used because they teach inexpressible and inconceivable suchness in which all phenomena, from form to omniscience, are utterly devoid of intrinsic characteristics. As for the main event of the middle wheel, although the date has been subject to a wide range of explanations among Tibetans, I do not dare posit one with confidence since I have not clearly seen the source for their views. The location of the middle wheel was Vulture's Peak in Rājagṛha where profound emptiness was taught to a great gathering of the fourfold assembly of śrāvakas including monks, nuns, upāsakas, and upāsikās, and to untold quintillions of saṅghas of bodhisattvas. The hidden meaning is the stages in which, through this teaching on emptiness, the eight clear realizations arise in the mindstreams of disciples, along with the seventy topics. That hidden meaning itself was taught through explicitly teaching that all phenomena are empty by way of the three gateways[108] and eleven rounds of teaching. [109]

2.65 The eight clear realizations of the hidden meaning are detailed in *The Ornament for Clear Realizations* as follows:

2.66 > “The perfection of wisdom
> Is proclaimed in eight topics:
> (1) all-aspect omniscience, (2) knowledge of the paths,
> (3) All knowing,

2.67 > “(4) Clear realization of all aspects,
> (5) Culminating clear realization, (6) Gradual clear realization,
> (7) Instantaneous clear realization,
> And (8) the dharmakāya—these are the eight.”[110]

2.68 The seventy topics, an extension of the eight topics, are described in the same work, as follows:

2.69 > “(1) Generating bodhicitta, (2) the instructions,
> (3) The four branches of discernment,
> (4) The foundation of practice
> Whose nature is that of the dharmadhātu,

2.70 > “(5) The object of focus, (6) the aim,
> (7) The activities of donning armor and (8) departure,
> And (9) the accumulations and (10) transcendence
> Are the all-aspect omniscience of the Muni.”[111]

2.71 These are the ten factors that illustrate all-aspect omniscience.

2.72 > “(1) Overshadowing and so forth,
> (2) The paths of the disciples and (3) the rhinos,
> (4) The path of seeing that brings great benefit

> Through the qualities here and beyond,

2.73
> “(5) Function, (6) admiration,
> (7) Praise, respect, and eulogy,
> (8) Dedication, (9) rejoicing,
> And both unsurpassable mental engagements,

2.74
> “(10) The accomplishment path of cultivation
> (11) And the complete purity path of cultivation
> Describe the knowledge of the path
> Of skillful bodhisattvas.”[112]

2.75 These are the eleven factors that illustrate the knowledge of the path.

2.76
> “(1) Not abiding in existence due to wisdom,
> (2) Not abiding in peace out of compassion,
> (3) Being distant through lacking the means,
> (4) Not being distant through skillful means,

2.77
> “(5) Unfavorable and (6) remedial conditions,
> (7) Training and (8) its equality,
> (9) And the paths of seeing of the śrāvakas and others
> Are asserted to comprise knowledge of all dharmas.”[113]

2.78 These are the nine factors that illustrate knowledge of the bases.

2.79
> “(1) Aspects, (2) trainings,
> (3) Their qualities, (4) flaws, and (5) characteristics,
> (6) The conditions conducive to liberation and (7) discernment,
> (8) The assembly of irreversible disciples,

2.80 > “(9) The equality of existence and peace,
> And (10) unsurpassed pure lands—
> These constitute clear realization of all aspects,
> Which includes (11) skillful means.”[114]

2.81 These are the eleven factors that illustrate the training of the clear realization of all aspects.

2.82 > “Its (1) sign, (2) increase,
> (3) Stability, (4) complete abiding of mind,
> (5–6) The four antidotes to
> The four types of concepts

2.83 > “On the paths of
> Seeing and cultivation respectively,
> (7) Unobstructed samādhi,
> And (8) mistaken notions

2.84 > “Are the culminating clear realization…”[115]

2.85 These are the eight factors that illustrate culminating clear realization.

2.86 > “…Gradual, clear realization
> Is thirteenfold…”[116]

2.87 These are the thirteen factors that represent training in gradual clear realization.

2.88 > “…awakening
> In a single instant

> Is fourfold according to its characteristics."[117]

2.89 These are the four factors that illustrate instantaneous training.

2.90
> "(1) The svābhāvikakāya, (2) the sambhogakāya,
> As well as (3) the nirmāṇakāya,
> And (4) the dharmakāya and its activities
> Are said to be fourfold."[118]

2.91 These are the four factors that illustrate the result, the dharmakāya.

2.92 As for these Perfection of Wisdom teachings that were given by way of the three gateways and eleven rounds of teaching, the three gateways are as follows: the gateway of concise teachings addressed to those who understand them through a brief indication, the gateway of middle-length teachings addressed to those who understand them through minor elaboration, and the gateway of detailed explanations addressed to those who fixate on words. The eleven rounds of teaching are the teachings given in the form of answers to questions from Śāriputra, Subhūti, Śakra, Subhūti, Maitreya, Subhūti, Śakra, Subhūti, Maitreya, Subhūti, and Ānanda, respectively.

2.93 The Perfection of Wisdom sūtras lacking nothing in content or form are as follows: the elaborate versions such as *The Perfection of Wisdom in One Hundred Million Lines* and *The Perfection of Wisdom in One Hundred Thousand Lines*, middle-length versions such as *The Perfection of Wisdom in Twenty-Five Thousand Lines* and so on, and concise versions such as *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines* and so on.

2.94 Since there are also countless other sūtras diverging from these, the majority of them were given in a single time and place, for, as it is said:

2.95
> "Although only one discourse was spoken,

> It was understood in many ways."[119]

2.96 Through the power of the Victorious One, the redactors gathered these into elaborate, middle-length, concise, and other miscellaneous versions according to how it appeared to them and as appropriate for the beings to be guided.

2.97 Some might say, "If it is the case that the Blessed One did not teach the Dharma of the Perfection of Wisdom anywhere other than that single place and time, how is this not a contradiction since there are mentions of him teaching it in a variety of places and at a variety of times?"

2.98 This is not a problem, for as it states in the sūtras:

2.99
> "O sons of the conqueror, look!
> [Through the blessings of the great Sage][120]
> We can perceive the Victorious One
> Dwelling in all Jambudvīpas.

2.100
> "We perceive the Well-Gone One
> On the summit of Mount Meru
> And the great, marvelous Buddha
> In all other world systems too."[121]

2.101 And, as stated above, even the miraculous emanations of noble bodhisattvas are a subject beyond comprehension, not to mention the powers of the complete Buddha, such as transforming a moment into an eon and so forth. More particularly, while never wavering from equipoise in the sublime and permanent abode that is the utterly stainless dharmadhātu, in the single time that is the equality beyond all time, the noble buddhas turn the wheel of Dharma, which is without any utterance at all. Even though we are not suitable recipients for fully understanding this, nevertheless, as followers of the Great

Vehicle, when we are explaining the Great Vehicle, it would be excellent if we at least pretended to elucidate it in this way.

2.102 One might object, “If that is the case, then what is the use of going to lengths to mention places such as Vulture’s Peak and so forth?”

2.103 Since that is all that is seen by childish beings in this fourth continent, who grasp on to extremes, the sūtras teach and present themselves accordingly, in order to compassionately guide them.

2.104 The purpose of this turning of such a middle wheel is for disciples who are the direct recipients of its teachings to enter the domain of the tathāgatas—for those who require this teaching to liberate their minds in order to enter the domain of the tathāgatas.

2.105 Indirectly, it also has the purpose of allowing all beings to remove the obscurations associated with mistaken views, unmistakenly realize the way all phenomena are, and attain the great nirvāṇa that does not abide in the two extremes.

2.106 The final wheel is defined as any sublime teaching given by the Teacher that primarily teaches the threefold purity in order to compassionately guide beings not fixed in a particular lineage in the way of the Great Vehicle. It is represented by those scriptures that primarily teach buddha nature such as *The Ornaments of the Buddha*,[122] *The Sūtra on the Descent into Laṅka*,[123] and so on. Why are these referred to as *the Dharma wheel of correct distinguishment*? They are so called because their teachings correctly distinguish all phenomena, from form to omniscience, according to the three natures—the imagined, the dependent, and the thoroughly established.

2.107 Not only does the measure of the main event of the final wheel ultimately defy definition, even from the limited perspective of what we childish beings see and hear, since it was taught in the Malaya Mountains, at the seat of awaken-

ing, in Vaiśālī, and elsewhere, at an indefinite time, it is difficult to unequivocally specify that only this or that comprises the final wheel. Nevertheless, the examples above, along with the *Heap of Jewels*,[124] *The Dense Array*,[125] the *Parinirvāṇa Sūtra*[126] and so forth ought to be posited, since they are extensive in words and meaning. Moreover, the majority of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna sūtras have statements with an underlying intention, many of which are clarified in these Third Turning sūtras. There are many examples of this, such as the statement in the Vinaya sūtras that monks are permitted to eat meat that is suitable, which is shown to have an underlying intention with the statement, "Meat that is pure in three ways—not specifically allocated, not requested, and not ordered—does not exist. Therefore, do not eat meat."[127]

2. A Presentation of the Heaps of Dharma

2.108 The entirety of the Dharma of scripture can generally be referred to as the *heaps of Dharma* since it appears as a heap that amasses a multitude of meaning and words. The position of the śrāvakas follows *The Treasury of Abhidharma*, which states, "The eighty thousand heaps of Dharma."[128]

2.109 And:

2.110 > "Some say it is the length of a treatise,
> Or each discourse on the aggregates and so forth,
> But the heaps of Dharma are explained
> As the antidotes of behavior."

2.111 As stated here, the entirety of the Dharma taught by the Teacher is contained within eighty thousand heaps of Dharma. One school posits the size of a single heap of Dharma to be six thousand ślokas, since that is the length of *The Heaps of Dharma*[129] by Śāriputra, one of the seven canonical Abhidharma works considered to be words of the Buddha by the Vaibhāṣikas and treatises by the Sautrāntikas. This school claims that *The Heaps of Dharma* by Śāriputra is the only heap of Dharma among the eighty thousand that remains, whereas the others have disappeared.

2.112 Another school posits the size of a heap of Dharma to be a single, complete teaching on a topic such as the aggregates, elements, sense sources, or dependent origination, and divides them accordingly.

2.113 For another school, the subdivisions and combinations of the afflictions—desire, anger, ignorance, pride, wrong view, and doubt—totals eighty thousand, and each heap of Dharma was taught as an antidote to each of the afflictions.

They assert a teaching that presents the function of a given antidote in full is the measure of a heap of Dharma.

2.114 Another school, basing its position on *The Ānanda Sūtra*,[130] maintains that, "It is said that Ānanda heard over eight thousand heaps of Dharma directly from the Blessed One himself and two from the śrāvakas."

2.115 Another school claims that there are eighty-four thousand heaps of Dharma. These various positions are found in *The Explanation of "The Treasury of Abhidharma*," and so forth.[131]

2.116 Both *An Explanation of "The Compendium"*[132] and *Clear Words*[133] agree that the system of the ordinary vehicles posits the size of a heap of Dharma to be one thousand ślokas in eight-syllable anuṣṭubh meter, which, when multiplied by eighty-four thousand, makes eighty-four million.

2.117 The position of the Great Vehicle is described in *Clear Words*, as follows:

> "According to the unsurpassed vehicle, a heap of Dharma is what can be written with the amount of ink that Śakra's elephant Airāvata can feasibly carry on its back. If this is taken to be the case, then the statement in some sūtras that the noble Devadatta could recite as many volumes of scripture as could be carried by five thousand elephants is reasonable."[134]

2.118 The sūtra referenced in the phrase "some sūtras" is reputed to be *The Sūtra on Repaying Kindness*.[135]

2.119 Thus far, the number of the heaps of Dharma has been posited to be eighty-four thousand. Some earlier Tibetans claimed that the way this gets divided is into twenty-one thousand heaps of Dharma from the Vinaya basket, which act as antidotes to the twenty-one thousand actions related primarily to the affliction of attachment; twenty-one thousand heaps of Dharma from the Sūtras, which

act as antidotes to the twenty-one thousand actions related to anger; twenty-one thousand heaps of Dharma from the Abhidharma, which act as antidotes to the twenty-one thousand actions related to ignorance; and twenty-one thousand heaps of Dharma from the three baskets equally, which act as antidotes to the twenty-one thousand actions related to the three poisons equally. Nevertheless, I have not seen this explanation in a credible source.

2.120 In any case, the division into eighty-four thousand heaps of Dharma was made with respect to them acting as antidotes to the eighty-four thousand afflictions. Otherwise, not only do the profound sūtras explain in detail how it is completely untenable to calculate the heaps of Dharma according to the number of ślokas or other such things, they also contradict the very sūtras accepted by the śrāvakas, as demonstrated by *Principles of Exegesis*, which cites *The Ānanda Sūtra* and *The Uttara Sūtra*, as follows:[136]

2.121 > "If the Buddha's teachings were not extant in their entirety even when the noble Ānanda was still alive not long after the Blessed Buddha's passing into nirvāṇa, then it goes without saying that this is also the case for the present time. *The Ānanda Sūtra* says, 'The Blessed One thought to himself, "Ānanda will uphold my teachings in my old age," and so he appointed the noble Ānanda as his attendant.' And, 'Ānanda said,[137] "For more than twenty years, I have attended the Venerable One." ' In the same text, Ānanda also says, 'I received over eighty thousand heaps of Dharma from the Blessed One, and two from the monks.'

2.122 > "Thus, it should be understood that Ānanda[138] did not necessarily retain everything the Blessed One had previously taught. Nor is it right to say that what Ānanda received from the monks was all that there was, since it would be incorrect to claim that the Dharma was less than forty sets during that period of time. Had noble Ānanda understood everything, Śakra, the lord of the devas, would not have declared in *The Uttara Sūtra* that 'there is not even a single monk who has retained this Dharma

> discourse.’ Therefore, Ānanda had not retained the entirety of the Dharma, yet what he recited is what was codified by the community of reciters.”[139]

3. Classifying the Dharma Wheels as Provisional or Definitive

This section has two subsections: (a) the main section on delineating the Greater and Lesser Vehicles and (b) the ancillary section on the refutations of objections.

a. Delineating the Greater and Lesser Vehicles

2.123 What do the three wheels look like when categorized as provisional and definitive? The position of master Asaṅga, his brother Vasubandhu, and others is as follows. The sūtra *Unraveling the Intent* says of the first wheel, "This turning of the Dharma wheel was surpassable and adapted to the circumstances. Being of provisional meaning, it became a topic of dispute."[140] It says the same about the second wheel. Of the third wheel, it says, "This turning of the Dharma wheel was unsurpassable and not limited to the circumstances. Being of definitive meaning, it did not become a topic of dispute."[141]

2.124 This quote, the above-cited quotation from *The Dhāraṇīśvararāja Sūtra*, and a majority of the other sūtras associated with the final wheel claim that, even though the middle wheel contains statements such as "all phenomena are nonexistent, unborn, and unceasing," and so forth, they are made with underlying intentions. Therefore, only the final wheel is ultimately of definitive meaning, whereas the others are not.

2.125 The reasons for positing the middle wheel as being of provisional meaning in this tradition are given in great detail throughout the sūtras and treatises. However, the main reason is that, if the teaching that all phenomena are nonexistent were taken literally, it would follow that the dependent nature and the thoroughly established nature would not exist. If that were the case, it would follow that affliction and purification would be nonexistent. How so?

2.126 The all-ground consciousness containing all seeds constitutes the dependent nature, which is characterized by awareness consumed by false imagination. When this is apprehended as an object, karma and the afflictions are apprehended. However, if the dependent nature were inherently nonexistent, it would no longer be logically tenable for it to exist even on the relative level. If

that were the case, the karma and the afflictions that are dependent upon it would also be untenable.

2.127 Therefore, the dependent nature must relatively exist like the eight illusion analogies and be able to perform functions on the relative level. It is the imagined nature, the awareness to which the dependent nature appears as an object, that is entirely nonexistent even on the relative level. The thoroughly established nature, which is the dependent nature devoid of the imagined nature, is suchness, the wisdom of the nonduality of objects and subjects. And this is referred to as either "buddha nature" or the "lineage." If this were nonexistent, it would follow that the presentation of the path of purification and its result—that is, the gathering of the accumulations and the purification of the obscurations that ultimately lead to the attainment of awakening—would no longer serve any purpose since its appearance is predicated on the buddha nature. This is why the ultimate must be truly existent.

2.128 "Why then are they said to be essenceless?" one may ask. There is a reason for this. This teaching that all phenomena are nonexistent was given with the underlying intention that phenomena of the imagined nature are without essential defining characteristics, phenomena of the dependent nature are without essential arising, and phenomena of the thoroughly established nature are without an essential ultimate nature. The purpose of teaching their nonexistence is primarily as an antidote to destroy the negative view apprehending a self in phenomena. Thus it has been excellently explained.

2.129 In contrast, the master Nāgārjuna and his son Āryadeva maintain that the middle wheel is the final definitive meaning because the teachings of utterly profound emptiness are unscathed by logical critique and because countless scriptural sources declare it to be the final definitive meaning. These include the Mother scriptures,[142] which state as follows:

2.130 “ ‘Blessed One,’ Śakra said, ‘the extent to which the perfection of wisdom does not cause anything to arise or cease is wondrous. It is not in the service of the nonarising and nonceasing of all phenomena, nor yet is it absent.’ ”

2.131 “ ‘Blessed One,’ Subhūti said, ‘if a bodhisattva great being reifies it as such, they will remain distant from the perfection of wisdom. They will undervalue the perfection of wisdom. They will nullify the perfection of wisdom. They will fail to practice the perfection of wisdom.’ ”

2.132 “ ‘Subhūti,’ the Blessed One said, ‘when the perfection of wisdom is revealed, form is not revealed. Nor are feeling, perception, formations, or consciousness revealed. The result of a stream enterer is not revealed. The result of a once-returner is not revealed. The result of a non-returner is not revealed. Arhatship is not revealed. Solitary buddhahood is not revealed. Buddhahood is not revealed.’ ”[143]

2.133 *The Verses That Summarize the Perfection of Wisdom* also states:

2.134 “The Dharma of the guides is profound and difficult to see.
It cannot be realized by anyone, nor can it be attained.
Therefore, the one who is benevolent and loving, upon having attained awakening,
Was unconcerned, thinking, ‘Which beings would understand this?’

2.135 “Beings like to fixate, longing for sense objects.
Immersed in clinging, they are unwise fools whose ignorance resembles darkness.
The Dharma to be attained is beyond fixation and clinging.
Hence, it conflicts with the beings of the world.

2.136 “The element of space is beyond boundaries
Throughout the east, south, west, and north.
It is everywhere—in the zenith, the nadir, and the ten directions.
It is not distinct nor is it differentiated.

2.137 “The suchness of the past, the suchness of the future,
The suchness of the present, the suchness of the arhats,
The suchness of all phenomena, the suchness of the victors,
And the suchness of their teachings are all undifferentiated.

2.138 “Any bodhisattva who seeks to attain
The well-gone ones’ awakening, devoid of differentiated qualities,
Should apply themselves with skillful means to the perfection of wisdom,
For without the wisdom of the guides, nothing will be attained.”[144]

2.139 The tradition of Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva posits the final teachings of the Buddha to be of provisional meaning. The reason for this is that, if one asserts the thoroughly established nature to exist essentially as ultimately truly existent and so forth, there are many logical fallacies. These are described in *The Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Way*, as follows:

2.140 “If there were something not empty,
There would be something that is empty.
There is nothing that is not empty,
So how can there be something that is empty?

2.141 “The victorious ones declared that emptiness
Is the death of all views,
But, for those who hold emptiness as a view,

> They said there is no cure."[145]

2.142 "What then was the point of the Blessed One giving such teachings?" one may ask. It was to guide the beings who, incorrectly thinking about the teachings of profound emptiness, become inclined toward views of nihilism. Alternatively, it was to guide beings who were not inspired by profundity, as explained above.

2.143 The proponents of awareness[146] critique this presentation with references to the sūtras. However, the references in the sūtras have underlying intentions, as demonstrated immediately above. Philosophers furthermore establish that there is no fault here through a variety of proofs, such as those found in the same work, as follows:

2.144 > "For one to whom emptiness makes sense,
> Everything makes sense.
> For one to whom emptiness makes no sense,
> Nothing makes sense."[147]

2.145 And:

2.146 > "If everything were not empty,
> There would be neither arising nor ceasing.
> It would follow that the four truths of the noble ones
> Would, according to you, be nonexistent."[148]

2.147 Thus, both of the Great Vehicle tenet systems, the Middle Way and Mind-Only, agree that the first wheel is of provisional meaning; however, they hold different positions on the middle and final wheels. Here, the latter tradition is to be given precedence. The middle wheel should be understood to be the final definitive meaning and the final wheel to contain aspects of both provisional

and definitive meaning. The Dharma teachings categorized as provisional or definitive in this way are described as follows in *The Teaching of Akṣayamati*:

2.148 > "The teachings that demonstrate the relative truth are of provisional meaning, while the teachings that demonstrate the ultimate truth are of definitive meaning."[149]

2.149 As stated here, the teachings on cause, path, result, and so forth that are based on relative truth are of provisional meaning because they gradually lead one to the definitive meaning of ultimate suchness. The unerring teachings on the reality of the ground, path, fruition, and so forth based on the ultimate truth are of definitive meaning because they definitively reveal the meaning of suchness without reification or negation.

2.150 In the well-spoken words of master Nāgārjuna:

2.151 > "The Dharma taught by the Buddha
> Is based on the two truths—
> The relative truth of the world
> And the ultimate truth."[150]

2.152 And:

2.153 > "Without relying on the conventional,
> The ultimate cannot be taught.
> Without relying on the ultimate,
> One will not reach nirvāṇa."[151]

2.154 *Fearlessness From All* explains the two truths respectively, as follows:

> "The *relative truth of the world* refers to how, even though phenomena are empty of intrinsic existence, due to worldly misconceptions that fail

> to understand this,[152] all phenomena appear to arise. Since this is relatively true for them, it is called the relative truth. The *ultimate truth* refers to the way in which noble beings perceive the nonarising of all phenomena with correct understanding. Since this is ultimately true for them, it is called the ultimate truth. Whoever fails to understand the twofold division of the relative and ultimate truths in this way has not understood the profundity of the Buddha's teachings."[153]

b. Refutations of Objections

2.155 "If a sūtra contains statements that are decidedly of provisional meaning, is it necessarily a Lesser Vehicle sūtra?"

This is not necessarily the case. Even though the majority of the first wheel does, for the most part, present the outlook of the Lesser Vehicle, the presence of provisional teachings in the final wheel does not prove that its sūtras teach the Lesser Vehicle, since their content is indisputably that of the Great Vehicle.

2.156 "Well, what if a sūtra contains teachings on the definitive meaning? Is it necessarily a Great Vehicle sūtra?"

This is also not necessarily the case since, even though the statement "profound, peaceful, unelaborated,[154] luminous, and unconditioned,"[155] for instance, is also indeed found in the context of teaching the final definitive meaning, that isn't sufficient to establish Vinaya scriptures as belonging to the Great Vehicle.[156] Thus, the mere distinction between provisional and definitive is not enough to distinguish whether a sūtra belongs to the Greater or Lesser Vehicle, since there are also numerous provisional sūtras and tantras of the Great Vehicle with underlying intentions.

2.157 "Well then, how is it that three wheels are distinguished as either provisional or definitive?"

This is not a problem since the distinction is made in terms of which is most predominant. According to the proponents of awareness, there are ten distinguishing factors that distinguish the Greater and Lesser Vehicles, which are described in *A Summary of the Mahāyāna*, as follows:

2.158 > "The basis of objects of knowledge, their characteristics, entrance into them,
> Causes and results, the divisions,

> The three trainings, their resultant relinquishments,
> And wisdom are what make the Supreme Vehicle exalted."[157]

2.159 The basis of objects of knowledge is the all-ground consciousness. The characteristics of knowable things are the imagined, dependent, and thoroughly established natures. The entrance into these characteristics is awareness. The causes and results of entering them are the six perfections. The divisions of practicing them are the ten levels. Higher discipline is the bodhisattva vow. Higher mind is samādhis, such as *heroic progress*.[158] Higher insight is nonconceptual wisdom. The resultant relinquishment is nonabiding nirvāṇa. The wisdom resulting from that is the three bodies.

2.160 Thus, what possesses these ten distinctions should be understood as belonging to the Great Vehicle, and what does not to the Lesser Vehicle. And, likewise, scriptures whose content is related to either all of or any of the ten distinctions should be posited as belonging to the Great Vehicle basket.

2.161 Alternatively, according to a position shared by all Middle Way and Mind-Only followers, the distinction is based on possessing the seven greatnesses described above or whether its content is related to them or not. In this context, *The Verses That Summarize the Perfection of Wisdom* says:

2.162
> "Those who think they will be a śrāvaka of the Well-Gone One,
> Those who seek to be a solitary buddha or a king of Dharma,
> Will not be able to do so without relying on acceptance,
> Like someone who cannot see the ford from one shore to the other."[159]

2.163 Master Nāgārjuna has said:

2.164
> "In *The Discourse to Kātyāyana*
> Both existence and nonexistence
> Were denied by the Blessed One,

> Who discerns the existent and nonexistent."[160]

2.165 It is difficult to distinguish the Greater and Lesser Vehicles according to their views alone since, as seen in these quotes, even śrāvakas and solitary buddhas transcend saṃsāra and manifest nirvāṇa without remainder through realizing the suchness of things. Therefore, it should be understood that the distinction is primarily in terms of the conduct of skillful means.

2.166 As *The Precious Garland* states:

2.167 > "The bodhisattva's aspirational prayers
> Are not taught in the Śrāvaka Vehicle,
> Nor are their conduct and dedication—
> How would one become a bodhisattva through that vehicle?[161]

2.168 > "The topic of adhering to bodhisattva conduct
> Was not taught in the śravaka sūtras,
> But rather in those of the Great Vehicle.
> The wise should thus accept them."[162]

2.169 The Small Vehicle is divided into the Lesser Vehicle of the śrāvakas and the Middling Vehicle of the solitary buddhas, according to the superiority or inferiority of their faculties and results. However, for the most part, they share identical presentations of the path, as explained in *The Main Treatise on the Levels*.[163]

2.170 The Great Vehicle is divided into the Philosophical Vehicle, which takes the cause as the path, and the Vajra Vehicle of Secret Mantra, which takes the result as the path. Although the former is divided into the Middle Way and Mind-Only schools, these are not to be presented as different vehicles since there is no difference in their results, even if there are some minor differences in terms

of their views, and also because individual vehicles cannot be distinguished solely based on the speed of their respective paths.

2.171 All vehicles are, in a general sense, ultimately one in that the nirvāṇa of the Śrāvaka Vehicle is merely a temporary nirvāṇa and not the true and final nirvāṇa. This is because the Thus-Gone One will have to urge them on from that nirvāṇa with rays of light and guide them to the state of great awakening. Temporarily speaking, however, each vehicle must be delineated individually since they each have their own system of paths, results, and so forth.

2.172 In this context, the śrāvakas do not accept either of the two latter Dharma wheels of the Great Vehicle. They critique these latter teachings, objecting that (1) they contradict the four seals of the Buddha's teachings; (2) they do not appear in the Vinaya, are not referenced in the sūtras, and contradict reality; (3) the ritual purification of misdeeds through mantra recitation, ablution, and fasting is the teaching of outsiders; and (4) the Great Vehicle sūtras were not included when the Buddha's teachings were grouped into the eighteen schools. (5) They also note other faults such as contradicting what is widely accepted.

2.173 The first point of contention argues that claiming the saṃbhogakāya to be permanent contradicts the statement that conditioned things are impermanent, claiming bodhisattvas live blissfully contradicts the statement that all defiled phenomena are suffering, claiming a sublime self contradicts the statement that phenomena are selfless, and claiming that śrāvakas and solitary buddhas must take rebirth after nirvāṇa in order to awaken to buddhahood contradicts the statement that nirvāṇa is peace. These will be addressed in order.

2.174 The first fault does not apply since, even though the saṃbhogakāya appears as permanent in the sense of continuous from the perspective of those on the tenth level, it is not intrinsically permanent. The second fault does not apply either since the things śrāvakas see as suffering are not seen as such by bodhisattvas, for they analyze them with penetrating insight. The third fault does not apply either because the term *sublime self* is used to demonstrate suchness,

which is devoid of any indication of “me” and “mine,” since it is unchanging, unshifting, and indestructible. The fourth fault does not apply either because the nirvāṇa of the śrāvakas and solitary buddhas is posited as nirvāṇa with the understanding that it is temporary, not as the great, final nirvāṇa.

2.175 The issues in the second point of contention, that the Great Vehicle sūtras do not appear in the Vinayas that are commonly accepted by the śrāvakas, is simply a limited perspective. Therefore, the way in which there is no fault is explained in *The Ornament of the Sūtras*, as follows:

2.176
> “It has its own references,
> Appears in its Vinaya,
> And does not contradict reality
> Because it is profound and vast.”[164]

2.177 *The Blaze of Reasoning* likewise states:

> “The Great Vehicle was, in fact, taught by the Buddha. Since it does not contradict the seals of the Dharma, is referenced in the sūtras on the four truths of the noble ones, can be genuinely seen in the Vinaya that tames the afflictions, and does not contradict the reality of dependent origination, it is the teachings of the Buddha. All these descriptions apply to the Great Vehicle. Furthermore, even the eighteen schools are referenced within their own respective sūtras but largely contradict each other. Even though the Great Vehicle is not referenced in some scriptural baskets such as the sūtras of the śrāvakas on account of its profound and vast manner of benefiting others, it is referenced in the Great Vehicle sūtras, it appears in the seven hundred bodhisattva precepts, and it does not contradict reality, which it teaches to be emptiness. This being the case, it does not stand in contradiction to the seals of the Dharma.”[165]

2.178 There are countless other statements such as this.

2.179 There is no fault in the third point of contention either. As for claims about mantra recitation, dhāraṇī mantras are a form of meditation; secret mantras are an application of hidden letters that reveal the secret of the thus-gone one's wisdom, which have the power to accomplish one's aims as desired; and vidyā mantras by nature teach the Dharma of the factors of awakening, and so forth. As for ablution, when the nāga king Anavatapta was reborn in a small lake, he made an aspiration, saying, "For any of the creatures that bathe, drink, enter, or live in the rivers that flow from this small lake of mine, may that become the cause for their awakening. May I gradually lead all of them to buddhahood." It is in this way that, even though water lacks the capacity to purify misdeeds, there is no contradiction for purification to occur due to the power of aspirations. As for fasting, it is not asserted to lead to liberation, but rather to the successful outcome of vidyā mantras. Hence, there is no fault here.

2.180 There is no fault in the fourth point of contention either for, as *The Blaze of Reasoning* explains in detail, it is logical for the Great Vehicle sūtras to be the words of the Buddha:

2.181 > "The Great Vehicle was taught in common to the eighteen schools as the result of taking into account the intentions and attitudes of beings definitely inclined toward profundity and vastness. This is similar to how the scriptures of the sciences were taught irrespective of birth, age, color, country, and time. Moreover, the categories of Śrāvaka Vehicle, Solitary Buddha Vehicle, and Great Vehicle are a ubiquitous feature of the teachings of all buddhas, whereas the division[166] of the teachings is found only in Śākyamuni's teachings, not others. Since the different vehicles were delineated by Krakucchanda and other thus-gone ones, they were not taught by Kāśyapa."[167]

2.182 There is no fault in the fifth point of contention either. The claims that contradict accepted customs such as renunciants needing to bow to householder bodhisattvas are also found in the sūtras of different schools like the Mahāsāṃghikas[168] and can be easily dispelled by quotes such as:

2.183 > “You, O hero, know the essence
> Of the precious jewel that is the mind,
> The cause of perfectly complete awakening.
> Others remain distant from it.[169]

2.184 > “Should I bow to you first
> Or to your great compassion,
> Which kept you at length in saṃsāra,
> Even though you knew its faults?”[170]

2.185 Furthermore, there is a wide range of other logical arguments purportedly establishing that the Great Vehicle is not the words of the Buddha, such as not accepting the extensive sayings of the Great Vehicle teachings as *extensive sayings*, or arguing that there is no need for the Great Vehicle since the methods for reaching great awakening are taught in the sūtras accepted by the śrāvakas. However, these are refuted in *The Ornament of the Sūtras*:

2.186 > “[The Great Vehicle is the words of the Buddha.]
> Because it was not prophesied against at the beginning, it appeared at the same time,
> It is beyond the scope of intellectuals, it is proven.
> Either it exists or, if it doesn’t, neither does the Śrāvakayāna.
> It is the antidote, and its words have other meanings.

2.187 > “The buddhas have direct vision,
> They work to protect the teachings,

> And their wisdom is not obscured by time.
> Hence they could never be indifferent.

2.188 > "The vehicle of the śrāvakas
> Is incomplete, contradictory, and unskillful.
> Not being taught in that way,
> It is not called the Great Vehicle.

2.189 > "Since their motivation, teachings,
> Practice, basis,
> And time are contradictory,
> The lesser is the Lesser Vehicle."[171]

2.190 Beyond this, since these contentions are also refuted in the commentarial works of numerous masters, such as Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Śāntideva, and others, establishing the Great Vehicle through scriptural citations and well-reasoned logical arguments, these works should be consulted.

III. How the Dharma Wheel of the Great Esoteric Vajra Vehicle Was Turned More Specifically

3.1 This section has two subsections: (A) a general definition with a summary by way of synonyms and (B) an extensive explanation of how it is exalted over the Vehicle of the Perfections and its divisions.

A. A General Definition of the Vajra Vehicle with a Summary by Way of Etymology

3.2 The Vajra Vehicle is defined as any of the sublime Dharma of scripture spoken by the Teacher that are included in the class that primarily teaches the exalted swift and easy methods for bringing sense objects into the path without abandoning them, and the way of spontaneously practicing cause and effect. The path that is the cause of undefiled bliss, along with its result—both the words that express it and what it is they express—as well as other teachings that are included therein, are called *the way of Secret Mantra*, *tantras*, the *Vajra Vehicle*, the *Vidyādhara Basket*, and the *Resultant Vehicle*.

3.3 As for *the way of Secret Mantra*, the master Tripiṭakamāla has classified the Well-Gone One's scriptures into three modes in his *Lamp of the Three Modes*, as follows:

3.4 > "The way of the suchness of the truths,
> The way of the perfections,
> And the way of great Secret Mantra
> Are explained here in summary."[172]

3.5 Its etymology derives from the Sanskrit word *mantra*, which is explained in *The Supplementary Tantra to the Guhyasamāja*, as follows:

3.6 > "Whatever mind arises
> In dependence on the faculties and their objects,
> That mind is called *man*,
> Whereas the syllable *tra* means 'protection.'

3.7 > "Freedom from worldly conduct

> Is called samayas and vows.
> Their protection (*tra*) by all the vajras
> Is called the conduct of mantra."[173]

3.8 It is therefore called *secret mantra* because it protects the mind from the torments of saṃsāra and the afflictions. Alternatively, it is called *secret mantra* because it is accomplished through proper conduct kept secret from unsuitable recipients.

3.9 *The Wheel of Time* says:

3.10 > "Since it is practiced in secret, it is Secret Mantra,
> The Vajra Vehicle with great results."[174]

3.11 The unsuitable recipients in this context, from whom it is to be hidden, are the logicians—both outsiders and insiders—who fixate on mere words, cling to prejudices, and who are unable to fathom the extraordinary view and conduct described here.

3.12 As for *way*, it is said to have eight meanings in *Principles of Exegesis*:

3.13 > "The word *way* corresponds to truth,
> The path, dependent origination, knowledge,
> Insight, nirvāṇa,
> Means, and reasoning."

3.14 Here, however, it should be taken as referring to "means" and "the path."

3.15 As for the *tantras*, they are described in *A Commentary on the Difficult Points Called "Endowed with Wisdom"* as follows:

> "It is called *tantra* because it protects the mind from thoughts. They are called *the tantras* because they are collections of tantras or belong to its class."[175]

3.16 Accordingly, it is called *tantra* in Sanskrit because it is etymologically formed by eliding and joining the letters in *citan* and *traya*, thereby denoting "the mind" and "protection." Alternatively, according to the way it is known to the world, the word *tantra* has the meaning of an ongoing continuity. Indeed, *The Two-Volume Lexicon* gives it as *tantra prabandhākhyā*.[176] Its uncommon meaning is given in the *Guhyasamāja*, as follows:

3.17 > "*Tantra* is known as 'continuity.'
> It is of three types—
> It is divided in terms of basis,
> And likewise nature and unassailability.

3.18 > "Basis and nature are the cause,
> While unassailability is the result."[177]

3.19 Accordingly, it is called *tantra* because the tantras of cause, path, and result form a continuum.

3.20 As for the *Vajra Vehicle*, in the Mantra and Perfection Vehicles, the ultimate outcome of the teachings in which the effect and cause are taken into the path is the single taste. Since this is indivisible and indestructible, it is called a *vajra*. It is called a *vehicle* since it leads there by means of the practice of cause and effect as spontaneous.

3.21 As *The Great Commentary on "The Wheel of Time"* states:

> "*Vajra* refers to great indivisibility and indestructibility; being a *vehicle*, it is the Vajra Vehicle, for it is the unification of the way of mantra and the way of the perfections, resultant and causal."[178]

3.22 As for the *Vidyādhara Basket*, it is called *vidyādhara* because it contains the vidyā mantras of the well-gone ones. Indranāla's commentary to *The Union of All Buddhas*[179] explains that there is a sevenfold division, with vidyādharas of devoted conduct, application of actions, entering the levels, conduct on the path, ripening of the path, the great seal, and completed activities. By those means, extraordinary conduct of Secret Mantra consistent with this explanation is completed. It is so called, since, upon completion, awakening is granted.

3.23 As is quoted in *The Commentary to "The Union of All Buddhas"*:

3.24 > "The seven types of vidyādharas
> Purify the abode of natural wisdom,
> While its distinctions consistent with Secret Mantra
> Teach what accords with minds of devotion.

3.25 > "The undefiled liberation that is buddhahood
> Is attained through this completion."[180]

3.26 The commentary to *The Tantra of Subāhu's Questions* states, "*Vidyādhara Basket* refers to the basis of training for vidyādharas and that which is taught by the system of the river of the view."[181]

3.27 As for the *Resultant Vehicle*, it is called *resultant* because the resultant body and wisdom, renowned as great immutable bliss, are practiced here by taking them directly as the path.

3.28 *Entering the Meaning of Unexcelled Yoga Tantra* states the following:

> "It is called *resultant* because it engages with the bodies, enjoyments, abodes, and activities in a completely purified manner. This is because the result of all the paths is the accomplishment of the great seal. It is also called *vajra* because it is indestructible and brings about the unobstructed attainment of the true goal. It is also a *vehicle* since its path cultivates the mind swiftly and without hardship."[182]

3.29 One may ask, "In that case, are the statements about the meaning of these names made based on their content or that which expresses their content?"

3.30 Although the meaning of *Vidyādhara Basket* is primarily in terms of what expresses the content, the other names are primarily in terms of their content. Therefore, since these names and their meaning are necessarily rooted in the content, and since what presents the content is the expressive speech, it is not contradictory for tantric texts also to be designated as such in terms of their relation to their content.

3.31 In this context, the Vajra Vehicle cannot be put forth as its own independent category outside of the Great Vehicle, since the former is a subset of the later general category. And since, aside from a mere difference in the speed of its path relative to the Causal Vehicle, there is no difference in terms of their results. This is also because there is no fourth vehicle or fifth tenet system, as is stated in Vajragarbha's commentary:

3.32 > "There are the śrāvakas and the solitary buddhas,
> And here there is the third, the Great Vehicle.
> The Muni did not intend for there to be
> A fourth or fifth group of Buddhists."[183]

3.33 Also, in terms of the collection or basket, Abhayākaragupta and others hold that the Vidyādhara Basket is included within the Three Baskets. While this is indeed an excellent position, there is nevertheless no contradiction for the

Vidyādhara Basket to be set apart as distinct on account of it being of greater profundity and superior on numerous points, even though it conforms with all three baskets.

3.34 As Śraddhākara has said, “It is held that the Vehicle of Secret Mantra is not included in the Three Baskets. Rather, it is renowned as the Vidyādhara Basket and, as such, is another Bodhisattva Basket.”[184]

3.35 Buddhaguhya also stated that:

3.36 > “The Dharma taught by the supreme Buddha
> Lies in the four sections of
> Vinaya, Sūtras, Abhidharma, and Vidyādhara.”[185]

B. An Extensive Explanation of How the Vajra Vehicle Is Exalted over the Vehicle of the Perfections and Its Divisions

This second section has two subsections: (1) how the Vajra Vehicle is exalted over the Vehicle of the Perfections and (2) its divisions.

1. How the Vajra Vehicle Is Exalted Over the Vehicle of the Perfections

3.37 As for the first, the Vajra Vehicle should be understood as being exalted over the Vehicle of the Perfections in terms of four distinctions. These are described in *A Lamp for the Three Modes*, as follows:

3.38 > "Though the goal is identical, since it lacks confusion,
> And is rich in methods, devoid of hardships,
> And meant for those with sharp faculties,
> Treatises on mantra are supreme."[186]

3.39 As such, the difference between sūtra and mantra lies in their methods and conduct, whereas their views are identical. "How do you know this?" one may ask. Because, as stated in the phrase "the goal is identical," the resultant modes of sūtra and mantra are the same and their result is the view that realizes the natural state just as it is. Furthermore, the supreme view of the Vehicle of the Perfections is that of the Middle Way and, as it has been said:

3.40 > "If there were a view greater than the Middle Way,
> That view would contain conceptual elaborations."[187]

3.41 It is possible that some individuals might still have doubts and say, "These mere references to methods and forms of conduct do not establish a distinction between sūtra and mantra for the following reasons. Since the Vehicle of the Perfections also teaches unconfused wisdom, such as the manner of practicing generosity and so forth without the reification of the three spheres, it *lacks confusion* about methods. The Vehicle of the Perfections is equally *rich in methods* since it teaches numerous skillful means for realizing suchness such as the two truths, the three natures, the six perfections, the thirty-seven factors of

awakening, and so on. It is also *devoid of hardships*, since it also teaches the skillful means of partaking in desire, as it is said in such passages as the following:

3.42

> "Just as the filth from the towns, for example,
> Can act as fertilizer to nourish sugarcane fields,
> So too can the afflictions of the bodhisattvas
> Act as fertilizer to nourish the Victorious One's Dharma."[188]

3.43 Also, when it comes to the teachings on the profound view, free from the conceptual elaborations of the eight extremes and so forth, and on the infinite forms of conduct of signlessness based upon such a view, the sūtras make clear that these teachings are *aimed at individuals with extremely sharp faculties*. If one accepts this, the Vehicle of the Perfections is also equal in terms of the swiftness of its path, such as attaining awakening within seven days, and so forth.

3.44 Nevertheless, this critique does not apply for the following reasons. The lack of confusion and the richness of methods you have described are similar only in name and nothing more. What the scriptural passage from *A Lamp for the Three Modes* is referring to are the extraordinary practices of the two stages and the yoga of union, immutable discipline, unchanging coemergent bliss, and other such things. Even the mere mention of these terms cannot be found in the Vehicle of the Perfections. Conversely, the Vajra Vehicle contains a vast amount of profound and secret key points, and it is for this reason that it is posited that it *lacks confusion*, and so forth.

3.45 The same text continues:

3.46

> "Wise beings imbued with great compassion,
> Upon investigation, adopt the supreme methods.
> Disapproving of ordinary methods,

> They attain the immutable state."[189]

3.47 As described here, disapproving of ordinary methods that are unable to benefit many beings, such as giving away one's head, the supreme method instantaneously fulfills the hopes of all beings. Accomplishing the exalted result of the two stages and the samādhi of union, one swiftly attains the unchanging and immutable state, allowing for the arising of spontaneously accomplished activities. These are what is explained as lacking confusion about methods.

3.48
> "The teacher of beings has taught
> The fourfold division of all methods
> In a supreme manner to the wise ones,
> So that they may perfectly benefit all beings."[190]

3.49 Since limited methods such as austerities and vows are unable to compassionately guide every type of disciple, here, methods such as the six perfections are taken as the basis upon which many other methods tailored for each type of disciple are taught. These include, for instance, first gaining certainty in reflexive awareness and the supreme deity, at which point the type of person in whom desire is predominant meditates on the deity, mantra, mudrā, and samādhi of Rāgavajra. Since these teachings are taught according to the four classes of tantra, the Vajra Vehicle is rich in methods.

3.50
> "The Muni teaches the ultimate aim
> That definitively provides beings
> With whatever they happen to wish for,
> Helping them to gain the object of their desires."[191]

3.51 Rather than spending long periods of time subduing the most overt afflictions with other methods before familiarizing oneself with meditation on emptiness, and so on, methods that accord with the desires of beings are taught at the very

outset. The activity seal, for instance, may be taught for individuals with the dullest of sharp faculties who are greatly afflicted by lust, the samaya seal for those who are slightly less lustful, the wisdom seal for those who have merely not let go of the conceptual imprints of desire, and the great seal for those with the sharpest of sharp faculties who are inclined toward nondual suchness. Since the Vajra Vehicle contains such methods and practices suited to one's level of desire, it is said to be *devoid of hardships*, for conduct that accords with one's inclinations is easily accomplished.

3.52 *A Lamp for the Three Modes* states:

> "Here, practitioners of the suchness of the noble truths should be understood as having dull faculties because they do not understand the methods of suchness. Practitioners of the suchness of the perfections have middling faculties since they are mistaken about methods, whereas those who practice secret mantra have sharp faculties since they have no confusion whatsoever. Thus, those with sharp[192] faculties, possessing the tantric yogic discipline, will attain the perfectly pure state through unmistaken skillful means in that very thing that would lead others to lower realms."[193]

3.53 Since the Vehicle of Mantra possesses the approach discussed above, this explains that the Vehicle of Mantra is also *meant for those with sharp faculties*. It also establishes that those with the sharp faculties of the Vehicle of the Perfections are, in fact, of middling faculties by comparison, since they are not taught this yogic discipline of mantra. According to the Vehicle of the Perfections, attaining awakening in seven days means that from the eighth level onward it takes seven days. Even though from that point on it is swift, since it takes two incalculable eons to get to that point, traversing the path takes a long time.

3.54 The master Vajrapāṇi explains the quote above as follows:

> "Even though actual suchness is beyond divisions, the Vehicle of the Perfections entails confusion for it realizes suchness through scripture and reasoning. The Vajra Vehicle *lacks confusion* for, alongside scripture and reasoning, one gains direct experience of suchness through the pith instructions of the guru. Additionally, it is *devoid of hardships* for it takes great bliss as its path. The Vehicle[194] of the Perfections is about equanimity and is without such experience. It is called the Causal Vehicle because it takes the cause as the path, whereas the Resultant Vehicle is so called because it takes the result as its path and is thereby exalted."[195]

3.55 This explanation also implicitly makes clear how the Vajra Vehicle is *rich in methods* and *meant for those with sharp faculties*. Alternatively, the Vajra Vehicle is supreme in terms of eleven aspects of skillful means, as described by the master Jñānaśrī:

3.56 > "The Vehicle of Secret Mantra is distinguished from the Great Vehicle of the Perfections, and from the Middle Way as well, as follows. It is distinguished by the skillful means of unsurpassed basis, unsurpassed practice, unsurpassed wisdom, unsurpassed diligence, the ability to care for every disciple, the transformations of the afflictions, the swiftness of the transformations, the swiftness of deliverance, the relinquishment of the afflictions, unsurpassed intention, and unsurpassed conduct."[196]

3.57 These eleven aspects are, respectively, as follows: In this path, the basis is the immense texts, such as *The Hevajra Tantra in Five Hundred Thousand Lines*,[197] and others, that are either unknown in the Vehicle of the Perfections or are completely debased. Having attained samādhi, one has the ability to perform unseen beneficial actions. By relying on extraordinary samādhis, due to the cause, nature, and pure actions, the causes of wisdom are extremely swift. Under the influence of one's samayas, one automatically undertakes great dili-

gence. Even those who have committed acts of immediate retribution and so forth and been shunned from other vehicles are accepted as disciples. Instead of eliminating the afflictions, by making them into something extraordinary, they are removed through purifying them in the natural state. The afflictions are transformed through the completion stage, which relies on bliss in the nature of offerings. This is opposed to the statement that:

3.58 > "Empowerments from the thus-gone ones
> Are received upon reaching the levels."[198]

3.59 Instead, one is transformed by the thus-gone ones right now. Here, there is the attainment of the state of union in a single lifetime, and so forth. There are the three applications— visualization of deities, the body of the buddhas; the recitation of mantras, their speech; and the practice of the samādhis, their mind.

3.60 The *conduct of inferior capacity* is external austerities, vows, and so forth; *distracting conduct* is spiritual practices involving physical and verbal effort without stability in suchness, and so forth; and *reifying conduct* is concepts of purity and impurity, and so forth. The Vehicle of Secret Mantra is exalted for it contains three forms of conduct that counter these three. As Vajradhara taught in the following verse:

3.61 > "Adhering to painful ascetic practices and vows
> Will not lead one to accomplishment.
> Enjoying every form of sensual desire, however,
> Leads one swiftly to accomplishment."[199]

3.62 And:

3.63 > "If you seek supreme awakening,
> Avoid reading books
> And circumambulating stūpas.

> Doing so makes awakening difficult to attain."[200]

3.64 And:

3.65
> "Partake of the five meats and five nectars
> With abandon in order to let go of concepts."[201]

3.66 This is why the Vajra Vehicle is exalted.

3.67 One may ask, "Why are physical and verbal spiritual practices rejected in the context of the last of the skillful means?"

3.68 That was taught with beginners in mind, as the master Jñānaśrī has said in his *Eliminating the Two Extremes of the Vajra Vehicle*:

> "Since the principal cause for accomplishing the desired result of awakening is the mind, one should first subjugate the mind and not emphasize other activities. When those who have not gained mastery over their minds read books or perform other physical and verbal actions, their minds become distracted. That is why one should give up all activities, sit comfortably, and look carefully at the mind. Once one has gained[202] focus in the mind and the mastery that has eliminated coarse afflictions, external activities are not needed, or, rather, the mind meditating exclusively on emptiness is sufficient, without need for physical and verbal activities.

3.69 "*The Tantra of the Complete Enlightenment of Vairocana* states the following:

3.70
> " 'The sublime victors asserted that practicing with attributes[203]
> Leads to accomplishments with attributes,
> Whereas resting in the absence of attributes
> Also leads to accomplishment with attributes.

3.71 “ ‘Thus, on every occasion, one should rest
In the absence of attributes.’[204]

3.72 “Jñānagarbha has also explained this well in his *Commentary on “Distinguishing the Two Truths”*:

> “ ‘When the dharmadhātu is realized, all worldly and supramundane dharmas gather around one as if summoned, which is explained with the support of the passage “Knowledge of exhaustion also achieves what is contaminated.”[205] That is why meditating exclusively on emptiness or performing other activities only after having first gained complete mastery over the mind is the supreme method for eliminating one’s own afflictions and the pursuit of others’ benefit.’ ”[206]

3.73 The master Ḍombipā has also said:

3.74 “The distinctions of its recipient,
The teachings presented for that recipient,
Its treatises, path, and result
Are what make the Mantra Vehicle exalted.”[207]

3.75 As can be seen, there are many ways of distinguishing the Vajra Vehicle. It is in this context that some Tibetan scholars have claimed that both the view and result of the Vajra Vehicle are exalted by citing the above quote from Ḍombipā along with Master Jñānapāda’s statement, “There are three ways in which this vehicle is extraordinary. These three are, namely, the practitioner, the path, and the result,”[208] and Indrabhūti’s statement, “The distinction of the guru, the distinction of the recipient, the distinction of ritual, the distinction of actions, the distinction of samayas, the distinction of the view, and the distinction of conduct are the seven that make it exalted.”[209]

3.76 Although this way of explaining it does indeed contain many important and secret key points concerning the Vajra Vehicle, for the time being I have followed what is most widely recognized.

2. The Divisions of the Vajra Vehicle

3.77 The second section is on the divisions of the Vajra Vehicle. The master Atiśa has divided the Vajra Vehicle into seven sections, as follows:

> "*Tantras such as Action, Conduct, and so forth* refers to Action tantra, Conduct tantra, Kalpatantra, Ubhaya tantra, Yoga tantra, Mahāyoga tantra, and Unexcelled Yoga tantra."[210]

3.78 There are also divisions of five, as the master Vajrapāṇi has said:

> "Within the continuum of skillful means, there are five: Action tantra, Conduct tantra, Yoga tantra, Unexcelled Yoga tantra, and Highest Yoga tantra."[211]

3.79 And, as is stated in the *Illuminating the Intent of "The Brightening Lamp"*:

> "The great Vajradhara has taught five types of mantra treatises according to the divisions of intention, latent tendencies, disposition, and habitual propensities. These are Action, Conduct, Yoga, Unexcelled Yoga, and Yoginī tantras."[212]

3.80 Śāntipā has said:

> "The vehicle endowed with great profundity and vastness has five types, namely, Action, Conduct, Yoga, Mahāyoga, and Unexcelled Yoga."[213]

3.81 *The Ocean of Ḍākas Tantra* states:

3.82 > "Within the bhaga there are five tantras—
> From Action and so forth up to Unexcelled."[214]

3.83 There are also divisions of five that differ from the above, as stated in *The Smaller Śaṃvara Tantra*:

3.84
> "Sūtra, Action, and Conduct,
> Yoga, and the Ultimate Secret are the divisions
> That bring joy to beings,
> According to their diverse inclinations."[215]

3.85 *The Compendium of Vajra Wisdom* states:

> "Mahāyoga, Ubhaya, Conduct, Action, and Kalpa tantras…"[216]

3.86 There are also divisions of three. *Perceiving the Meaning of Name-Mantras* states:

> "Yoga, Conduct, and Action tantras…"[217]

3.87 *An Explanation of the Vajrāmṛta Tantra* states:

> "*All tantras* refers to Action tantras, Union tantras, Secret tantras, and so forth."[218]

3.88 There are also twofold divisions of inner and outer Secret Mantra, as described by Abhayākaragupta:

3.89
> "According to the inner and outer vajras of Vajradhara,
> …
> The ritual for maṇḍalas and so forth
> Have been elaborated by the Teacher into two classes of tantra."[219]

3.90 While there is a range of different classifications, according to what is most widely accepted these days, there is a fourfold division into Action, Conduct, Yoga, and Unexcelled Yoga tantras. The first is Action tantra, which primarily

teaches external conduct as described in the commentary *A Summary of the Hevajra Tantra*:

3.91

> "Action tantras predominately teach external conduct for those who have little capacity to meditate on suchness and, instead, prefer conduct with conceptual signs."[220]

3.92 *Illuminating the Intent of "The Bright Lamp"* also states:

> "The tantras that describe ablution, changing clothes three times per day, fasting, and other such practices are the Action tantras. These include *The Arising of Tārā*[221] and others."[222]

3.93 Abhayākaragupa has also said:

> "*Outer sublime Dharma* refers to Action tantras and so forth. Action tantras include *The Sovereign Tantra of the Three Vows*,[223] the *Bhūtaḍāmara Tantra*,[224] and others, which contain the practice of external actions such as ablution and observing silence, and which focus on statues and painted images as the deity."[225]

3.94 The second class of tantra, Conduct tantra, is described in *Illuminating the Intent of "The Brightening Lamp"* as follows:

> "Conduct tantras are primarily about yogic comportment, accomplishments, miraculous powers, and so forth."[226]

3.95 Hence, they are called Conduct tantras because they principally teach the conduct of yogic comportment. Alternatively, they are so called because the conduct is equally of external actions and inner samādhi, as is described in the commentary *A Summary of the Hevajra Tantra*:

3.96 > "Ubhaya or 'coupled' tantras overlap with parts of both Action and Yoga tantras. They are for those who are inclined to ritual actions yet have no wish to sacrifice the internal practice of the vast conduct of method and wisdom."[227]

3.97 Abhayākaragupta has also said, "Conduct tantras include those such as *The Tantra of the Complete Enlightenment of Vairocana*[228] and others."[229]

3.98 The third class of tantra, Yoga tantra, is described in *A Commentary on the Practice "Victory Over the Three Worlds"* as follows:

> "*Yoga* refers to the mind resting in equipoise. It is called *Yoga tantra* because, through the power of that equipoise, in order that bodhisattvas may accomplish their aims in the manner of Secret Mantra, it weaves and joins together mantras, mudrās, maṇḍalas, empowerments, and other various elements."[230]

3.99 It is called Yoga tantra because it primarily teaches the practices of inner yoga as described in *The Commentary on the Complete Enlightenment of Vairocana*, as follows:

> "In *The Compendium of Realities*,[231] and other such works, the inner practice is foremost—although it is not the case that external conduct is absent."[232]

3.100 Abhayākaragupta has also said, "*Secret* refers to Yoga tantra and so forth. The Yoga tantras include *The Compendium of Realities*,[233] and others." [234]

3.101 The fourth class of tantra, Unexcelled Yoga tantra, is described in *The Supplementary Tantra to the Guhyasamāja*, as follows:

3.102 > "The coming together of method and wisdom,
> Is explained to be *yoga*.

> In being essenceless, it is wisdom;
> As a mark of existence, it is method."[235]

3.103 *The Vajra Framework* states:

3.104 > "Ah, how wondrous, the ḍākinī tantra
> Is the most sublime among all tantras."[236]

3.105 Accordingly, it is excelled by none of the other tantras, since it teaches the extraordinary form of yoga in which there is the nonduality of method and wisdom. For this reason, it is called Unexcelled Yoga tantra.

3.106 Abhayākaragupta has also said:

> "Unexcelled Yoga tantra includes the *Guhyasamāja*,[237] and other such works." [238]

3.107 The reason for this fourfold system of categorization is given in the *Emergence from Sampuṭa*, as follows:

3.108 > "There are four types of tantra, in keeping with the four, laughing, gazing,
> Holding hands, and embracing, like a worm in wood."[239]

3.109 *The Ornament of the Vajra Essence* also states:

3.110 > "Understand that the division of tantra is in terms of embracing,
> And, likewise, in terms of holding hands, laughing, and gazing."[240]

3.111 As stated, the four forms of tantra which take desire as the path were taught to guide disciples with four forms of desire.

3.112 *The Vajra Framework* also states:

3.113 > “Action tantra is for lesser individuals,
> Whereas nonaction yoga is beyond that.
> Supreme yoga is for supreme beings,
> Whereas unexcelled yoga is beyond that.”[241]

3.114 How the tantras were taught in four classes according to the particular dispositions and faculties of the disciples is also explained as follows in *A Lamp for the Three Modes*:

3.115 > “First of all, due to habitual propensities from other lifetimes, some are unable to settle their minds without actions such as inhabiting secluded jungles, ablution, drawing maṇḍalas, pūjās, homa, austerities, and recitation. Action tantras were taught for them.

3.116 > “Those whose minds are fixated on suchness are also dependent on actions because, through the power of their faith, the actions the well-gone ones taught will lead them to the attainment of wisdom. Root tantras with limited branches of actions were taught for them.

3.117 > “Others are inclined solely toward meditating on nondual suchness and are not distracted by extensive branches of actions. Conduct tantras that emphasize yoga and incidentally expound minimal branches of actions were taught for them.

3.118 > “The obligation to perform actions was not taught to great beings, and those included in that type who, due to the habituation of other lifetimes, do not dualistically discriminate between any actions or any things. Instead, the Blessed One taught them the Mahāyoga tantras, the highest of all tantras, in which no actions or conduct are prohibited. In

> this way, in order to accomplish the aims of all beings, mantra treatises endowed with various methods were taught in four classes."

3.119 *Illuminating the Intent of "The Bright Lamp"* explains the four classes of tantra in terms of the affliction that is to be eliminated, as follows:

> "Action tantras were taught with people of high and middling levels of ignorance in mind. Conduct tantras were taught for those with lesser levels of ignorance. Yoga tantras were taught for people with lesser and middling levels of desire, anger, and ignorance. Unexcelled Yoga tantras were taught for the class of individuals with high levels of desire, anger, and ignorance. Yoginī tantras were taught for the class of beings with the highest of high levels of desire, anger, and ignorance."[242]

3.120 The classes of tantra are also connected with time, as Kāṇhapā has said:

3.121 > "According to the four divisions of time,
> The tantras are also of four types."[243]

3.122 *Stainless Light* also states the following:

> "Here, the tantras on laughing correspond to the juncture of the first period. The tantras on gazing correspond to the juncture of the third period. The tantras on caressing the breasts correspond to the juncture of the fifth period. The tantras on holding hands correspond to the juncture of the seventh period. These are the four types of tantras."[244]

3.123 Master Alaṃkakalaśa explains in his commentary on *The Garland of Vajras*,[245] cited below, how the four classes of tantra were taught to enjoin the four castes. Much could be said to elaborate on the many different Indian and Tibetan explanations on the classes of tantra, and how these correct explana-

tions are not in conflict with each other. Nevertheless, since this is not the place for producing commentaries and the like, I will stop here for the time being.

3.124 According to this fixed enumeration of the four classes of tantra, the internal divisions of the individual classes are as follows. Action tantra is comprised of six gates, given that it has the six tantras of the tathāgata family, lotus family, vajra family, wealth family, prosperity family, and worldly family. Each of these respectively contains the principal deity of the family, lord of the family, mother of the family, uṣṇīṣa of the family, wrathful male deities of the family, wrathful female deities of the family, male messengers of the family, female messengers of the family, male attendants of the family, and female attendants of the family. Action tantras can also be divided in terms of their primary content. If the Action tantras are further condensed, they can be subsumed into three families—the tathāgata family, the lotus family, and the vajra family.

3.125 *A Memorandum Unraveling the Meaning of "The Questions of Subāhu Tantra"* states:

3.126 > "The wealth family is contained in the lotus family. The prosperity family is contained in the vajra family. One should understand the worldly family as being predominantly spread throughout these two. Those not contained in these should be designated as *based on the tathāgata family* because they neither derive from the Thus-Gone One's blessing nor are they born into the family of the Well-Gone One, like bodhisattvas who inhabit the levels. This point is described in the tantra:

3.127 > " 'However, some things are circumstantial,
> And vary in dependence on the well-gone ones.'[246]

3.128 > "As such, it appears that those who were disciplined by the Buddha and adhere to their samayas are contained within the three families."[247]

3.129 As described here, a section of the worldly family is known as *variable* and is implicitly shown to belong[248] to the tathāgata family, since that is where it is taught. These can also be subsumed into secret mantras and vidyā mantras as is stated in *The Explanation of the Subsequent Meditative Absorption*:

3.130 > "Vidyā mantras have a female form, divine shape, utterances teaching skillful means, mudrās, and the rest. The inverse of these are the characteristics of secret mantras."[249]

3.131 Though it is correct to say that Conduct tantra shares, for the most part, the same divisions as Action tantra, there is nevertheless no contradiction in classifying them according to the five families.

3.132 When Yoga tantra is categorized according to families, since it has five root families, it also has five tantras. When it is divided in even greater detail, it has one hundred.

3.133 *The Tip of the Vajra* states:

3.134 > "How many families are described?
> One hundred families have been taught.
> When condensed, there are five—
> Buddha, vajra, ratna,
> Dharma, and karma."[250]

3.135 As for how the major families are categorized into these subcategories, each major family contains five minor families, which are further divided into the four categories of essence, mudrā, secret mantra, and vidyā mantra—totaling one hundred. If these are further condensed, they can be subsumed into skillful means tantras, which primarily teach bodhicitta, and wisdom tantras, which primarily teach the perfection of wisdom. These are also referred to by

the terms *father* and *mother* as explained in *A Commentary on the Perfection of Wisdom in One Hundred Fifty Lines*:

3.136 > "The mother from whom all the thus-gone ones arise is the perfection of wisdom, known as a supreme garland. When there is mention of a mother of the thus-gone ones, there must also be mention of a father of the thus-gone ones. Who, then, is that? The father is taught to be the profound mantra discourse known as the *Tattvasaṃgraha Tantra*."[251] [252]

3.137 Unexcelled Yoga tantra has twelve principal divisions. The Father tantras are described as follows in *The Supplementary Tantra to the Guhyasamāja*:

3.138 > "The mudrās of the vajra-holding[253] knowledge kings, and the others, [254]
> And of the six wheel-turning rulers…"[255]

3.139 These are explained as the six families—Akṣobhya, Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, and Amoghasiddhi, with Vajradhara as the sixth. Similarly, the Mother tantras are described with particular names in *The Appendix to the Discourse Tantra*, as follows:

3.140 > "Moreover, they are Vajrasattva,
> Vairocana, Vajrāditya,
> Padmanarteśvararāja,
> Aśvottama, and Heruka."[256]

3.141 As described here, the Mother tantras are divided into six categories, which combined make twelve divisions of Unexcelled Yoga tantra. If these are subdivided, there are many thousands, as described in *Emergence from Sampuṭa*:

3.142 > "Arisen within the five families,
> They are multiplied therein by the thousands.

> Still, their nature is but single—
> The unending, ultimate bliss.”[257]

3.143 Since all six families are pervaded by the Vajradhara family, the five families are divided into numerous subdivisions. The *Hevajra* also describes an infinite number of families, as follows:

3.144 > “Within each of the five families there are multitudes of tathāgatas,
> Equal in number to the grains of sand in ten Ganges Rivers.
> Within each of these great families there are many families,
> And within each of these families there are many thousands more families.

3.145 > “These too are big, containing hundreds of thousands of families,
> Which have tens of millions, which in turn become innumerable.
> Within each of these families there are further innumerable families—
> All of them arise from the family of the supreme joy.”[258]

3.146 This is also the case with the number of tantras, since they are divided from six families into thirty-six, and so forth. These are subsumed into the skillful means and wisdom, or Father and Mother tantras, in the following ways. There are also many other ways in which they can be exhaustively subsumed according to the profundity and vastness of their content or whether its path is the creation or completion stages, among others. This is described in many scriptural quotations, such as the following from Śraddhākaravarman:

3.147 “The division between method and wisdom tantras is based on distinctions in suchness, disciples, purity, common renown, and so forth. The tantras that primarily teach vast suchness are the skillful means tantras whereas those that primarily teach its profundity are the wisdom tantras. In skillful means tantras, maṇḍalas with multiple forms of male deities are taught to guide men and

those of own's own tradition, whereas the wisdom tantras teach maṇḍalas that, in order to guide women and tīrthika outsiders, have multiple female deities whose form is consistent with that. Those that teach deities that are the purity of the outer and inner aggregates, elements, and sense sources are the skillful means tantras. Those that teach deities that are the purity of the outer and inner channels and bodhicitta are the wisdom tantras. Those that teach the forms of the deities that are in agreement with the world are the skillful means tantras. Those that teach forms of the deity that are in opposition to the world are the wisdom tantras. Such is how they are designated.

3.148 > " 'Moreover, the divisions of wisdom
> Are asserted to delineate the two yogas.' "[259]

3.149 *Revealing the Secret Suchness* states:

3.150 > "These are the stages of creation and completion.
> The yoga is that of the creation
> Whereas the completion is said to be the yoginī."[260]

3.151 *Stainless Light* states:

> "Relatively, wherever the yoginīs move and the principal deity remains still are the yoginī[261] tantras. Wherever methods move and wisdom remains still are the skillful means tantras."[262]

3.152 *The Ḍākinī Net Vajra Framework* states:

3.153 > " 'Blessed One, why is the term *Yoginī tantra* used?'

3.154 > "The vajra holder gave the following answer:

3.155 > “ ‘The skillful means in the perfection of wisdom
> Are referred to as the *yoginī*.
> This is because, through the application of the great seal,
> They refer to that reality.

3.156 > “ ‘In the *Yoginī Vajra Framework*,
> This is therefore termed *Yoginī tantra*.
> The means of all the perfections
> Are accomplished through mere meditation.’ ”[263]

3.157 And:

3.158 > “In order to tame males
> The Yoga tantras are taught.
> In order to gather noble women
> The Yoginī tantras are taught.”[264]

3.159 These are some of the many distinctions given throughout the tantras and their commentaries.

3.160 These, moreover, are included within the category of nondual tantra, as it states in many scriptures, such as in *The Wheel of Time* root tantra, which states:

3.161 > “Yoga is not exclusively method
> Nor is it solely wisdom.
> The union of skillful means and wisdom
> Is what the Thus-Gone One taught as yoga.”[265]

3.162 *The Commentary of Vajragarbha* states:

3.163 “The tantras whose nature is wisdom and skillful means
Should be called Yoga tantras.
Yet yoga is not captured by the word *skillful means*,
Nor by the word *wisdom*.

3.164 “ ‘Yoga tantra’ refers to
The nondual tantras,[266] *Hevajra*,
Guhyasamāja, and so forth,
All of which have the nature of wisdom and skillful means.

3.165 “They are all Yoga tantras
for they bear the name of *wisdom* and *skillful means*.”[267]

3.166 *The Hevajra Tantra* states:

3.167 “Listen, for I will expound
This tantra, which is the essence of skillful means and wisdom.”[268]

3.168 *The Guhyasamāja Tantra* states:

3.169 “The union of skillful means and wisdom
Is explained to be *yoga*.
Wisdom is the aspect of nonexistence
Whereas method is the existent characteristic.”[269]

3.170 *The Smaller Śaṃvara Tantra* states:

3.171 “Listen to what is taught in the tantra—
The yoga endowed with mantra recitation, concentration, and so forth,
Along with knowledge of the rites,

> According to the union of wisdom and skillful means."[270]

3.172 *Stainless Light* states:

> "According to its essence, everything with the nature of wisdom and skillful means is the Yoga tantras."[271]

3.173 Alternatively, there are many other ways of categorizing the four classes of tantra in terms of their content and literary form, such as in terms of general and specific; root, explanatory, and supplementary tantras; or root, accessory, and concordant tantras, among others.

3.174 The lengths of the tantric texts that have been categorized are as follows. Although it has been explained above how, in general, it is not possible to quantify the extent of the Well-Gone One's purview, nevertheless, several tantras do provide measurements to fulfill particular needs. The Action tantras are described in *The Tantra of Subāhu's Questions*, where it describes the length of the tathāgata family tantras:

3.175 > "The Victor taught the Vidyādhara Basket
> Numbering thirty million, five hundred thousand."[272]

3.176 And the length of the vajra family tantras:

3.177 > "I taught seventy million mantras
> Along with their maṇḍalas and mudrās."[273]

3.178 And the length of the lotus family tantras:

3.179 > "Avalokiteśvara has likewise taught mantras
> Numbering three million, five hundred thousand."[274]

3.180 And the length of the prosperity family tantras:

3.181 > “Pañcika teaches twenty thousand;
> His wife explains half of that.”[275]

3.182 And the length of the wealth family tantras:

3.183 > “The lord of wealth teaches thirty thousand,
> While the father of Pūrṇa explains a hundred thousand.”[276]

3.184 And the length of the worldly family tantras:

3.185 > “Devas, asuras, and the rest, who have faith in the Victor,
> Have explained mantras infinite in number.”[277]

3.186 The commentary[278] explains these numbers as referring to the number of ślokas. The other tantras such as Conduct, and so forth, are far more extensive than the Action tantras. Given that the latter ones are progressively vaster than the former ones, I have not seen a general length of the other classes of tantra given in numbers of ślokas. The lengths are, however, given in terms of the titles of the tantras in *The Compendium of Vajra Wisdom Tantra*, as follows:

3.187 > “Mahāyoga tantras bear the name
> *Twelve thousand.*
> If they are expanded, they are beyond count.
> Ubhaya tantras are six thousand,
> Conduct tantras are eight thousand,
> And Action tantras are four thousand.”[279]

3.188 While these are rough estimates, *The Arising of Śaṃvara* gives a more precise calculation, albeit only for Unexcelled Yoga tantra:

3.189 “The extent of the Yoga tantras
Is determined as sixty million.
Likewise, the number of Yoginī tantras
Is one hundred sixty million.”[280]

3.190 The Archer, Saraha, has said:

“*Yoga tantras number sixty million* refers to the six types of yoga tantras. *The Yoginī tantras number one hundred and sixty million* refers to the sixteen types of Yoginī tantras.”[281]

3.191 *The Ornament of the Vajra Essence* states:

3.192 “There is the *Guhyasamāja*[282] in 1,000 verses;
The Garland of Vajras[283] in 300,000 verses,
The Prophecy of the Intent[284] in 4,000 verses;
The Questions of the Four Goddesses[285] in 170 verses;
The Supplementary Tantra[286] in 208 verses,
Which is the explanatory tantra;
The Great Samaya in 55 verses;[287]
The Fivefold Vajra Assembly[288] in 1,000 verses;
The Compendium[289] in 100,000 verses;
Sovereign Sameness[290] in 210 verses;
Secret Moon Drop[291] in 7,000 verses;
Subterranean Vajra[292] in 120 verses;
Vajra Crown[293] in 705 verses;
Wrathful Moon Drop[294] in 500,000 verses;
Vajra Victory[295] in 198 verses;[296]
Secret Equanimity[297] in 5,000 verses;
Secret Vajra Treasury[298] in 7,000 verses,
Secret Jewel Drop[299] in 1,000,000 verses;
Miraculous Power of Vairocana[300] in 1,100 verses;

Ornament for the Vajra Secret[301] in 1,000 verses;
Vajra Skull[302] in 200,100,
100,000, and 700,000 verses;
Ornament for the Samaya in 3,000 verses;
Hero Mañjuśrī in 100,000 verses;
Great Secret Gathering in 150 verses;
Jeweled Stalk in 907 verses;
Drop of Time in 180 verses;
And *The Goddess Śāstra* in 507 verses.

3.193 "I will give the correct instructions
In terms of their specific intentions,
Teaching this classification of
The tantras of mutual embrace."[303]

3.194 *The Abbreviated Wheel of Time Tantra* describes the purified form of the thirty-six consonants as the measure of the thirty-six Father tantras and the purified form of the thirty-six vowels as the measure of the thirty-six Mother tantras:

3.195 "*Ka* and the others of the thirty letters, together
With *ha*, *ya*, *ra*, *va*, *la*, and *kṣa*, are thirty-six,

3.196 "And modified by the vowel-forms,[304] they become
The 'flavor'-times-'flavor'[305] lords of the circle.

3.197 "A lone deity is with one vowel, in the case of two in which
A companion is included he is embraced by his wisdom consort,

3.198 "And the lord of the circle is also
Five with five, and nine with nine.

3.199 “Indeed, he is thirty-sixfold, and will be of the number of
The vowels, with thirteen, nine-and-‘direction,’[306] and so forth;

3.200 “The door guardians are *ya* and so forth;
And the entire rest of the group are the remaining vowels.

3.201 “The six fierce deities are *ha* and so forth, in the areas
Of their clans according to the vowels of wind and the rest.[307]

3.202 “Each will be a ‘flavor’-times-‘flavor’-fold[308]
Yoga and Yoginī tantra together with the letters…”[309]

3.203 The Father tantras are described in *The Bright Lamp*:

> “The glorious *Guhyasamāja* which is the root of all tantras ending in the thirty-three consonants is the root tantra. All other tantras are like limbs that branch off it.”[310]

3.204 The mother tantras are described in *The Vajra Framework*:

3.205 “*Ḍākinī Bliss*, *Ocean Bliss*, *Khasama*,[311]
Golden Rain, *Great Joy*, *Ghasmarī*,
Ecstatic Reveling, and *Secret Enchantment*
Are the eight tantras beneficial for the vajra ḍāka.[312]

3.206 “*All Buddhas*,[313] *Hevajra Maṇḍala*,
The Secret Treasury, *Source of Ambrosia*,
Cakrasaṃvāra, and *The Framework*[314]
Are known as the six Yoginī tantras.”[315]

3.207 One may ask, “Who was the teacher who turned these extremely vast Dharma wheels of Secret Mantra? At what time? For which disciples? In what way? And in which places?”

3.208 The nirmāṇakāya Teacher, the Fourth Guide, the Lord of the Śākyas turned these wheels in the manner of the sambhogakāya endowed with the seven branches of union[316] for some, in the manner of the supreme nirmāṇakāya for others, and in the manner of approval or blessings for yet others. Unceasingly throughout time, he turned these wheels with the echo of all sounds whose nature is beyond expression for gatherings of vidyādhara ḍākas and yoginīs, in the various appearances of places.

3.209 More specifically, the Action tantras were taught by the supreme nirmāṇakāya Teacher primarily to Mañjuśrī and others in Akaniṣṭha, although there are also various Action tantras that were delivered in the Thirty-Three, the human realm, and other locations, as it says in *The Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī*:

3.210 > “I have now arrived and remain here,
> Above the realm of the Pure Abode.
> I turned the wheel of the sacred mantra teachings
> That accord with the three vehicles
> And established beings in discipline.
> Further, I taught this king of manuals
> Throughout the entire world
> And am now giving it to Mañjughoṣa.”[317]

3.211 And *The Tantra of Subāhu’s Questions* is also explained to have been delivered in Aḍakavatī, and so on. The Action tantras were either directly spoken by the Teacher himself; or explained by Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, Vajrapāṇi, and others, through his power; or spoken by worldly devas; or they were taught through the Teacher’s blessings.

3.212 The Conduct tantras were also primarily taught in Great Akaniṣṭha, the Thirty-Three, and other places, and, for the most part, are similar to the Action tantras.

3.213 The Yoga tantras were primarily delivered when the Teacher, having awakened as the sambhogakāya in Akaniṣṭha, in the form of a minor sambhogakāya or nirmāṇakāya Vairocana went to the peak of Mount Meru and emanated as the great maṇḍala of thus-gone ones. They were also taught in unfixed locations such as Paranirmitavaśavartin and elsewhere.

3.214 The Unsurpassed Yoga tantras were taught in specific places that are identifiable on the relative level, such as Akaniṣṭha, Tuṣita, the peak of Meru, Oḍḍiyāna, the glorious Dhanyakaṭaka stūpa, and elsewhere. They were also taught in the ultimate abodes of the immutable dharmadhātu beyond all realms of conceptual marks, such as the bhaga of the vajra queen, the abode of great bliss, the source of phenomena, the palace of great liberation, and elsewhere. There, the Teacher arose in the form of Cakrasaṃvara, Hevajra, Kālacakra, and others to turn the wheel of Dharma at all times with the great mystery of the voice of the indestructible vajra nāda in the singular nature of great bliss indivisible from the audience of listeners. This is described in the following words:

3.215 > “I am the expounder, I am the Dharma,
> I am the listener with my own assembly.
> I am the teacher of the world, I am what is to be accomplished,
> I am the world, and I transcend the world.”[318]

IV. How the Sublime Dharma Teachings Were Communally Recited by Their Respective Redactors

This section contains (A) how the ordinary words of the Buddha were recited and (B) how the extraordinary words of the Buddha were recited.

A. How the Ordinary Words of the Buddha Were Recited

4.1 As for the first section, when the Teacher passed into nirvāṇa at Kuśinagarī, a group of eighteen thousand arhats also passed into nirvāṇa. Prior to that, Śāriputra and his following of eighty thousand had already passed into nirvāṇa, as had Maudgalyāyana and his following of seventy thousand prior to them. The devas mocked this, saying, "The monks with authority have passed away, leaving the Blessed One's Sūtras, Vinaya, and Abhidharma[319] uncollated."

4.2 Seeing this, Mahākāśyapa the elder instructed Pūrṇa the arhat to convene the saṅgha in Kuśinagarī. Pūrṇa rested in the final level of concentration and looked while immersed in the vision of wisdom. Rising from samādhi, he struck the gaṇḍī and all the monks who had been dwelling in different lands convened, with the exception of Gavāṃpati. Having been told to call Gavāṃpati, Pūrṇa used his miraculous powers to approach him in the Thirty-Three, where he had been resting in the absorption of cessation in a hermitage of śairīṣaka trees. Despite Pūrṇa's insistence, Gavāṃpati said:

4.3 > "I intended to go there,
> To where beings' protective beacon stayed.
> But now he has crossed to the far shore of quiescence,
> Those who are wise will go to other worlds.

4.4 > "Offer this alms bowl and
> These three great robes to the saṅgha.
> Without another birth, I will process to peace.
> Noble one, please forgive me for my intention."[320]

4.5 With that, he passed into nirvāṇa amid a display of miracles. His remains were consumed by naturally arisen fire, and four streams of water flowed from them, resounding with the following four stanzas:

4.6 > “Now that the times have turned wicked,
> Beings are left to rely on their own karma.
> The beacon for beings has gone out.
> Know that all beings will come to this.”

4.7 > “What has come together is destroyed in an instant.
> Birth and the rest entail suffering and affliction.
> Ordinary beings entertain the conceit of a self,
> But know, though, that there is no agent.”

4.8 > “The skilled, being ever-cautious, are conscientious,[321]
> Endeavoring to direct their minds to merit.
> Every creature will pass and perish,
> For the glory of life is fleeting.”

4.9 > “The best students bowed to the Sage
> And fulfilled their aims in full.
> With respect and devotion, Gavāṃpati
> Follows after the guru.”[322]

4.10 Pūrṇa then honored Gavāṃpati’s remains and gathered his Dharma robes and alms bowl. When he returned, he offered them to the saṅgha and said:

4.11 > “Upon hearing the Protector’s body was no more,
> He passed into peace by means of his meritorious karma.
> These are his alms bowl and robes.

> He asks that the saṅgha forgive his intention."[323]

4.12 Kāśyapa then told the monks:

4.13
> "He passed as noble beings do,
> For others do not go like that.
> Once their aim is complete,
> Then the mighty leave the assembled.

4.14
> "Do not consider doing
> As Gavāṃpati, the great mind of Śairīṣaka, did,
> Passing into peace through his meritorious karma.
> Act wisely among the assembly for the sake of other beings."[324]

4.15 Having established that rule, he appointed Ānanda as the water steward[325] and said, "Let us recite the Dharma in a secluded location near Magadha, the place where the Blessed One attained the dharmakāya."

4.16 While Ānanda and the other monks traveled there through the countryside, Mahākāśyapa took a direct route to Ajātaśatru. Previously, when the Blessed One was alive, Ajātaśatru was completely devoid of faith and would jump off his elephant or horse whenever he saw the Blessed One, but the Teacher's miraculous powers would prevent him from being injured. Therefore, the instant Ajātaśatru saw Mahākāśyapa there, remembering the Teacher, he suddenly jumped off his elephant.

4.17 Mahākāśyapa caught him with his miraculous powers and told him, "The Thus-Gone One is always resting in meditative equipoise, but the śrāvakas sometimes rest in meditative equipoise while other times they do not. Since they cannot access the vision of wisdom when not resting in meditative equipoise,

you should not jump from your elephant or other mounts henceforth." Thus the rule was established.

4.18 King Ajātaśatru provided the resources, and Mahākāśyapa and all but one of the five hundred monks convened in the Nyagrodha Cave in Magadha, where they pledged to spend the rainy-season retreat.

4.19 Previously, the Blessed One had shared half of his seat with Mahākāśyapa and entrusted the entirety of the teachings—and the Abhidharma Basket[326] most of all—to him and his following of four, including Rāhula and Ānanda, thereby empowering him as his representative. He had also specifically entrusted the Sūtra Basket to Ānanda and the Vinaya to Upāli. However, since all the other monks among the five hundred were arhats, and only Ānanda was still a stream enterer in training, not being free from desire, he was not fit to join the recitation of the Dharma.

4.20 Mahākāśyapa examined how to best train Ānanda and saw that he was to be trained through criticism.[327] Mahākāśyapa publicly pronounced Ānanda's eight faults, such as permitting women to go forth. At that time, the devas exclaimed, "Ah, amazing! The devas are flourishing whereas the asuras are dwindling. The teachings of the Blessed One are flourishing due to a great śrāvaka who resembles the likes of the Teacher himself proclaiming the eight faults of another great śrāvaka who resembles the likes of the Teacher himself."

4.21 Full of sorrow, Ānanda left the supreme gathering and entered a rainy-season-style retreat in the land of Vṛji. He gave teachings to a group of four including Vṛjiputra. Vṛjiputra became an arhat and used his superknowledges to gaze into his preceptor's mind. Seeing that he was still in training and not free from desire, he told him:

4.22 > "Descendant of Gautama, be not careless,
> Take to the deep forest and enter nirvāṇa.
> Focus your mind and meditate.

> Before long you will achieve a state of peace."[328]

4.23 By relying on these instructions and completely focusing, Ānanda became an arhat. Ānanda then returned to the Nyagrodha Cave to join the five hundred arhats.

4.24 It was then that Mahākāśyapa told the monks, "Since the monks of the future will be forgetful and weak, they won't be able to retain the Three Baskets without summarizing stanzas. Therefore, summarizing stanzas should be recited in the morning and the Three Baskets should be recited in the afternoon. Among the three baskets," he added, "the Sūtra Basket should be recited first."

4.25 "Let it be so," the monks said in agreement, requesting Mahākāśyapa himself to recite the Dharma. As he sat upon the lion throne, he encouraged Ānanda and, beginning an act by motion and resolution, instructed him to recite the Sūtra Basket. Mahākāśyapa then descended the throne. The five hundred arhats then laid their five hundred outer robes on top of the throne.

4.26 Ānanda the elder glanced in the four directions. He felt compassion for beings, engendered respect for the Dharma, and viewed his fellow practitioners of the holy life with high regard. He circled the lion throne clockwise, bowed his head, and paid homage to the monks in order of seniority. Reflecting on impermanence, he sat on the lion throne with a majestic presence. As he looked at the gathering, profound and unmoving, he thought to himself, "I have retained the sūtras of the Blessed One, even those spoken in the abodes of devas and nāgas, those spoken to me directly, and those that were transmitted by others. I will thus relate everything I have heard."

4.27 The devas became aware and this and said the following:

4.28 > "This noble, well established in the teachings,
> Ever revered by the three worlds,

> With nary a doubt
> Will proclaim the Dharma like a lion.

4.29 > “Ah! Listen reverently
> To his explanation of peace,
> The supreme essence of the essential
> For you who wish for bliss.”[329]

4.30 Kāśyapa then told Ānanda:

4.31 > “Venerable, explain the excellent features
> Of the Dharma spoken by the Victor,
> The sūtras spoken by our Teacher,
> Who wished to help the world.”[330]

4.32 Gazing toward the seat of awakening and recollecting the Buddha, Ānanda joined his palms. Projecting his voice, he began to recite, starting with, “Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was staying in the Deer Park at Ṛṣivadana, near Vārāṇasī.”

4.33 The devas and other beings who were not free from desire [pressed in,] hurting Ānanda and causing him to cry out:[331]

4.34 > “Alas! In these worlds,
> Impermanent without exception,
> This precious treasury’s
> Ocean of qualities has dried up.

4.35 > “I heard directly from him
> The Dharma, which brings the bliss of liberation.
> I applied my intelligence to what I heard

> And today I will proclaim that."[332]

4.36 Ānanda then recounted the three sūtras on how the Dharma wheel of the four truths was turned for the group of five.[333] That moment, referring to these three, the all-knowing Kauṇḍinya declared, "I was there in person to receive these Dharma discourses," and related how it happened.

4.37 All five hundred arhats, save for one, rose from their seats and sat so they could see Ānanda. "Alas!" they thought. "Even though we witnessed the Dharma being spoken, now, due to the force of impermanence, the Blessed One has gone and can only be heard." With that in mind, they said:

4.38
> "The conqueror of gods, humans, demigods, and nāgas has passed into peace.
> Why do you continue living without entering the state of peace?
> If you see for yourselves that the Omniscient One is absent among beings,
> What intelligent person would grasp and cling to life?"[334]

4.39 They then settled in the fourth concentration and viewed Ānanda's recitation of the sūtras with their clairvoyance.[335] Rising from their samādhis, they asked, "Venerable Ānanda, is this your Āgama?"

"Yes, venerable ones, this is my Āgama. Venerable ones, do your received scriptures resemble it?"

"Yes, venerable Ānanda, they are identical."

They thereby mutually verified their recitations.

4.40 Kāśyapa thought to himself, "I have recited the Blessed One's first discourse and the rest. Since none of the followers of the holy life have opposed it, this must be the Dharma. This must be the Vinaya. These must be the teachings of the Teacher." He knew it to be so.

4.41 Ānanda similarly recounted the villages, towns, kingdoms, or royal courts where the Blessed One's discourses were spoken. The other five hundred arhats, save for one, confirmed the sūtras. The discourses associated with the aggregates were gathered into the section on the aggregates,[336] those associated with the sense sources were rehearsed into the section on the sense sources,[337] and those associated with understanding dependent origination through the noble truths were gathered into the section on causation.[338] The many explanations of the śrāvakas were gathered as śrāvaka explanations, the many explanations of the Buddha were rehearsed as the Buddha explanations, and the thirty-seven factors of awakening were rehearsed as the branches of the path. Those associated with chanting were gathered in the section of chanting and those associated with stanzas were gathered into the Saṃyuktāgama. The long[339] sūtras were placed in the Dīrghāgama, the medium length sūtras in the Madhyamāgama, and those between one and ten phrases in the Ekottarikāgama.

4.42 Mahākāśyapa then asked Ānanda, "Is that the extent of your Āgamas?"

"That is everything. There is nothing beyond this." Having said that, Ānanda descended the lion throne.

4.43 Mahākāśyapa discussed with the saṅgha again in a similar manner, and Upāli was appointed as the one to recite the Vinaya. Upāli ascended the lion throne. As he sat there, Mahākāśyapa asked him, "Where did the Blessed One establish the first rule of training?"

"In Vārāṇasī."

4.44 "For whom?

"For the group of five monks."

4.45 "What was the reason?"

“He established a rule of training that said the lower robe should be worn in a circular fashion.”

4.46 The Vinaya was related in full in this question-and-answer format. The monks reviewed it with their superknowledges and confirmed it among themselves and so forth as before. The arhats codified the four defeats, the thirteen offenses in which a remnant is restored by the saṅgha, the two uncertain offenses, the thirty transgressions requiring forfeiture, the ninety simple transgressions, the four confessable offenses, the multiple rules of training, and the seven methods for settling disputes; pronouncements, supplementary pronouncements, prohibitions, and permissions; and an act of motion alone, an act whose second member is a motion, an act whose fourth member is a motion, and three vastu rites into their respective categories and separated them from one another.[340] Upāli then descended the throne.

4.47 Mahākāśyapa then reflected, “For the benefit of the beings of the future, I alone should rehearse the Abhidharma Basket, which will prevent the content of the Sūtras and Vinaya from falling into decline.”

4.48 Without being assigned, Mahākāśyapa sat upon the lion throne and said, “Venerable ones, I alone will recite the mātṛkā. The mātṛkā clarifies the characteristics of knowable things.” Mahākāśyapa continued to recite the four applications of mindfulness, the four right efforts, the four bases of miraculous power, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven limbs of awakening, the eightfold path of the noble ones, the four correct knowledges, the four results of śramaṇas, and so forth. The arhats reviewed this with their superknowledges and so on as before.

4.49 At that moment, the terrestrial yakṣas declared, “Ah, the five hundred arhats, including the noble Kāśyapa, have communally recited the Well-Gone One’s Three Baskets, causing the devas to flourish and the asuras to diminish.” That very instant, this resounded all the way up to Akaniṣṭha. The communal recita-

tion of the words of the Buddha became known as the rehearsal of the five hundred.

4.50 Upon the conclusion of the communal recitation, Mahākāśyapa said:

4.51
> "Oh, the one endowed with the ten powers' speech is immeasurable.
> By collecting these treatises on Dharma for the benefit of beings,
> May evil-minded agents of ignorance wherever they are go to waste,
> And may the wise remove their cataracts and become lamps."[341]

4.52 And:

4.53
> "I collected the Sage's sūtras
> And established the path[342] of Dharma.
> Passed from one to one,
> The Teacher's words will endure.

4.54
> "I have punished the shameless.
> I have embraced those with shame.
> It is time that I, who acted helpfully and virtuously,
> Enter nirvāṇā."[343]

4.55 Having said that, he set his mind on peace, entrusted the teachings to Ānanda, and made a prophecy about Śāṇavāśa. Mahākāśyapa went before the four great stūpas and made offerings to the eight stūpas of the Well-Gone One. He also made offerings to the Blessed One's incisors in the nāga realms and the Thirty-Three.

4.56 Then, in Rājagṛha, he called upon Ajātaśatru, but the king was asleep and the gatekeeper did not dare call on him. Mahākāśyapa instructed him to call the king after he woke up and left for Mount Kukkuṭapādaka. In the center of three hills, he wrapped his physical remains in the refuse-rags robe of the Teacher

and blessed them, so that his physical remains would not disintegrate until the arrival of Maitreya. He then passed into nirvāṇa amid a display of miracles.

4.57 The devas and other beings made offerings to his remains. They made the three hills converge and covered his remains with them. They wailed aloud as they paid homage and then departed.

4.58 When Ajātaśatru awoke and learned that the great elder had passed into nirvāṇa, he fainted. After coming back to, he went to Ānanda and took him to Mount Kukkuṭapādaka. When they arrived there, the yakṣas reopened the mountain so that the king could make offerings and pay homage to Mahākāśyapa's remains. Ajātaśatru wanted to light a funeral pyre but Ānanda stopped him, explaining the purpose of leaving the remains for when, in the future, Maitreya and his nine hundred ninety million śrāvakas would come here. They came out and the mountain covered Mahākāśyapa's remains once more. They then constructed a stūpa on top of it.

4.59 This was the well-known first communal recitation of the words of the Buddha, the main event when the baskets of the śrāvakas and the ordinary baskets were communally recited.

B. How the Extraordinary Words of the Buddha Were Recited

This section contains two subsections: (1) how the basket of the Causal Great Vehicle was recited and (2) how the basket of the Resultant Great Vehicle was recited.

1. How the Basket of the Causal Great Vehicle Was Recited

4.60 As for the first, the scholars of the noble land say that one million bodhisattvas gathered on the Vimalasambhava Mountain, south of the city of Rājagṛha in the land of Magadha. There, the Sūtras were recited by Vajrapāṇi, the Vinaya by Maitreya, and the Abhidharma by Mañjuśrī.

4.61 *The Blaze of Reasoning* states:

> "The Great Vehicle was taught by the Buddha because Samantabhadra, Mañjuśrī, the Lord of the Guhyakas, Maitreya, and others were the main ones to recite it. Our[344] main reciters could not have been śrāvakas, since the Great Vehicle teachings are not within their province."[345]

4.62 The Lord of the Guhyakas in particular is the reciter for all the scriptures of the thousand guides of the Fortunate Eon such as the sūtras of definitive meaning and so forth. As described above, *The Sūtra on the Mysteries and Secrets of the Realized Ones*[346] recounts how he made aspirations to uphold the secrets. Since *secrets* is established as meaning definitive scriptures, it makes sense that Vajrapāṇi, the holder of them, was supreme among the reciters.

2. How the Basket of the Resultant Great Vehicle Was Recited

4.63 The second subsection follows the four classes of tantra. The Action tantras were primarily recited in the Aḍakavatī on the northern side of Meru, on the periphery of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. There, Vajrapāṇi sat upon a throne of five hundred outer robes, which had been laid out by bodhisattvas such as Samantabhadra and Vajradharma, and recited the Action tantras by saying "Thus did I hear at one time…" and so forth.

4.64 *The Commentary on Uṣnīṣa Sitātapatrā* by Śūraṅgavarman states:

> "While in the Aḍakavatī palace, Vajrapāṇi acted as the communal reciter. A retinue of tenth-level bodhisattvas, including Samantabhadra, Vajradharma, and others, spread out their upper robes and beseeched him, saying:

4.65

> " 'Where did the Well-Gone One deliver
> The sūtras that turned the wheel of Dharma?
> Please answer thus, O vajra holder.
> Please answer thus, O wise son.'

4.66

> "After this, Vajrapāṇi introduced them with the opening formula 'Thus have I heard.' "[347]

4.67 Some also say that the following quote from *The Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī* describes the communal recitation of the Action tantras:

4.68

> "My foremost disciple,
> Who shelters under the pipal tree,
> Will call a meeting of the sages.

> All of them are free from desire and very dignified.

4.69

> “The entire doctrine with its twelve branches,
> Along with the Vinaya, will be recited there—
> The Dharma that I have taught
> And that which was formerly taught by other victors.

4.70

> “The doctrine will be presented
> By the foremost disciple as threefold,
> With its scriptures divided into
> Sūtra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma.

4.71

> “The wise Mahākāśyapa will release beings
> From the three fetters, dry up their three faults,
> Free them from the three sufferings,
> And establish them in the three vehicles.

4.72

> “The sagacious one will thus
> Further the cause of the buddhas’ teachings.”[348]

4.73 Conduct tantras were also recited by Vajrapāṇi, Samantabhadra, and others. This is described as follows in Śūraṅgavarman’s[349] *A Word Commentary on “The Manifest Complete Enlightenment of Vairocana”*:

> “This is because, for the reciters, Samantabhadra, Vajrapāṇi, and so forth, the realization was primary.”[350]

4.74 Among them, Vajrapāṇi was the foremost. *The Vajrapāṇi Empowerment Tantra* describes how the teacher empowered and entrusted the Lord of the Guhyakas with the teachings, as follows:

> “Son of good family, all the thus-gone ones have empowered you with the vajras in their hands into the great vajra maṇḍala of the great wheel-turning king of maṇḍalas, empowering you thus. They have given you the vajra made of many hundred sextillions of samādhis. They have blessed you with the vajra of the great wheel-turning king. They have revealed the vajra essence to you in its entirety. All the thus-gone ones have authorized you to work for the benefit of all the teachings and to protect them. Your great aspiration of the past has been fulfilled.”[351]

4.75 The Yoga tantras were communally recited by Vajradhara appearing in the form of Vajrapāṇi, the master of the ten levels, in Aḍakavatī, at the request of Samantabhadra and other bodhisattva great beings. The master Ānandagarbha’s Yoga tantra commentary states the following:

4.76 > “The reciter was Vajradhara residing in the Aḍakavatī palace as the master of the ten levels who uttered ‘Thus have I heard…’ and so on.”[352]

4.77 And:

> “The Vajra Bearer appearing in the form of the master of the ten levels dwelling in Aḍakavatī told Samantabhadra and other bodhisattva great beings, ‘When I recited the Yoga tantras in the royal palace of Aḍakavatī, we witnessed the world become completely filled with all the thus-gone ones, like a sesame pod filled with sesame seeds.’ ”[353]

4.78 The Unexcelled Yoga tantras were, in general, recited by the Lord of the Guhyakas. In the case of the Father tantras, the *Guhyasamāja*[354] states that the tantras were entrusted to Vajradharma. Candrakīrti and others assert Vajradharma to be Vajrapāṇi’s name when he was entrusted with the tantras and empowered. They also state that he was the reciter of the Unexcelled Yoga tantras. In the case of the mother tantras, Indrabhūti’s *Śaṃvara Commentary*,

translated by the great lotsāwa Rinsang, quotes the following from the *Yoginī Essence Tantra*:[355]

4.79

> "Later, the prophesied reciter
> In the great palace of Aḍakavatī,
> The supreme heaven northwest of the greatest mountain,
> Gathered great beings
> Numbering nine hundred sixty million.
> Upon supplicating the venerable Lord of the Guhyakas,
> He declared 'Thus have I heard' and
> Wrote all the tantras on golden paper with beryl ink."[356]

4.80 *The Appendix to the Discourse Tantra*[357] also agrees with the above quotation from *The Commentary on Uṣnīṣa Sitātapatrā*.[358]

4.81 *Clarifying the Meaning of the Words: An Explanation of the Śaṃvara Root Tantra* states, "The gathering of reciters were the lords of Aḍakavatī."[359]

4.82 *The Wisdom Tilaka Tantra* also states:

> " 'O Blessed One, who will explain this secret tantra for the fortunate beings of the future?' "The Blessed One answered, 'It will be explained by the glorious protector Vajrapāṇi.' "[360]

4.83 *The Torch of Suchness Tantra* states, "The goddess asked:

4.84

> " 'Who will this tantra of great secrets
> Be understood by? Who will explain it?'

4.85

> "The Blessed One answered, 'In the glorious vajra abode of Oḍḍiyāna to the north, King Indrabhūti will understand it, explain it, and clarify it for beings.'

4.86 > “ ‘O Blessed One,’ said the goddess, ‘please explain how many levels the great king Indrabhūti has mastered.’

4.87 > “The Blessed One responded, ‘The king Vajrapāṇi, whom I have described in *Wisdom Tilaka*,[361] *the Glorious King of Tantras*, is Indrabhūti himself. He is the nirmāṇakāya with mastery of the ten levels, the wisdom body with mastery of the fourteen levels.’ ”[362]

4.88 The reciter of *The Wheel of Time* root tantra, Sucandra, was also a nirmāṇakāya of Vajrapāṇi.

4.89 There are also different reciters who are mentioned specifically, as stated in *The Ocean of Ḍākas Tantra*:

4.90 > “The performers of the communal recitation and others
> Attained what came from me.
> The gathering of all the mātṛkās
> Held the communal recitation in the vajra abode.

4.91 > “They confirmed it among themselves,
> Supplicating and beseeching.
> They then rejoiced in the words
> Spoken by the Blessed One.”[363]

4.92 As stated here, yoginīs such as Vajravārāhī are said to have recited some mother tantras in a question-and-answer format in vajra abodes, Vajragarbha is said to have recited *The Two-Part Hevajra Root Tantra*,[364] and Vajrapāṇi is said to have recited the previously referenced root tantra. Beyond this, there are also various cases in which recited tantras were further redacted by other com-

munities of reciters at later times, such as *The Wheel of Time* root tantra[365] being further redacted by Mañjuśrīkīrti.

4.93 Even though, in the context of both sūtra and tantra, reciters are mentioned individually, this does not contradict the general claim of being recited by the Lord of the Guhyakas. Since the Lord of the Guhyakas is said to be the reciter of the Sūtras, which teach all three trainings, he therefore compiled the Vinaya and Abhidharma, which selectively teach one of the trainings. Furthermore, *The Wheel of Time* states that Vajrapāṇi is the singular coalescence of the vajra ears of all the well-gone ones.

4.94 The following passage from *The Vajrapāṇi Empowerment Tantra* shows that Samantabhadra and Vajrapāṇi are not separate and that the entirety of the teachings were entrusted to him:

4.95 > "The bodhisattva known as Samantabhadra, having made an aspiration in the world system Full Array of Flower Essence Ornaments that the past conduct of blessed Vairocana be taught, tamed the yakṣas, and took them under his care. The great leader of the yakṣas lived in a remote region in Aḍakavatī here in the Sahā World, in central Jambudvīpa…"[366]

4.96 And:

> "With the empowerment having been conferred, the bodhisattva Samantabhadra was entrusted with the teachings."[367]

4.97 *The Wisdom Tilaka Tantra* states that, in fact, Vajrapāṇi is the holder of the entirety of the Well-Gone One's teachings:

4.98 > "The great protector Vajrapāṇi,
> The master of all vajra holders,
> Is the cause of creation and destruction
> Of world systems beyond limit.

> Nothing arises from him,
> For he is the supreme, self-arisen lord."[368]

4.99 And:

> "To protect[369] every view,
> He acts in various forms.
> Sometimes he is the vajra holder.
> Sometimes he is in the form of a buddha,
> Sometimes in the form of a heruka,
> Sometimes a well-gone one,
> And sometimes in the form of a bodhisattva.
> Sometimes he is the listener,
> Sometimes he is the teacher, Blissful Lotus,
> Sometimes he appears to be reading,
> Sometimes he is the creator of tantras and treatises,
> And sometimes he is the reciter of them.
> What need is there to say more?
> The teacher of this is victorious Vajrapāṇi."[370]

4.100 Ultimately, Vajrapāṇi cannot be established as anyone other than the vajra mind of the Teacher himself, as stated in *The Attainment of the Glorious Secret Assembly*:

4.101 > "There exists no other
> Reciter of this.
> I alone proclaim it.
> The creator of the tantra is vajra mind."[371]

4.102 For this reason, it is not satisfactory for explanations on the opening formula of "Thus have I heard," and so forth, to unequivocally claim that these are nothing but words inserted by the community of reciters. This is because they are

said to express the complete meaning of the tantra from the perspective of those with sharpest faculties.

4.103 The full extent of all the tantras that have been recited by the communal reciters cannot be grasped by the great noble ones, much less by ordinary beings. Throughout oceans of buddhafields, oceans of tantras suited for oceans of fortunate disciples of secret mantra have appeared for their benefit. We should thus understand that any claim of "Such-and-such tantras exist in such-and-such places" is necessarily limited.

Concluding Verses

c.1 Born of the divine, nectar-like pools of the Well-Gone One's vast teachings,
Reciters such as Vajrapāṇi and others have, as appropriate for the porcelain cups of diverse aspirations,
Used the precious golden ladles of their vast and unfathomably deep intellects cultivated across eons
To distribute the elixir of lesser, middling, and supreme liberation for the gatherings of beings of good lineage here in this Sahā World.

c.2 Oh! The youthful splendor of the Muni's teachings,
Brimming with smiles of brilliant laughter,
Puts even the banners of Kāmadeva's[372]
arrogance to shame.

c.3 Like the silhouette of the moon reflected
In the many lakes of diverse motivations,
The doctrines of the son of the Śākyas
Have been thoroughly discerned by the wise.

c.4 Yet who could delight in how,
In this later time, these have become,
Like the roots of lotuses[373] in the ford of elephants, [374]
Maddened by the waters of verbiage.

c.5 Those who yearn to witness here the activities
Of the Victorious One's skillful means
Should emerge from the darkness of prejudice
And uncover the sun of well-spoken explanations.

c.6 *This has been the first well-spoken branch, "How the Dharma Wheel Was Turned and a History of How the Words of the Buddha Were Communally Recited." It*

belongs to "Vines of Jasmine Blossoming in the Youthful Moonlight to the Delight of the Wise: The Excellent History of How All the Source Texts of the Well-Gone One's Teachings Extant in the Language of the Land of Snows Were Put into Print."

Appendix

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How the Basket of the Resultant Great Vehicle Was Recited

Notes

1. The three imperial catalogs are the Denkarma (*ldan/lhan dkar ma*), Phangthangma (*'phangs thang ma*), and the no-longer-extant Chimpuma (*mchims phu ma*). According to Situ Panchen, the Phangthangma was the first of the two catalogs, while the Denkarma was produced some years later. However, there is disagreement on this issue among both traditional Tibetan scholars and modern historians, as discussed by Herrmann-Pfandt (2008). In her introductory survey of these two catalogs, Herrmann-Pfandt provides an overview of the various opinions and proposes that the most likely dating for the Phangthangma is the year 806 (pp. xxiv–xxvi), while for the Denkarma she suggests the year 812 (pp. xviii–xxii).

2. There is a caption for each of the figures in the vignette: (1) The liberator of beings of the five degenerations in this Sahā World—the crown of the Śākyas (*mi mjed zhing 'dir lnga bdo'i 'gro/ sgrol mdzad ston pa shAkya'i tog*); (2) Though you are the father of the guides, you maintain a youthful appearance, Mañjuśrīghoṣa (*'dren pa rnams kyi yab gyur kyang / gzhon nu'i tshul 'dzin 'jam dpal dbyangs*); (3) The founder of the five fields of learning in the cool land of Tibet—Sakya Paṇḍita (*bsil ldan ljongs su lnga rig gi/ srol 'byed sa skya paN+Di ta*); and (4) The illuminator of the Victor's teachings in the land of snow mountains—lord Butön (*gangs ri'i khrod 'dir rgyal bstan gyi/ gsal byed gcig pu bu ston rje*).

3. Chökyi Jungné (chos kyi 'byung gnas, 1968, folio 77a). In his "Notes sur le Kanjur de Derge," Yoshiro Imaeda suggests that this may have been the abbot of the Degé Gönchen, the main monastery of Degé, the site of the printing house where the Degé Kangyur and Tengyur were published. It is important to note, in this regard, that while the Degé kings held the title of "throne holder" of this monastery, the term used was *khri chen*, not *mkhan chen*.

4. Eimer 1985, p. 283.

5. This view is argued by Steinkellner (1989).

6. Indeed, the *ka* in Kangyur means *buddhavacana*.

7. While Kangyurs of predominantly Tshalpa lineage all included a limited section of Nyingma tantras, it is noteworthy that the Degé at first did not. Not only is the Nyingma tantra section absent, it is also not mentioned at all in the *Catalog* prepared for the first printing in 1733. And, even when more texts were added in a later printing in 1762, the Nyingma section was still left out. Indeed, it was only much later, at some point in the mid-eighteenth century—long after the death of both Situ Panchen and his successor—that these volumes were added, apparently at the instigation of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo (1820–92). It is unclear why it was omitted in such obvious contrast to other extant Kangyurs, and for so long, although it is worth noting that, in 1794, the Degé printery had published a full, twenty-four volume, Nyingma Gyübum collection.

8. *Saṃgīti* has been translated here as "communal recitation," instead of "council," since the latter term connotes debates about orthodoxy that were not always the focus of these early recitations of the Buddha's teachings.

9. *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6).

10. "Six ornaments" refers to Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, Dignāga, Āryadeva, Vasubandhu, and Dharmakīrti.

11. "Four great masters" refers to Aśvaghoṣa, Rāhulabhadra, Guṇaprabha, and Dharmapāla.

12. "Two marvelous ones" refers to Śāntideva and Candragomin.

13. Epithet used for translators.

14. This stanza employs a poetic device known as matching initial letters (*thog ma'i zung ldan gyi rgyan*), in which the first word of each line begins with an identical syllable, in this case *gang*.

15. The Third Well-Spoken Branch: An Exact Account of How All the Victorious One's Teachings Extant Today in the Land of Snow Mountains Were Put into Print, Toh 4568-3.

16. We have not been able to identify the source of this verse, although Tibetan sources often attribute it to the *Udānavarga* (Toh 326/4099).

17. It is unclear why the text states that there are nine meanings since, in keeping with other commentaries, Situ Panchen glosses this passage of Vasubandhu's *Principles of Exegesis* (*Vyākhyāyukti*) by giving ten examples.

18. *Vyākhyāyukti* (Toh 4061, folio 36.b).

19. Neither the precise meaning nor the Sanskrit of the term *'byung 'gyur* is completely clear to us.

20. All the examples above are from the *Vyākhyāyukti*, albeit not verbatim. Alternatively, the author may have been quoting from a different edition of the text than the one preserved in the Degé Kangyur.

21. *Amarakośa* (Toh 4299, folio 228.a). Although "drinking the moon" or *somapāna* can refer to the ritual drinking of soma, there is also a mythological context in which the moon is the soma or nectar drunk by the gods.

22. *Amarakośaṭīkākāmadhenu* (Toh 4300, folio 288.a).

23. *Abhidharmakośakārikā* (Toh 4089, folio 25.a).

24. *Ratnagotravibhāga* (Toh 4024, folio 55.a).

25. Which sūtra is being referred to here is unclear. In Tibetan commentarial literature, it is often attributed to the *Saṃdhinirmocana* (Toh 106) or *The Sūtra of the Devaputra Susthitamati's Questions* (*Susthitamatidevaputraparipṛcchāsūtra*, Toh 80), among other texts, yet it does not appear in any these works, at least as worded here.

26. *Ratnagotravibhāga* (Toh 4024, folio 72.b).

27. *Mūlasarvāstivādiśrāmaṇerakārikāvṛttiprabhāvatī* (Toh 4125, folio 161.b).

28. *Vyākhyāyukti* (Toh 4061, folio 43.b).

29. *Vyākhyāyukti* (Toh 4061, folio 118.a).

30. The sixty qualities are synonymous with the sixty branches of speech, explained below.

31. *Vyākhyāyukti* (Toh 4061, folio 115.a).

32. Following *Munimatālaṃkāra* in reading *gcad* for *dpyad* (Toh 3903, folio 282.a).

33. Instead of *gdul* (“restrained”), following Toh 3903, reading *gdung*, which most likely translates *paridāha.*

34. At least according to some commentators, the image here is referring to the way in which the subjects of the nāga lord do not go against his words (Toh 4029, folio 105.b).

35. Reading *rno ba dang ’jebs pa* (“sharp and sweet sounding”) from Toh 47 and Toh 3903 instead of *rgyun mi ’chad pa dang ’jig pa* (“unceasing and perishable”).

36. Adding “*smad pas*” based on Toh 3903, folio 283.a.

37. Alternatively, following Toh 4029 (folio 106.a), instead of “grammar,” *vyākaraṇa* can be read in the sense of prophesying the awakening of śrāvakas and bodhisattvas.

38. Reading *’jigs* (“fear”) from Toh 47 and Toh 3903 (folio 283.a) instead of *’jig* (“destruction”).

39. While translated as “smooth” in Tibetan, like the fourteenth of the sixty qualities, in light of how this attribute is described here, “friendly” may be more apt.

40. *Munimatālaṃkāra* (Toh 3903, folio 282.a).

41. This is not a direct quote from a particular sūtra, but rather a common expression found throughout sūtra literature, a classic example being *Dharmānusmṛti* (Toh 280). Fortunately, the Sanskrit of this passage is also at least partially preserved in texts such as the *Dharmaskhandha*, *Mahāvastu* and the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* (Toh 3940, folio 174.a).

42. This quote is from Asaṅga’s *Yogācārabhūmau paryāyasaṃgrahaṇī* (Toh 4041).

43. This is not a direct quote from a particular sūtra but rather a common expression found throughout sūtra literature, a classic example being the *Dharmānusmṛti* (Toh 280).

44. This passage is found in the *Avadānaśataka* (Toh 343, folio 241.b).

45. This quote is from Haribhadra’s *Āryāṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāvyākhyānābhisamayālaṃkārāloka* (Toh 3791).

46. *Mahākaruṇāpuṇḍarīka* (Toh 111, folio 125.b).

47. We have yet to identify the source of this quotation.

48. A note in *Butön’s Buddhism in India and Its Spread to Tibet* states that this specifically refers to Translator Tro (Stein & Zangpo 2013, p. 39).

49. The four major divisions in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, usually listed as the *Vinayavibhaṅga*, *Vinayavastu*, *Vinayakṣudrakavastu*, and the *Vinayottaragrantha*.

50. This passage is found in the *Sūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya*, commenting on Asaṅga’s *Sūtrālaṃkāra* (Toh 4020, folio 13.a). Reading *shes bya*, “to be known,” instead of *zhes bya*, based on the version found in Degé Tengyur (Toh 4026, folio 164.a), which is further corroborated by the Sanskrit (*jñeya*).

51. In an immediately adjacent passage, the *Sūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya* explains that "threefold" refers to the division into Sūtra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma, whereas "twofold" refers to the division into the śrāvaka and bodhisattva scriptures (Toh 4026, folio 164.a).

52. This quote is from Sthiramati's *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (Toh 4034, folio 154.b).

53. The point here, difficult to convey in Tibetan and English translation, is that the Sanskrit term *sūcana*, translated here as "thread," comes from the root *sūc*, which is meant to provide an etymological explanation of the term "sūtra."

54. *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, 11.3 (Toh 4020, folio 13.a).

55. *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, 11.4 (Toh 4020, folio 13.a).

56. *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, 11.3 (Toh 4020, folio 13.a).

57. *Sūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya* (Toh 4026, folio 164.a).

58. A fourfold list of what the intention was behind those statements of the Buddha that should not be taken literarily: intending sameness (*samatābhiprāya*, *mnyam pa nyid la dgongs pa*), intending another time (*kālāntarābhiprāya*, *dus gzhan la dgongs pa*), intending another meaning (*arthāntarābhiprāya*, *don gzhan la dgongs pa*), and intending another individual (*pudgalāntarābhiprāya*, *gang zag gzhan la dgongs pa*) (Toh 4026, folio 185.a).

59. A further fourfold list of what the Buddha intended: the allusive intention concerning entry into the teachings (*avatāraṇābhisaṃdhi*, *gzhugs pa la ldem por dgongs pa*), the allusive intention concerning characteristics (*lakṣaṇābhisaṃdhih*, *mtshan nyid la ldem por dgongs pa*), the allusive intention concerning antidotes (*pratipakṣābhisaṃdhi*, *gnyen po la ldem por dgongs pa*), and the allusive intention concerning interpretation (*pariṇāmanābhisaṃdhi*, *bsgyur ba la ldem por dgongs pa*) (Toh 4026, folio 184.b).

60. *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (Toh 4034, folio 157.a).

61. *Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (Toh 4034, folio 157.a).

62. *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, 11.1 (Toh 4020, folio 13.a).

63. *Sūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya* (Toh 4026, folio 164.a).

64. *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, 19.58–59 (Toh 4020, folio 35.a).

65. Reading *rtag* instead of *rtags*.

66. This is a standard canonical list appearing, with slightly different wording, in such texts as Daśabalaśrīmitra's *Saṃskṛtāsaṃskṛtaviniścaya*, quoted below (Toh 3897, folio 312.b).

67. *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (Toh 4049, folio 101.a).

68. *sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa* (Toh 4347, folio 142.b).

69. *Vyākhyāyukti* (Toh 4061, folio 82.b).

70. *Saṃskṛtāsaṃskṛtaviniścaya*, quoted below (Toh 3897, folio 312.a).

71. *sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa* (Toh 4347, folio 142.b).

72. For two stories about Viśvantara, please see *The Chapter on Medicines* (*Bhaiṣajyavastu*, Toh 1-6), 9.714–9.914.

73. *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (Toh 4049, folio 101.b).

74. *Unraveling the Intent* (*Saṃdhinirmocana*, Toh 106), 7.30. Although the wording of the translation here differs slightly from Toh 106, this does not reflect a difference in the source text.

75. *Amarakośa* (Toh 4299, folio 233.a).

76. Also sometimes attributed to the *Vyākyāyukti*; we have yet to identify the source for this oft-quoted verse.

77. The translation of this line reflects 5.19.b of the Tibetan translation, not the available Sanskrit (Johnston 1950, p. 117).

78. *Ratnagotravibhāga* 5.19 (Toh 4024, folio 72.b).

79. *Vyākhyāyukti* (Toh 4061, folio 123.a). Note that the wording of the quotation here differs slightly from the Degé edition of *Vyākhyāyukti.*

80. *Vyākhyāyukti* (Toh 4061, folio 123.a).

81. This refers to the *Mahāvibhāṣāśāstra*, which was not itself preserved in the Tengyur.

82. Toh 4021 and Toh 4022.

83. *Abhidharmakośa* 6.54 (Toh 4089, folio 20.b).

84. "Cutting off possession" is a technical term, harkening back to the Sarvāstivāda idea that one frees oneself from possessing (*prāpti*) the afflictions.

85. *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (Toh 4090, folio 30.b).

86. *Abhidharmakośa* 6.54 (Toh 4089, folio 20.b).

87. This paraphrase corresponds to the following passage of Yaśomitra's *Abhidharmakośasphuṭārthā* (Toh 4092, folio 209.b).

88. This is presumably a reference to Yaśomitra, author of the quotations being cited, who, according to some accounts, was a prince under the rule of King Harṣadeva (Mejor 1991, p. 39).

89. *Abhidharmakośasphuṭārthā* (Toh 4092, folio 212.a).

90. Although obscure in translation, Yaśomitra is making an etymological point here about the connection between *cakra* or "wheel" and the word *kramaṇa*, translated here loosely as "spiral upward," which also has the sense of progressing and approaching. *Abhidharmakośasphuṭārthā* (Toh 4092, folio 212.b).

91. *Prasphuṭapadā* (Toh 3796, folio 21.a).

92. *The Play in Full* (*Lalitavistara*, Toh 95), 26.103–26.113. The wording of our translation of this passage differs in several places from the version found in Toh 95.

93. *Abhidharmakośa* 1.25 (Toh 4089, folio 3.a).

94. *Prasphuṭapadā* (Toh 3796, folio 19.b).

95. *Abhidharmakośa* 6.54 (Toh 4089, folio 20.b).

96. Here the author is reproducing the quotation as it is found in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (Toh 4090, folio 30.a). Although we have yet to identity the sūtra, Śamathadeva attributes this to what he calls the "Śakra Sutra" (*brgya byin gyi mdo*) (*Abhidharmakośaṭīkopayikā*, Toh 4094, folio 28.a).

97. *sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa* (Toh 4347, folio 143.a).

98. *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (Toh 4090, folio 30.a).

99. *Abhidharmakośasphuṭārthā* (Toh 4092, folio 292.a).

100. *The Sūtra on the Questions of Dhāraṇīśvararāja* is also known as *The Teaching on the Great Compassion of the Tathāgata* (*Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśa*, Toh 147). See 2.505. The wording of our translation of this passage differs slightly from the version found in Toh 147.

101. For this analogy, see *The Teaching on the Great Compassion of the Tathāgata*, 2.504.

102. *Ratnagotravibhāga* 2.41 (Toh 4024, folio 64.a).

103. *Catuḥśatakaśāstra* (Toh 3846, folio 9.b). Note that "basis of all views," *lta gzhi kun*, is absent in the Degé recension, as well as in the Sanskrit of the verse extant in Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* (1913, p. 359).

104. This refers to Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva.

105. Though this stock phrase appears widely throughout Buddhist literature, one seminal instance can be found in *The Sūtra of the Wheel of Dharma*.

106. Although Yaśomitra also quotes this passage in his commentary, we have yet to identify the sūtra in question (Toh 4092, folio 211.a).

107. *The Play in Full* (*Lalitavistara*, Toh 95), 26.219–26.220.

108. The three gateways are explained below (2.92).

109. The eleven rounds of teaching are the teachings given in response to the questions of Śāriputra, Subhūti, Śakra, Subhūti, Maitreya, Subhūti, Śakra, Subhūti, Maitreya, Subhūti, and Ānanda, respectively

110. *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* 1.3–4 (Toh 3786, folio 2.a).

111. *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* 1.5–6 (Toh 3786, folio 2.a).

112. *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* 1.7–9 (Toh 3786, folio 2.a).

113. *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* 1.10–11 (Toh 3786, folio 2.a).

114. *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* 1.12–13 (Toh 3786, folio 2.b).

115. *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* 1.14–16a (Toh 3786, folio 2.b).

116. *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* 1.16 (Toh 3786, folio 2.b).

117. *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* 1.16 (Toh 3786, folio 2.b).

118. *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* 1.17 (Toh 3786, folio 2.b).

119. While versions of this phrase appear throughout the canon, we have yet to identify this particular passage.

120. This line was omitted: *drang srong chen po'i byin rlabs kyis*.

121. This quote is from "The Verses of the Assembly of Bodhisattvas," the nineteenth chapter of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka* (Toh 44–19).

122. *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* (Toh 44).

123. *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* (Toh 107).

124. *Ratnakūṭa Sūtra* (Toh 45).

125. *Ghanavyūha Sūtra* (Toh 110).

126. *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*. Note that there are several sūtras in the Kangyur with this name (Toh 119, 120, and 121).

127. *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* (Toh 107, folio 157.b).

128. *Abhidharmakośakārikā* 1.25 (Toh 4089, folio 3.a).

129. This refers to the *Dharmaskandha*, preserved in Chinese translation (Taishō 1537).

130. As discussed in n. 132, we have yet to identify *The Ānanda Sūtra*.

131. *Abhidharmakośasphuṭārthā* (Toh 4092, folio 48.a).

132. Either the *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya* (Toh 4053) or the *Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā* (Toh 4054).

133. *Prasphuṭapadā* (Toh 3796).

134. *Prasphuṭapadā* (Toh 3796, folio 19.b).

135. *thabs mkhas pa chen po sangs rgyas drin lan bsab pa'i mdo* (Toh 353, folio 145.b). Note that no Sanskrit title is available for this sūtra.

136. Since we have not been able to find the passages Vasubandhu quotes from these sūtras in the Kangyur, it is difficult to identify *The Ānanda Sūtra* and *The Uttara Sūtra* with any confidence. It is possible, however, that *The Uttara Sūtra* may have been a version of *The Uttara Sutta* preserved in the Pali canon.

137. Reading *des kyang smras pa* from *Principles of Exegesis* instead of *sems kyang smras pa* (*Vyākhyāyukti*, Toh 4061, folio 98.a).

138. The Pedurma misprints *des* as *nges*.

139. *Vyākhyāyukti* (Toh 4061, folio 98.a).

140. *Unraveling the Intent* (*Saṃdhinirmocana*, Toh 106), 7.30.

141. *Unraveling the Intent* (*Saṃdhinirmocana*, Toh 106), 7.30.

142. "Mother" refers to the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras, which are often personified as a female deity and worshiped as the "Mother of All Buddhas" (*sarvajinamātā*).

143. *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā* (Toh 12, 7.18– 7.20).

144. *Prajñāpāramitā-sañcayagāthā* (Toh 13, folio 9.b).

145. *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 13.7–8 (Toh 3824, folio 8.a).

146. "Proponents of awareness" (*rnam rig smra ba*) is another name for the Yogācāra school.

147. *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 24.14 (Toh 3824, folio 15.a).

148. *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 24.20 (Toh 3824, folio 14.b).

149. This appears in *The Teaching of Akṣayamati* (*Akṣayamatinirdeśa*, Toh 175), 1.240, albeit with minor variations in the Tibetan.

150. *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 24.8 (Toh 3824, folio 15.a).

151. *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 24.10 (Toh 3824, folio 15.a).

152. While we suspect the manuscript containing this clause may be corrupt, the Pedurma offers no alternative readings, nor is the Sanskrit extant.

153. *Akutobhayā* (Toh 3829, folio 89.a).

154. The term *spros bral* ("unelaborated") appears as *rdul bral* ("stainless") in other versions of the Buddha's famous first statement after awakening, such as in *The Play in Full* (*Lalitavistara*, Toh 95), 25.3.

155. *The Play in Full* (*Lalitavistara*, Toh 95), 25.3.

156. A version of this statement is found in the *Saṅghabhedavastu* chapter of the *Vinayavastu* (Toh 1–17, folio 39.a).

157. *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* (Toh 4048, folio 2.b).

158. "Heroic progress" (*sūraṃgama*, *dpa' bar 'gro ba*) refers to a particular kind of concentration.

159. *Prajñāpāramitāsañcayagāthā* (Toh 13, folio 3.b).

160. *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 15.7 (Toh 3824, folio 9.a).

161. *Ratnāvali* 4.90 (Toh 4158, folio 121.b). Stanzas 390 and 393 from Nāgārjuna's *Rājaparikathāratnāvali*.

162. *Ratnāvali* 4.93 (Toh 4158, folio 121.b).

163. *Yogācārabhūmivastu* (Toh 4035).

164. *Sūtrālaṃkāra* 1.11 (Toh 4020, folio 2.b).

165. *Tarkajvālā* (Toh 3856, folio 166.a).

166. Following Toh 3856 (folio 188.b), reading "division" (*tha dad*) instead of "all" (*thams cad*). In either case, context suggests that this is referring to the division of eighteen schools.

167. *Tarkajvālā* (Toh 3856, folio 188.a).

168. One of the eighteen nikāya schools.

169. *Śatapañcāśataka* 19 (Toh 1147, folio 110.b).

170. *Śatapañcāśataka* 59 (Toh 1147, folio 112.a). The version of this and the verse quoted above are from Bhāviveka's *Tarkajvālā*; however, they appear in a slightly different translation (Toh 3856, folio 180.a).

171. *Sūtrālaṃkāra* 1.7–10 (Toh 4020, folio 2.a).

172. *Nayatrayapradīpa* (Toh 3707, folio 26.a).

173. *rgyud phyi ma*, 70–71 (Toh 443, folio 151.b).

174. Though often quoted, we have yet to identify this passage.

175. *Śrībuddhakapālatantrasya Pañjikājñānavatī* (Toh 1652, folio 114.b). Note that this only includes the first half of this quotation.

176. *sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa* (Toh 4347, folio 154.a). This translates as "*tantra* is an appellation for continuity." The *dpe bsdur ma* edition misprints *prabandhākhyā* as *prabandhāvya*.

177. *rgyud phyi ma* (Toh 443, folio 150.b). In the Degé Kangyur, this quote is found in *The Supplementary Tantra to the Guhyasamāja* rather than the *Guhyasamāja* itself. Although *The Supplementary Tantra* circulated separately from the root tantra, it was later added as its final eighteenth chapter.

178. *Vimalaprabhā* (Toh 1347, folio 126.a).

179. *Śrīsarvabuddhasamayogaḍākinīmāyaśambaratantrārthaṭīkā* (Toh 1659, folio 276.a).

180. *Śrīsarvabuddhasamayogaḍākinīmāyaśambaratantrārthaṭīkā* (Toh 1659, folio 276.b).

181. *dpung bzangs kyis zhus pa'i rgyud kyi tshig gi don bshad pa'i brjed byang* (Toh 2672, folio 90.b). What is meant by "river of the view" (*lta ba'i klung*) is unclear and the phrase does not appear to occur elsewhere.

182. *Yogānuttaratantrārthāvatārasaṃgraha* (Toh 3713, folio 106.a).

183. *Hevajrapiṇḍārthaṭīkā* (Toh 1180, folio 3.a).

184. *Yogānuttaratantrārthāvatārasaṃgraha* (Toh 3713, folio 106.a).

185. *Āryavajravidāraṇānāmadhāraṇīṭīkāratnābhāsvarā* (Toh 2680, folio 176.b).

186. *Nayatrayapradīpa* (Toh 3707, folio 16.b).

187. Sakya Paṇḍita's *sdom pa gsum gyi rab tu dbye ba'i bstan bcos* (2007, p. 54).

188. *Kāśyapaparivartasūtra* (Toh 87, folio 130.a).

189. *Nayatrayapradīpa*, 17 (Toh 3707, folio 16.b).

190. *Nayatrayapradīpa*, 17 (Toh 3707, folio 17.b).

191. *Nayatrayapradīpa* (Toh 3707, folio 22.a).

192. "Sharp" (*rnon po*) is missing in Toh 3707, folio 23.b.

193. *Nayatrayapradīpa* (Toh 3707, folio 23.a).

194. Reading the addition of *theg pa* ("vehicle") from Toh 3716.

195. *Guruparamparakramopadeśa* (Toh 3716, folio 169.b).

196. *rdo rje theg pa'i mtha' gnyis sel ba* (Toh 3714, folio 115.b).

197. This refers to an original *Hevajra Tantra*, which, according to commentarial traditions, preceded the shorter extant *Hevajra Tantra*.

198. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (Toh 107, folio 191.b).

199. *Guhyasamāja Tantra* 7.3 (Toh 442, folio 100.a), as quoted in the *rdo rje theg pa'i mtha' gnyis sel ba* (Toh 3714, folio 118.b).

200. Here Situ Panchen is reproducing the verse as it is quoted in the *rdo rje theg pa'i mtha' gnyis sel ba* (Toh 3714, folio 118.b). We have not independently located this verse in its entirety although it is possibly an amalgam of the following lines of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*: line a in 17.46b (Toh 442, folio 142.b); bc in lines ab of 17.67 (Toh 442, folio 145.a), and d in 16.15d (Toh 442, folio 133.b).

201. Here again, Situ Panchen is reproducing a verse quoted in the *rdo rje theg pa'i mtha' gnyis sel ba* that we have not be able to identify independently (Toh 3714, folio 119.a). It is possible that the author of the *rdo rje theg pa'i mtha' gnyis sel ba*, Jñānaśrī, was quoting a passage that was either translated differently in the Kangyur, or simply not included.

202. Following Toh 3714 (folio 118.b) reading *thob*, as opposed to the *Catalog* in the Pedurma, which reads *thos*.

203. Following Buddhaguhya's commentary, which glosses this as a "concentration (*ting nge 'dzin*) with attributes," we have added "practicing" for the sake of clarity (Toh 2663, folio 30.a).

204. *Vairocanābhisambodhi Tantra* (Toh 494, folio 190.a), although reproduced here as part of the larger quotation from Toh 3714.

205. *Abhidharmakośa* 7.26 (Toh 4089, folio 22.b). Note that this quotation is nested inside another quotation, which is itself part of a larger quotation from *rdo rje theg pa'i mtha' gnyis sel ba*.

206. Although Jñānaśrī attributes this quote to Jñānagarbha, it appears to be from Śāntarakṣita's commentary (Toh 3883, folio 50.a). As was the case above, this nested quotation is reproduced as part of a larger quotation from *rdo rje theg pa'i mtha' gnyis sel ba* (Toh 3714, folio 118.b).

207. Nested quotation from *Sarvasamayasaṃgraha* (Toh 3725, folio 44.b).

208. Nested quotation from *Sarvasamayasaṃgraha* (Toh 3725, folio 44.b).

209. Nested quotation from *Sarvasamayasaṃgraha* (Toh 3725, folio 44.b).

210. *Bodhimārgapradīpapañjikā* (Toh 3948, folio 287.a).

211. *Guruparamparakramopadeśa* (Toh 3716, folio 170.a).

212. *Pradīpoddyotanābhisaṃdhiprakāśikā* (Toh 1793, folio 2.b).

213. *Triyānavyavasthāna* (Toh 3712, folio 103.b).

214. *Ḍākārṇavamahāyoginītantrarāja* (Toh 372, folio 198.a).

215. *Laghusaṃvara Tantra* (Toh 368, folio 246.b).

216. *Vajrajñānasamuccaya Tantra* (Toh 447, folio 284.b).

217. *Mantrārthāvalokinī* (Toh 2533, folio 27.b).

218. *Vajrāmṛtatantraṭīkā* (Toh 1650, folio 22.b).

219. *Vajrāvalināmamaṇḍalopāyikā* (Toh 3140, folio 1.b).

220. *Hevajranāmatantrārthasaṃgraha* (Toh 1193, folio 12.b).

221. This may refer to *Āryatārākurukullākalpa* (Toh 437).

222. *Pradīpoddyotanābhisaṃdhiprakāśikā* (Toh 1793, folio 2.b).

223. *Trisamayavyūharāja Tantra* (Toh 502).

224. *Bhūtaḍāmara Tantra* (Toh 747).

225. *Śrīsaṃputatantrarājaṭīkāmnāyamañjarī* (Toh 1198, folio 109.a).

226. *Pradīpoddyotanābhisaṃdhiprakāśikā* (Toh 1793, folio 2.b).

227. *Śrīhevajranāmatantrārthasaṃgraha* (Toh 1193, folio 12.b).

228. *Vairocanābhisambodhi* (Toh 494).

229. *Śrīsaṃputatantrarājaṭīkāmnāyamañjarī* (Toh 1198, folio 109.a).

230. *Āryatrailokyavijayanāmavṛitti* (Toh 2509, folio 216.b). This passage draws on the primary sense of the term “tantra” as a loom or warp of thread to explain how Yoga tantra weaves and joins together the various elements of tantric practice through the practice of samādhi.

231. *Tattvasaṃgraha* (Toh 479).

232. *rnam par snang mdzad mngon par byang chub pa’i rgyud chen po’i ’grel bshad* (Toh 2663, folio 65.b).

233. *Tattvasaṃgraha* (Toh 479).

234. *Śrīsaṃputatantrarājaṭīkāmnāyamañjarī* (Toh 1198, folio 109.a).

235. *rgyud phyi ma*, 33 (Toh 443, folio 150.a).

236. *Vajrapañjara* (Toh 419, folio 37.a).

237. *Guhyasamāja Tantra* (Toh 442).

238. *Śrīsaṃputatantrarājaṭīkāmnāyamañjarī* (Toh 1198, folio 109.a).

239. We have not identified this passage although it has parallels with the *Emergence from Sampuṭa* (*Sampuṭodbhava*, Toh 381, 6.143). In the context of 6.143, however, the *Rahasyadīpikā* (10.21–23) explains that the image of the worm is based on the idea of devouring the straw of the afflictions. See also Vīryavajra's commentary (Toh 1199, folio 69.b). Given the textual dissimilarities, however, we have translated this verse in terms of its rhetorical context within the *Catalog*.

240. *Śrīvajrahṛdayālaṃkāra Tantra* (Toh 451, folio 51.b).

241. *Vajrapañjara* (Toh 419, folio 54.b).

242. *Pradīpoddyotanābhisaṃdhiprakāśikā* (Toh 1793, folio 3.a).

243. *Guhyatattvaprakāśa* (Toh 1450, folio 349.b).

244. *Vimalaprabhānāmakālacakratantraṭīkā* (Toh 1347, folio 206.b).

245. *Śrīvajramālāmahāyogatantraṭīkāgaṃbhīrārthadīpikānāma* (Toh 1795).

246. *The Tantra of Subāhu's Questions* (*Subāhuparipṛcchātantra*, Toh 805), 10.12.

247. *Āryasubāhuparipṛcchānāmatantrapiṇḍārthavṛtti* (Toh 2673, folio 102.a).

248. Reading *gtogs* instead of *rtogs* from Kongtrul's *shes bya kun khyab mdzod* (1997, p. 379).

249. *Dhyānottarapaṭalaṭīkā* (Toh 2670, folio 4.a).

250. *Vajraśikharamahāguhyayoga Tantra* (Toh 480, folio 150.a).

251. *Āryaprajñāpāramitānayaśatapañcāśatikāṭīkā* (Toh 2647, folio 273.b).

252. *Tattvasaṃgraha* (Toh 479).

253. Although Matsunaga's Sanskrit edition reads *vajrāṇāṃ*, here we follow the Tibetan translation, which reads *rdo rje can.*

254. "And the others" (*ādi*) is found in Matsunaga's Sanskrit edition, although absent from the Tibetan translation.

255. *rgyud phyi ma*, 103 (Toh 443, folio 152.b).

256. *Abhidhānottara Tantra* (Toh 369, folio 307.a).

257. *Emergence from Sampuṭa* (*Sampuṭodbhava*, Toh 381), 6.182. This translation is based on the Sanskrit, whereas instead of "unending, ultimate bliss," the Tibetan (117a.7) has "supremely beneficial great bliss" (*bde chen mchog tu phan pa nyid*).

258. *Emergence from Sampuṭa* (*Sampuṭodbhava*, Toh 381), 6.184. Note that there are minor disparities between the quotation in the *Degé Kangyur Catalog* and the canonical version translated here. As seen above, Situ Panchen simply refers to this text as "*Hevajra*."

259. *Yogānuttaratantrārthāvatārasaṃgraha* (Toh 3713, folio 106.b). We have yet to identify the passage Śraddhākaravarman is quoting.

260. *Guhyatattvaprakāśa* (Toh 1450, folio 349.b).

261. Reading *rnal 'byor ma'i* ("yoginī") from Toh 845 instead of *rnal 'byor gyi* ("yoga").

262. *Vimalaprabhānāmakālacakratantraṭīkā* (Toh 1347, folio 187.a).

263. *Vajrapañjara* (Toh 419, folio 54.b).

264. *Vajrapañjara* (Toh 419, folio 54.b).

265. Found, with slight variation, in *Vimalaprabhānāmakālacakratantraṭīkā* (Toh 1347, folio 120.b).

266. Following Toh 1180, folio 9.b, reading *gnyis med pa'o* for *gnyis rtog med*.

267. *Hevajrapiṇḍārthaṭīkā* (Toh 1180, folio 9.b).

268. *Hevajra Tantra* (Toh 417, 1.1.7). The wording of our translation differs somewhat from the version found in Toh 417.

269. *rgyud phyi ma*, 33 (Toh 443, folio 150.a).

270. *Laghusaṃvara Tantra*, 1.5 (Toh 368, folio 213.b). Note that, in the canonical version, instead of *shes rab thabs kyi kun sbyor bzhin*, we find *bsrub bya srub byed yang dag sbyar*, which is also supported by the Sanskrit (*manthamanthānasamyoga*) (Pandey 2002).

271. With minor differences, this passage is found in the *Vimalaprabhānāmakālacakratantraṭīkā* (Toh 1347, folio 187.a).

272. *The Tantra of Subāhu's Questions* (*Subāhuparipṛcchātantra*, Toh 805), 10.1.

273. *The Tantra of Subāhu's Questions* (*Subāhuparipṛcchātantra*, Toh 805), 10.2.

274. *The Tantra of Subāhu's Questions* (*Subāhuparipṛcchātantra*, Toh 805), 10.4.

275. *The Tantra of Subāhu's Questions* (*Subāhuparipṛcchātantra*, Toh 805), 10.9.

276. *The Tantra of Subāhu's Questions* (*Subāhuparipṛcchātantra*, Toh 805), 10.9. *Notes on the Meaning* identifies this figure as Vaiśravaṇa.

277. *The Tantra of Subāhu's Questions* (*Subāhuparipṛcchātantra*, Toh 805), 10.10.

278. This is *A Memorandum Unraveling the Meaning of the Questions of Subāhu Tantra* (*Subāhuparipṛcchātantrapiṇḍārthavṛtti*, Toh 2673).

279. *Vajrajñānasamuccaya Tantra* (Toh 447, folio 284.b).

280. *Śaṃvarodayatantra* (Toh 373, folio 291.a).

281. *Śrībuddhakapālatantrasyapañjikājñānavatī* (Toh 1652, folio 107.a).

282. *Sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittarahasyaguhyasamājanāmamahākalparāja* (Toh 442).

283. *Vajramālābhidhānamahāyogatantrasarvatantrahṛdayarahasyavibhaṅga* (Toh 445).

284. *Saṃdhivyākaraṇa Tantra* (Toh 444).

285. *Caturdevīparipṛcchā* (Toh 446).

286. *rgyud phyi ma* (Toh 443).

287. *Mahāsamaya Tantra* (Toh 390).

288. Unidentified.

289. Unclear whether this refers to the *Vajrajñānasamuccayatantra* (Toh 447), the longer *Jñānavajrasamuccaya* (Toh 450), or some other tantra.

290. Likely the *Advayasamatāvijayākhyākalpa* (Toh 452).

291. *Candraguhyatilaka Tantra* (Toh 477).

292. Likely the *Vajrapāṇinīlāmbaradharavajrapātāla Tantra* (Toh 499).

293. Unidentified.

294. Unidentified.

295. Unidentified.

296. Reading *brgya dgu brgyad* ("198") for *brgya dgu brgya*.

297. Unidentified.

298. Unidentified. Reading *mdzod* ("treasury") from the Yongle, Peking, Narthang, and Stok editions of Toh 451 instead of *mdzes* ("beauty").

299. Likely the *Guhyamaṇitilaka Sūtra* (Toh 493).

300. Perhaps referring to the *Vairocanābhisambodhi* (Toh 494).

301. Perhaps referring to the *Guhyālaṃkāravyūhatantra* (Toh 492).

302. This and the remainder of the tantras listed have yet to be identified.

303. *Śrīvajrahṛdayālaṃkāra Tantra* (Toh 451, folio 51.a).

304. In this context, "vowel" also includes the semivowels *ya*, *ra*, *la*, and *va*, along with *ha*.

305. "Flavor" being a code word for six, this is to be understood as six times six—in other words, thirty-six.

306. "Direction" being a code word for the number ten, this is to be understood and nine plus ten—in other words, nineteen.

307. In other words, *ya* and so forth.

308. "Flavor" being a code word for six, this is to be understood as six times six—in other words, thirty-six.

309. The sentence continues in the next verse. *Paramādibuddhoddhritaśrīkālacakranāmatantrarāja*, 5.8–9 (Toh 1346, folio 81.a).

310. Although this appears to be a reference to the *Pradipoddyotana* (Toh 1785), we have not been able to locate the passage. Alongside Gö Khugpa Lhetsé's ('gos khug-pa lhas-btsa) translation, which is preserved in the Tengyur, there were supposedly two other translations, suggesting the possibility that the author could indirectly be drawing from an alternative translation.

311. *Khasama* (Toh 386).

312. Note that our translation of this line reflects the canonical version.

313. *Sarvabuddhasamayogaḍākinījālaśaṃvarottaratantra* (Toh 366).

314. *Vajrapañjara* (Toh 419).

315. *Vajrapañjara* (Toh 419, folio 54.b).

316. An allusion to Vajradhara.

317. *The Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī* (*Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, Toh 543), 53.54– 53.55.

318. *Hevajra Tantra* (Toh 417, 2.2.39). "I am the world, and I transcend the world" reflects the Tibetan (*'jig rten 'jig rten 'das pa dang*), although the Sanskrit here reads "I am the world, and I am the worldly" (*loko 'haṃ laukiko 'pyaham*).

319. While we have used "Abhidharma" here, the Tib. term *ma mo* translates *mātṛkā*, the systematized summaries that eventually developed into what is generally considered the Abhidharma.

320. *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6, folio 303.a).

321. Reading *dogs pa* ("cautious") from Toh 6 instead of *dgos pa* ("necessity").

322. *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6, folio 303.a).

323. *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6, folio 303.b).

324. *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6, folio 303.b).

325. As one of the closest disciples of the Buddha, Ānanda had heard nearly all of the Buddha's discourses but was unable to practice extensively due to his responsibilities as an attendant. He was thus appointed as the water steward so that he could still attend the first council in spite of his status of not having attained arhatship (Toh 6, folio 304.a).

326. As before, while we have used "Abhidharma," this refers specifically to *mātṛkā*.

327. Although the *Catalog* reads "weariness" (*skyo ba*), following Toh 6 we are reading this as "criticism" (*spyo ba*) (folio 306.a).

328. *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6, folio 309.b).

329. *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6, folio 311.a).

330. *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6, folio 311.a).

331. Our translation of this line reflects the grammar of this passage as it is found in Toh 6.

332. *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6, folio 311.b).

333. The first three sūtras spoken by the Buddha were the *Dharmacakrapravartanasūtra* (Toh 31), *Anātmalakṣaṇasūtra*, and **Ādityaparyāyasūtra*, the latter two of which were not translated into Tibetan as independent works.

334. *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6, folio 312.a).

335. Here “clairvoyance” translates *smon lam gyi shes pa* or **praṇidhijñāna*, not the more common *abhijñāna*.

336. This corresponds to the Khanda Vagga of the Saṃyutta Nikāya in the Pali canon.

337. This corresponds to the Salayatana Vagga of the Saṃyutta Nikāya in the Pali canon.

338. This corresponds to the Nidana Vagga of the Saṃyuta Nikāya in the Pali canon.

339. Reading *ring po* (“long”) from Toh 6 (folio 314.a) instead of *dang po* (“first”).

340. The first set in this list corresponds to the *Prātimokṣa Sūtra* (Toh 2), the second set to the *Vinayavibhaṅgas* for monks and nuns (Toh 3 and Toh 5), and the third set to the *Vinayavastu* (Toh 1). While this technically excludes the *Kṣudrakavastu* and *Uttaragrantha*, the final two divisions of the four divisions of the Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya, it nevertheless highlights the sections of the Vinaya shared by all nikāyas and thus reads uncontroversially for non-Mūlasarvāstivādin readers.

341. *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6, folio 316.b).

342. The Pedurma misprints *lam* (“path”) as *las* (“from”).

343. *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6, folio 316.b).

344. Following Toh 3856, reading *gi* for *gis*.

345. *Tarkajvālā* (Toh 3856, folio 166.a).

346. *Tathāgataguhya* (Toh 47).

347. *Sarvatathāgatoṣṇīṣabhavasitātapatrānāmavṛtti* (Toh 2689, folio 321.a).

348. *The Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī* (*Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, Toh 543), 53.294– 53.298.

349. The colophon of this work states that it was written by Buddhaguhya.

350. *rnam par snang mdzad mngon par rdzogs pa byang chub pa’i rgyud kyi chen po’i tshig ’grel zhes bya ba* (Toh 2663a, folio 264.a). This quote occurs within the larger context of a discussion as to why the *Vairocanābhisambodhi* does not begin with the classic opening formula *evaṃ mayā śrūtam* or “Thus have I heard.”

351. *Āryavajrapāṇyabhiṣekamahātantra* (Toh 496, folio 29.b).

352. *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgrahamahāyānābhisamayanāmatantravyākhyātattvālokakarīnāma* (Toh 2510, folio 27.b).

353. *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgrahamahāyānābhisamayanāmatantravyākhyātattvālokakarīnāma* (Toh 2510, folio 30.b).

354. *Sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittarahasyaguhyasamājanāmamahākalparāja* (Toh 442).

355. Although, in the Tengyur, there are many such quotations from a “*Yoginī Essence Tantra*” (*rnal ’byor ma snying po’i rgyud*), we have yet to identity these with any text in the Kangyur.

356. *Śrīcakrasaṃvaratantrarājaśambarasamuccayanāmavṛitti* (Toh 1413, folio 4.b).

357. *Mūlatantrahṛdayasaṃgrahābhidhānottaratantramūlamūlavṛitti* (Toh 1414).

358. *Sarvatathāgatoṣṇīṣabhavasitātapatrānāmavṛtti* (Toh 2689).

359. *dpal bde mchog gi rgya cher bshad pa tshig don rab tu gsal ba zhes bya ba* (Toh 1412, folio 356.a).

360. *Jñānatilakayoginītantra* (Toh 422, folio 134.b).

361. *Jñānatilakayoginītantra* (Toh 422).

362. *Tattvapradīpatantra* (Toh 423, folio 142.b).

363. *Ḍākarṇavamahāyoginītantrarāja* (Toh 372, folio 264.a).

364. *Hevajra Tantra* (Toh 417).

365. *Paramādibuddhoddhritaśrīkālacakranāmatantrarāja* (Toh 362).

366. *Vajrapāṇyabhiṣekamahātantra* (Toh 496, folio 17.b).

367. *Vajrapāṇyabhiṣekamahātantra* (Toh 496, folio 11.a). Immediately preceding this verse, the text reads "through empowering the Great Vajrapāṇi" (*lag na rdo rje dbang chen po bskur bas*).

368. *Jñānatilakayoginītantra* (Toh 422, folio 134.b).

369. Toh 422 (folio 134.b) reads "hide" (*bskung*) instead of "protect" (*bsrung*). Given that "views" (*dṛṣṭi*), particularly in the plural, is usually pejorative, the Degé canonical reading may be preferable.

370. *Jñānatilakayoginītantra* (Toh 422, folio 134.b).

371. This verse appears in the *Sakalatantrasambhavasaṃcodanīśrīguhyasiddhināma* (Toh 2217, folio 5.b).

372. We are using "Kāmadeva" even though the Tibetan (*yid srub*) is a translation of his epithet "Manmatha."

373. The force behind this image is that the roots of the lotuses are ruined by mad elephants.

374. The word *gnyis 'thung* (*dvipa*) is a poetic synonym for elephants. It literally means "double drinker" on account of the way elephants use both their trunks and their mouths to drink.

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dang po/ rgyal ba'i gsung rab gangs ri'i khrod du deng sang ji tsam snang ba par du bsgrubs pa'i byung ba dngos legs par bshad pa'I yal 'dab. Toh 4568-1, Degé Kangyur vol.103 (dkar chag, lakṣmī), folios 1.a–50.a.

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Glossary

Abhayākaragupta

’jigs med ’byung gnas sbas pa

འཇིགས་མེད་འབྱུང་གནས་སྦས་པ།

abhayākaragupta

A renowned Indian Buddhist monk and tantric master who was the author of over twelve works in the Tengyur.

absorption of cessation

’gog snyoms

འགོག་སྙོམས།

nirodhasamāpatti

A state of utter absorption in which all physical and mental activity ceases for the practitioner.

accessory tantra

’phros pa’i rgyud

འཕྲོས་པའི་རྒྱུད།

A classification of tantric literature.

act of motion alone

gsol rkyang gi las

གསོལ་རྒྱང་གི་ལས།

**muktikājñāptikarman*

A formal act of the saṅgha in which the motion suffices, with no need to formally state the act. Such an act is employed before a candidate for ordination is asked about private matters pertaining to his fitness for ordination.

act whose fourth member is a motion

gsol bzhi'i las

གསོལ་བཞིའི་ལས།

jñāpticaturthakarman

A formal act of the saṅgha that requires an initial motion followed by the statement of the proposed act, repeated three times. Such an act is required for several proceedings—among other occasions, to fully ordain someone or to officially threaten an intransigent monk.

act whose second member is a motion

gsol gnyis kyi las

གསོལ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་ལས།

jñāptidvitīyakarman

A formal act of the saṅgha that requires an initial motion followed by the statement of the proposed act. Such an act is needed to grant the vows of full ordination to a nun, among other occasions.

acts of immediate retribution

mtshams med

མཚམས་མེད།

Acts for which one will be reborn in hell immediately after death, without any intervening stages. The five are killing a worthy one (arhat), killing one's own father, killing one's own mother, causing a schism in the monastic community, and maliciously drawing blood from a thus-gone one.

Aḍakavatī

lcang lo can

ལྕང་ལོ་ཅན།

aḍakavatī

A city of yakṣas located on Mount Sumeru and ruled by Kubera.

aggregates

phung po

ཕུང་པོ།

skandha

The basic components out of which the world and the personal self are formed, usually listed as the following set of five: form, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness.

Airāvata

rab brtan

རབ་བརྟན།

airāvata

The king of the elephants.

Ajātaśatru

ma skyes dgra

མ་སྐྱེས་དགྲ།

ajātaśatru

The son of King Śreṇya Bimbisāra, who later becomes the king of Magadha.

Ajita

ma pham pa

མ་ཕམ་པ།

ajita

An epithet for Maitreya.

Akaniṣṭha

'og min

འོག་མིན།

akaniṣṭha

The eighth and highest level of the Realm of Form (*rūpadhātu*), the last of the five pure abodes (*śuddhāvāsa*); it is only accessible as the result of specific states of *dhyāna*. According to some texts this is where non-returners (*anāgāmin*) dwell in their last lives. In other texts it is the realm of the enjoyment body (*saṃbhogakāya*) and is a buddhafield associated with the Buddha Vairocana; it is accessible only to bodhisattvas on the tenth level.

Akṣobhya

mi bskyod pa

མི་བསྐྱོད་པ།

akṣobhya

Akṣobhya is the tathāgata at the head of the vajra family among the five families.

Alaṃkakalaśa

a lang+ka ka lA sha

ཨ་ལངྐ་ཀ་ལ་ཤ

alaṃkakalaśa

An Indian Buddhist master with several works in the Tengyur.

all-aspect omniscience

rnam kun mkhyen nyid, rnam mkhyen

རྣམ་ཀུན་མཁྱེན་ཉིད།, རྣམ་མཁྱེན།

sarvākārajñatā

The first of the eight progressive sections of clear realization.

all-ground

kun gzhi

ཀུན་གཞི།

ālaya

One of the eight consciousnesses, most widely known in the context of Yogācāra, which serves as the substratum that carries karmic potential from one moment to the next.

all-ground consciousness

kun gzhi'i rnam shes

ཀུན་གཞིའི་རྣམ་ཤེས།

ālayavijñāna

One of the eight consciousnesses, most widely known in the context of Yogācāra, which serves as the substratum that carries karmic potential from one moment to the next.

Amitābha

'od dpag med

འོད་དཔག་མེད།

amitābha

Amitābha is the tathāgata at the head of the lotus family among the five families.

Amoghasiddhi

don grub

དོན་གྲུབ།

amoghasiddhi

Amoghasiddhi is the tathāgata at the head of the karma family among the five families.

Ānanda

kun dga' bo

ཀུན་དགའ་བོ།

ānanda

A major śrāvaka disciple and personal attendant of the Buddha Śākyamuni during the last twenty-five years of his life. He was a cousin of the Buddha (according to the *Mahāvastu*, he was a son of Śuklodana, one of the brothers of King Śuddhodana, which means he was a brother of Devadatta; other sources say he was a son of Amṛtodana, another brother of King Śuddhodana, which means he would have been a brother of Aniruddha).
Ānanda, having always been in the Buddha's presence, is said to have memorized all the teachings he heard and is celebrated for having recited all the Buddha's teachings by memory at the first council of the Buddhist saṅgha, thus preserving the teachings after the Buddha's parinirvāṇa. The phrase "Thus did I hear at one time," found at the beginning of the sūtras, usually stands for his recitation of the teachings. He became a patriarch after the passing of Mahākāśyapa.

Ānandagarbha

kun dga' snying po

ཀུན་དགའ་སྙིང་པོ།

ānandagarbha

Ānandagarbha (fl. ca. 750) was an Indian paṇḍita closely associated with the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgrahatantra*.

Anavatapta

ma dros pa

མ་དྲོས་པ།

anavatapta

The nāga king who is said to dwell in Lake Manasarovar near Kailash.

anuṣṭubh

rjes bsngags

རྗེས་བསྔགས།

anuṣṭubh

The most common Sanskrit meter.

arhat

dgra bcom

དགྲ་བཅོམ།

arhat

According to Buddhist tradition, one who is worthy of worship (*pūjām arhati*), or one who has conquered the enemies, the mental afflictions (*kleśa-ari-hata-vat*), and reached liberation from the cycle of rebirth and suffering. It is the fourth and highest of the four fruits attainable by śrāvakas. Also used as an epithet of the Buddha.

Āryadeva

'phags pa lha

འཕགས་པ་ལྷ།

āryadeva

One of the great masters of Indian Buddhism and the main disciple of Nāgārjuna.

Āṣāḍhā

chu stod

ཆུ་སྟོད།

Āṣāḍhā

The period of time from the sixteenth day of the fifth lunar month to the fifteenth day of the sixth lunar month.

Asaṅga

thogs med

ཐོགས་མེད།

asaṅga

The Indian master traditionally considered the founder of the Yogācāra school of Buddhism.

asura

lha min

ལྷ་མིན།

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).

Aśvottama

dbang phyug rta mchog

དབང་ཕྱུག་རྟ་མཆོག

Aśvottama

One of the buddhas of the six buddha families.

atyaṣṭi

shin tu legs spyod

ཤིན་ཏུ་ལེགས་སྤྱོད།

atyaṣṭi

A Sanskrit meter consisting of seventeen syllables. There are a total of 131,072 possible variations on this meter depending on the weight or stress of the vowels used.

austerities

dka’ thub

དཀའ་ཐུབ།

tapas

Harsh, often extreme practices that can include deprivation and physical mortification. Such practices are typically rejected in the Buddhist “middle way.” The term can be used in a more positive sense to refer to the hardships of practice one must endure to reach liberation.

Avalokiteśvara

spyan ras gzigs

སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས།

avalokiteśvara

One of the “eight close sons of the Buddha,” he is also known as the bodhisattva who embodies compassion. In certain tantras, he is also the lord of the three families, where he embodies the compassion of the buddhas. In Tibet, he attained great significance as a special protector of Tibet, and in China, in female form, as Guanyin, the most important bodhisattva in all of East Asia.

basket

snod

སྣོད།

piṭaka

A figurative receptacle or repository of scripture.

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”).

bodhicitta

byang chub kyi sems

བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་སེམས།

bodhicitta

In the general Mahāyāna teachings the mind of awakening (bodhicitta) is the intention to attain the complete awakening of a perfect buddha for the sake of all beings. On the level of absolute truth, the mind of awakening is the realization of the awakened state itself.

Bodhisattva Basket

byang chub sems dpa'i sde snod

བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའི་སྡེ་སྣོད།

bodhisattvapiṭaka

The collection of the Mahāyāna teachings.

bodhisattva vow

byang sdom

བྱང་སྡོམ།

bodhisattvasaṃvara

The bodhisattva’s pledge to attain complete awakening for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Brahmā

tshangs pa

ཚངས་པ།

brahmā

A high-ranking deity presiding over a divine world; he is also considered to be the lord of the Sahā world (our universe). Though not considered a creator god in Buddhism, Brahmā occupies an important place as one of two gods (the other being Indra/Śakra) said to have first exhorted the Buddha Śākyamuni to teach the Dharma. The particular heavens found in the form realm over which Brahmā rules are often some of the most sought-after realms of higher rebirth in Buddhist literature. Since there are many universes or world systems, there are also multiple Brahmās presiding over them. His most frequent epithets are "Lord of the Sahā World" (*sahāṃpati*) and Great Brahmā (*mahābrahman*).

buddha nature

de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་སྙིང་པོ།

tathāgatagarbha

The innate potential for becoming a tathāgata.

buddhafield

zhing khams

ཞིང་ཁམས།

kṣetra

This term denotes the operational field of specific buddhas, spontaneously arising as a result of their altruistic aspirations.

Buddhaguhya

sangs rgyas gsang ba

སངས་རྒྱས་གསང་བ།

buddhaguhya

An acclaimed Indian Buddhist master who was active in Tibet ca. 760, during the early spread of Buddhism.

Cakrasaṃvara

’khor lo sdom pa

འཁོར་ལོ་སྡོམ་པ།

cakrasaṃvara

Cakrasaṃvara is a deity of the highest yoga tantras, especially popular among the new schools of Tibetan Buddhism.

Candrakīrti

zla ba grags pa

ཟླ་བ་གྲགས་པ།

candrakīrti

Although usually this refers to a Mādhyamika philosopher who wrote extensive commentaries on the works of Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva, in the context of discussing tantra this refers to an important commentator on the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*.

Candrakīrti

zla ba grags pa

ཟླ་བ་གྲགས་པ།

candrakīrti

Writing in the seventh century, Candrakīrti was a Mādhyamika philosopher who composed extensive commentaries on the works of Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva. In Tibet, he eventually came to be regarded as the preeminent authority on the Madhyamaka view.

categorized ultimate truth

rnam grangs pa’i don dam bden pa

རྣམ་གྲངས་པའི་དོན་དམ་བདེན་པ།

paryāyaparamārtha

The ultimate truth expressed in words, in contrast to the actual ultimate truth beyond language.

causal condition

rgyu'i rkyen

རྒྱུའི་རྐྱེན།

hetupratyaya

One of the four types of conditions (rkyen bzhi).

Causal Vehicle

rgyu'i theg pa

རྒྱུའི་ཐེག་པ།

Also called the "Vehicle of Characteristics," this refers to the Vehicle of the Perfections, and is often used in contrast to the Resultant Vehicle.

channels

rtsa

ཙཱ།

nāḍī

These are the veins of the subtle body through which vital winds flow, the most important of which are the central, left, and right.

clear realization of all aspects

rnam kun mngon rdzogs rtogs pa

རྣམ་ཀུན་མངོན་རྫོགས་རྟོགས་པ།

sarvākārābhisambodha

The fourth of the eight progressive sections of clear realization.

completion stage

rdzogs, rdzogs rim

རྫོགས།, རྫོགས་རིམ།

niṣpannakrama, sampannakrama, utpannakrama

The second of the two stages of tantric practice. Its practices are specific to individual tantric systems but typically include sexual yogas, the consumption of illicit substances, manipulation of the subtle energetic anatomy, or resting in an uncontrived state.

concentration

bsam gtan

བསམ་གཏན།

dhyāna

Dhyāna is defined as one-pointed abiding in an undistracted state of mind, free from afflicted mental states. Four states of *dhyāna* are identified as being conducive to birth within the form realm. In the context of the Mahāyāna, it is the fifth of the six perfections. It is commonly translated as “concentration,” “meditative concentration,” and so on.

conceptual elaborations

spros pa

སྤྲོས་པ།

This term denotes discursive or conceptual thought processes, sometimes also translated as “fabrication.” The absence of conceptual elaboration is what characterizes the realization of ultimate truth.

concordant phenomena

chos mthun

ཆོས་མཐུན།

sādharmya

Two discrete entities that, owing to their similar qualities, are to be taken as a single unit.

concordant tantra

cha mthun gyi rgyud

ཆ་མཐུན་གྱི་རྒྱུད།

A classification of tantric literature.

conditioned

’dus byas

འདུས་བྱས།

saṃskṛta

Refers to all phenomena produced by causes and conditions.

confessable offenses

sor bshags

སོར་བཤགས།

pratideśanīya

The least severe of five types of offenses a monk can incur. There are four other types of offenses that require personal confession and are expunged that way.

consonants

gsal byed

གསལ་བྱེད།

vyañjana

The thirty-four consonants of the Sanskrit alphabet. In a tantric context, they are ascribed with a range of symbolic meanings.

conventional

tha snyad

ཐ་སྙད།

vyavahāra

The relative truth.

creation stage

bskyed

བསྐྱེད།

utpattikrama

The first of the two stages of tantric practice focused on the visualized development of the tantric maṇḍala and its deities, and the recitation of mantra.

culminating clear realization

rtse mor phyin pa, rtse mo'i mngon rtogs

རྩེ་མོར་ཕྱིན་པ།, རྩེ་མོའི་མངོན་རྟོགས།

mūrdhābhisamaya

The fifth of the eight progressive sections of clear realization.

ḍāka

dpa' bo

དཔའ་བོ།

ḍāka

Covers a wide range of meanings—in general a male being, not necessarily benevolent, ranging from a powerful spirit to a retinue deity in a maṇḍala.

Daśabalaśrīmitra

stobs bcu dpal bshes gnyen

སྟོབས་བཅུ་དཔལ་བཤེས་གཉེན།

daśabalaśrīmitra

An India paṇḍita (ca. 1100–ca. 1170 CE).

Deer Park

ri dwags kyi nags

རི་དྭགས་ཀྱི་ནགས།

mṛgadāva

The forest, located outside of Varanasi, where the Buddha first taught the Dharma.

defeat

pham pa

ཕམ་པ།

pārājika

The most severe of the five types of offenses (ltung ba sde lnga) a monk can incur. It cannot be expunged and results in the monk's defrocking, unless the saṅgha sees fit to allow him to engage in training to rehabilitate.

defiled phenomena

zag bcas

ཟག་བཅས།

sāsrava

Phenomena that contribute to the defilements (kleśa, nyon mongs).

definitive meaning

nges don

ངེས་དོན།

nītārtha

The actual intent of the Buddha's teachings, in contrast to the "provisional meaning."

dependent

gzhan dbang

གཞན་དབང་།

paratantra

One of the three natures in Yogācāra philosophy.

dependent origination

rten cing ’brel par ’byung ba

རྟེན་ཅིང་འབྲེལ་བར་འབྱུང་བ།

pratītyasamutpāda

The principle of dependent origination asserts that nothing exists independently of other factors, the reason for this being that things and events come into existence only by dependence on the aggregation of causes and conditions. In general, the processes of cyclic existence, through which the external world and the beings within it revolve in a continuous cycle of suffering, propelled by the propensities of past actions and their interaction with afflicted mental states, originate dependent on the sequential unfolding of twelve links, commencing from fundamental ignorance and ending with birth, aging, and death. It is only through deliberate reversal of these twelve links that one can succeed in bringing the whole cycle to an end. See also “twelve links of dependent origination.”

desire realm

’dod pa’i khams

འདོད་པའི་ཁམས།

kāmadhātu

In Buddhist cosmology, this is our own realm, the lowest and most coarse of the three realms of saṃsāra. It is called this because beings here are characterized by their strong longing for and attachment to the pleasures of the senses. The desire realm includes hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, asuras, and the lowest six heavens of the gods—from the Heaven of the Four Great Kings (*cāturmahārājika*) up to the Heaven of Making Use of Others’ Emanations (*paranirmitavaśavartin*). Located above the desire realm is the form realm (*rūpadhātu*) and the formless realm (*ārūpyadhātu*).

deva

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.

Devadatta

lhas byin

ལྷས་བྱིན།

devadatta

A cousin of the Buddha Śākyamuni who broke with him and established his own community. He is portrayed as engendering evil schemes against the Buddha and even succeeding in wounding him. He is usually identified with wicked beings in accounts of previous lifetimes.

dhāraṇī mantra

gzungs sngags

གཟུངས་སྔགས།

dhāraṇīmantra

Use standard.

dharma constituent

chos kyi khams

ཆོས་ཀྱི་ཁམས།

dharmadhātu

One of the eighteen constituents, referring to mental phenomena.

Dharma discourse

chos kyi rnam grangs

ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་གྲངས།

dharmaparyāya

An explication of the Dharma.

Dharma of scripture

lung gi chos

ལུང་གི་ཆོས།

āgamadharma

One of the two types of Dharma. It comprises the Three Baskets.

dharma sense source

chos kyi skye mched

ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐྱེ་མཆེད།

dharmāyatana

Mental phenomena, the twelfth of the twelve sense sources.

dharmadhātu

chos kyi dbyings

ཆོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

dharmadhātu

Use standard.

dharmakāya

chos kyi sku

ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ།

dharmakāya

The eighth of the eight progressive sections of clear realization.

Dharmamitra

chos bshes, chos kyi bshes gnyen

ཆོས་བཤེས།, ཆོས་ཀྱི་བཤེས་གཉེན།

dharmamitra

An Indian scholar (fl. twelfth century) who was a student of Haribhadra.

Dīrghāgama

lung ring po

ལུང་རིང་པོ།

dīrghāgama

One of the Four Āgama into which the Mūlasarvāstivādin tradition grouped the Buddha's early sūtra discourses. It is known in the Pali tradition as the Dīgha Nikāya.

Ḍombipā

DoM bi ba

ཌོ་བི་བ།

ḍombipā

Also known as Ḍombi Heruka, he was one of the eighty-four mahāsiddhas and is often depicted riding a tiger and brandishing a snake. There are no less than seventeen treatises attributed to him in the Tengyur.

eight extremes

mtha’ brgyad

མཐའ་བརྒྱད།

Arising, cessation, eternalism, nihilism, going, coming, unity, and difference.

eight stūpas

mchod rten brgyad

མཆོད་རྟེན་བརྒྱད།

Stūpas representative of eight important events in the life of the Buddha.

eighteen schools

sde ba bco brgyad, sde pa bco brgyad

སྡེ་བ་བཅོ་བརྒྱད།, སྡེ་པ་བཅོ་བརྒྱད།

A traditional division of early Buddhism into eighteen schools prior to the rise of the Mahāyāna.

eightfold entrants and abiders

zhugs gnas brgyad

ཞུགས་གནས་བརྒྱད།

The eight entrants and abiders are as follows: entrants into becoming a stream enterer, abiders in the results of a stream enterer, entrants into becoming a once-returner, abiders in the results of a once-returner, entrants into becoming a non-returner, abiders in the results of a non-returner, entrants into becoming an arhat, and abiders in the results of an arhat.

eightfold path of the noble ones

’phags lam yan lag brgyad

འཕགས་ལམ་ཡན་ལག་བརྒྱད།

āryāṣṭāṅgamārga

The path leading to the accomplishment of a worthy one, consisting of right (1) view, (2) intention, (3) speech, (4) action, (5) livelihood, (6) effort, (7) mindfulness, and (8) absorption.

eighth level

sa brgyad pa

ས་བརྒྱད་པ།

aṣṭamī bhūmiḥ

The level or bhūmi known as Immovable (acāla).

Ekottarikāgama

gcig las ’phros pa’i lung

གཅིག་ལས་འཕྲོས་པའི་ལུང་།

ekottarikāgama

One of the Four Āgama into which the Mūlasarvāstivādin tradition grouped the Buddha’s early sūtra discourses. It is known in the Pali tradition as the Aṅguttara Nikāya.

elder

gnas brtan

གནས་བརྟན།

sthavira

The term is used to designate a senior monk.

element

khams

ཁམས།

dhātu

In the context of Buddhist philosophy, one way to describe experience in terms of eighteen elements (eye, form, and eye consciousness; ear, sound, and ear

consciousness; nose, smell, and nose consciousness; tongue, taste, and tongue consciousness; body, touch, and body consciousness; and mind, mental phenomena, and mind consciousness).
This also refers to the elements of the world, which can be enumerated as four, five, or six. The four elements are earth, water, fire, and air. A fifth, space, is often added, and the sixth is consciousness.

emptiness

stong pa nyid

སྟོང་པ་ཉིད།

śūnyatā

Emptiness denotes the ultimate nature of reality, the total absence of inherent existence and self-identity with respect to all phenomena. According to this view, all things and events are devoid of any independent, intrinsic reality that constitutes their essence. Nothing can be said to exist independent of the complex network of factors that gives rise to its origination, nor are phenomena independent of the cognitive processes and mental constructs that make up the conventional framework within which their identity and existence are posited. When all levels of conceptualization dissolve and when all forms of dichotomizing tendencies are quelled through deliberate meditative deconstruction of conceptual elaborations, the ultimate nature of reality will finally become manifest. It is the first of the three gateways to liberation.

etymology

nges tshig

དེས་ཚིག

nirukti

The lexical explanation of a given term.

existence

srid

སྲིད།

bhava

Refers to saṃsāra and is typically contrasted with peace.

explanatory tantra

nye bar bshad pa'i rgyud

ཉེ་བར་བཤད་པའི་རྒྱུད།

Though tantras in their own rite, explanatory tantras offer exegesis on root tantras.

fearlessness

mi 'jigs pa

མི་འཇིགས་པ།

vaiśāradya

Four unique types of confidence possessed by a buddha, these are enumerated in a variety of ways.

fields of knowledge

rig pa'i gnas

རིག་པའི་གནས།

vidyāsthāna

These refers in general to the five main fields of knowledge (craftsmanship, medicine, grammar, logic, and inner knowledge) and the five minor fields of knowledge (synonymics, astrology, dramaturgy, poetics, and composition).

final teachings

bka' tha ma

བཀའ་ཐ་མ།

The third of the three wheels or turnings.

five branches of melodious speech

dbyangs kyi yan lag lnga

དབྱངས་ཀྱི་ཡན་ལག་ལྔ།

(1) Deep like thunder (’brug sgra ltar zab pa); (2) sweet sounding and pleasing to the ear (snyan cing ’jebs la rnar snyan pa); (3) lovely and lovable (yid du ’ong zhing dga’ bar byed pa); (4) clear and instructive (rnam par gsal zhing rnam par rig par byed pa); and (5) worth hearing and not inconsistent (mnyan par ’os shing mi mthun pa med pa).

five certainties

nges pa lnga

དེས་ན་ལྔ།

The five certainties of the sambhogakāya are certainty with regard to place, dharma, retinue, time, and body.

five faculties

dbang po lnga

དབང་པོ་ལྔ།

pañcendriya

The faculties of faith, perseverance, mindfulness, meditative stabilization, and wisdom. They are the same as the five powers, only at a lesser stage of development.

five families

rigs lnga

རིགས་ལྔ།

pañcakula

Refers to the five Buddha families of Akṣobhya, Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, and Amoghasiddhi.

five fields of knowledge

rig pa’i gnas lnga

རིག་པའི་གནས་ལྔ།

pañcavidyāsthāna

These are traditionally listed as the five main branches of knowledge: crafts, medicine, grammar, logic, and philosophy.

five functions

bya ba lnga

བྱ་བ་ལྔ།

The five functions performed by melodious speech endowed with the five qualities are being audible, nondistracting, liberating, conducive to understanding, and ripening.

five meats

sha lnga

ཤ་ལྔ།

Tantric substances used for their transformative powers when understood from the perspective of equality.

five nectars

bdud rtsi lnga

བདུད་རྩི་ལྔ།

pañcāmṛta

Tantric substances used for their transformative powers when understood from the perspective of equality.

five powers

stobs lnga

སྟོབས་ལྔ།

pañcabala

Faith, perseverance, mindfulness, meditative stabilization, and wisdom. These are among the thirty-seven dharmas on the side of awakening. Although the same as the five faculties, they are termed “powers” due to their greater strength.

five qualities

yon tan lnga

ཡོན་ཏན་ལྔ།

The five qualities of melodious speech are vastness, sweetness, logical meaning, being easily grasped, and varied according to preference.

five types of offenses

ltung ba sde lnga

ལྟུང་བ་སྡེ་ལྔ།

pañcāpattinīkāya

The five types of offenses that could be incurred by a monastic refer to defeats, saṅgha remnants, transgressions, confessable offenses, and misdeeds.

form body

gzugs kyi sku

གཟུགས་ཀྱི་སྐུ།

rūpakāya

Use standard.

form realm

gzugs khams

གཟུགས་ཁམས།

rūpadhātu

One of the three realms of saṃsāra in Buddhist cosmology, it is characterized by subtle materiality. Here beings, though subtly embodied, are not driven primarily by the urge for sense gratification. It consists of seventeen heavens

structured according to the four concentrations of the form realm (*rūpāvacaradhyāna*), the highest five of which are collectively called “pure abodes” (*śuddhāvāsa*). The form realm is located above the desire realm (*kāmadhātu*) and below the formless realm (*ārūpyadhātu*).

formless realm

gzugs med pa’i khams

གཟུགས་མེད་པའི་ཁམས།

arūpadhātu

The highest and subtlest of the three realms of saṃsāra in Buddhist cosmology. Here beings are no longer bound by materiality and enjoy a purely mental state of absorption. It is divided in four levels according to each of the four formless concentrations (*ārūpyāvacaradhyāna*), namely, the Sphere of Infinite Space (*ākāśānantyāyatana*), the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness (*vijñānānantyāyatana*), the Sphere of Nothingness (*akiñcanyāyatana*), and the Sphere of Neither Perception nor Non-perception (*naivasaṃjñā-nāsaṃjñāyatana*). The formless realm is located above the other two realms of saṃsāra, the form realm (*rūpadhātu*) and the desire realm (*kāmadhātu*).

Fortunate Eon

bskal bzang

བསྐལ་བཟང་།

bhadrakalpa

The current time period, thus named because a thousand buddhas will manifest during this eon.

four applications of mindfulness

dran pa nye bar gzhag pa bzhi

དྲན་པ་ཉེ་བར་གཞག་པ་བཞི།

catuḥsmṛtyupasthāna

A fundamental practice of Buddhist meditation: the close application of mindfulness to the body, feelings, mind, and phenomena.

four bases of miraculous power

rdzu ’phrul gyi rkang pa bzhi

རྫུ་འཕྲུལ་གྱི་རྐང་པ་བཞི།

caturṛddhipāda

Determination, discernment, diligence, and concentration.

four branches of discernment

nges ’byed yan lag rnam bzhi

ངེས་འབྱེད་ཡན་ལག་རྣམ་བཞི།

The third of the ten factors that illustrate all-aspect omniscience.

four castes

mi rigs bzhi

མི་རིགས་བཞི།

caturvarṇa, cāturvarṇya

The four main castes of Indic society: brahmin, kṣatriya, vaiśya, and śūdra.

four classes of tantra

rgyud sde bzhi

རྒྱུད་སྡེ་བཞི།

This fourfold division eventually became the predominant schema for organizing the tantras. The four are as follows: Action tantras (kriyātantra), Conduct tantras (caryātantra), Yoga tantras (yogatantra), and Unexcelled Yoga tantras (anuttarayoga/yoganiruttaratantra).

four correct knowledges

so so yang dag par rig pa bzhi

སོ་སོ་ཡང་དག་པར་རིག་པ་བཞི།

catuḥpratisaṃvid

Genuine discrimination with respect to phenomena, meaning, language, and eloquence.

four dharmas of śramaṇas

dge sbyong gi chos bzhi

དགེ་སྦྱོང་གི་ཆོས་བཞི།

To not scold back when scolded, to not get angry when shown anger, to not hit back when hit, and to not expose others' faults when one's faults are exposed.

four forms of desire

'dod chags rigs bzhi

འདོད་ཆགས་རིགས་བཞི།

Embracing, holding hands, laughing, and gazing.

four noble ones

'phags bzhi

འཕགས་བཞི།

Śrāvakas, solitary buddhas, bodhisattvas, and buddhas.

four results

'bras bu bzhi

འབྲས་བུ་བཞི།

catuḥphala

The four fruitions of the śrāvaka vehicle: stream entry, once-returning, non-returning, and worthy one. (*Provisional 84000 definition. New definition forthcoming.*.)

four right efforts

yang dag par spong ba bzhi

ཡང་དག་པར་སྤོང་བ་བཞི།

catuḥsamyakprahāṇa

Four correct ways in which to strive, sometimes also employed to explain “right effort” in the context of the eightfold path of the noble ones. They are abandoning nonvirtuous dharmas that have not yet arisen and those that have already arisen, generating virtuous dharmas that have yet to arise, and maintaining virtuous dharmas that have already arisen.

four seals of the Buddha’s teaching

bka’ rtags kyi phyag rgya bzhi

བཀའ་རྟགས་ཀྱི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་བཞི།

caturdharmoddāna

All conditioned phenomena are impermanent; all defilements are suffering; all phenomena are without self; nirvāṇa is peace.

four supports

gnas bzhi

གནས་བཞི།

catvāro niśrayāḥ

In getting ordained, a monk pledges to make do with a restricted set of supports that are conducive to the holy life. These fall into four categories: clothing, shelter, food, and medicine.

four truths of the noble ones

’phags pa’i bden pa bzhi

འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་པ་བཞི།

caturāryasatya

The four truths that the Buddha transmitted in his first teaching: (1) suffering, (2) the origin of suffering, (3) the cessation of suffering, and (4) the path to the cessation of suffering.

fourfold assembly

'khor bzhi

འཁོར་བཞི།

catuḥparṣad

Monks, nuns, and male and female lay practitioners.

fourth guide

rnam 'dren bzhi pa

རྣམ་འདྲེན་བཞི་པ།

An epithet for the Buddha Śākyamuni that indicates the sequence of his appearance after the three buddhas of this eon who preceded him.

Full Array of Flower Essence Ornaments

me tog snying po'i rgyan bkod pa thams cad

མེ་ཏོག་སྙིང་པོའི་རྒྱན་བཀོད་པ་ཐམས་ཅད།

A world system.

gandharva

dri za

དྲི་ཟ།

gandharva

A class of generally benevolent nonhuman beings who inhabit the skies, sometimes said to inhabit fantastic cities in the clouds, and more specifically to dwell on the eastern slopes of Mount Meru, where they are ruled by the Great King Dhṛtarāṣṭra. They are most renowned as celestial musicians who serve the gods. In the Abhidharma, the term is also used to refer to the mental body assumed by sentient beings during the intermediate state between death and rebirth. Gandharvas are said to live on fragrances (*gandha*) in the desire realm, hence the Tibetan translation *dri za*, meaning "scent eater."

gaṇḍī

gaN+DI

གཎྜཱི།

gaṇḍī

A percussion instrument made from a wooden beam cut from specific trees to particular proportions; it has been widely used in Buddhist monasteries to signal timed events like the assembling of the monks.

Gautama

gau tam

གཽ་ཏམ།

gautama

The Buddha's family name.

Gavāṃpati

ba lang bdag

བ་ལང་བདག

gavāṃpati

One of the group of five friends who were the second group to become students of the Buddha, and he was one of the ten students of the Buddha who were the first to become arhats.

general characteristics

spyi'i mtshan

སྤྱིའི་མཚན།

sāmānyalakṣaṇa

Used in contrast to individual characteristics (svalakṣaṇa, rang mtshan) to denote the qualities common to a class of objects.

Ghoṣaka

dbyangs sgrogs

དབྱངས་སྒྲོགས།

ghoṣaka

Ghoṣaka is said to have hailed from Tokharistan, attended the Buddhist Council in Puruṣapura, and written a commentary to the *Abhidharmavibhāṣā*.

glorious Dhanyakaṭaka stūpa

dpal ldan 'bras spungs kyi mchod rten

དཔལ་ལྡན་འབྲས་སྤུངས་ཀྱི་མཆོད་རྟེན།

śrīdhanyakaṭakaḥ stūpaḥ

The location of where the Buddha taught the Kālacakra tantra on Vulture's Peak Mountain.

gradual clear realization

mthar gyis pa

མཐར་གྱིས་པ།

anupūrvābhisamaya, ānupūrvābhisamaya

The sixth of the eight progressive sections of clear realization.

great lotsāwa

lo chen

ལོ་ཆེན།

Honorific term for a Tibetan translator.

great seal

phyag rgya chen po

ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahāmudrā

This polyvalent term may refer to the realized state of mind where wisdom and means form an inseparable union.

Great Vehicle

theg chen

ཐེག་ཆེན།

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.

group of five

lnga sde bzang po

ལྔ་སྡེ་བཟང་པོ།

pañcakā bhadravargīyāḥ

The five companions of Prince Siddhārtha during his period of ascetic practice. After his awakening, they became his first five disciples. Their names are Kauṇḍinya, Aśvajit, Bāṣpa, Mahānāma, and Bhadrika.

guru

bla ma

བླ་མ།

guru

A spiritual teacher, in particular one with whom one has a personal teacher–student relationship.

Haribhadra

seng ge bzang po

སེང་གེ་བཟང་པོ།

haribhadra

Indian *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* commentator (fl. late eighth century).

heaps of Dharma

chos kyi phung po, chos phung

ཆོས་ཀྱི་ཕུང་པོ།, ཆོས་ཕུང་།

dharmaskandha

Collections of the Buddha's teachings.

Heruka

he ru ka

ཧེ་རུ་ཀ

heruka

One of the buddhas of the six buddha families.

Hevajra

dgyes pa rdo rje

དགྱེས་པ་རྡོ་རྗེ།

hevajra

Hevajra is a deity from the Unexcelled Yoga tantras associated with the *Hevajra Tantra* and related literature.

holy life

tshangs par spyod pa

ཚངས་པར་སྤྱོད་པ།

brahmacarya

Brahman is a Sanskrit term referring to what is highest (*parama*) and most important (*pradhāna*); the *Nibandhana* commentary explains *brahman* as meaning here *nirvāṇa,* and thus the brahman conduct is the "conduct toward brahman," the conduct that leads to the highest liberation, i.e., nirvāṇa. This is

explained as “the path without outflows,” which is the “truth of the path” among the four truths of the noble ones. Other explanations (found in the Pāli tradition) take “brahman conduct” to mean the “best conduct,” and also the “conduct of the best,” i.e., the buddhas. In some contexts, “brahman conduct” refers more specifically to celibacy, but the specific referents of this expression are many.

homa

sbyin sreg

སྦྱིན་སྲེག

homa

Traditional ritual worship involving a sacrificial fire into which oblations are offered.

hundred sextillion

bye ba khrag khrig brgya stong

བྱེ་བ་ཁྲག་ཁྲིག་བརྒྱ་སྟོང་།

koṭiniyutaśatasahasra

If the Abhidharma system is followed, this is a number calculated by multiplying a koṭi (bye ba), or ten million, by a niyuta (khrag khrig), or a hundred billion, and by a śatasahasra (brgya stong), or one hundred thousand, which all together equals ten to the 23rd power or a hundred sextillion. This term is often used to express a number so large as to be inconceivable.

imagined

kun brtags

ཀུན་བརྟགས།

parikalpita

One of the three natures in Yogācāra philosophy.

individual characteristics

rang mtshan

རང་མཚན།

svalakṣaṇa

Used in contrast to general characteristics (sāmānyalakṣaṇa, spyi'i mtshan) to denote the qualities specific to a particular object.

Indrabhūti

in+d+ra b+hU ti

ཨིན་ད྅་བྷཱུ་ཏི།

indrabhūti

There have been several figures in Buddhist history who bear the name Indrabhūti, most prominent among them being Indrabhūti the mahāsiddha and the king of Oḍḍiyāna. There are no less than twenty-two works in the Degé Tengyur attributed to Indrabhūti.

Indranāla

brgya byin sdong po

བརྒྱ་བྱིན་སྡོང་པོ།

indranāla

An Indian Buddhist master and commentator.

inner knowledge

nang rig pa

ནང་རིག་པ།

The fifth of the five fields of knowledge. This refers specifically to the inner science of Buddhism.

insiders

nang

ནང་།

Those who follow the Buddhist path.

intention

dgongs pa, dgongs pa can

དགོངས་པ།, དགོངས་པ་ཅན།

abhiprāya

The intention that lies behind the Buddha's teachings and Buddhist scriptures. This term can be used to imply that the given teaching is of provisional rather than definitive meaning and thus requires further explanation to arrive at its intended meaning.

Jambudvīpa

dzam+bu'i gling

རྫམ་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.

Jñānagarbha

ye shes snying po

ཡེ་ཤེས་སྙིང་པོ།

jñānagarbha

Jñānagarbha (ca. 700–60) was a Buddhist master possibly from Bengal. His most acclaimed work is the *Satyadvayavibhaṅga*.

Jñānapāda

ye shes zhabs

ཡེ་ཤེས་ཞབས།

jñānapāda

Also known as Buddhajñānapāda, he was a renowned Indian Buddhist master and abbot of Nālandā who, in Tibet, was associated with the transmission of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*.

Jñānaśrī

dza+nyA na shrI

ཛྙཱ་ན་ཤྲཱི།

jñānaśrī

An Indian Buddhist master who was the teacher of Atiśa Dīpaṃkara and a "gatekeeper" of Vikramaśīla.

Kālacakra

dus kyi 'khor lo

དུས་ཀྱི་འཁོར་ལོ།

kālacakra

The central deity of the Kālacakra maṇḍala who is in union with the consort Viśvamātā.

Kāmadeva

'dod pa'i lha

འདོད་པའི་ལྷ།

kāmadeva

Use standard definition

Kāṇhapā

nag po zhabs

ནག་པོ་ཞབས།

kāṇhapā

Also known as Kṛṣṇācārya, he was one of the eighty-four mahāsiddhas and has several works in the Tengyur.

Kāśyapa

'od srung

འོད་སྲུང་།

kāśyapa

Depending on context, can refer to one of the Buddha's principal śrāvakas ("disciples") who became a leader of the saṅgha after the Buddha's passing, or to a particular Buddha of a previous age.
See also Mahākāśyapa.

Kauṇḍinya

kau N+Di n+ya, kun shes kau N+Di n+ya

ཀཽ་ཎྜི་ན་, ཀུན་ཤེས་ཀཽ་ཎྜི་ན།

kauṇḍinya, ājñātakauṇḍinya

One of the five excellent companions, with whom Siddhārtha Gautama practiced asceticism near the Nairañjanā River and who later heard the Buddha first teach the four truths of the noble ones at the Deer Park in Sarnath. Kauṇḍinya immediately realized its import and entered the stream, shortly thereafter becoming an arhat.

knowledge of all dharmas

thams cad shes pa nyid

ཐམས་ཅད་ཤེས་པ་ཉིད།

sarvajñatā

The third of the eight progressive sections of clear realization.

knowledge of the bases

gzhi shes

གཞི་ཤེས།

vastujñatā

The third of the eight topics.

knowledge of the path

lam shes, lam shes nyid

ལམ་ཤེས།, ལམ་ཤེས་ཉིད།

mārgākārajñatā

The second of the eight progressive sections of clear realization.

Krakucchanda

log par dad sel

འོག་ཏང་དད་སེལ།

krakucchanda

The name of the first buddha of this Fortunate Eon.

Kukkuṭapādaka

bya gag rkang gi ri

བྱ་གག་རྐང་གི་རི།

kukkuṭapādaka

A mountain.

Kuśinagarī

rtswa can

རྩྭ་ཅན།

kuśinagara, kuśinagarī

The capital of the Malla kingdom, in the vicinity of which the Buddha passed into parinirvāṇa.

language universal

sgra spyi

སྒྲ་སྤྱི།

A technical term in Buddhist epistemology designating the referent of our conceptual apprehension of language.

Lesser Vehicle

theg dman, theg pa chung ngu, theg pa dman pa

ཐེག་དམན།, ཐེག་པ་ཆུང་ངུ།, ཐེག་པ་དམན་པ།

hīnayāna

This is a collective term used by proponents of the Great Vehicle to refer to the Śrāvakayāna (Hearer Vehicle) and Pratyekabuddhayāna (Solitary Buddha Vehicle). The name stems from their goal—i.e., nirvāṇa and personal liberation—being seen as small or lesser than the goal of the Great Vehicle—i.e., buddhahood and the liberation of all sentient beings.

Lord of Men

mi'i dbang po

མིའི་དབང་པོ།

An epithet used in the *Catalog* to refer to Tenpa Tsering, the tenth Degé king and sponsor of the Degé Kangyur.

Lord of the Guhyakas

gsang ba'i bdag po

གསང་བའི་བདག་པོ།

guhyakādhipati

A common epithet for Vajrapāṇi.

lotus family

pad+ma'i rigs

པདྨའི་རིགས།

padmakula

The second of the six gates of Action tantra, considered a supramundane family. In the Degé Kangyur these are Toh 674–742.

lower realms

ngan ’gro

ངན་འགྲོ།

apāya, durgati

The states of hell beings, hungry ghosts (pretas), and animals.

lower robe

sham thabs

ཤམ་ཐབས།

nivāsana

The garment that monastics wear to cover the lower body. One of the three Dharma robes (tricīvara, chos gos gsum).

Madhyamāgama

lung bar ma

ལུང་བར་མ།

madhyamāgama

One of the Four Āgama into which the Mūlasarvāstivādin tradition grouped the Buddha’s early sūtra discourses. It is known in the Pali tradition as the Majjhima Nikāya.

Magadha

ma ga d+hA

མ་ག་དྷ།

magadha

An ancient Indian kingdom that lay to the south of the Ganges River in what today is the state of Bihar. Magadha was the largest of the sixteen “great states” (*mahājanapada*) that flourished between the sixth and third centuries BCE in northern India. During the life of the Buddha Śākyamuni, it was ruled by King Bimbisāra and later by Bimbisāra's son, Ajātaśatru. Its capital was initially Rājagṛha (modern-day Rajgir) but was later moved to Pāṭaliputra (modern-day Patna). Over the centuries, with the expansion of the Magadha’s might, it became the capital of the vast Mauryan empire and seat of the great King Aśoka.
This region is home to many of the most important Buddhist sites, including Bodh Gayā, where the Buddha attained awakening; Vulture Peak (*Gṛdhrakūṭa*), where the Buddha bestowed many well-known Mahāyāna sūtras; and the Buddhist university of Nālandā that flourished between the fifth and twelfth centuries CE, among many others.

Mahākāśyapa

’od srung chen po

འོད་སྲུང་ཆེན་པོ།

mahākāśyapa

One of the Buddha’s principal śrāvakas (“disciples”), he became a leader of the saṅgha after the Buddha’s passing.

Maitreya

byams pa

བྱམས་པ།

maitreya

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

Mañjuśrī and Avalokiteśvara, and his name appears frequently in sūtras, either as the Buddha's interlocutor or as a teacher of the Dharma. *Maitreya* literally means "Loving One." He is also known as Ajita, meaning "Invincible."
For more information on Maitreya, see, for example, the introduction to *Maitreya's Setting Out* (Toh 198).

Malaya Mountains

ri ma la ya

རི་མ་ལ་ཡ།

malayagiri

A mountain range in Jambudvīpa.

maṇḍala

dkyil 'khor

དཀྱིལ་འཁོར།

maṇḍala

A mystic diagram, usually consisting of a square within a circle, used to define a sacred space in the context of esoteric rituals of initiation and consecration, as a preliminary to certain advanced meditational practices.

Mañjughoṣa

'jam pa'i dbyangs

འཇམ་པའི་དབྱངས།

mañjughoṣa

An alternate name for Mañjuśrī.

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.

Mañjuśrīkīrti

’jam dpal grags pa

འཇམ་དཔལ་གྲགས་པ།

mañjuśrīkīrti

A king of Śambhala.

Mantra Vehicle

sngags kyi theg pa

སྔགས་ཀྱི་ཐེག་པ།

mantrayāna

Also called the Resultant Vehicle, this refers to the vehicle of tantric Buddhism.

māra

bdud

བདུད།

māra

Māra, literally “death” or “maker of death,” is the name of the deva who tried to prevent the Buddha from achieving awakening, the name given to the class of beings he leads, and also an impersonal term for the destructive forces that keep beings imprisoned in saṃsāra:
(1) As a deva, Māra is said to be the principal deity in the Heaven of Making Use of Others’ Emanations (*paranirmitavaśavartin*), the highest paradise in the desire realm. He famously attempted to prevent the Buddha’s awakening under the Bodhi tree—see *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 21.1—and later sought

many times to thwart the Buddha's activity. In the sūtras, he often also creates obstacles to the progress of śrāvakas and bodhisattvas. (2) The devas ruled over by Māra are collectively called *mārakāyika* or *mārakāyikadevatā*, the "deities of Māra's family or class." In general, these māras too do not wish any being to escape from saṃsāra, but can also change their ways and even end up developing faith in the Buddha, as exemplified by Sārthavāha; see *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 21.14 and 21.43. (3) The term māra can also be understood as personifying four defects that prevent awakening, called (i) the divine māra (*devaputramāra*), which is the distraction of pleasures; (ii) the māra of Death (*mṛtyumāra*), which is having one's life interrupted; (iii) the māra of the aggregates (*skandhamāra*), which is identifying with the five aggregates; and (iv) the māra of the afflictions (*kleśamāra*), which is being under the sway of the negative emotions of desire, hatred, and ignorance.

mātṛkā

ma mo

མ་མོ།

mātṛkā

An early name for the Abhidharma and also for the earliest lists of doctrinal topics.

mātṛkā

ma mo

མ་མོ།

mātṛkā

Normally seven or eight in number, these goddesses are considered dangerous, although they have a more positive role in the tantra tradition.

Maudgalyāyana

maud gal gyi bu

མོད་གལ་གྱི་བུ།

maudgalyāyana

One of the principal śrāvaka disciples of the Buddha, paired with Śāriputra. He was renowned for his miraculous powers. His family clan was descended from Mudgala, hence his name Maudgalyāyana, “the son of Mudgala’s descendants.” Respectfully referred to as Mahāmaudgalyāyana, “Great Maudgalyāyana.”

Meru

ri rab

རི་རབ།

sumeru

According to ancient Buddhist cosmology, this is the great mountain forming the axis of the universe. At its summit is Sudarśana, home of Śakra and his thirty-two gods, and on its flanks live the asuras. The mount has four sides facing the cardinal directions, each of which is made of a different precious stone. Surrounding it are several mountain ranges and the great ocean where the four principal island continents lie: in the south, Jambudvīpa (our world); in the west, Godānīya; in the north, Uttarakuru; and in the east, Pūrvavideha. Above it are the abodes of the desire realm gods. It is variously referred to as Meru, Mount Meru, Sumeru, and Mount Sumeru.

methods

thabs, thabs mkhas

ཐབས།, ཐབས་མཁས།

upāya, upāyakuśala

The concept of skillful or expedient means is central to the understanding of the Buddha’s enlightened deeds and the many scriptures that are revealed contingent on the needs, interests, and mental dispositions of specific types of individuals. It is, therefore, equated with compassion and the form body of the buddhas, the rūpakāya.
According to the Great Vehicle, training in skillful means collectively denotes the first five of the six perfections when integrated with wisdom, the sixth perfection. It is therefore paired with wisdom (*prajñā*), forming the two indispensable aspects of the path. It is also the seventh of the ten perfections. (*Provisional 84000 definition. New definition forthcoming*.)

Middling Vehicle

theg pa ’bring

ཐེག་པ་འབྲིང་།

The vehicle of solitary buddhas.

Mind-Only

sems tsam

སེམས་ཙམ།

cittamātra

Used here as a synonym of the Yogācāra school due to their view that external phenomena are mere projections of the mind.

monk

dge slong

དགེ་སློང་།

bhikṣu

The term *bhikṣu*, often translated as “monk,” refers to the highest among the eight types of prātimokṣa vows that make one part of the Buddhist assembly. The Sanskrit term literally means “beggar” or “mendicant,” referring to the fact that Buddhist monks and nuns—like other ascetics of the time—subsisted on alms (*bhikṣā*) begged from the laity.
In the Tibetan tradition, which follows the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, a monk follows 253 rules as part of his moral discipline. A nun (*bhikṣuṇī*; *dge slong ma*) follows 364 rules. A novice monk (*śrāmaṇera*; *dge tshul*) or nun (*śrāmaṇerikā*; *dge tshul ma*) follows thirty-six rules of moral discipline (although in other vinaya traditions novices typically follow only ten).

mudrā

phyag rgya

ཕྱག་རྒྱ།

mudrā

A seal, in both the literal and metaphoric sense. *Mudrā* is also the name given to an array of symbolic hand gestures, which range from the gesture of touching the earth displayed by the Buddha upon attaining awakening to the numerous gestures used in tantric rituals to symbolize offerings, consecrations, etc. Iconographically, mudrās are used as a way of communicating an action performed by the deity or a specific aspect a deity or buddha is displaying, in which case the same figure can be depicted using different hand gestures to signify that they are either meditating, teaching, granting freedom from fear, etc. In Tantric texts, the term is also used to designate the female spiritual consort in her various aspects.

Muni

thub pa

ཐུབ་པ།

muni

Means “sage” or “wise one” but, in this context, is another epithet of the Buddha.

nāda

nA da

ན་ད།

nāda

A term used in tantric contexts to refer to sound or voice with the connotation of awakened speech.

nāga

klu

ཀླུ།

nāga

A class of nonhuman beings who live in subterranean aquatic environments, where they guard wealth and sometimes also teachings. Nāgas are associated with serpents and have a snakelike appearance. In Buddhist art and in written

accounts, they are regularly portrayed as half human and half snake, and they are also said to have the ability to change into human form. Some nāgas are Dharma protectors, but they can also bring retribution if they are disturbed. They may likewise fight one another, wage war, and destroy the lands of others by causing lightning, hail, and flooding.

Nāgārjuna

klu, klu sgrub

ཀླུ།, ཀླུ་སྒྲུབ།

nāgārjuna

The founder of the Madhyamaka school; traditionally he is said to have recovered *The Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras* from the realm of the nāgas.

natural state

gnas lugs

གནས་ལུགས།

A synonym of the ultimate that literally means “the way things are.”

nihilism

chad lta

ཆད་ལྟ།

ucchedadṛṣṭi

The extreme philosophical view that rejects rebirth and the law of karma by considering that causes (and thus actions) do not have effects and that the self, being the same as one or all of the aggregates (*skandhas*), ends at death. Commonly translated as “nihilism” or, more literally, as “view of annihilation.” It is often mentioned along with its opposite view, the extreme of eternalism or permanence.

nirmāṇakāya

sprul pa

སྤྲུལ་པ།

nirmāṇakāya

“Body of manifestation.” One of the four bodies of a buddha, referring to the way a buddha appears to ordinary beings.

nirvāṇa

mya ngan ’das

མྱ་ངན་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.

nirvāṇa without remainder

lhag med myang 'das

ལྷག་མེད་མྱང་འདས།

nirupadhiśeṣanirvāṇa

At the end of an arhat's or a buddha's life, the aggregates of that life cease and no further aggregates arise. At that point there is only the unconditioned element (*dhātu*) of nirvāṇa in which there is no remainder of the aggregates. When nirvāṇa is attained with awakening, whether at the level of an arhat or a buddha, all suffering, afflicted mental states (*kleśa*), and causal processes (*karman*) that lead to rebirth and suffering have ceased, but due to previously accumulated karma, the aggregates of that life remain and must still exhaust themselves. It is only at the end of life that these cease, and the arhat or the buddha is said to attain, or metaphorically to "enter," the nirvāṇa without remainder. See also the entries for nirvāṇa and parinirvāṇa.

non-returner

phyir mi 'ong

ཕྱིར་མི་འོང་།

anāgāmin

The third of the four attainments of śrāvakas, this term refers to a person who will no longer take rebirth in the desire realm (*kāmadhātu*), but either be reborn in the Pure Abodes (*śuddhāvāsa*) or reach the state of an arhat in their current lifetime. (*Provisional 84000 definition. New definition forthcoming.*)

nun

dge slong ma

དགེ་སློང་མ།

bhikṣuṇī

The term *bhikṣuṇī*, often translated as "nun," refers to the highest among the eight types of prātimokṣa vows that make one part of the Buddhist assembly. The Sanskrit term *bhikṣu* (to which the female grammatical ending *ṇī* is added) literally means "beggar" or "mendicant," referring to the fact that Buddhist nuns and monks—like other ascetics of the time—subsisted on alms (*bhikṣā*) begged from the laity. In the Tibetan tradition, which follows the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, a bhikṣuṇī follows 364 rules and a bhikṣu follows 253 rules as part of their moral discipline.

For the first few years of the Buddha's teachings in India, there was no ordination for women. It started at the persistent request and display of determination of Mahāprajāpatī, the Buddha's stepmother and aunt, together with five hundred former wives of men of Kapilavastu, who had themselves become monks. Mahāprajāpatī is thus considered to be the founder of the nun's order.

Nyagrodha Cave

n+ya gro d+ha'i phug

ཉ་ག་རོ་ད་ཧ་ཡི་ཕུག

The location of the first Buddhist council.

Oḍḍiyāna

au D+yan

ཨོ་ཌྜན།

oḍḍiyāna

An ancient kingdom, most likely located in the Swat Valley of present-day Pakistan.

offense

ltung ba

ལྟུང་བ།

āpatti

Refers to the 253 different offenses a monk may incur.

offenses in which a remnant is restored by the saṅgha

dge 'dun lhag ma

དགེ་འདུན་ལྷག་མ།

saṅghāvaśeṣa

One of five types of offenses a monk can incur. Second only to a defeat in severity, there are thirteen offenses in which a remnant is restored by the saṅgha.

once-returner

phyir 'ong

ཕྱིར་འོང་།

sakṛdāgāmin

One who has achieved the second of the four levels of attainment on the śrāvaka path and who will attain liberation after only one more birth. (*Provisional 84000 definition. New definition forthcoming.*)

opening formula

gleng gzhi

གླེང་གཞི།

nidāna

The introductory sections of a sūtra. Literally it can mean "cause." Commonly, there are said to be twelve, which include these nine.

outer robes

bla gos

བླ་གོས།

cīvara

In common parlance, this denotes the patched, yellow upper robe worn by renunciants.

outsiders

phyi, phyi rol pa

ཕྱི།, ཕྱི་རོལ་པ།

Non-Buddhists.

Padmanarteśvararāja

pad+ma gar dbang rgyal po

པདྨ་གར་དབང་རྒྱལ་པོ།

padmanarteśvararāja

One of the buddhas of the six buddha families.

Paltsek

dpal brtsegs

དཔལ་བརྩེགས།

Paltsek (eighth to early ninth century), from the village of Kawa north of Lhasa, was one of Tibet's preeminent translators. He was one of the first seven Tibetans to be ordained by Śāntarakṣita and is counted as one of Guru Rinpoché's twenty-five close disciples. In a famous verse by Ngok Lotsawa Loden Sherab, Kawa Paltsek is named along with Chokro Lui Gyaltsen and Zhang (or Nanam) Yeshé Dé as part of a group of translators whose skills were surpassed only by Vairotsana.
He translated works from a wide variety of genres, including sūtra, śāstra, vinaya, and tantra, and was an author himself. Paltsek was also one of the most important editors of the early period, one of nine translators installed by Tri Songdetsen (r. 755–797/800) to supervise the translation of the Tripiṭaka and help catalog translated works for the first two of three imperial catalogs, the Denkarma (*ldan kar ma*) and the Samyé Chimpuma (*bsam yas mchims phu ma*). In the colophons of his works, he is often known as Paltsek Rakṣita (*rak+Shi ta*).

Pañcika

lngas rtsen

ལྔས་རྩེན།

pañcika

A prominent yakṣa.

Paranirmitavaśavartin

gzhan ’phrul dbang byed

གཞན་འཕྲུལ་དབང་བྱེད།

paranirmitavaśavartin

The sixth and highest heaven in the desire realm; also used as the name of the gods living there. It is so named because the inhabitants have power over the emanations of others.

path of liberation

rnam grol gyi lam, rnam grol lam

རྣམ་གྲོལ་གྱི་ལམ།, རྣམ་གྲོལ་ལམ།

vimokṣamārga, vimuktimārga

The second of the two moments of relinquishing the afflictions. The path of liberation is the moment in which one is liberated from the afflictions.

peace

zhi ba

ཞི་བ།

śānti

Refers to nirvāṇa and is typically contrasted with existence.

permission

gnang ba

གནང་བ།

abhyanujñā

In the context of Vinaya, permissions are acts of personal discretion, including special exceptions made on account of medical advice given to the sick and so forth.

practice

rnal ’byor

རྣལ་འབྱོར།

yoga

A term that is generally used to refer to a wide range of spiritual practices. It literally means to be merged with or “yoked to,” in the sense of being fully immersed in one’s respective discipline.

prastāra

prastA ra, ’god tshul

ཟློས་ར།, འགོད་ཚུལ།

prastāra

A technical term within Sanskrit prosody, this refers to a table of all the possible variations of long and short vowel combinations.

prastha

bre

བྷེ།

prastha

The smallest measure of grain in ancient India, equivalent to about five or six ounces.

preceptor

mkhan po

མཁན་པོ།

upādhyāya

A person’s particular preceptor within the monastic tradition. They must have at least ten years of standing in the saṅgha, and their role is to confer ordination, to tend to the student, and to provide all the necessary requisites, therefore guiding that person for the taking of full vows and the maintenance of conduct and practice. This office was decreed by the Buddha so that aspirants would not have to receive ordination from the Buddha in person, and the Buddha identified two types: those who grant entry into the renunciate

order and those who grant full ordination. The Tibetan translation *mkhan po* has also come to mean “a learned scholar,” the equivalent of a *paṇḍita*, but that is not the intended meaning in Indic Buddhist literature.

primary condition

bdag rkyen

བདག་རྐྱེན།

adhipatipratyaya

One of the four types of conditions (rkyen bzhi).

prohibition

so sor spong ba

སོ་སོར་སྤོང་བ།

pratikṣepa

In the context of Vinaya, a prohibition refers to “what is not to be done” in any circumstances.

pronouncement

bcas pa

བཅས་པ།

prajñapti

In the context of Vinaya, a pronouncement refers to the establishing of a rule of training (śikṣāpada).

prophecy

lung bstan, lung ston

ལུང་བསྟན།, ལུང་སྟོན།

vyākaraṇa

A prophecy usually made by the Buddha or another tathāgata, concerning the perfect awakening of one of their followers.

prosody

sdeb sbyor

སྡེབ་སྦྱོར།

chandas

The science of poetic metrics.

prosperity family

rgyas pa'i rigs

རྒྱས་པའི་རིགས།

The fifth of the six gates of Action tantra. In the Degé Kangyur this is represented by a single work, Toh 772. It is considered a mundane family.

provisional meaning

drang ba'i don

དྲང་བའི་དོན།

neyārtha

A statement that is specific to context, or that requires further explanation, used in contrast to "definitive meaning."

pūjā

mchod pa

མཆོད་པ།

pūjā

Worship that involves making offerings.

Pure Abode

gnas gtsang

གནས་གཙང་།

śuddhāvāsa

The highest division of the realm of form, comprising its five highest heavens; also used as the name of the gods living there.

Pūrṇa

gang po

གང་པོ།

pūrṇa

Close śrāvaka disciple of the Buddha.

qualities of knowledge and liberation

rig dang grol ba'i yon tan

རིག་དང་གྲོལ་བའི་ཡོན་ཏན།

The Dungkar Tibetological Great Dictionary lists the eight qualities of knowledge and liberation as follows: (1) the qualities of knowing things are they are, (2) the qualities of knowing the extent of all that exists, (3) the qualities of inner knowledge, (4) the qualities of knowledge, (5) the qualities of liberation from the obscurations of desire, (6) the qualities of liberation from obstructive obscurations, (7) the qualities of liberation from the obscurations of inferior states, and (8) the qualities of liberation.

Rāgavajra

'dod chags rdo rje

འདོད་ཆགས་རྡོ་རྗེ།

rāgavajra

A tantric deity.

Rāhula

sgra can zin

སྒྲ་ཅན་ཟིན།

rāhula

The Buddha's son and disciple.

Rājagṛha

rgyal po'i khab

རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཁབ།

rājagṛha

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

Ratnasambhava

rin 'byung

རིན་འབྱུང་།

ratnasambhava

Ratnasambhava is the tathāgata at the head of the jewel (ratna) family among the five families.

reality

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.

referentiality

dmigs pa

དམིགས་པ།

dmigs (pa) translates a number of Sanskrit terms, including *ālambana*, *upalabdhi*, and *ālambate*. These terms commonly refer to the apprehending of a subject, an object, and the relationships that exist between them. The term may also be translated as "referentiality," meaning a system based on the existence of referent objects, referent subjects, and the referential relationships that exist between them. As part of their doctrine of "threefold nonapprehending/nonreferentiality" (*'khor gsum mi dmigs pa*), Mahāyāna Buddhists famously assert that all three categories of apprehending lack substantiality.

relative

kun rdzob

ཀུན་རྫོབ།

saṃvṛti

Although often also translated as "conventional," this term literally means "obscuring," and refers to the way things appear to the minds of the ignorant, in contrast to its counterpart, the ultimate.

Resultant Vehicle

'bras bu'i theg pa

འབྲས་བུའི་ཐེག་པ།

A term used in contrast to the Causal Vehicle to refer to tantric Buddhism, since it takes the result of buddhahood into the path.

Rinsang

rin bzang

རིན་བཟང་།

An abbreviation of Rinchen Sangpo, the foremost translator of the later spread of Buddhist teachings in Tibet.

root tantra

rtsa ba'i rgyud

རྩ་བའི་རྒྱུད།

mūlatantra

A classification of tantric literature that applies primarily to Yoga and Unexcelled Yoga tantras.

Ṛṣivadana

drang srong lhung ba, drang srong smra ba

དྲང་སྲོང་ལྷུང་བ།, དྲང་སྲོང་སྨྲ་བ།

ṛṣivadana

A sacred area located outside of Vārāṇasī, where many sages are said to have practiced in the past.

rule of training

bslab pa'i gzhi

བསླབ་པའི་གཞི།

śikṣāpada

These basic precepts are five in number for the laity: (1) not killing, (2) not stealing, (3) chastity, (4) not lying, and (5) avoiding intoxicants. For monks, there are three or five more; avoidance of such things as perfumes, makeup, ointments, garlands, high beds, and afternoon meals. (*Provisional 84000 definition. New definition forthcoming.*)

sage

drang srong

དྲང་སྲོང་།

ṛṣi

An epithet of the Buddha.

Sahā World

mi mjed

མི་མཇེད།

sahā

Use standard.

śairīṣaka

shi ri sha ka

ཤི་རི་ཤ་ཀ

śairīṣaka, śirīṣa

Refers either to the tree Acacia sirissa or to a divine garden in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three in which there are many such trees.

Śakra

brgya byin

བརྒྱ་བྱིན།

śakra

The lord of the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three (*trāyastriṃśa*). Alternatively known as Indra, the deity that is called “lord of the gods” dwells on the summit of Mount Sumeru and wields the thunderbolt. The Tibetan translation *brgya byin* (meaning “one hundred sacrifices”) is based on an etymology that *śakra* is an abbreviation of *śata-kratu*, one who has performed a hundred sacrifices. Each world with a central Sumeru has a Śakra. Also known by other names such as Kauśika, Devendra, and Śacipati.

Śākya

shAkya

ཤཱཀྱ།

śākya

Name of the ancient tribe in which the Buddha was born as a prince; their kingdom was based to the east of Kośala, in the foothills near the present-day border of India and Nepal, with Kapilavastu as its capital.

Śākyamuni

shAkya thub pa

ཤཱཀྱ་ཐུབ་པ།

śākyamuni

An epithet for the historical Buddha, Siddhārtha Gautama: he was a *muni* (“sage”) from the Śākya clan. He is counted as the fourth of the first four buddhas of the present Good Eon, the other three being Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, and Kāśyapa. He will be followed by Maitreya, the next buddha in this eon.

samādhi

ting nge ’dzin, ting ’dzin

ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན།, ཏིང་འཛིན།

samādhi

In a general sense, *samādhi* can describe a number of different meditative states. In the Mahāyāna literature, in particular in the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras, we find extensive lists of different samādhis, numbering over one hundred. In a more restricted sense, and when understood as a mental state, *samādhi* is defined as the one-pointedness of the mind (*cittaikāgratā*), the ability to remain on the same object over long periods of time. The *Drajor Bamponyipa* (*sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*) commentary on the *Mahāvyutpatti* explains the term *samādhi* as referring to the instrument through which mind and mental states “get collected,” i.e., it is by the force of samādhi that the continuum of mind and mental states becomes collected on a single point of reference without getting distracted.

Samantabhadra

kun tu bzang po

ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ།

samantabhadra

Samantabhadra (Entirely Excellent) is one of the eight principal bodhisattvas. He is known for embodying the conduct of bodhisattvas through his vast aspirations, offerings, and deeds for the benefit of beings.

samāvṛtta

mnyam pa'i br-it+ta

མཉམ་པའི་བྲིཏྟ།

samāvṛtta

A poetic meter in which the syllabic quantity (vṛtta) is of equal number.

samaya

dam tshig

དམ་ཚིག

samaya

Literally, in Sanskrit, "coming together." *Samaya* refers to precepts given by the teacher, the corresponding commitment by the pupil, and the bond that results, which can also be the bond between the practitioner and the deity or a spirit. It can also mean a special juncture or circumstance, or an ordinary time or season.

sambhogakāya

longs rdzogs, longs sku

ལོངས་སྤྱོད་རྫོགས།, ལོངས་སྐུ།

sambhogakāya

"Enjoyment body." One of the four bodies of a buddha, referring to the way a buddha manifests for realized beings.

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.

Saṃyuktāgama

yang dag par ldan pa’i lung

ཡང་དག་པར་ལྡན་པའི་ལུང་།

saṃyuktāgama

One of the Four Āgama into which the Mūlasarvāstivādin tradition grouped the Buddha’s early sūtra discourses. It is known in the Pali tradition as the Saṃyutta Nikāya.

Śāṇavāśa

sha na’i gos can

ཤ་ན་འི་གོས་ཅན།

śānivāśika

A certain householder who was fourth among those in the apostolic succession that carried on the Buddha’s teachings after his parinirvāṇa.

saṅgha

dge ’dun

དགེ་འདུན།

saṃgha, saṅgha

Though often specifically reserved for the monastic community, this term can be applied to any of the four Buddhist communities—monks, nuns, laymen,

and laywomen—as well as to identify the different groups of practitioners, like the community of bodhisattvas or the community of śrāvakas. It is also the third of the Three Jewels (*triratna*) of Buddhism: the Buddha, the Teaching, and the Community.

Śāntideva

zhi ba lha

ཞི་བ་ལྷ།

śāntideva

Indian commentator from the eighth century renowned for his work *The Way of the Bodhisattva* (*Bodhicaryāvatāra*).

Śāntipā

shAn+ti pa

ཤཱན྄ཏི་པ།

śāntipā

Ratnākaraśānti was an acclaimed Indian Buddhist master who lived between the late tenth and early eleventh century. He was a gatekeeper and abbot at Vikramaśīla and, under the name Śāntipā, is listed among the eighty-four mahāsiddhas. He has some forty works in the Tengyur.

Saraha

mda' bsnun zhabs

མདའ་བསྣུན་ཞབས།

sarahapāda

One of the eighty-four mahāsiddhas, known for his dohās (songs of spiritual realization). Lived circa ninth century ce.

Śāriputra

shA ri'i bu

ཤཱ་རིའི་བུ།

śāriputra

One of the principal śrāvaka disciples of the Buddha, he was renowned for his discipline and for having been praised by the Buddha as foremost of the wise (often paired with Maudgalyāyana, who was praised as foremost in the capacity for miraculous powers). His father, Tiṣya, to honor Śāriputra's mother, Śārikā, named him Śāradvatīputra, or, in its contracted form, Śāriputra, meaning "Śārikā's Son."

Sautrāntika

mdo sde pa

མདོ་སྡེ་པ།

Sautrāntika

Literally "followers of the sūtras," an early Buddhist school critical of the Vaibhāṣika interpretation of the Abhidharma.

sciences

gtsug lag

གཙུག་ལག

śāstra

An area of knowledge, sometimes contrasted with belles lettres (kāvya).

scripture

gsung rab

གསུང་རབ།

pravacana

Refers to the discourses of the Buddha.

seals of the Dharma

chos kyi phyag rgya

ཆོས་ཀྱི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ།

dharmamudrā

See: four seals of the Buddha's teaching.

seat of awakening

byang chub kyi snying po

བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་སྙིང་པོ།

bodhimaṇḍa

The place where the Buddha Śākyamuni achieved awakening and where every buddha will manifest the attainment of buddhahood. In our world this is understood to be located under the Bodhi tree, the Vajrāsana, in present-day Bodhgaya, India. It can also refer to the state of awakening itself.

Secret Mantra

gsang sngags

གསང་སྔགས།

mantra

Tantric Buddhism.

sense source

skye mched

སྐྱེ་མཆེད།

āyatana

These can be listed as twelve or as six sense sources (sometimes also called sense fields, bases of cognition, or simply āyatanas).
In the context of epistemology, it is one way of describing experience and the world in terms of twelve sense sources, which can be divided into inner and outer sense sources, namely: (1–2) eye and form, (3–4) ear and sound, (5–6) nose and odor, (7–8) tongue and taste, (9–10) body and touch, (11–12) mind and mental phenomena.

In the context of the twelve links of dependent origination, only six sense sources are mentioned, and they are the inner sense sources (identical to the six faculties) of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind.

seven canonical Abhidharma works

mngon pa sde bdun

མངོན་པ་སྡེ་བདུན།

The seven main canonical Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma texts.

seven limbs of awakening

byang chub kyi yan lag bdun

བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་ཡན་ལག་བདུན།

saptabodhyaṅga

The set of seven factors or aspects that characteristically manifest on the path of seeing: (1) mindfulness (*smṛti*, *dran pa*), (2) discrimination between dharmas (*dharmapravicaya*, *chos rab tu rnam ’byed/shes rab*), (3) diligence (*vīrya*, *brtson ’grus*), (4) joy (*prīti*, *dga’ ba*), (5) mental and physical ease (*praśrabdhi*, *shin sbyangs*), (6) meditative absorption (*samādhi*, *ting nge ’dzin*), and (7) equanimity (*upekṣā*, *btang snyoms*).

seven methods for settling disputes

rtsod pa zhi byed kyi chos bdun

རྩོད་པ་ཞི་བྱེད་ཀྱི་ཆོས་བདུན།

saptādhikaraṇaśamatha

The *Pratimokṣasūtra* (Toh 2) and the *Kṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6) give similar lists of seven means to quell or settle disputes.

signlessness

mtshan ma med pa

མཚན་མ་མེད་པ།

animitta

The ultimate absence of signs or referents, and one of the three gateways of liberation.

śikhariṇī

gtsug phud can

གཙུག་ཕུད་ཅན།

śikhariṇī

A technical term within Sanskrit posody, this refers to the 59,330th of the 131,072 variations on the atyaṣṭi meter.

simple transgression

ltung byed ’ba’ zhig pa

ལྟུང་བྱེད་འབའ་ཞིག་པ།

śuddhaprāyaścittika

In the context of Vinaya, one of two types of offenses. There are ninety varieties of simple transgression. These are expunged through participation in the community’s purification.

six cities

grong khyer drug

གྲོང་ཁྱེར་དྲུག

Magadha, Vaiśālī, Śrāvastī, Vārāṇasī, Sāketā, and Campā.

six families

rigs drug

རིགས་དྲུག

ṣaṭkula

Refers to the six Buddha families of Akṣobhya, Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, Amoghasiddhi and Vajradhara.

six gates

sgo drug

སྒོ་དྲུག

The sixfold division of Kriyātantra.

six perfections

phar phyin drug

ཕར་ཕྱིན་དྲུག

ṣaṭpāramitā

The practice of the bodhisattva, which consists of giving, discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and insight.

śloka

sh+lo ka

ཤློ་ཀ

śloka

Generally means “verse,” but is also applied to prose as a specific measure of thirty-two syllables.

solitary buddha

rang rgyal

རང་རྒྱལ།

pratyekabuddha

Literally, “buddha for oneself” or “solitary realizer.” Someone who, in his or her last life, attains awakening entirely through their own contemplation, without relying on a teacher. Unlike the awakening of a fully realized buddha (*samyaksambuddha*), the accomplishment of a pratyekabuddha is not regarded as final or ultimate. They attain realization of the nature of dependent origination, the selflessness of the person, and a partial realization of the selflessness of phenomena, by observing the suchness of all that arises through interdependence. This is the result of progress in previous lives but, unlike a buddha, they do not have the necessary merit, compassion or motivation to

teach others. They are named as “rhinoceros-like” (*khaḍgaviṣāṇakalpa*) for their preference for staying in solitude or as “congregators” (*vargacārin*) when their preference is to stay among peers.

son of the Śākyas

shA kya’i sras

ཤཱ་ཀྱའི་སྲས།

The Buddha Śākyamuni.

source of phenomena

chos kyi ’byung gnas

ཆོས་ཀྱི་འབྱུང་གནས།

dharmodaya

The universal matrix, represented as a triangle or two interlocking triangles; in the tantric viśuddhi (pure correspondences) system, it corresponds to the triangular area between a woman’s legs.

special insight

lhag mthong

ལྷག་མཐོང་།

vipaśyanā

An important form of Buddhist meditation focusing on developing insight into the nature of phenomena. Often presented as part of a pair of meditation techniques, the other being śamatha, “calm abiding”.

specific rules

nges pa

ངེས་པ།

One of the meanings of the word dharma.

sprouts of the Victor

rgyal ba'i myu gu

རྒྱལ་བའི་མྱུ་གུ

jināṇkura

Bodhisattvas.

Śraddhākara

shrad+d+hA ka ra

ཤྲདྡྷཱ་ཀ་ར།

śraddhākara

An Indian Buddhist master and author of several works in the Tengyur. Büton relates how he was invited to Tibet by King Yeshé Ö.

śramaṇa

dge sbyong

དགེ་སྦྱོང་།

śramaṇa

A general term applied to spiritual practitioners who live as ascetic mendicants. In Buddhist texts, the term usually refers to Buddhist monastics, but it can also designate a practitioner from other ascetic/monastic spiritual traditions. In this context *śramaṇa* is often contrasted with the term *brāhmaṇa* (*bram ze*), which refers broadly to followers of the Vedic tradition. Any renunciate, not just a Buddhist, could be referred to as a śramaṇa if they were not within the Vedic fold. The epithet Great Śramaṇa is often applied to the Buddha.

śrāvaka

nyan thos

ཉན་ཐོས།

śrāvaka

The Sanskrit term *śrāvaka*, and the Tibetan *nyan thos*, both derived from the verb "to hear," are usually defined as "those who *hear* the teaching from the

Buddha and *make it heard* to others." Primarily this refers to those disciples of the Buddha who aspire to attain the state of an arhat seeking their own liberation and nirvāṇa. They are the practitioners of the first turning of the wheel of the Dharma on the four noble truths, who realize the suffering inherent in saṃsāra and focus on understanding that there is no independent self. By conquering afflicted mental states (*kleśa*), they liberate themselves, attaining first the stage of stream enterers at the path of seeing, followed by the stage of once-returners who will be reborn only one more time, and then the stage of non-returners who will no longer be reborn into the desire realm. The final goal is to become an arhat. These four stages are also known as the "four results of spiritual practice."

stream enterer

rgyun zhugs

རྒྱུན་ཞུགས།

srotāpanna

One who has achieved the first level of attainment on the path of the śrāvakas, and who has entered the "stream" of practice that leads to nirvāṇa.
(*Provisional 84000 definition. New definition forthcoming*.)

stūpa

mchod rten

མཆོད་རྟེན།

stūpa

The Tibetan translates both *stūpa* and *caitya* with the same word, *mchod rten*, meaning "basis" or "recipient" of "offerings" or "veneration." Pali: *cetiya*.
A caitya, although often synonymous with *stūpa*, can also refer to any site, sanctuary or shrine that is made for veneration, and may or may not contain relics.
A stūpa, literally "heap" or "mound," is a mounded or circular structure usually containing relics of the Buddha or the masters of the past. It is considered to be a sacred object representing the awakened mind of a buddha, but the symbolism of the stūpa is complex, and its design varies throughout the

Buddhist world. Stūpas continue to be erected today as objects of veneration and merit making.

Subhūti

rab ’byor

རབ་འབྱོར།

subhūti

One of the ten great śrāvaka disciples of the Buddha Śākyamuni, known for his profound understanding of emptiness. He plays a major role as an interlocutor of the Buddha in the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras.

Sucandra

zla ba bzang po

ཟླ་བ་བཟང་པོ།

sucandra

The king of Śambhala who requested the teaching from the Buddha that has been preserved as the *Kālacakra Tantra*.

suchness

de bzhin nyid, de kho na nyid

དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད།, དེ་ཁོ་ན་ཉིད།

tathatā, tathātva

A synonym of the ultimate denoting the way things actually are.

supplementary pronouncement

rjes bcas

རྗེས་བཅས།

anuprajñāpti

In the context of Vinaya, a supplementary pronouncement refers to amendments made to a previous pronouncement.

supplementary tantra

phyi rgyud

ཕྱི་རྒྱུད།

A classification of tantric literature.

supreme nirmāṇakāya

mchog gi sprul pa'i sku

མཆོག་གི་སྤྲུལ་པའི་སྐུ།

A nirmāṇakāya is said to be a supreme nirmāṇakāya when it is adorned with the major and minor marks, turns the wheel of Dharma that leads to the higher realms and liberation, and performs the twelve deeds. This title is most often used in reference to the Buddha Śākyamuni.

Supreme Vehicle

theg pa mchog

ཐེག་པ་མཆོག

agrayāna

An epithet of the Mahāyāna or Great Vehicle.

Śūraṅgavarman

shU rang+ga barma

ཤཱུ་རངྒ་བར་མ།

śūraṅgavarman

Also known as Śūraṅgavarja, he was an Indian Buddhist master with three tantric works in the Tengyur.

svābhāvikakāya

ngo bo nyid

ངོ་བོ་ཉིད།

svābhāvikakāya

Literally “essential body,” the svābhāvikakāya is one of the four bodies of a buddha.

tathāgata family

de bzhin gshegs pa’i rigs

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་རིགས།

tathāgatakula

The first of the six gates of Action tantra. In the Degé Kangyur these are Toh 502–673. It is considered a supramundane family.

ten levels

sa bcu

ས་བཅུ།

daśabhūmi

The ten levels of a bodhisattva’s development into a fully awakened buddha.

ten powers

stobs bcu

སྟོབས་བཅུ།

daśa balāni

A category of the distinctive qualities of a tathāgata. They are knowing what is possible and what is impossible; knowing the results of actions or the ripening of karma; knowing the various inclinations of sentient beings; knowing the various elements; knowing the supreme and lesser faculties of sentient beings; knowing the paths that lead to all destinations of rebirth; knowing the concentrations, liberations, absorptions, equilibriums, afflictions, purifications, and abidings; knowing previous lives; knowing the death and rebirth of sentient beings; and knowing the cessation of the defilements.

ten virtues

dge bcu

དགེ་བཅུ།

daśakuśala

Abstaining from killing, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, lying, uttering divisive talk, speaking harsh words, gossiping, covetousness, ill will, and wrong views.

Tenpa Tsering

bstan pa tshe ring

བསྟན་པ་ཚེ་རིང་།

Tenpa Tsering (1678–1738) was both the king of Degé and the hereditary throne holder at Lhundrup Teng Monastery. He initiated and sponsored the production of the Degé Kangyur and the founding of the Degé printing house. For more on his life see his entry at The Treasury of Lives.

terrestrial

sa bla

ས་བླ།

bhauma

A qualifier for supernatural beings.

the noble land

’phags pa’i yul

འཕགས་པའི་ཡུལ།

An honorific epithet for India.

thirty-seven factors of awakening

byang chub kyi phyogs kyi chos sum cu rtsa bdun, byang phyogs so bdun

བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་ཆོས་སུམ་ཅུ་ཙ་བདུན།, བྱང་ཕྱོགས་སོ་བདུན།

saptatriṃśadbodhipakṣadharma

Thirty-seven practices that lead the practitioner to the awakened state: the four applications of mindfulness, the four thorough relinquishments, the four bases of miraculous power, the five faculties, the five powers, the eightfold path, and the seven branches of awakening.

Thirty-Three

sum cu rtsa gsum

སུམ་ཅུ་རྩ་གསུམ།

trāyastriṃśa

The second heaven of the desire realm, located above Mount Meru and reigned over by Indra and thirty-two other gods.

thoroughly established

yongs grub

ཡོངས་གྲུབ།

pariniṣpanna

One of the three natures in Yogācāra philosophy.

three gateways of liberation

rnam thar sgo gsum

རྣམ་ཐར་སྒོ་གསུམ།

trivimokṣadvāra

Emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness.

three kāyas

sku gsum

སྐུ་གསུམ།

trikāya

The three bodies or dimensions of a buddha's enlightenment.

three natures

mtshan nyid gsum

མཚན་ཉིད་གསུམ།

trilakṣana

The three natures enumerated in the Yogācāra school: the imagined (Skt. parikalpita, Tib. kun brtags), the dependent or other-powered (Skt. paratantra, Tib. gzhan dbang), and the thoroughly established or final outcome (Skt. pariniṣpanna, Tib. yongs su grub pa).

three poisons

dug gsum

དུག་གསུམ།

triviṣa

The three main afflictions: desire, anger, and ignorance.

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.

three seals

phyag rgya gsum

ཕྱག་རྒྱ་གསུམ།

In this context, the three seals are that all phenomena are selfless, everything compounded is momentary, and nirvāṇa is peace.

three spheres

'khor gsum

འཁོར་གསུམ།

trimaṇḍala

Subject, object, and action.

three trainings

bslab pa gsum

བསླབ་པ་གསུམ།

śikṣātraya

Discipline, concentration, and insight.

three vastu rites

gzhi gsum gyi tshul

གཞི་གསུམ་གྱི་ཚུལ།

In the context of Vinaya, the three vastu rites are rites of restoration (from Toh 1-2 the gso sbyong gi gzhi), the rite of lifting restrictions (from Toh 1-3 the dgag dbye'i gzhi), and the rite of the rains retreat pledge (from Toh 1-4 the dbyar gyi gzhi).

three vehicles

theg pa gsum

ཐེག་པ་གསུམ།

triyāna

The Śrāvaka Vehicle, the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle, and the Bodhisattva Vehicle.

threefold purity

'khor gsum rnam dag

འཁོར་གསུམ་རྣམ་དག

The absence of the reification of subject, object, and action.

Thus-Gone One

de bzhin gshegs pa

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ།

tathāgata

A frequently used synonym for *buddha*. According to different explanations, it can be read as *tathā-gata*, literally meaning “one who has thus gone,” or as *tathā-āgata*, “one who has thus come.” *Gata*, though literally meaning “gone,” is a past passive participle used to describe a state or condition of existence. *Tatha(tā)*, often rendered as “suchness” or “thusness,” is the quality or condition of things as they really are, which cannot be conveyed in conceptual, dualistic terms. Therefore, this epithet is interpreted in different ways, but in general it implies one who has departed in the wake of the buddhas of the past, or one who has manifested the supreme awakening dependent on the reality that does not abide in the two extremes of existence and quiescence. It is also often used as a specific epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

tīrthika

mu stegs can

མུ་སྟེགས་ཅན།

tīrthika

Those of other religious or philosophical orders, contemporary with the early Buddhist order, including Jains, Jaṭilas, Ājīvikas, and Cārvākas. Tīrthika (“forder”) literally translates as “one belonging to or associated with (possessive suffix *–ika*) stairs for landing or for descent into a river,” or “a bathing place,” or “a place of pilgrimage on the banks of sacred streams” (Monier-Williams). The term may have originally referred to temple priests at river crossings or fords where travelers propitiated a deity before crossing. The Sanskrit term seems to have undergone metonymic transfer in referring to those able to ford the turbulent river of saṃsāra (as in the Jain tīrthaṅkaras, “ford makers”), and it came to be used in Buddhist sources to refer to teachers of rival religious traditions. The Sanskrit term is closely rendered by the Tibetan *mu stegs pa*: “those on the steps (*stegs pa*) at the edge (*mu*).”

transgressions requiring forfeiture

spang ltung

སྣང་ལྡུང་།

naiḥsargikāpatti

In the context of Vinaya, a sub type of offense of which there are thirty varieties. These are expunged through communal confession and the forfeiting of the object that caused the transgression.

treatise

bstan bcos

བསྟན་བཅོས།

śāstra

In Tibetan traditions, primarily used to refer to the subsequent commentaries to the Buddha's words.

Tripiṭakamāla

tri pi Ta ka ma la

ཏྲི་པི་ཏ་ཀ་མ་ལ།

tripiṭakamāla

An Indian Buddhist master and commentator whose *A Lamp for the Three Modes* exerted great influence on Buddhist tantric exegesis.

truth of cessation

'gog bden

འགོག་བདེན།

nirodhasatya

The third of the four truths of the noble ones.

truth of the path

lam bden

ལམ་བདེན།

mārgasatya

The fourth of the four truths of the noble ones.

Tuṣita

dga’ ldan

དགའ་ལྡན།

tuṣita

Tuṣita (or sometimes Saṃtuṣita), literally “Joyous” or “Contented,” is one of the six heavens of the desire realm (*kāmadhātu*). In standard classifications, such as the one in the *Abhidharmakośa*, it is ranked as the fourth of the six counting from below. This god realm is where all future buddhas are said to dwell before taking on their final rebirth prior to awakening. There, the Buddha Śākyamuni lived his preceding life as the bodhisattva Śvetaketu. When departing to take birth in this world, he appointed the bodhisattva Maitreya, who will be the next buddha of this eon, as his Dharma regent in Tuṣita. For an account of the Buddha’s previous life in Tuṣita, see *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 2.12, and for an account of Maitreya’s birth in Tuṣita and a description of this realm, see *The Sūtra on Maitreya’s Birth in the Heaven of Joy*, (Toh 199).

twelve links of dependent origination

rten ’brel bcu gnyis

རྟེན་འབྲེལ་བཅུ་གཉིས།

The principle of dependent origination asserts that nothing exists independently of other factors, the reason for this being that things and events come into existence only by dependence on the aggregation of multiple causes and conditions. In general, the processes of cyclic existence, through which the external world and the sentient beings within it revolve in a continuous cycle of suffering, propelled by the propensities of past actions and their interaction with afflicted mental states, originate dependent on the sequential unfolding of twelve links: (1) fundamental ignorance, (2) formative predispositions, (3) consciousness, (4) name and form, (5) sense field, (6) sensory contact, (7) sensation, (8) craving, (9) grasping, (10) rebirth process, (11) actual birth, (12) aging and death. It is through deliberate reversal of these twelve links that one can succeed in bringing the whole cycle to an end.

two accumulations

tshogs gnyis

ཚོགས་གཉིས།

sambhāradvaya

The accumulations of merit and wisdom.

two obscurations

sgrib gnyis

སྒྲིབ་གཉིས།

The afflictive and cognitive obscurations.

two stages

rim pa gnyis

རིམ་པ་གཉིས།

The two steps of tantric practice, the generation stage (utpattikrama) and completion stage (sampannakrama).

two truths

bden pa gnyis

བདེན་པ་གཉིས།

dve satye, satyadvaya

Ultimate truth and relative or conventional truth.

ultimate

don dam

དོན་དམ།

paramārtha

Used in contrast to relative or conventional truth to designate the way things actually are.

unassociated formations

ldan min ’du byed

ལྡན་མིན་འདུ་བྱེད།

viprayuktasaṃskāra

A subdivision of the formation aggregate for phenomena that cannot be classified as either mind or matter.

uncertain offense

ma nges pa

མ་ངེས་པ།

aniyata

In the context of the Vinaya, this is a type of offense whose seriousness is of an undetermined nature and requires the evaluation of the saṅgha.

uninterrupted path

bar chad med lam

བར་ཆད་མེད་ལམ།

ānantaryamārga

The first of the two moments of relinquishing the afflictions. The uninterrupted path is the moment in which one actively relinquishes the afflictions.

unique qualities of a buddha

sangs rgyas kyi chos ma ’dres pa

སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་ཆོས་མ་འདྲེས་པ།

āveṇikabuddhadharma

Use standard definition.

Upāli

nye ba ’khor

ཉེ་བ་འཁོར།

upāli

A great upholder of monastic discipline, who recited the Vinaya at the First Council following the Buddha's passing.

upāsaka

dge bsnyen

དགེ་བསྙེན།

upāsaka

Lay male devotees who uphold the five precepts.

upāsikā

dge bsnyen ma

དགེ་བསྙེན་མ།

upāsikā

Lay female devotees who uphold the five precepts.

uṣṇīṣa

gtsug tor

གཙུག་ཏོར།

uṣṇīṣa

One of the thirty-two signs, or major marks, of a great being. In its simplest form it is a pointed shape of the head like a turban (the Sanskrit term, *uṣṇīṣa*, in fact means "turban"), or more elaborately a dome-shaped extension. The extension is described as having various extraordinary attributes such as emitting and absorbing rays of light or reaching an immense height.

Vaibhāṣika

bye brag tu smra ba

བྱེ་བག་ཏུ་སྨྲ་བ།

Vaibhāṣika

Literally “followers of the Vibhāṣā,” the Vaibhāṣika were an Abhidharma school associated with the Sarvāstivāda.

Vairocana

rnam snang

རྣམ་སྣང་།

vairocana

Vairocana is the tathāgata at the head of the tathāgata family among the five families.

Vaiśālī

yangs pa can

ཡངས་པ་ཅན།

vaiśālī

The ancient capital of the Licchavis. The Buddha visited this city several times during his lifetime.

vajra family

rdo rje’i rigs

རྡོ་རྗེའི་རིགས།

vajrakula

The third of the six gates of Action tantra. In the Degé Kangyur these are Toh 743–763. It is considered a supramundane family.

Vajra Vehicle of Secret Mantra

gsang sngags rdo rje theg pa

གསང་སྔགས་རྡོ་རྗེ་ཐེག་པ།

Also called the Resultant Vehicle, this refers to the vehicle of tantric Buddhism.

Vajradhara

rdo rje ’chang

རྡོ་རྗེ་འཆང་།

vajradhara

In Buddhist tantra, the name of a primordial buddha.

Vajradharma

rdo rje chos

རྡོ་རྗེ་ཆོས།

vajradharma

A bodhisattva.

Vajrāditya

rdo rje nyi ma

རྡོ་རྗེ་ཉི་མ།

vajrāditya

One of the buddhas of the six buddha families.

Vajragarbha

rdo rje snying po

རྡོ་རྗེ་སྙིང་པོ།

vajragarbha

A bodhisattva.

Vajrapāṇi

badz+ra pA Ni

བཇྲ་པ་ཎི།

vajrapāṇi

An Indian Buddhist master with a number of works in the Tengyur.

Vajrapāṇi

lag na rdo rje, phyag na rdo rje

ལག་ན་རྡོ་རྗེ།, ཕྱག་ན་རྡོ་རྗེ།

vajrapāṇi

Vajrapāṇi means “Wielder of the Vajra.” In the Pali canon, he appears as a yakṣa guardian in the retinue of the Buddha. In the Mahāyāna scriptures he is a bodhisattva and one of the “eight close sons of the Buddha.” In the tantras, he is also regarded as an important Buddhist deity and instrumental in the transmission of tantric scriptures.

Vajrasattva

rdo rje sems dpa’

རྡོ་རྗེ་སེམས་དཔའ།

vajrasattva

Used as a proper name, Vajrasattva is one of the principal deities of the esoteric Buddhist pantheon, regarded as both a source of the Buddhist tantras and the exemplar of the awakened state.

Vajravārāhī

rdo rje phag mo

རྡོ་རྗེ་ཕག་མོ།

vajravārāhī

A Buddhist goddess related to Vajrayoginī.

Vārāṇasī

vA rA Na sI, wA rA Na sI

བྭ་རཱ་ཎ་སཱི།, ཝཱ་ར་ཎ་སཱི།

vārāṇasī

Also known as Benares, one of the oldest cities of northeast India on the banks of the Ganges, in modern-day Uttar Pradesh. It was once the capital of the ancient kingdom of Kāśi, and in the Buddha’s time it had been absorbed into the kingdom of Kośala. It was an important religious center, as well as a major

city, even during the time of the Buddha. The name may derive from being where the Varuna and Assi rivers flow into the Ganges. It was on the outskirts of Vārāṇasī that the Buddha first taught the Dharma, in the location known as Deer Park (*Mṛgadāva*). For numerous episodes set in Vārāṇasī, including its kings, see *The Hundred Deeds*, Toh 340.

Vasubandhu

dbyig gnyen

དབྱིག་གཉེན།

vasubandhu

A great fourth-century scholar and author, half-brother and pupil of Asaṅga and an important author of the Yogācāra tradition.

Vehicle of Characteristics

mtshan nyid kyi theg pa

མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ཐེག་པ།

Also called the Causal Vehicle, this refers to the Pāramitāyāna, in contrast to the Vajrayāna.

Vehicle of Secret Mantra

gsang sngags theg pa

གསང་སྔགས་ཐེག་པ།

Also called the Resultant Vehicle, this refers to the vehicle of tantric Buddhism.

Vehicle of the Perfections

pha rol tu phyin pa'i theg pa, phar phyin theg pa

ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པའི་ཐེག་པ།, ཕར་ཕྱིན་ཐེག་པ།

pāramitāyāna

A term used to distinguish the sūtra tradition of the Great Vehicle from the Vajrayāna.

verbal root

byings

དབྱིངས།

dhātu

The etymological root of Sanskrit verbs on the basis of which other elements in the process of conjugation are derived.

Victor

rgyal ba

རྒྱལ་བ།

jina

Epithet of a buddha.

vidyā mantra

rig sngags

རིག་སྔགས།

vidyāmantra

A type of incantation or spell used to accomplish a ritual goal. This can be associated with either ordinary attainments or those whose goal is awakening.

vidyādhara

rig sngags ’chang

རིག་སྔགས་འཆང་།

vidyādhara

A class of semidivine being that is famous for wielding (dhara) spells (vidyā). Loosely understood as “sorcerers,” these magical beings are frequently petitioned through dhāraṇī and Kriyātantra ritual to grant magical powers to the supplicant. The later Buddhist tradition, playing on the dual valences of vidyā as “spell” and “knowledge,” began to apply this term to realized figures in the Buddhist pantheon.

view of the transitory collection

'jig lta

འཇིག་ལྟ།

satkāyadṛṣṭi

The view that the transitory collection of the five aggregates constitutes a real person.

Vimalasambhava

bi ma la saM b+ha ba

བི་མ་ལ་སཾ་ཧྦ་བ།

The name of the mountain where the Mahāyāna teachings were codified.

vision of wisdom

ye shes mthong ba

ཡེ་ཤེས་མཐོང་བ།

jñānadarśana

Meditative insight into the way things truly are, corresponding to the Pali ñāṇadassana. It is also sometimes rendered as "vision and wisdom," which is reflected in the alternative Tibetan translation shes pa dang mthong ba.

Viśvantara

thams cad sgrol

ཐམས་ཅད་སྒྲོལ།

viśvantara

A prince who the Buddha was in a former life.

vowels

dbyangs

དབྱངས།

svara

The fourteen vowels of the Sanskrit alphabet. In a tantric context, they are ascribed with a range of symbolic meanings.

Vṛji

br-i dzi

བྲི་རྫི།

vṛji

The land and people of Vṛji or Vaji (Pali: Vajji), a country situated on the northeastern Gangetic plain, and one of the sixteen mahājanapada of ancient India.

Vulture's Peak

bya rgod phung po'i ri

བྱ་རྒོད་ཕུང་པོའི་རི།

gṛdhrakūṭa

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

wealth family

nor bu'i rigs, nor can

ནོར་བུའི་རིགས།, ནོར་ཅན།

The fourth of the six gates of Action tantra. In the Degé Kangyur these are Toh 764–771. It is considered a mundane family.

Well-Gone One

bde bar gshegs pa, bder gshegs

བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ།, བདེར་གཤེགས།

sugata

One of the standard epithets of the buddhas. A recurrent explanation offers three different meanings for *su-* that are meant to show the special qualities of "accomplishment of one's own purpose" (*svārthasampad*) for a complete buddha. Thus, the Sugata is "well" gone, as in the expression *su-rūpa* ("having a good form"); he is gone "in a way that he shall not come back," as in the expression *su-naṣṭa-jvara* ("a fever that has utterly gone"); and he has gone "without any remainder" as in the expression *su-pūrṇa-ghaṭa* ("a pot that is completely full"). According to Buddhaghoṣa, the term means that the way the Buddha went (Skt. *gata*) is good (Skt. *su*) and where he went (Skt. *gata*) is good (Skt. *su*).

wheel-turning king

'khor los sgyur ba

འཁོར་ལོས་སྒྱུར་བ།

cakravartin

An ideal monarch or emperor who, as the result of the merit accumulated in previous lifetimes, rules over a vast realm in accordance with the Dharma. Such a monarch is called a *cakravartin* because he bears a wheel (*cakra*) that rolls (*vartate*) across the earth, bringing all lands and kingdoms under his power. The cakravartin conquers his territory without causing harm, and his activity causes beings to enter the path of wholesome actions. According to Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*, just as with the buddhas, only one cakravartin appears in a world system at any given time. They are likewise endowed with the thirty-two major marks of a great being (*mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa*), but a cakravartin's marks are outshined by those of a buddha. They possess seven precious objects: the wheel, the elephant, the horse, the wish-fulfilling gem, the queen, the general, and the minister. An illustrative passage about the cakravartin and his possessions can be found in *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 3.3–3.13.

Vasubandhu lists four types of cakravartins: (1) the cakravartin with a golden wheel (*suvarṇacakravartin*) rules over four continents and is invited by lesser kings to be their ruler; (2) the cakravartin with a silver wheel (*rūpyacakravartin*) rules over three continents and his opponents submit to him as he approaches; (3) the cakravartin with a copper wheel

(*tāmracakravartin*) rules over two continents and his opponents submit themselves after preparing for battle; and (4) the cakravartin with an iron wheel (*ayaścakravartin*) rules over one continent and his opponents submit themselves after brandishing weapons.

wishlessness

smon pa med pa

སྨོན་པ་མེད་པ།

apraṇihita

The ultimate absence of any wish, desire, or aspiration, even those directed toward buddhahood, and one of the three gateways of liberation.

words of the Buddha

bka’

བཀའ།

buddhavacana

A term used to denote the teachings of the Buddha.

worldly family

’jig rten pa’i rigs

འཇིག་རྟེན་པའི་རིགས།

The sixth of the six gates of Action tantra. In the Degé Kangyur this is represented by a single work, Toh 773. It is considered a mundane family.

yakṣa

gnod sbyin

གནོད་སྦྱིན།

yakṣa

A class of nonhuman beings who inhabit forests, mountainous areas, and other natural spaces, or serve as guardians of villages and towns, and may be propitiated for health, wealth, protection, and other boons, or controlled

through magic. According to tradition, their homeland is in the north, where they live under the rule of the Great King Vaiśravaṇa.
Several members of this class have been deified as gods of wealth (these include the just-mentioned Vaiśravaṇa) or as bodhisattva generals of yakṣa armies, and have entered the Buddhist pantheon in a variety of forms, including, in tantric Buddhism, those of wrathful deities.

Yama

gshin rje

གཤིན་རྗེ།

yama

Lord of death.

yoginī

rnal ’byor ma

རྣལ་འབྱོར་མ།

yoginī

Divine and semidivine female figures associated with the bestowal of temporal and transcendent spiritual accomplishment.