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The Exposition on the Universal Gateway

Samantamukhaparivarta

Translated into Tibetan by
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འཕགས་པ་ཀུན་ནས་སྐྱེ་ལེ་འུ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་མདོ།

'phags pa kun nas sgo'i le'u zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra “The Exposition on the Universal Gateway”

Āryasamantamukhaparivartanāmahāyānasūtra



Toh 54

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SUMMARY

- s.1 In *The Exposition on the Universal Gateway*, the bodhisattva Amalagarbha arrives in this world from a distant pure land to request teachings from the buddha Śākyamuni. The Buddha proceeds to explain to all assembled bodhisattvas, monks, and lay devotees the manner in which the five aggregates are equal to meditative absorption. He also explains how the various classes of beings and all other phenomena are absorption as well. In conclusion, he lists the names of various absorptions and the benefits one obtains upon attaining these states.

ac.

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ac.1 Translated by the Dharmachakra Translation Committee under the guidance of Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche. The translation was produced by Oriane Lavolé who also wrote the introduction. Andreas Doctor compared the translation with the original Tibetan and edited the text.

The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 *The Exposition on the Universal Gateway* takes place at Vulture Peak Mountain where a celestial bodhisattva named Amalagarbha arrives with a large retinue to request teachings from the Buddha Śākyamuni. In response, the Buddha delivers a teaching that describes how all phenomena are forms of absorption. The Buddha first points out how each of the aggregates are absorption and then he proceeds to describe how all beings and phenomena are absorption as well. The reason why phenomena are absorption is their shared empty nature. In short, emptiness is the intrinsic nature of absorption as well as all other phenomena.

i.2 Following this teaching, Mañjuśrī asks the Buddha to list the names of various absorptions for the benefit of the assembled bodhisattvas. In response, Śākyamuni mentions a number of absorptions as well as the spiritual accomplishments that they bring. Mañjuśrī rejoices in this teaching and makes aspiration prayers to benefit all those who hear this teaching. Suddenly, however, the demon Māra appears and laments this situation. He begs the Buddha not to bless the teaching he has just delivered, since that would result in Māra's realm becoming empty. The Buddha surprisingly grants Māra this request and so the demon joyfully returns with his aims fulfilled. In answer to Mañjuśrī's astonishment at this unexpected turn of events, the Buddha delivers a short teaching on the nondual nature of all phenomena, which delights the whole congregation and reassures everyone that everything is well, nevertheless.

i.3 To our knowledge, a Sanskrit version of this sūtra no longer exists. However, an early Sanskrit prototype of the text appears to have circulated in the southern parts of Central Asia as an independent scripture, not yet part of the Heap of Jewels collection, as early as the mid-fifth century.¹ Khotanese references to this sūtra from that time also seem to confirm its Sanskrit title, which is otherwise not attested elsewhere.²

- i.4 The sūtra was translated twice into Chinese. The first of the Chinese translations (Taishō 315) was produced in 287 CE by the monk Dharmarakṣa (c. 233–310 CE).³ The second translation (Taishō 310-10) was produced by the renowned South Indian translator Bodhiruci (?–727) between 706 and 713 CE.⁴ This is the version that was included in the Chinese collection of the Heap of Jewels.⁵
- i.5 In Tibet, the text was translated together with the other scriptures in the Heap of Jewels collection. The Tibetan colophon lists the translators as the Indian preceptors Jinamitra and Surendrabodhi, and the Tibetan translator Yeshé Dé, who were active translators in the late eighth and early ninth centuries.⁶ The sūtra appears to have had limited popularity in Tibet, as it is not quoted widely in commentarial treatises.
- i.6 This English translation was prepared based on the Tibetan translation found in the Degé Kangyur, in consultation with the Stok Palace manuscript and the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*).

The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra

The Exposition on the Universal Gateway

1.

The Translation

[F.184.b] [F.185.a]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was staying at Vulture Peak Mountain by Rājagṛha, together with a great saṅgha of eight hundred monks, and with forty-two thousand bodhisattvas. At that time, a bodhisattva great being by the name Amalagarbha, accompanied by ninety-two thousand other bodhisattvas, set out from the world known as Immaculate Conduct—the buddhfield of the thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Saṃkusumita. They traveled to Vulture Peak Mountain, here in this Sahā world, where the blessed, thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Śākyamuni dwelled.

1.2 As the bodhisattva great being Amalagarbha arrived in the sky, surrounded and attended by a great assembly of bodhisattvas, the Blessed One noticed him. As he caught sight of him, the Blessed One thought, “The bodhisattva great being Amalagarbha has been dispatched here by the thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Saṃkusumita in order to receive the Dharma teaching called *The Exposition on the Universal Gateway*. Therefore, I, for my part, should gather the bodhisattvas.” Then, because the Blessed One formed this intent, all bodhisattva great beings residing in boundless, infinite worlds⁷ arrived at Vulture Peak Mountain here in this Sahā world to meet the Blessed One.

1.3 Upon arrival, they bowed their heads to the Blessed One’s feet and sat down to one side. [F.185.b] All the bodhisattva great beings at Vulture Peak Mountain who had retired for meditation⁸ also gathered. The bodhisattva great being Amalagarbha then went before the thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Śākyamuni, holding a thousand-petaled lotus flower made of the seven precious substances. He bowed his head to the Blessed One’s feet and offered him the thousand-petaled lotus.

1.4 Amalagarbha then said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, the thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Saṃkusumita from the world Immaculate Conduct inquires about the Blessed One’s health. Does the Blessed One have but little trouble, grief, and agitation?⁹ Is he in good health, strong, and at ease? Is the Blessed One free of illness and does he have but few troubles?” When he had thus inquired after the Blessed One’s health, he added, “Might the blessed, thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Śākyamuni deliver the Dharma teaching pertaining to the inconceivable *Exposition on the Universal Gateway* to the bodhisattva great beings?” Then, having asked the Blessed One in this way, the bodhisattva great being Amalagarbha sat down cross-legged in the sky in the midst of his retinue of bodhisattvas.

1.5 At that time, Prince Mañjuśrī was also present within that assembly.¹⁰ He rose from his seat, draped his shawl over one shoulder, and knelt on his right knee. Joining his palms, he bowed toward the Blessed One and said, “In order to foster the bodhisattvas, I request the Blessed One, the Thus-Gone One, to thoroughly expound the Dharma teaching pertaining to the inconceivable *Exposition on the Universal Gateway*. Blessed One, [F.186.a] I beseech you. In the past, I received this teaching from the thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha Bright Lamp and thereby developed eighty-four sextillion absorptions. I also understood seventy-seven sextillion approaches to accomplishing dhāraṇīs. That being the case, may the Blessed One also teach this thoroughly in order to foster these bodhisattvas.”

1.6 In response, the Blessed One said the following to Prince Mañjuśrī: “To this effect, Mañjuśrī, listen carefully and keep in mind what I explain.”

Prince Mañjuśrī answered, “Blessed One, so be it.”¹¹

1.7 He listened closely as the Blessed One said, “Mañjuśrī, bodhisattva great beings should understand form to be absorption. They should understand sound to be absorption. They should understand scent to be absorption. They should understand taste to be absorption. They should understand tactile objects to be absorption. They should understand the objects of the mind to be absorption.

1.8 “They should understand women’s figures¹² to be absorption. They should understand men’s figures¹³ to be absorption. They should understand boys’ figures to be absorption. They should understand girls’ figures to be absorption. They should understand the gods’ figures to be absorption. They should understand the nāgas’ figures to be absorption. They should understand the yakṣas’ figures to be absorption. They should understand the gandharvas’ figures to be absorption. They should understand the asuras’ figures to be absorption. They should understand the garuḍas’ figures to be absorption. They should understand the kinnaras’ figures to be absorption. They should understand the mahoragas’ figures to

be absorption. They should understand the hell beings' figures to be absorption. They should understand animals' figures to be absorption. [F.186.b] They should understand the figures of beings in the world of the Lord of Death to be absorption.

1.9 “They should understand attachment to be absorption. They should understand anger to be absorption. They should understand ignorance to be absorption. They should understand all virtues to be absorption. They should understand all nonvirtues to be absorption. They should understand all conditioned phenomena to be absorption. They should understand all unconditioned phenomena to be absorption. In this manner, they should understand all phenomena to be absorption. Mañjuśrī, bodhisattva great beings who obtain all such absorptions have omnipresent minds and are trained in the Dharma teaching of *The Exposition on the Universal Gateway*.

1.10 “Mañjuśrī, in this regard, how should bodhisattvas understand form to be absorption?

“Form is said to be like a bubble:
Its essence cannot be found.
Since it is essenceless and cannot be grasped,
I have taught it to be absorption.

“Mañjuśrī, this is how one should understand form to be absorption.

1.11 “Mañjuśrī, in this regard, how should bodhisattvas understand sound to be absorption?

“Sound is like an echo:
It has no substance.
I know it to have no distinguishable parts
And to be devoid of characteristics, with no particularities.

1.12 “It has no characteristics or origin,
And is hollow and unconditioned.
Knowing it¹⁴ to be like an echo,
I have taught it to be absorption.

“Mañjuśrī, that is how you should understand sound to be absorption.

1.13 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand scent to be absorption?

“Just as the bottom of the ocean
Can never be reached in any way,
You could smell for ten million eons,
But there would still be no satisfying the nose.

- 1.14 “The olfactory cognition cannot be apprehended;
It is deceiving and nonexistent.
Were it to be real,
It could rapidly be contented.
- 1.15 “Since it is imperceptible and unreal,
The nose is known to be nonexistent and hollow.¹⁵
Knowing it to be void and empty, [F.187.a]
I have taught it to be absorption.

“Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand scent to be absorption.
- 1.16 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand taste to be absorption?

“The tongue is neither pungent nor bitter;
It is neither sour nor salty.
The tongue just changes in accordance
With the conditions it encounters.
- 1.17 Taste is known to arise through causes¹⁶
And in dependence on conditions.
Knowing it to be inconceivable,
I have taught it to be absorption.

“Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand taste to be absorption.
- 1.18 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand tactile objects to be
absorption?

“Tactile objects, which arise out of cognition,
Are not inherently existent.
Softness¹⁷ and roughness
Are created by conditions.
- 1.19 “Tactile objects are baseless;
Their way of abiding is devoid of self.
Knowing them to be a combination of composite factors,
I have taught them to be absorption.

“Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand tactile objects to be
absorption.
- 1.20 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand objects of the mind to be
absorption?

“Beings of the trichiliocosm

All dwell in the same condition.¹⁸

Though they cognize the range of mental objects,
They cannot find their substance.

1.21 “That which is aggregated and amassed
Has no basis in cognition.
Though cognition displays various colors,
These exist neither outside nor inside.

1.22 “Mental objects do not abide and have no basis.
Like an illusion, they are insubstantial.
Knowing them to be nonexistent and hollow,
I have taught them to be absorption.

“Mañjuśrī, that is how you should understand mental objects to be absorption.

1.23 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand the female figure to be absorption?

“Though women do not exist
Within the four major elements,
The immature, with their confused minds,
Engage in trifling desires.

1.24 “Though illusory women are without marks,
They appear as the female figure.
Those men who are enclosed in darkness [F.187.b]
Give rise to strong attachment toward them.

1.25 “While they give rise to desirous thoughts
Regarding illusory women,
These women are nonexistent.¹⁹

1.26 “It is this mistaken mind
That has made the simple-minded
Circle around for countless eons.

1.27 “Therefore, if you know insubstantiality,
All women are without characteristics.
This statement on the peace of absorption
I have made with reference to the female figure.

“Mañjuśrī, that is how you should understand the female figure to be absorption.

1.28 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand the male figure to be absorption?

“When men declare:
‘This is a woman and I am a man,’
In that instant, their minds
Become desirous and mistaken.

1.29 “Yet mind is formless²⁰ and imperceptible.
It is indemonstrable as woman or man.
It is conceptual superimpositions
That give rise to the perception of man.²¹

1.30 “Men declare: ‘This is a woman and I am a man.’
Yet all such imputed notions
I have taught to be like a mirage,
And no man exists therein.

1.31 “Since the nature of man is illusory,
He has arisen out of nonexistence.
This statement on the peace of absorption
I have made with reference to the male figure.

“Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand the male figure to be absorption.

1.32 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand boys’ figures to be absorption?

“If there is no sapling,
How can a flower appear?
If there is no flower,
The fruit cannot grow either.

1.33 “Likewise, since women are nonexistent,
Boys cannot be apprehended either.
Those who are under the sway of their imaginations,
Falsely conceive²² what they call *boy*.

1.34 “If you know woman to be unborn,
Boys have no origin either.
Realizing all entities to be nonexistent,
I have taught boys to be absorption.

“Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand boys’ figures to be absorption.

1.35 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas [F.188.a] understand girls’ figures to be absorption?

“If a palm tree’s crown is cut off,
It can never grow again.
Knowing this, the wise
Will not wish for any fruits to appear.

1.36 “Likewise, once the wise know that women
Have also never been born,
They no longer wrongly think,
‘Their basis,²³ a girl, has been born.’

1.37 “Knowing that when a seed is parched
It can no longer grow,
This statement on the peace of absorption
I have made with reference to girls’ figures.

“Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand girls’ figures to be absorption.

1.38 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand gods’ figures to be absorption?

“Gods are the result of virtuous action
Produced by virtuous thoughts.
Pure minds cause
The manifestation of beautiful gods.

1.39 “Their delightful palaces
Are not created by anyone else.
The mandāra flower too
Is not made by anyone else.

1.40 “Produced by illusory action,
These appearances are inconceivable.
The beautiful glitter of beryl gems
Is also false and untrue.

1.41 “Knowing that gods manifest in an unreal manner
And are therefore unreal,
This statement on the peace of absorption
I have made with reference to the gods’ figures.

“Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand gods’ figures to be absorption.

1.42 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand nāgas’ figures to be absorption?

“By becoming intolerant,
They manifest the forms of nonexistent clouds.
Although they do not remain in those clouds,
They bring down heavy rainfall.

1.43 “They fill up the seas,
Rivers,²⁴ and oceans here in Jambudvīpa.
Yet, whether in the beginning or the end,
This water is devoid of origin.

1.44 “All beings are similar to that water—
They are skilled in various undertakings
And display various karmic actions,
But these karmic actions have no origin.

1.45 “The wise know these illusions, [F.188.b]
Which delude the immature, to be unarisen.
Thus, since the untrue appears as true,
I have taught nāgas to be absorption.

“Mañjuśrī, that is how you should understand nāgas’ figures to be absorption.

1.46 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand yakṣas’ figures to be absorption?

“From the transformation of the mind
Manifests a terrifying figure.
Though its body may be great,
It was created by a single mind.

1.47 “Fear does not exist within the mind;
It appears from a combination of factors.
Look at the inconceivable array of hideous forms²⁵
Arising out of nonexistent action!

1.48 “Knowing this inconceivable array of hideous forms
To be utterly empty,²⁶
This statement on the peace of absorption
I have made with reference to the yakṣas’ figures.

- “Mañjuśrī, that is how you should understand yakṣas’ figures to be absorption.
- 1.49 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand gandharvas’ figures to be absorption?
- “Though these phenomena are devoid of any going,
They are given the name of *wanderers*.
Knowing wanderers to go nowhere,
I have taught absorption with reference to gandharvas.²⁷
- “Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand gandharvas’ figures to be absorption.
- 1.50 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand asuras’ figures to be absorption?
- “The asura, sealed with the letter *a*,²⁸
Truly arises from the unborn.
Since they are unceasing and non-arising,
Absorption is taught with reference to the asuras.²⁹
- “Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand asuras’ figures to be absorption.
- 1.51 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand garuḍas’ figures to be absorption?
- “Grasping onto the ungraspable,³⁰
We apply labels as we speak.
Since neither name nor form are existent,
I have taught absorption with reference to the garuḍas.
- “Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand garuḍas’ figures to be absorption.
- 1.52 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand kinnaras’ figures to be absorption?
- “It is by uncreated, created actions [F.189.a]
That the kinnaras are produced.³¹
Knowing them to be unborn,
I have taught absorption with reference to the kinnaras.
- “Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand the kinnaras’ figures to be absorption.

1.53 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand mahoragas’ figures to be absorption?

“By whatever names these phenomena
Are variously posited³² in the worlds,
The phenomena do not exist there;
Everything is imagined out of nonexistence.

1.54 “If you know everything to be fabricated,
There are naturally no concepts.
This statement on the peace of absorption
I have made with reference to the mahoragas’ figures.

“Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand mahoragas’ figures to be absorption.

1.55 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand the hell beings’ figures to be absorption?

“Stainless, pure, and hollow,
They have no maker whatsoever.
They are produced by their own thoughts,
Which have no existence either.

1.56 “Hell is clean, immaculate,
Pure, true, and luminous.
It is beyond all characteristics and marks,
Like the seat of awakening—thus I know.

1.57 “Knowing hell to be beyond attributes and unarisen,
Similar to the sky,
This statement on the peace of absorption
I have made with reference to the hell beings’ figures.

“Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand hell beings’ figures to be absorption.

1.58 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand figures in the animal realm to be absorption?

“For instance, cloud formations
Appear in various colors;
Though the clouds have no real color,
They fool the unwise.

- 1.59 “Likewise, since the mind does not exist
It is like the form of a cloud:
In the realms of animals,
It displays bodies in various forms.
- 1.60 “Karmic actions³³ are of an illusory nature.
I know them to be unarisen and beyond characteristics.
This statement on the peace of absorption
I have made with reference to animals’ figures.
- “Mañjuśrī, [F.189.b] this is how you should understand figures in the animal realm to be absorption.
- 1.61 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand the figures in the world of the Lord of Death to be absorption?
- “Black misdeeds and objectionable deeds
And white irreproachable deeds
Have all become mixed up
In terms of the best, the middling, and the worst.
- 1.62 “Then, in the world of the Lord of Death,
Beings suffer and spin around in confusion.³⁴
Yet there is no realm of the Lord of Death—
It is inherently empty.
- 1.63 “Like experiences in a dream,
It is without beginning or completion.
Since the realm of the Lord of Death is nonexistent,
I have taught it to be absorption.
- “Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand the figures in the world of the Lord of Death to be absorption.
- 1.64 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand desire to be absorption?
- “Desire surges from the imagination;
Those fancies too are unarisen.
That which has no arising has no abiding—
Its location can never be determined.
- 1.65 “Since it does not abide and has no location,
Desire is like the sky.
Yet immature defiled beings
Imagine it to be affliction.

- 1.66 “This phenomenon, which knows no affliction,
Is then designated by the word *desire*.
Were one to search in all ten directions,
One would not find its substance.
- 1.67 “This insubstantial desire
Is feared by confused, childish beings.
Those who fear where there is no danger
Can know no happiness.
- 1.68 “For instance, some people
Might perceive the sky as something frightening.
Terrified, they will run away, exclaiming,
‘I must not see the sky!’
- 1.69 “Yet, since space is omnipresent,
No one can be free from it.
Corrupted, immature beings
Imagine it falsely.
- 1.70 “Thus, childish beings who do not know
Phenomena to be like the sky
Yearn to rid themselves
Of insubstantial desire.
- 1.71 “Since desire is like the sky
No one can be freed from it.
Perfectly freed and liberated, [F.190.a]
Phenomena are like nirvāṇa.
- 1.72 “The buddhas of the past,
The guides of the present,
And the perfect buddhas yet to come
All have desire as their domain of experience.
- 1.73 “When you have known desire to be empty,
There is no deliverance from it whatsoever.
It is those who perceive desire as something frightening
Who think they must free themselves from it.
- 1.74 “Being a limit of nothing whatsoever,
The limit of desire is luminosity.
As it is without characteristics, permanent, and sameness³⁵—
I see it as the seat of awakening.

- 1.75 “Beings who perceive it as existent
Aim to diminish desire.
Imagining the nonexistent,
They imagine its abandonment.
- 1.76 “ ‘I must abandon desire’—
Giving rise to such a conception,
They would speak of its abandonment;
But such is these beings’ mere conception.
- 1.77 “The limit of desire defies thought
And is indestructible.
Thus it is equal to the limit of reality.
So, do not think³⁶ of being freed from it!
- 1.78 “If one were freed from desire,
One would be freed from emptiness.
Desire and emptiness
Are not two separate things.
- 1.79 “In this way, these beings imagine³⁷
The birth of the unborn.
Therefore, to such immature beings whose consciousness is dualistic,
I have taught abandonment.
- 1.80 “Since it is unborn,
Desire is just a label.
Names have no desire,
And no one at all is attached to a name.
- 1.81 “Knowing desire to be without attachment,
And seeing it as limitless emptiness,
The wise do not see liberation
As a way to eliminate desire.
- 1.82 “Knowing that desire is like the qualities of awakening,
And like nirvāṇa,
I have taught immaculate³⁸ absorption³⁹
With reference to the word *desire*.
- 1.83 “Desire rests on the sphere of peace.
Knowing it to be complete peace,
To the wise ones I have taught
Absorption with reference to the word *desire*.

- “Mañjuśrī, this is how bodhisattvas should understand desire [F.190.b] to be absorption.
- 1.84 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand anger to be absorption?
“As anger comes from rejecting,
It is also an affliction born from conditions.
This self, which has arisen from a lack of self,
Comes about through the aggregation of many things.⁴⁰
- 1.85 “Anger at harsh words
Comes about like lethal poison.
Words are simply the nature of sound
And therefore completely nonexistent.
- 1.86 “For instance, fire is kindled through the meeting
Of the grinding stick and grinding support.
Without these materials coming together,
Fire cannot be.
- 1.87 “Likewise, from unpleasant words
Arises vain anger;
But if you examine these hollow⁴¹ words,
You will find no anger there.
- 1.88 “Anger does not come from words.
It does not reside inside,
Nor does anger arise from the outside—⁴²
Since it is without origination, it is hollow.
- 1.89 “The coming together of causes
Is the source of anger.
If the causes come apart,
Anger is nowhere to be found.
- 1.90 “People may seek
Curd and milk, churn it with a stick,
And create the conditions
For butter to appear.
- 1.91 “Likewise, unpleasant words
Are sources of hollow anger:
Because of their illusions,
The unwise get fired up about them.

- 1.92 “Knowing anger to be caused by imputation,
And therefore utterly insubstantial,
I have made this statement on the peace of absorption
With reference to the word *anger*.
- 1.93 “Knowing anger to be equal to the limit of reality,
Rooted in suchness,⁴³
And similar to the realm of phenomena,
I have taught about *absorption*.

“Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand anger to be absorption.
- 1.94 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand delusion to be absorption?

“Delusion comes from ignorance;
Ignorance too is nonexistent.
Where there is no delusion,
There can be no confusion.
- 1.95 “Beings confuse what is without confusion,
And perceive attachment where there is none.⁴⁴
This is just like a childish being [F.191.a]
Vainly trying to tie a knot in space.
- 1.96 “Labeling⁴⁵ nonexistent phenomena
As defilements:
This [problem] of childish beings is outrageous.
It is indeed the most heinous of evil deeds.
- 1.97 “Just as someone
May examine *the sky*
For ten million eons
And find no aggregates in it—
- 1.98 “Likewise, due to confusion
The origin of immature beings is inconceivable.
Ignorance does not heap up—
It cannot fill anything up.
- 1.99 “One may try to measure the sky,
But it has no beginning.
The sky cannot be filled by anything:
It is immeasurable.
- 1.100 “Likewise, for thousands of eons

- Beings have been filled with⁴⁶ ignorance;
Still, they are never being filled,
And they are never satisfied in the slightest.
- 1.101 “When a person who uses a bellow
First empties it, expelling its air, and
Having compressed it, opens it up again,
Nothing is to be found inside it.
- 1.102 “Likewise, desire is like a bellow:
Those who act out of delusion
Can never find satisfaction,
But only pursue further desires.
- 1.103 “Ignorance is said to be nonexistent:
It is uprooted and insubstantial,
Rootless and without location;
Therefore, ignorance is inexhaustible.
- 1.104 “Since ignorance is inexhaustible,⁴⁷
Its end cannot be found.
Therefore, I cannot make it disappear
For all sentient beings.
- 1.105 “To make an analogy,
Even if I were to remain alive
For inconceivably many tens of millions of eons
And every single day
- 1.106 “Cause as many beings as there are in a trichiliocosm
To pass into nirvāṇa,
Though I may succeed in this,
The realms of beings would still not be depleted.
- 1.107 “Created by ignorance,
The realms of beings are without marks.
Ignorance is like an illusion,
And its end can therefore not be found.
- 1.108 “Since Buddha is the same as ignorance,
I have taught that they are no different.
It is confused, childish beings
Who have given me the name *Buddha*.⁴⁸
- 1.109 “Omniscience and ignorance are the same;

All ignorance is nonexistent.
Ignorance is the same as all beings,
And all beings are inconceivable. [F.191.b]

1.110 “Inconceivability and ignorance
Are thus imputed by thought.
All of the mind⁴⁹ is inconceivable,
And has no limit.

1.111 “Since ignorance is immeasurable,
One cannot find its origin.
Without an origin,
How can it arise?

1.112 “If ignorance is unborn,
How could it ever cause confusion?
How could it ever cause confusion
Is how it also is with all buddhas.⁵⁰

1.113 “Knowing that they are neither different nor separate,
And that all phenomena are nondual,
I made this statement on the peace of absorption
With reference to the word *ignorance*.

1.114 “When I came to know sameness,
I [understood] that ignorance was the same as it.⁵¹
Knowing all of these to be the same,
Understand absorption accordingly.

“Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand ignorance to be absorption.

1.115 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand all nonvirtues to be absorption?

“The features of being desirous,
And the turbulence of being angry,
As well as being ignorant—
Know them all to be absorption.

1.116 “The production⁵² of any affliction⁵³
Is absorption—be confident of that!
Afflictions are false and unreal;
Meditate on them all in this way.

- “Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand all nonvirtues to be absorption.
- 1.117 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand all virtues to be absorption?
- “Whatever virtues beings may have,
And howsoever their minds and conduct may be,
All conduct is but one conduct;
Know absorption to be like this!
- 1.118 “Knowing the conduct of all beings
To be but one performance,⁵⁴
I have made this statement on the peace of absorption
With reference to the word *all*.⁵⁵
- “Mañjuśrī, in this way, you should understand all virtues to be absorption.
- 1.119 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand all conditioned phenomena to be absorption?
- “Formations are not formations.
In terms of numerical estimation,
They are uncountable and immeasurable—
Know absorption to be so.
- 1.120 “Knowing formations to be immeasurable, [F.192.a]
Without body or substance,
I have made this statement on the peace of absorption
With reference to all formations.
- “Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand all conditioned phenomena to be absorption.
- 1.121 “Mañjuśrī, how should bodhisattvas understand all unconditioned phenomena to be absorption?
- “Since this Dharma is naturally peaceful,
It is beyond number.
I have taught that peace formed by ignorance
Is formed by absorption.
- 1.122 “Knowing everything conditioned to be inexpressible
And uncreated,
I have taught such
To all beings who are attached to words.

“Mañjuśrī, this is how you should understand all unconditioned phenomena to be absorption.”

- 1.123 As he completed these verses, thus delivering this inconceivable teaching, ninety-two thousand bodhisattvas gained the acceptance of phenomena being unborn. Seventy-two sextillion gods formed the resolve to attain unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Thirty-six thousand monks liberated their minds from the defilements, without further appropriation. Six thousand two hundred nuns also formed the resolve to achieve unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Eight million one hundred thousand male lay practitioners formed the resolve to achieve unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Four million two hundred thousand female lay practitioners also formed the resolve to reach unsurpassed and perfect awakening.
- 1.124 Then Prince Mañjuśrī said to the Blessed One, “If those bodhisattvas with sharp faculties who have come here hear the names of some absorptions, they will attain illumination in all phenomena. They will be impervious to all the gods belonging to the entourage of Māra and to those who hold the view that apprehends the person. Through a single letter, they will understand all letters, and through all letters, they will understand⁵⁶ one letter.⁵⁷ They will become skilled in teaching the Dharma to all beings with unimpeded confident eloquence. [F.192.b] They will gain acceptance of the profound Dharma. They will understand all conduct to be of a single defining characteristic. They will achieve an unobscured state through the four correct discriminations. I beseech the Blessed Ones to teach the names of these absorptions.”
- 1.125 To this the Blessed One responded, “Mañjuśrī, to that end, listen carefully and keep in mind what I shall say.”
- Prince Mañjuśrī answered, “Blessed One, so be it.” He then listened⁵⁸ as the Blessed One had directed.
- 1.126 The Blessed One then said, “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *the infinite immaculate*. If bodhisattvas obtain this absorption, they will reveal all forms⁵⁹ to be pure.
- 1.127 “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *swift travel*. If bodhisattvas obtain this absorption, they will outshine the light of the sun and the moon.
- 1.128 “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *source of light*. If bodhisattvas obtain this absorption, they will overwhelm Śakra and Brahmā in their splendor.
- 1.129 “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *showing the land*. If bodhisattvas obtain this absorption, they will pacify the desire, anger, and ignorance of all their assembled retinues.
- 1.130 “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *unobstructed light*. If bodhisattvas obtain this absorption, they will illuminate all buddha realms.

- 1.131 “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *forgetting no Dharma*. If they obtain this absorption, bodhisattvas will retain all the Dharma teachings taught by the Buddha and teach them to others as well.
- 1.132 “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *imitating the pleasant sound of the lion’s roar*. If they obtain this absorption, bodhisattvas will [F.193.a] make themselves heard all the way up to the Brahmā realm.
- 1.133 “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *truly creating all forms of joy, contentment, and satisfaction*. If they obtain this absorption, bodhisattvas will gladden the various minds and thoughts of all sentient beings.
- 1.134 “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *captivating to behold and greatly joyous*. If they obtain this absorption, bodhisattvas will become captivating to behold and to listen to.
- 1.135 “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *source of inconceivable qualities, wellspring of the precious domain of wisdom, singular stream free of affliction*. If they obtain this absorption, bodhisattvas will be able to display all miracles and subdue all beings.
- 1.136 “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *the symbol of all languages*. If they obtain this absorption, bodhisattvas will understand all languages, expressions, and signs. They will reveal a single letter through all letters, and all letters through a single letter.
- 1.137 “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *accumulation and demonstration of all merit and roots of virtue arisen from ripened action*. If they obtain this absorption, bodhisattvas will remain in equipoise without saying anything. Without uttering a single sound, they will cause all beings to hear the words *Buddha, Dharma, Saṅgha, hearers, solitary buddhas, bodhisattvas, and perfections*.
- 1.138 “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *the exalted king of all dhāraṇīs*. If they obtain this absorption, bodhisattvas will know how to engage in the accomplishment of infinite dhāraṇīs.
- 1.139 “Mañjuśrī, there is the absorption called *the array of confident eloquence in all Dharma teachings*. [F.193.b] If they obtain this absorption, bodhisattvas will become confidently eloquent in all utterances, languages, sounds, and expressions.”
- 1.140 Then Prince Mañjuśrī said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, I have an insight to share regarding the unique description of qualities expressed in this Dharma teaching.”
- The Blessed One responded, “Mañjuśrī, please share your insight.”
- 1.141 Mañjuśrī then said, “Blessed One, I wish that those bodhisattvas who are free of doubt and hesitation and who teach, hold, recite, integrate, and authentically and extensively expound this Dharma teaching to others, undoubtedly achieve confident eloquence in this very lifetime. I wish that they obtain swift confidence, vast confidence, confidence in the profound,

unforgetting confidence, and variegated confidence. I wish that their minds become free from all animosity toward any sentient being. Why do I make that wish? It is because the accomplishment of this Dharma teaching depends on precisely this conduct.”

1.142 The Blessed One then approved of Prince Mañjuśrī, saying “Mañjuśrī, excellent, excellent. Your words are well spoken. Mañjuśrī, for instance, it is incontrovertible that generosity yields great wealth. It is incontrovertible that discipline leads to rebirth in the upper realms. It is incontrovertible that study leads to great insight. It is incontrovertible that familiarization leads to separation. Likewise, Mañjuśrī, it is incontrovertible that this Dharma teaching will bring forth confident eloquence in this very lifetime.

1.143 “Mañjuśrī, the rising sun dispels all the thick black of darkness. Mañjuśrī, likewise, you should wish for confident eloquence to arise as soon as this Dharma teaching is delivered. [F.194.a]

1.144 “Mañjuśrī, for instance, bodhisattvas who abide on the seat of awakening are certain to fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. Likewise, Mañjuśrī, bodhisattva great beings who recite this Dharma teaching are certain to achieve confident eloquence in this very lifetime.

1.145 “Mañjuśrī, therefore, bodhisattva great beings who wish to achieve confident eloquence in this very lifetime should without doubt or hesitation obtain this Dharma teaching, hold it, recite it, read it, understand it, and expound it extensively and correctly to others.”

1.146 Then the bodhisattva great being Amalagarbha said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, after you pass into parinirvāṇa, I too will work to ensure that those bodhisattvas who have no doubt or hesitation and who retain, hold, read, understand, and correctly and extensively expound this Dharma teaching to others achieve confident eloquence in it.”

1.147 At this point, the evil Māra came weeping and wailing before the Blessed One and said, “Blessed One, if the thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha is compassionate and bestows⁶⁰ happiness to suffering beings, then I beseech the Blessed One not to further bless this Dharma teaching, so as to dispel my own mental anguish. Blessed One, when the Blessed One was seated on the seat of awakening, and now as he delivered this Dharma teaching, [F.194.b] I was tormented by intense suffering, anguish, and sorrow. Blessed One, if any sentient being who so much as hears this Dharma teaching will proceed irreversibly to unsurpassed and perfect awakening, then no need to mention that those who not only hear but retain, hold, read, understand, and expound this Dharma teaching extensively and correctly to others will likewise proceed irreversibly to unsurpassed and perfect awakening. All these beings will fully pass into nirvāṇa. Therefore, Blessed One, my māra realm will become empty. If the thus-gone, worthy, perfect buddha is

compassionate and bestows happiness onto those who suffer, then I beseech the Blessed One to relieve my suffering. I beseech the Well-Gone One to relieve my suffering.”

1.148 Then the Blessed One responded to the evil Māra, “Evil one, do not fear. Not all sentient beings will fully pass into nirvāṇa. Evil one, nor will I bless this Dharma teaching, so do not fear.”

When the Blessed One had consoled him, the evil Māra was satisfied, pleased, and happy. He became joyful, delighted, and elated, and instantly disappeared.

1.149 Then Prince Mañjuśrī spoke to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, with what intention did you tell the evil Māra that you would not bless this Dharma teaching?”

The Blessed One responded, “Mañjuśrī, since no phenomenon is blessed, all phenomena [F.195.a] are blessed. Since this Dharma teaching is not blessed either, it is blessed. Mañjuśrī, that is why I told the evil Māra that I would not bless this Dharma teaching. Mañjuśrī, by the power of truth and the truth of these words, since no phenomenon is blessed, they are all blessed. They are beyond distinction, inexpressible, without characteristics, inexplicable, unutterable, nondual, without duality, and identical with the limit of reality. They are steeped in suchness and are of the nature of the realm of phenomena. By the power of this truth and these true words, may this Dharma teaching spread throughout the world!”

1.150 Then, having performed this truth blessing, the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda, this Dharma teaching and all the eighty-four thousand sections of Dharma are the same,⁶¹ so you must therefore retain this teaching of *The Universal Gateway*. You must hold it, read it, master it, and teach it extensively and authentically to others. Why is that? Ānanda, it is because the thus-gone ones teach the eighty-four thousand sections of the Dharma to beings once they have understood this realm of Dharma⁶² of *The Universal Gateway*. Ānanda, for that reason you must guard, retain, and master this Dharma teaching.”

1.151 When the Blessed One had said this, the bodhisattva great being Amalagarbha, Prince Mañjuśrī, Venerable Ānanda, and the whole world with its gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas rejoiced and praised the Blessed One’s words.

1.152 *This concludes The Exposition on the Universal Gateway, the tenth of the one hundred thousand sections of the Dharma discourse known as The Noble Great Heap of Jewels.*

c.

Colophon

c.1 Translated, edited, and finalized by the Indian preceptors Jinamitra and Surendrabodhi along with the chief editor-translator Bandé Yeshé Dé.

ab.

ABBREVIATIONS

- C* Coné (co ne) Kangyur
- H* Lhasa (zhol) Kangyur
- J* Lithang ('jang sa tham) Kangyur
- K* Peking (pe cin) Kangxi Kangyur
- K_Y* Peking Yongle (g.yung lo) Kangyur
- N* Narthang (snar thang) Kangyur
- S* Stok Palace (stog pho brang) Manuscript Kangyur

n.

NOTES

- n.1 Dhammadinnā 2013, 340.
- n.2 Dhammadinnā 2013, 340.
- n.3 Sen et al., 2011.
- n.4 Orzech et al., 2011.
- n.5 Da baoji jing 大寶積經, Taishō 310. This text has also been translated into English by Chang (1983, 134–148).
- n.6 This dating is also confirmed by the text’s inclusion in the Denkarma inventory of the early ninth century CE. See Denkarma, 295.b. See also Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, 22, no. 34.
- n.7 N has *dge* (“virtuous”) instead of *dag* (a plural particle) here.
- n.8 K_Y has *gzhol* (which might translate “who were engaged in true training”) instead of *’jog*.
- n.9 Reading according to K_Y, which has *bskyod pa yang chung ngam*, whereas there is no *chung* (“little”) in the other versions, though it would seem to be implied.
- n.10 K_Y does not have *’khor de nyid du ’dus par gyur* (“was also present within that assembly”) and would therefore just translate as “at that time, Prince Mañjuśrī was also present.”
- n.11 N and H have *de ltar ’tshal lo* (“pray do so”) instead of *de bzhin no* (“so be it”) here.
- n.12 K_Y, J, K, N, and C do not have *kyi gzugs* (“figures”) here.

- n.13 K_Y, J, K, and N again do not have *gzugs* (“form”) here.
- n.14 This translation is according to K_Y, K, N, H, and S, which have *shes pas na* instead of *shes pa na* (“when it is known”).
- n.15 N has *sna yang yod min gsog tu med* (“The nose is nonexistent and does not exist in its emptiness”) instead of *sna yang yod min gsog tu shes* here.
- n.16 K has *ra ro yi rgyu las byung ba dang* (“It is caused by drunkenness”) instead of *ro 'di rgyu las byung ba dang*.
- n.17 K has *'jam dpal* (“Mañjuśrī”) instead of *'jam pa*.
- n.18 This phrase, *de dag gnas gcig gnas gyur te*, could also be translated as “Each live in their own abode.”
- n.19 This verse and the following only have three lines in the Tibetan.
- n.20 K_Y and K have *gzung med* here instead of *gzugs med*, which would translate as “imperceptible” again instead of “formless.”
- n.21 The word used for “man” here (*skyes pa*) also means “birth” or “being born.” Thus there is a word play on these two senses of *skyes pa*.
- n.22 This reading is according to K_Y, K, and H. The other recensions had *btags pa* instead of *brtags pa*, which would translate as “impute” instead of “imagine.”
- n.23 K_Y has *bu rtan* (sic!) instead of *brtan*.
- n.24 K_Y and K have *klu* (“nāgas”) instead of *klung* (“rivers”).
- n.25 This line is altogether absent from N.
- n.26 K_Y has *ston* (“teach”) instead of *stong* (“empty”).
- n.27 The next few one-stanza arguments make use of letter plays prevalent in dhāraṇī literature. The play here is on the letter *ga*, which begins both the Sanskrit term *gandharva* and the verb \sqrt{gam} (“to go”).
- n.28 In other words, the letter *a* begins and ends the word *asura*.
- n.29 There is another play here on the letter *a*, which begins the word *asura* but is also significant in Mahāyāna Buddhism, where it is considered to be the shortest form of the *Prajñāpāramitā*, whose topic is emptiness, characterized as unborn and unceasing. In fact, the prefix *a-* in Sanskrit indicates a negation

and thus also begins the Sanskrit terms *aniruddha* (“unceasing”) and *apraṇṛtti* (“non-arising”).

- n.30 The play on letters is at work here again with the letter *ga* beginning the term *garuḍa* and the verb root $\sqrt{\text{grah}}$ (“grasping”).
- n.31 Here again, the letter at play is *ka*, which begins both *kinnara* and the Sanskrit verb *kr̥ta* (“created” or “produced”).
- n.32 K_Y has *bzhig* (“destroyed”) instead of *bzhag* (“posited”).
- n.33 K_Y and K have *lus* instead of *las* here, which would translate as “bodies” instead of “karmic actions.”
- n.34 This reading is according to S , which has *chol par* (“confusion”) instead of *tshol ba* (“seeking”).
- n.35 K_Y and K have *mnyam brtags* and S has *mnyam brtag* (both translating as “equally imagined”) instead of *mnyam rtag* (“permanent, and sameness”).
- n.36 Reading according to K_Y and N , *rtog* instead of *rtogs* (“realize”).
- n.37 N has *btags* (“label”) instead of *brtags*.
- n.38 K_Y has *rdul phra ba’i* (“subtle particle”) instead of *rdul dang bral ba’i* (“immaculate”).
- n.39 There is a possible letter play here with the letter *na* beginning the words *nirvāṇa* and *nirmala*.
- n.40 K_Y and K have *med pa’i tshogs* (“the meeting of nonexistent factors”) instead of *mang po’i tshogs*.
- n.41 J and C have *srog* (“life-force”) instead of *gsog* (“hollow”).
- n.42 K_Y , N , and H are missing the negation here and read *phyi rol nas ’ongs te* (“Anger comes from the outside”).
- n.43 Instead of *rten* (“rooted”), H has *bstan* which would translate “I have taught it to be suchness.”
- n.44 K_Y has *chags med pa par* and K has *chags pa med par* instead of *chags med chags par*. The translation for K_Y and K would therefore read “They perceive without attachment.”
- n.45 K_Y , K , J , C , N , and H have *brtags* (“imagining”) instead of *btags* (“labeling”).

- n.46 K_Y has *dga'* ("pleased by") instead of *dgang* ("filled with").
- n.47 The negation is missing in K_Y.
- n.48 See "buddha."
- n.49 K_Y has *sems can* ("beings") instead of *sems kun* ("all of the mind").
- n.50 In other words, the possibility of confusion is not inherent either to ignorance or buddhas because of their shared unborn nature.
- n.51 Here "it" likely refers to absorption.
- n.52 K_Y has *sgrib* ("obscuration") instead of *sgrub* ("production").
- n.53 There is a possible letter play here with Skt. *sādh* (Tib. *sgrub pa*, "production") and *sarva* (*kun*, "any").
- n.54 Here again the same letter play appears to be functioning between Skt. *sādh* (Tib. *sgrub pa*, "performance") and *sarva* (*kun*, "all").
- n.55 "All" is likely meant to refer to "all virtues and nonvirtues" here, as there is a clear letter play connecting these two sections with the repeated use of *sarva* ("all").
- n.56 N has *rtags* ("indicate") instead of *rtogs* ("understand") here.
- n.57 This refers to the letter play that runs throughout the entire text and is a salient feature of dhāraṇī texts.
- n.58 N has *mnyam pa* ("equal") instead of *mnyan pa* ("listened").
- n.59 N and H have *gzungs* ("dhāraṇī") instead of *gzugs* ("form").
- n.60 N has *rtsol* ("strives") instead of *stsol* ("bestows").
- n.61 K_Y and K have *mnyan* ("listen") instead of *mnyam* ("same"). According to these recensions, this phrase would then translate as "in order to listen to the eighty-four thousand sections of Dharma and this Dharma teaching."
- n.62 Tibetan: *chos kyī dbyings*. Sanskrit: *dharmadhātu*. Elsewhere in this translation we have translated this as "realm of phenomena."

b.

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GLOSSARY

· Types of attestation for Sanskrit names and terms ·

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in the Sanskrit manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other Sanskrit manuscripts of the Kangyur or Tengyur.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where Tibetan-Sanskrit relationship is attested in dictionaries or other manuscripts.
RP	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan phonetic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the Tibetan phonetic rendering of the term.
RS	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan semantic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the semantics of the Tibetan translation.
SU	<i>Source Unspecified</i> This term has been supplied from an unspecified source, which most often is a widely trusted dictionary.

g.1 absorption

ting nge 'dzin

ཐིང་ངེ་འཛིན།

samādhi

Placing the mind on an object of attention, or sometimes more generally, an elevated spiritual state of mind.

g.2 acceptance of phenomena being unborn

mi skye ba'i chos la bzod pa

མི་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཚོས་ལ་བཟོད་པ།

anutpattikadharmakṣānti

An attainment characteristic of the effortless and spontaneous wakefulness of the eighth ground of the bodhisattvas.

g.3 acceptance of the profound dharma

chos zab mo la bzod pa

ཚོས་ཟབ་མོ་ལ་བཟོད་པ།

gambhīradharmakṣānti

One of the three types of patience, which consists in accepting the teachings on emptiness.

g.4 accumulation and demonstration of all merit and roots of virtue arisen from ripened action

las kyi rnam par smin pa las byung ba'i bsod nams dang dge ba'i rtsa ba thams cad

bsags shing ston par byed pa

ལས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་པར་སྐྱིན་པ་ལས་བྱུང་བའི་བསོད་ནམས་དང་དགེ་བའི་རྩ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་བསམགས་ཤིང་སྟོན་པར་བྱེད་པ།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.5 Amalagarbha

dri ma med pa'i snying po

དྲི་མ་མེད་པའི་སྤྱིང་པོ།

amalagarbha

A bodhisattva from another world.

g.6 asura

lha ma yin

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།

asura

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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).

g.7 beryl gem

bai dUr+ya

བེ་དུརྱ།

vaidūrya

One of the most precious gems.

g.8 Brahmā

tshangs pa

ཚངས་པ།

brahmā

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A high-ranking deity presiding over a divine world where other beings consider him the creator; he is also considered to be the lord of the Sahā world (our universe). 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 Sahā World” (*Sahāṃpati*) and Great Brahmā (*Mahābrahmā*).

g.9 Bright Lamp

kun tu snang ba'i sgron ma

ཀུན་ཏུ་སྒྲོལ་བའི་སྒྲོན་མ།

—

A past buddha.

g.10 buddha

sangs rgyas

སངས་རྒྱལ།

buddha

The Indic term *buddha* means "The Awakened One" and is used in Buddhism as an epithet for the historical Buddha Siddhārtha Gautama as well as other spiritually enlightened beings in general.

"Buddha" is the past participle of the Sanskrit root *budh*, meaning "to awaken," "to understand," or "to become aware."

g.11 captivating to behold and greatly joyous

lta bas chog mi shes shing mchog tu dga' ba dang ldan pa

ལྷ་བས་ཚོག་མི་ཤེས་ཤིང་མཚོག་ཏུ་དགའ་བ་དང་ལྷན་པ།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.12 cognition

nam par rig pa

རྣམ་པར་རིག་པ།

vijñapti

Perception of an object.

g.13 confident eloquence

spobs pa

སྲོབས་པ།

pratibhāna

Inspiration, presence of mind, self-confidence, or quick-wittedness, particularly as manifested in speech.

g.14 dhāraṇī

gzungs

གཟུངས།

dhāraṇī

Type of early Mahāyāna Buddhist texts resembling long mantras, used as mnemonic devices as well as for ritual incantation.

g.15 dwell in the same condition

gnas gcig gnas pa

གནས་གཅིག་གནས་པ།

ekāoasathāvāsa

To experience the same type of conditions.

g.16 forgetting no Dharma

chos thams cad mi brjed pa

ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་མི་བརྗེད་པ།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.17 four correct discriminations

so so yang dag par rig pa bzhi

སོ་སོ་ཡང་དག་པར་རིག་པ་བཞི།

catuhpratisamvid

Correct or genuine discrimination with respect to Dharma, meaning, language, and confident eloquence.

g.18 gandharva

dri za

དྲི་ཟ།

gandharva

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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 under the jurisdiction of 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 any sentient being in the realm of desire (*kāmadhātu*) during the intermediate state between death and rebirth. Gandharvas are said to live on fragrances in the desire realm, hence the Tibetan translation *dri za*, meaning “scent eater.”

g.19 garuḍa

nam mkha' lding

ནམ་མཁའ་ལྗིང་།

garuḍa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In Indian mythology, the garuḍa is an eagle-like bird that is regarded as the king of all birds, normally depicted with a sharp, owl-like beak, often holding a snake, and with large and powerful wings. They are traditionally enemies

of the nāgas. In the Vedas, they are said to have brought nectar from the heavens to earth. *Garuḍa* can also be used as a proper name for a king of such creatures.

g.20 hearer

nyan thos

ཉན་ཐོས།

śrāvaka

Someone who practices according to the Vehicle of the Hearers (those who hear the teachings from others); or, someone who heard the Dharma from the Buddha.

g.21 imitating the pleasant sound of the lion's roar

seng ge'i sgra mngon par bsgrags pa'i dbyangs yid du 'ong ba rjes su sgros pa

སང་གའི་སྒྲ་མངོན་པར་བསྒྲགས་པའི་དབྱངས་ཡིད་དུ་འོང་བ་རྗེས་སུ་སྒྲོས་པ།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.22 Immaculate Conduct

spyod pa yongs su dag pa dang ldan pa

སྟོན་པ་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པ་དང་ལྡན་པ།

—

The buddha realm of the buddha Saṃkusumita.

g.23 irreversibly

slar mi ldog pa

སྐར་མི་ལྷོག་པ།

avaivartika

Name of the bhūmis from the path of seeing on, from which point there is no regression.

g.24 Jambudvīpa

'dzam bu'i gling

འཛམ་བུའི་གླིང་།

jambudvīpa

Our known world, one of the four major continents within our world system.

g.25 Jinamitra

dzi na mi tra

ཇོན་མི་ཏེ།

jinamitra

An Indian Kashmiri paṇḍita who was resident in Tibet during the late eighth and early ninth centuries. He worked with several Tibetan translators on the translation of several sūtras. He is also the author of the *Nyāyabindupiṇḍārtha* (Toh 4233), which is contained in the Tibetan Tengyur (*bstan 'gyur*) collection.

g.26 kinnara

mi'am ci

མི་འམ་ཅི།

kinnara

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings that resemble humans to the degree that their very name—which means “is that human?”—suggests some confusion as to their divine status. Kinnaras are mythological beings found in both Buddhist and Brahmanical literature, where they are portrayed as creatures half human, half animal. They are often depicted as highly skilled celestial musicians.

g.27 liberated their minds from the defilements, without further appropriation

len pa med par zag pa rnams las sems rnam par grol

ལེན་པ་མེད་པར་ཟག་པ་རྣམས་ལས་སེམས་རྣམ་པར་གྲོལ།

anupādāyaśravebhyaś cittāni vimuktāni

To achieve liberation without needing to take further rebirth, or appropriation of the five aggregates, in saṃsāra.

g.28 limit of reality

yang dag mtha'

ཡང་དག་མཐའ།

bhūtakoti

This term has three meanings: (1) a synonym for the ultimate nature, (2) the experience of the ultimate nature, and (3) the quiescent state of a worthy one (arhat) to be avoided by bodhisattvas.

g.29 mahoraga

lto 'phye chen po

ལྷ་འཕྲི་ཆེན་པོ།

mahoraga

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Literally “great serpents,” mahoragas are supernatural beings depicted as large, subterranean beings with human torsos and heads and the lower bodies of serpents. Their movements are said to cause earthquakes, and they make up a class of subterranean geomantic spirits whose movement through the seasons and months of the year is deemed significant for construction projects.

g.30 major elements

'byung ba chen po

འབྲུང་བ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahābhūta

The four major elements here are air, fire, water, and earth. The fifth element of space is often added to this list.

g.31 mandārava

man dA ra ba

མན་རྒྱ་རབ།

mandārava

A mythical flower that grows only in pure realms and god realms.

g.32 Mañjuśrī

'jam dpal

འཇམ་དཔལ།

mañjuśrī

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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. In addition to the epithet Kumārabhūta, which means “having a youthful form,” Mañjuśrī is also called Mañjughoṣa, Mañjusvara, and Pañcaśikha.

g.33 māra

bdud

མཚན་མཚམས།

māra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

(1) The demon who assailed Śākyamuni prior to his awakening. (2) The deities ruled over by Māra who do not wish any beings to escape from saṃsāra. (3) Any demonic force, the personification of conceptual and emotional obstacles. They are also symbolic of the defects within a person that prevent awakening. (*Provisional 84000 definition. New definition forthcoming.*)

g.34 mental objects

yid kyi kham

ཡིད་ཀྱི་མཚན་མཚམས།

manodhātu

The sphere of the mind or intellect, all that appears to the mind that isn't one of the five sense objects. Also translated here as "objects of the mind."

g.35 nāga

klu

ལྷ།

nāga

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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.

g.36 objects of the mind

yid kyi kham

ཡིད་ཀྱི་མཚན་མཚམས།

manodhātu

The sphere of the mind or intellect, all that appears to the mind that isn't one of the five sense objects. Also translated here as "mental objects."

g.37 perfections

pha rol tu phyin pa

ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་བྱིན་པ།

pāramitā

The trainings of the bodhisattva path: generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, concentration, and knowledge.

g.38 Prince Mañjuśrī

'jam dpal gzhon nur gyur pa

འཇམ་དཔལ་གཞོན་ནུར་གྱུར་པ།

mañjuśrīkumārabhūta

See “Mañjuśrī.”

g.39 Rājagṛha

rgyal po'i khab

རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཁབ།

rājagṛha

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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.

g.40 realm of Dharma

chos kyi dbyings

ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

dharmadhātu

The “sphere of dharmas,” a synonym for the nature of things. Also translated here as “realm of phenomena.”

g.41 realm of phenomena

chos kyi dbyings

ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

dharmadhātu

The “sphere of dharmas,” a synonym for the nature of things. Also translated here as “realm of Dharma.”

g.42 Sahā

mi mjed

མི་མཛེད།

sahā

Our world system.

g.43 Śakra

brgya byin

བརྒྱ་བྱིན།

śakra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The lord of the gods. 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.

g.44 Śākyamuni

shAkya thub pa

ཤཱཀྱ་ཐུབ་པ།

śākyamuni

The buddha of this age; the historical buddha.

g.45 Saṃkusumita

me tog kun tu rgyas pa

མེ་ཏོག་ཀུན་ཏུ་རྒྱས་པ།

saṃkusumita

A buddha from another world.

g.46 showing the land

yul ston pa

ཡུལ་སྟོན་བ།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.47 solitary buddha

rang sangs rgyas

རང་སངས་རྒྱལ།

pratyekabuddha

Someone who obtains personal liberation through very little or no instruction from others.

g.48 source of inconceivable qualities, wellspring of the precious domain of wisdom, singular stream free of affliction

yon tan bsam gyis mi khyab pa'i 'byung gnas shes rab kyi yul rin po che'i 'byung khungs rgyun cig pa nyon mongs pa med pa

ཡོན་ཏན་བསམ་གྱིས་མི་ཁྱེད་པའི་འབྱུང་གནས་ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་འབྱུང་ཁུངས་རྒྱན་ཅིག་པ་ཉོན་མོངས་པ་མེད་པ།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.49 source of light

'od zer 'byung ba

འོད་ཟེར་འབྱུང་བ།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.50 Surendrabodhi

su ren dra bo dhi

སུ་རེན་བྲ་བོ་ནྱི།

surendrabodhi

An Indian paṇḍita resident in Tibet during the late eighth and early ninth centuries.

g.51 swift travel

mgyogs par 'gro ba

མགྲོགས་པར་འགྲོ་བ།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.52 the array of confident eloquence in all dharma teachings

chos thams cad la spobs pa bkod pa

ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་སྣོ་བས་པ་བཀོད་པ།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.53 the exalted king of all dhāraṇīs

zungts thams cad las mngon par 'phags pa'i rgyal po

བྱུངས་ཐམས་ཅད་ལས་མངོན་པར་འཕགས་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.54 the infinite immaculate

mtha' yas dri med

མཐའ་ཡས་འི་མེད།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.55 the symbol of all languages

sgra skad thams cad kyi brda'

སྐད་སྐད་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་བཅའ།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.56 truly creating all forms of joy, contentment, and satisfaction

dga' ba dang mgu ba dang tshim pa thams cad yang dag par bskyed pa

དགའ་བ་དང་མགུ་བ་དང་ཚིམ་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡང་དག་པར་བསྐྱེད་པ།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.57 unobstructed light

'od zer thogs pa med pa

འོད་ཟེར་ཐོགས་པ་མེད་པ།

—

Name of an absorption.

g.58 Vulture Peak Mountain

bya rgod kyi phung po

བྱ་རྗེ་ཀྱི་ཕུང་པོ།

grḍhrakūṭa

The mountain where many Mahāyāna teachings were delivered by Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.59 world of the Lord of Death

gshin rje'i 'jig rten

གཤིན་རྗེའི་འཇིག་རྟེན།

yamaloka

Epithet for the preta (hungry ghost) realm.

g.60 yakṣa

gnod sbyin

གནོད་སྦྱིན།

yakṣa

A class of semidivine beings said to dwell in the north, under the jurisdiction of the Great King Vaiśravaṇa, otherwise known as Kubera.

g.61 Yeshé Dé

ye shes sde

ཡེ་ཤེས་སྡེ།

—

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

