

༄། །ལྷ་མོ་སྣེ་ལ་མའི་མཚན་བརྒྱ་ཙུ་བརྒྱད་པ།

**The Hundred and Eight Names of the
Goddess Tārā**

Tārādevīnāmāṣṭaśataka



Toh 728
Degé Kangyur vol. 94 (rgyud 'bum, tsha), folios 219.a–222.a

Translated by Samye Translations
under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

First published 2022
Current version v 1.0.10 (2022)
Generated by 84000 Reading Room v2.16.19

84000: *Translating the Words of the Buddha* is a global non-profit initiative to translate all the Buddha's words into modern languages, and to make them available to everyone.



This work is provided under the protection of a Creative Commons CC BY-NC-ND (Attribution - Non-commercial - No-derivatives) 3.0 copyright. It may be copied or printed for fair use, but only with full attribution, and not for commercial advantage or personal compensation. For full details, see the Creative Commons license.

This print version was generated at 8.35pm on Thursday, 26th January 2023 from the online version of the text available on that date. If some time has elapsed since then, this version may have been superseded, as most of 84000's published translations undergo significant updates from time to time. For the latest online version, with bilingual display, interactive glossary entries and notes, and a variety of further download options, please see <https://read.84000.co/translation/toh728.html>.

co.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ti. Title
- im. Imprint
- co. Contents
- s. Summary
- ac. Acknowledgements
- i. Introduction
- tr. The Translation
 - 1. The Hundred and Eight Names of the Goddess Tārā
- n. Notes
- b. Bibliography
 - Primary Sources
 - Secondary Sources
- g. Glossary

SUMMARY

s.

- s.1 In this sūtra, the goddess Tārā recites a dhāraṇī before an assembly of gods, asuras, and spirits of various types, which brings them peace and stills their speech. The assembled beings then sing praise for Tārā in the form of one hundred and eight epithets of the goddess. Tārā gives a pithy teaching on the importance of seeking liberation and on the right attitude needed for this endeavor. Finally, the goddess gives encouragement and extols the power of the dhāraṇī.

ac.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ac.1 Translated by Samye Translations under the guidance of Phakchok Rinpoche. The translation and introduction were produced and edited by Roger Espel Llima, Stefan Mang, Lowell Cook, Ryan Conlon, and Alex Yiannopoulos.

INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 This sūtra opens with an homage to the goddess Tārā, to whom the text is dedicated. Tārā immediately pronounces a dhāraṇī in front of an audience of gods, asuras, and spirits of various types. Awed by Tārā's presence, they all praise her powers. In the central portion of the sūtra, the assembled beings offer homage and praise to Tārā in the form of a list of epithets of the goddess. At the end of this recitation, Tārā responds with some words of encouragement and gives a brief teaching on the path to liberation as well as on the importance of applying unwavering effort to cross over the ocean of cyclic existence. The text concludes with Tārā extolling the power of the dhāraṇī she previously pronounced, detailing its salvific effects, and praising those who uphold it. At the end of the sūtra, the audience is filled with joy, and we are told that their speech has been completely stilled.

i.2 The sūtra can be divided into three sections. The first section centers on the dhāraṇī. After a brief introduction, Tārā recites the dhāraṇī, "which had never been seen or heard before," and we are told of its effect on the audience. The second section, which is the longest and constitutes the core of the text, is composed of the list of epithets of the goddess Tārā. These epithets are given in the form of thirty-five four-line verses, and it is not obvious how to count exactly 108 names in them. This list of names is quite different from the most well-known list of Tārā's names found in *One Hundred and Eight Names of the Noble Lady Tārā* (Toh 727; *rje btsun ma 'phags ma sgrol ma'i mtshan brgya rtsa brgyad pa*). There is very little overlap in the epithets, but many of them echo similar themes related to Tārā's forms, qualities, attributes, and activities. The third and final section takes the form of a pithy teaching given by Tārā to her audience.

i.3 Since this sūtra lacks a colophon, it offers no contextual information besides the original Sanskrit title. In particular, it is not known when or by whom it was translated into Tibetan. The Sanskrit text does not appear to be extant, and there do not appear to be any Indian or Tibetan authors who

commented on it. The text was translated into Chinese by Fa Tian in the late tenth century under the title 聖多羅菩薩一百八名陀羅尼經 (*Sheng duoluo pusa yibai ba ming tuoluoni jing*, Taishō 1105). This sūtra has not been previously translated into any European language, and it has only been mentioned in passing in scholarly works on Tārā,¹ which makes it a relatively unexplored text.

i.4 This English translation is based on the Tibetan version in the Degé Kangyur. The Comparative Edition (*dpe sdur ma*) Kangyur, the Stok Palace Kangyur, and the Phukdrak Kangyur were consulted for variant readings.

The Translation

The Hundred and Eight Names of the Goddess Tārā

1. The Hundred and Eight Names of the Goddess Tārā

[F.219.a]

- 1.1 Homage to the great goddess Tārā, the completely victorious jewel, who, with her exquisite necklace, garments, and lower robes, is a canopy for the great worldly realm. [F.219.b]

At that time, the goddess Tārā uttered this supreme dhāraṇī, which had never been seen or heard before:

- 1.2 *om trailokyavijaya | acittajaya | aniracijataya | sujaya | vijaya | mahājaya | vijaya² | jaya jaya | he he | smara smara | vara vara varada | mahādevi | vilasa | vilasa | vilasa | vāja amotakari vijayadevi | hī hī | kiṇi kiṇi³ vilambase | smara smara | mahāprajñā anipata | vajramahākāruṇika⁴ | bhagini hrūṇ hrūṇ | sphuṭa sphuṭa | sphoṭa sphoṭa | āveśaya āveśaya | dhuna dhuna | vidhuna vidhuna | kampa kampa | kampaya | surabhigandha | atisita | mukhe haladavala | saṃgarājana | vimaviḡi | vināśaya vināśaya | he bhagavati | santrāsaya⁵ viḡhanān | parivalāya asmākaṇ asmākaṇ | mādani mādani | saṃbodhaya | saṃmohaya | hara hara | hiri hiri | huru huru | vitakara | varāja | haṇ haṇ | trotāya | haṇ haṇ | santratāya | santroya | manta manta | marda marda | cara cara | saṃcara saṃcara | vega vega vegavati | namo namo namaḥ svāhā |⁶*

- 1.3 Upon hearing this great mantra,
Supremely renowned in the three realms,
The assemblies of gods and asuras,
Together with the hordes of rākṣasas,
Yakṣas, kinnaras, mahoragas,
Bhūtas, gandharvas, and vināyakas,
Grew afraid and hung their heads low.
With their mighty arms trembling, they said:

- 1.4 “Homage to you, Tārā, the broad-eyed one,
Who turns away the speech of Kāmadeva,
So that your names⁷ may fill the three realms!
- 1.5 “Proclaimer of Avalokiteśvara’s lineage,
Light renowned for its greatness, O broad-eyed one,
You came into being to help sentient beings!”
- 1.6 Then, all the gods and asuras,
Such as Śiva and the others, gathered together.
The lords among vidyādharas
And the vidyādharas themselves
Draped their upper garments across their shoulders,
Performed excellent circumambulations, and,
Bending their knees to the ground,
Spoke the following words: [F.220.a]
- 1.7 “O Tārā, goddess of blazing light,
To you we pay homage! Homage! Homage to you!
Your hundred and eight peerless and pristine names
We will now recite:
- 1.8 “Glorious, exalted one, ever victorious and propitious,
Your extrasensory powers are as swift as Prajāpati’s.
Your fierceness instills fear in the Lord of Love,⁸
Yet you are free of carelessness and conceit.
- 1.9 “Your eyes, face, and navel
Are lotus-like and exude purity.
Your broad, beautiful eyes glow blue⁹
Like the blue of the utpala flower.
- 1.10 “You protect all those worthy of care,
Granting them happiness, strength, and beauty.
Protector and fierce guardian,
You enact the deeds of the Three Jewels.
- 1.11 “Your lips and fingernails shine red.
With bloodshot eyes you gaze.
Joyful, lotus-like force of joy,
You are the color of the lotus, in whose hues you delight!
- 1.12 “With your extraordinary strength and frightful attire
You tame and pacify the three worlds.

Subduer who acts to tame beings,
Noble one, you are praised as supreme among all.¹⁰

- 1.13 “Holder of the vajra of resplendent clarity that tames beings,
Utterly victorious clear light,
You are awake, beyond taint or stain,
And you are honored¹¹ by Candra and the outstanding gods.
- 1.14 “Your beautiful beams of light
Pervade all objects of desire.¹²
Majestic in your battle with Varuṇa,
Supreme one, your mind is naturally expansive and pervasive.
- 1.15 “With your triple crown ornament, three belly folds,¹³ and three eyes
You clear away the three defilements.
Dispeller of phenomenal existence, lady of deep virtue,
You are also renowned for your eloquence.
- 1.16 “You grant victory and merit
And fearlessly vanquish evil.
Lady of peace who grants wealth and luster,
Your form, belly, and bosom are most elegant!
- 1.17 “Lady of illusion who tames the field of illusory displays,¹⁴
You uphold discipline and dispel all impurity.
Holding a garland, you bring elation,
Grant exhilaration,¹⁵ and remove all conceit.
- 1.18 “Wrathful lady who inspires splendor,
White lady of bliss who brings peace,
Sovereign lady of all living beings, noble and mighty goddess, [F.220.b]
You hold and bestow sacred knowledge.¹⁶
- 1.19 “Your moon-like face glows with moonlight,
Stealing away the moon’s own effulgence.
Lady who delights in robbing the radiance of the sun,
You are beautiful, exalted, and wholly at peace!
- 1.20 “Blissful¹⁷ steppingstone to happiness,
You remove all that stands in the way of good fortune.
You make wealth increase and merit ever-victorious.
You gleam like gold and silver from the Jambu River.
- 1.21 “Dispeller of fears and bestower of fearlessness,
You are Tārā; your face is like the moon.

You never stray far from any sentient being.
You bring joy and are worthy of worship and homage.

- 1.22 “Your exalted garments glimmer with blue hues;
You are beautifully adorned with red ornaments;
And, like Gaṅgā, you dress in yellow clothing.
Blazing white lady, you are all-seeing!
- 1.23 “Fragrant as a ball of bezoar,
You are the adamantine Varuṇa and retinue.
Fearsome lady, queen of the supreme maṇḍala,
With your white teeth you laugh and smile.
- 1.24 “You wear armlets, earrings, and bracelets
And are wreathed in glimmering crystal necklaces.
Lady with a face of beauty, wearing a superb sash,
You are accompanied by the one who holds a sprig of neem leaves.¹⁸
- 1.25 “You wear a jeweled diadem, hold a jewel,
And are adorned with jeweled ornaments.
You are adorned with a band of beautiful gems,
And sparkle like precious stones.
- 1.26 “Vajra lady, you radiate with blazing colors,
Awakening men and women both.
Fanged one who wields the rod¹⁹ of peace,
You are as strong as Brahmā and as swift as the wind.²⁰
- 1.27 “You are the woman who descends from the sky
And shines with the light of a supreme goddess.²¹
Luminous one who conquers through desire,
You have vanquished the torment of desire.
- 1.28 “Wrathful one with a topknot and diadem, victorious one,
You are Brahmā and have the speech of Brahmā.
Your beautiful voice rings like the call of the kalaviṅka.²²
Sovereign of the world, you are born within the supreme family!
- 1.29 “Fierce lady adorned with the resplendence of jewels
And holding a staff with adamantine leaves,
Your immaculate earrings sway as you move.
Such is how you dawn in the minds of those in Yama’s realm.²³
- 1.30 “You are the one taking the form of a vidyādhari.
You are endowed with five strengths and bestow strength. [F.221.a]

Wielding strength as well as absence of strength,²⁴
You cut with the blade of wisdom.

- 1.31 “You are crafty and full of art,
And your voice resounds mightily,
Like a bouquet of campaka flowers
Brightens a courtyard or hall from above.²⁵
- 1.32 Wrathful one, you hold a bouquet in your hand
And are an excellent support for yellow-clad monastics.²⁶
Fortunate one, you are decked in ornaments²⁷
And experience great delight.
- 1.33 “Vajra fury who brings joy,
You are endowed with the signs and great strength of your lineage.
With your bliss, intelligence, and adamant means,
You bestow understanding²⁸ and increase wisdom.
- 1.34 “Goddess of the resplendent diadem,
Your manner is greater than all the gods.
As Nārāyaṇī, you dispel negativity,
And you delight in auspiciousness and modesty.
- 1.35 “Lady of gladness, you delight all who associate with you
And you delight in those who delight in wholesome conduct.
Delightful lady who exudes delight,
You are an excellent support for all qualities.²⁹
- 1.36 “Lady who emanates buddha emanations,
And who works to dispel pride,
You destroy karma and afflictions,
And conquer all forms of desire.
- 1.37 “You are a buddha with the ten knowledges,
And you uphold the ten perfections.
You have reached the ten grounds,
And shine bright with the light of the ten strengths.
- 1.38 “You wear a vajra diadem and wield a vajra.
With your subtle vajra you clear away asuras.
With the vajra of time³⁰ you bring elation,
And you wield the vajra hook of bliss and glory.
- 1.39 “Charming lady who holds a vajra in her hand
And wields a vajra lasso, an excellent lasso,

You are captivating; you bring satisfaction to the mind,
And you dispel all opponents and obstacle makers.

1.40 “You bring about contentment and great happiness,
And reveal the way of play and dance.
Rich in Dharma, you have the radiance of halāhala.
Giver of the Dharma, your gaze is vast.

1.41 “You are a vajra emanation,
And are said to be vajra nectar.
Great goddess, powerful with a blazing vajra,
To you we pay homage!

1.42 “With this praise of ours,
We recite your hundred and eight sublime names.
Amazing! The supreme Blessed One herself³¹ [F.221.b]
Has spoken the most sublime of utterances.”³²

1.43 Then, the magnificent goddess Tārā,
Who is like the light of the moon
And blazes with radiance,
Revealed a smile and spoke:

1.44 “Maheśvara and the rest of you,
Listen now to my words.
Always be agreeable with everyone
As you strive to attain the ten strengths.
At all times, protect the great way
Of the thus-gone ones.
Keeping your minds on the path of peace,
You must cross over the unbearable ocean of cyclic existence,
Which is the source of great terrors
And is so difficult to ford.
Setting your mind upon the city of nirvāṇa,
You must strive for it and enter it.”

1.45 Then Tārā, whose face is as beautiful
As a garland of the sun’s blazing rays,
Spoke the following words
Like the rumbling thunder of the Thus-Gone One:

1.46 “O wonder! This excellent vidyāmantra of Tārā
Clears away all darkness,
Creates immense power and strength,

And cuts through all obscurations.

- 1.47 “This dhāraṇī, which brings so much joy,
Will not be heard by the masses
Who have not purified themselves
By cultivating inner confidence.
- 1.48 “This great samaya, the samaya of this vidyāmantra,
Will arise for those
Who have developed stable confidence,
From their prior efforts toward buddhahood.
- 1.49 “Whoever upholds this sublime, indestructible dhāraṇī-mantra,
Which quells all afflictions,
Eliminates all negativity,
And nurtures all beings—³³
Whoever, in meditative equipoise,
Hears it, reads it, or keeps it in mind—
Will accomplish all their aims
As was stated by the Self-Arisen One.
- 1.50 “They will be liberated from all affliction,
Become the most excellent of sentient beings,
And will be equal to the thus-gone ones
Who are immersed in knowledge of every world’s phenomena.
- 1.51 “Whoever chants these hundred and eight names
And praises Tārā’s moon-like face in this way [F.222.a]
Will reach buddhahood itself.
They will accomplish all their aims
And gain control over kings, powerful people,
And any number of other beings.
- 1.52 “This praise, known as *The Hundred and Eight Names of the Goddess Tārā with a
Lovely Face*,
Fills the many worlds
And dispels all afflictions and everything untoward!
- 1.53 “Her body, which is like the supreme mountain of thus-gone ones,
Shakes the mountain ascended by the clans of māras.
She is the light that fully awakens gods and humans.
- 1.54 “This eminent one is renowned for her profound dedication
To the great collection of well-spoken teachings

Ceaselessly transmitted by the most eminent of the Victor's heirs
Through their stability in the unique³⁴ powers.
Appearing for the benefit of all, she condenses this Dharma,
And thus expertly soothes the fevers of the mind."

- 1.55 After these words that dispel unbearable afflictions,
And which produce a tranquil mind,
Were spoken by the supreme Victor,
Tārā remained still and did not speak further.
- 1.56 Astonished and enraptured by the sublime goddess Tārā,
The entire assembly of devas and asuras was filled with joy and wonder
Upon hearing these instructive words that evoke deep joy and grant
happiness and long life.
Overjoyed, they joined their hands above their heads as their speech was
stilled.
- 1.57 *This completes the dhāraṇī named "Supreme Tārā, the Hundred and Eight Names of
the Goddess Tārā."*

NOTES

n.

n.1 See Blonay (1895), p. 25; Martin (1996), p. 94; Beyer (1978), p. 476n53.

n.2 Against the Degé witness, we follow the Narthang and Stok Palace Kangyurs in reading *jaya* instead of *jāya* for the six words beginning with *acittajaya*.

n.3 Against the Degé witness, we follow Narthang and Stok Palace in reading *kiṇi kiṇi* in place of *kini kini*. This is based on parallel uses of *kiṇi kiṇi* in other dhāraṇīs.

n.4 Against the Degé witness, we follow Narthang and Stok Palace in reading *vajramahākaruṇika* in place of *vajramamamahākaruṇika*.

n.5 Against the Degé witness, we follow Narthang and Stok Palace in reading *saṅtrāsaya* in place of *santrasaya*.

n.6 This dhāraṇī has been reproduced primarily as it appears in the Degé witness of the Tibetan translation, and the word divisions have been arranged in a way that seems most appropriate given the available readings. This dhāraṇī employs conventions typical of dhāraṇīs, which are difficult to understand with precision and to translate. Moreover, it is evident that the transmission of this dhāraṇī has suffered from various corruptions. Therefore, it is not possible to conjecture alternative readings or offer a complete translation. Generally, the dhāraṇī can be understood to invoke the goddess as one who is described as victorious in various ways. She is asked to recollect her vows (*smara smara*) and to manifest beautifully (*vilasa vilasa*) as a great, boon-granting goddess. Her connections with vajra-emptiness and compassion are evoked, and she is asked to spring forth (*sphuṭa sphuṭa*), enter or possess (*āveśa āveśa*), shake (*kampa kampa*), and to make others shake (*kampaya*). Her fragrance and white color are mentioned, she is asked to terrorize obstructive forces (*saṅtrāsaya vighanān*), to “surround us” and

provide protection (*parivalāya asmākaṃ asmākaṃ*), and spring into action (*cara cara*). She is then described as one who is rich in driving force (*vegavati*). The dhāraṇī ends by paying homage to her (*namo namo namaḥ svāhā*).

- n.7 Reading *mtshan dag* in accordance with the Narthang and Stok Palace Kangyurs. Degé and other editions have *mtha' dag*.
- n.8 Tentatively interpreting the Tib. phrase *dbang phyug rab dga'* as a variant of *dga' rab dbang phyug*, which is an epithet of Kāmadeva.
- n.9 Tib. *sngo ba* and *sngon po* (both appear in the Tibetan verse) can refer to a range of colors from green (Skt. *harita*) to blue (Skt. *nīla*).
- n.10 Tib. *mi mchog dam pa* (Skt. *narottama* or *naravarapravara*), which more literally means “the very best of humans.”
- n.11 Narthang, Lhasa, and Stok Palace read *rje* (“lord”) instead of *rjed* (“to honor, to respect”), which makes “Lord over Candra and the outstanding gods.”
- n.12 Tentative for *sred bya dang ni sred bya'i bar*.
- n.13 Three folds or lines on the belly that typify feminine beauty in classical Indian aesthetics.
- n.14 Tib. *sgyu 'phrul sgyu 'phrul ldan zhing 'dul*. Tentatively reading the repeated word *sgyu 'phrul* (Skt. *māya*, “illusion” or “illusory display”) as first referring to Tārā herself. The Phukdrak Kangyur reads *sgyu phrul rdzu 'phrul ldan zhing 'dul*, “you tame the field of illusory and miraculous displays.”
- n.15 In Tibetan the word *rgyags*, whose meaning ranges from “exhilaration” to “vanity,” is repeated twice in close succession. Here it is translated as “elation” and “exhilaration” to avoid the repetition.
- n.16 Tib. *tshangs par ldan*, possibly from Skt. *brahmapat*. Could also be read as “possessing and granting purity.”
- n.17 Reading *bde ma* as attested in Narthang and Stok Palace. Degé reads *bde ba*.
- n.18 Reference unclear. Could also be read as “You hold [a sprig of] neem leaves as your companion.”
- n.19 Reading the Tib. *dbyig* as *dbyig pa*, corresponding to the Skt. *daṇḍa*.
- n.20 Tib. *rlung dang ldan*, possibly from Skt. *vāyuvat*, here understood as “wind-like” rather than the more literal reading “endowed with wind.” Understood

as *vāyuvat*, this phrase could also be read as “swift like Vāyu,” referring to the wind god.

- n.21 Following Stok Palace *'od 'phro ma* (Kangxi and Yongle also have *'od 'phro dang*, with the same general meaning). Other versions have *'od 'phrog ma*, “steals the light of the supreme goddess.”
- n.22 Tentatively reading *ping ka* as an abbreviation for *ka la ping ka* (Skt. *kalaviṅka*), the kalaviṅka bird.
- n.23 Translation tentative.
- n.24 Meaning unclear; Lhasa has *stobs mang* (“many strengths”) rather than *stobs med* (“lack of strength”), but all other editions agree on *stobs med*.
- n.25 The reading of this verse is quite tentative. In the Tibetan, the relationships between Tārā’s skill and voice, a courtyard or (banquet) hall, and being illuminated by a bouquet of campaka flowers, are not made explicit. We read *khyams dang khyams bza'* (“courtyard and hall”) with the Narthang Kangyur, where Degé has the repetition *khyams dang khyams bzang* (“courtyard and excellent courtyard”).
- n.26 This reading is also highly conjectural. We read *ser mo tsan pa* as *ser mo btsun pa* (“yellow-[clad] venerable ones”), for lack of a better alternative, despite the high level of agreement between the different witnesses. The Tibetan syllable *tsan* exists as part of the word *tsan dan* (“sandalwood”), so if *tsan* were taken to be short for *tsan dan*, a literal reading would be something like “excellent support for those to do with yellow sandalwood.”
- n.27 Another occurrence of the obscure word *gshal ka*, here tentatively translated as “ornament.”
- n.28 “Understanding” and “intelligence” here translate the same Tibetan word, *blo* (“intellect”).
- n.29 “Qualities” here translates the Tibetan word *chos*, Skt. *dharma*, which has a wide range of meanings.
- n.30 Reference unclear.
- n.31 Could also be understood as the Blessed One himself, meaning that the Buddha has recited the dhāraṇī at one point as well.
- n.32 Referring to the dhāraṇī that opens this text.

- n.33 Meaning unclear. Here, the Tib. term *rab 'byed pa* is understood to align with the Skt. term *prabhāvana*.
- n.34 Reading *khyad par stobs*, following the Lhasa, Narthang, Phukdrak, and Stok Palace Kangyurs. Degé reads *khyab par stobs* (“pervading power”).

b.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

· Primary Sources ·

lha mo sgrol ma'i mtshan brgya rtsa brgyad pa (*Tārādevīnāmāṣṭaśataka*). Toh 728, Degé Kangyur vol. 94 (rgyud, tsha), folios 219.a–222.a. Folio numbers in brackets refer to this edition.

lha mo sgrol ma'i mtshan brgya rtsa brgyad pa. bka' 'gyur (dpe bsdur ma) [Comparative Edition of the Kangyur], krung go'i bod rig pa zhib 'jug ste gnas kyi bka' bstan dpe sdur khang (The Tibetan Tripitaka Collation Bureau of the China Tibetology Research Center). 108 volumes. Beijing: krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang (China Tibetology Publishing House), 2006–9, vol. 94 pp. 582–91.

lha mo sgrol ma'i mtshan brgya rtsa brgyad pa. Stok Palace (stog pho brang) Kangyur vol. 107 (rgyud, ma), folios 122.a–126.a

rje btsun ma 'phags ma sgrol ma'i mtshan brgya rtsa brgyad pa. Toh 727, Degé Kangyur vol. 94 (rgyud, tsha), folios 217.a–219.a

· Secondary Sources ·

Beyer, Stephan. *The Cult of Tārā: Magic and Ritual in Tibet*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.

Blonay, Godefroy de. *Materiaux pour servir à l'histoire de la déesse buddhique Tārā*. Paris, 1895.

Willson, Martin. *In Praise of Tara: Songs to the Saviouress*. Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 1996.

g.

GLOSSARY

g.1

Asura

lha ma yin

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།

asura

One of the six classes of sentient beings. The asuras are dominated by envy, ambition, and hostility, and they are incessantly embroiled in disputes with the gods. They are frequently portrayed in Brahmanical and Buddhist mythology as having a disruptive effect on cosmological and social harmony.

Links to further resources:

[104 related glossary entries](#)

g.2

Avalokiteśvara

spyan ras gzigs

སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས།

Avalokiteśvara

Bodhisattva of compassion. One of the eight main bodhisattvas, the heart sons of the Buddha.

Links to further resources:

[57 related glossary entries](#)

g.3

Bezoar

gi'u wang

གི་ལུ་ཕང་།

gorocanā

A yellowish, fragrant substance obtained from the solidified bile of elephants and cattle.

Links to further resources:

[3 related glossary entries](#)

g.4 Bhūta

'byung po

འབྱུང་པོ།

bhūta

A specific class of nonhuman supernatural beings, or a term for spirits in general.

Links to further resources:

[37 related glossary entries](#)

g.5 Brahmā

tshangs pa

ཚངས་པ།

Brahmā

A major deity in the Brahmanical pantheon 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).

Links to further resources:

[122 related glossary entries](#)

g.6 Campaka

tsam pa ka

ཚམ་པ་ཀ།

campaka

A type of flower, often identified as *Magnolia champaca*.

Links to further resources:

[6 related glossary entries](#)

g.7 Candra

zla ba

ཟླ་བ།

Candra

The moon personified as a deity.

Links to further resources:

[15 related glossary entries](#)

g.8 Dhāraṇī

gzungs

གཟུངས།

dhāraṇī

The term *dhāraṇī* has the sense of something that “holds” or “retains,” and as such can refer to the special capacity of practitioners to memorize and recall detailed teachings. It can also refer to a verbal expression of the teachings—an incantation, spell, or mnemonic formula that distills and “holds” essential points of the Dharma and is used by practitioners to attain mundane and supramundane goals. The same term is also used to denote texts that contain such formulae.

Links to further resources:

[93 related glossary entries](#) · [View the 84000 Knowledge Base article](#)

g.9 Extrasensory powers

mngon shes

མངོན་ཤེས།

abhijñā

Supernatural powers of perception gained through spiritual practice. Their number and type can vary, but they are traditionally given as a set of five: (1) miraculous abilities, (2) clairvoyance, (3) clairaudience, (4) knowledge of others’ minds, and (5) recollection of past lives.

Links to further resources:

[43 related glossary entries](#)

g.10 Gandharva

dri za

དྲི་ཟ།

gandharva

A class of generally benevolent nonhuman beings who inhabit the sky and are most renowned as celestial musicians.

Links to further resources:

[113 related glossary entries](#)

g.11 Gaṅgā

gang ga ma

གང་ག་མ།

Gaṅgā

The Brahmanical goddess identified with the Ganges River.

Links to further resources:

[3 related glossary entries](#)

g.12 Halāhala

ha la ha la

ཧ་ལ་ཧ་ལ།

halāhala

A mythical poison, blue in color, created from the churning of the ocean by the devas and asuras.

Links to further resources:

[3 related glossary entries](#)

g.13 Jambu River

'dzam bu'i chu bo

འཛམ་བུ་འི་ཚུ་བོ།

—

A divine river whose gold is believed to be especially fine.

Links to further resources:

[32 related glossary entries](#)

g.14 Kalaviṅka

ka la ping ka

ཀ་ལ་ཕིང་ཀ།

kalaviṅka

In Buddhist literature refers to a mythical bird with the head of a human and the body of a bird. The kalaviṅka's call is said to be far more beautiful than that of all other birds—so compelling that it can be heard even before the bird has hatched. The call of the kalaviṅka is also used as an analogy to describe the voice of the Buddha.

Links to further resources:

[19 related glossary entries](#)

g.15 Kāmadeva

dod pa'i lha

དོད་པའི་ལྷ།

Kāmadeva

The god of love and desire in the Brahmanical pantheon. In Buddhist literature, he is often associated with Māra.

g.16 Kinnara

mi'am ci

མི་འམ་ཅི།

kinnara

A class of nonhuman beings who are half human, half animal. Typically, their upper bodies are animal, and their lower bodies human. The term literally means “Is that human?” Kinnaras are celebrated for their celestial voices.

Links to further resources:

[78 related glossary entries](#)

g.17 Lord of Love

dbang phyug rab dga'

དབང་ཕྱུག་རབ་དགའ།

—

An epithet of Kāmadeva.

g.18 Maheśvara

dbang phyug chen po

དབང་ཕྱུག་ཆེན་པོ།

Maheśvara

A name for Śiva.

Links to further resources:

[47 related glossary entries](#)

g.19 Mahoraga

lto 'phye chen po

ལྷོ་འཕྱེ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahoraga

Literally “large serpent.” A subterranean, semidivine being that takes the form of a large serpent, sometimes with a human torso and head.

Links to further resources:

[69 related glossary entries](#)

g.20 Māra

bdud

བརྩལ།

māra

A class of beings related to the demon Māra or a term for the demon Māra himself. Māra and the māras are portrayed as the primary adversaries and tempters of people who vow to take up the religious life. They can be understood as a class of demonic beings responsible for perpetuating the illusion that keeps beings bound to the world and worldly attachments and the mental states those beings elicit.

Links to further resources:

[113 related glossary entries](#)

g.21 Nārāyaṇī

sred med bu mo

སྲེད་མེད་བུ་མོ།

Nārāyaṇī

Female form of Nārāyaṇa, which is another name for Viṣṇu.

g.22 Nectar

bdud rtsi

བརྩལ་རྩི།

amṛta

The divine nectar that prevents death, often used as a metaphor for the Dharma.

Links to further resources:

[12 related glossary entries](#)

g.23 Neem

nim pa

ནིམ་པ།

nimba

Azadirachta indica.

Links to further resources:

1 related glossary entry

g.24 Prajāpati

skye dgu'i dbang phyug

སྐྱེ་དགུ་འི་དབང་ཕྱུག

Prajāpati

The Vedic deity associated with the creation of humanity and the human world.

Links to further resources:

10 related glossary entries

g.25 Rākṣasa

srin po

སྲིན་པོ།

rākṣasa

A class of nonhuman beings that are often, but certainly not always, considered harmful and demonic in the Buddhist tradition.

Links to further resources:

47 related glossary entries

g.26 Sash

'og pag

འོག་པག

—

Sash, waistband.

g.27 Śiva

dbang phyug

དབང་ཕྱུག

śiva

Major deity in the classical Indian religious traditions. He is sometimes portrayed as one part of the divine triad that also includes Brahmā and Viṣṇu.

g.28 Tārā

sgrol ma

—

སྲོལ་མ།

Tārā

Lit. “Savior.” Though often described as a goddess known for giving protection, she is variously presented in Buddhist literature as a great bodhisattva or a fully awakened buddha.

Links to further resources:

[14 related glossary entries](#)

g.29 Ten grounds

sa bcu

ས་བརྒྱ།

daśabhūmi

The ten levels of a bodhisattva’s development into a fully awakened buddha.

Links to further resources:

[12 related glossary entries](#)

g.30 Ten knowledges

shes pa bcu

ཤེས་པ་བརྒྱ།

daśajñāna

The ten knowledges, as given in the *Abhidharmakośa*, are (1) worldly knowledge, (2) the knowledge of phenomena (*dharmā*), (3) inferential knowledge, (4) knowledge of suffering, (5) knowledge of the origin of suffering, (6) knowledge of the cessation of suffering, (7) knowledge of the path, (8) knowledge of others’ minds, (9) knowledge of exhaustion, and (10) knowledge of non-arising.

g.31 Ten perfections

pha rol tu phyin pa bcu

ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་བརྒྱ།

daśapāramitā

A set of practices to be mastered by those on the bodhisattva path: (1) generosity, (2) discipline, (3) patience, (4) diligence, (5) meditative concentration, (6) wisdom, (7) skillful means, (8) strength, (9) aspirations, and (10) knowledge.

Links to further resources:

[4 related glossary entries](#)

g.32 Ten strengths

stobs bcu

ཏྲུབ་སྒྲུབ།

daśabala

A set of powers or qualities specifically possessed by a tathāgata: (1) the knowledge of what is possible and not possible; (2) the knowledge of the ripening of karma; (3) the knowledge of the variety of aspirations; (4) the knowledge of the variety of natures; (5) the knowledge of the different levels of capabilities; (6) the knowledge of the destinations of all paths; (7) the knowledge of various states of meditation (dhyāna, liberation, samādhi, samāpatti, and so on); (8) the knowledge of remembering previous lives; (9) the knowledge of deaths and rebirths; and (10) the knowledge of the cessation of defilements.

Links to further resources:

[36 related glossary entries](#) · [View the 84000 Knowledge Base article](#)

g.33 Utpala

ut+pala

ལྷ་ལྷ་ལ།

utpala

A type of blue flower often identified as a lotus or water lily.

Links to further resources:

[11 related glossary entries](#)

g.34 Varuṇa

chu lha

ལྷ་ལྷ།

Varuṇa

Vedic deity of the waters (and sometimes the sky) who is also regarded as a protector of cosmic order.

Links to further resources:

[20 related glossary entries](#)

g.35 Victor's heirs

rgyal sras

རྒྱལ་སྲས།

jinaputra

A synonym for bodhisattvas.

Links to further resources:

[4 related glossary entries](#)

g.36 Vidyādhara

rig sngags 'chang

འགྲུབ་ལྡན་འཇམ་མགོན།

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. The term is often applied to practitioners of Buddhist ritual magic.

Links to further resources:

[20 related glossary entries](#)

g.37 Vidyādhari

rig sngags 'chang ma

འགྲུབ་ལྡན་འཇམ་མགོན་མཚན་མོ།

vidyādhari

A female vidyādhara.

g.38 Vidyāmantra

rig sngags

འགྲུབ་ལྡན་མཚན་མོ།

vidyāmantra

A sacred utterance or spell made for the purpose of attaining either worldly or transcendent benefits.

Links to further resources:

[18 related glossary entries](#)

g.39 Vināyaka

log 'dren

ལོག་འདྲེན།

vināyaka

A class of nonhuman beings that deceive, harm, or otherwise obstruct humans, especially practitioners. Their name literally means “those who lead astray.”

Links to further resources:

[4 related glossary entries](#)

g.40 Yakṣa

gnod sbyin

གནོད་སྦྱིན།

yakṣa

A class of nonhuman beings that haunt or protect natural places and cities. They can be malevolent or benevolent, and they are known for bestowing wealth and worldly boons, or, alternatively, for creating obstacles and causing harm. They are often represented as the attendants of the god of wealth.

Links to further resources:

[96 related glossary entries](#)

g.41 Yama

gshin rje

གཤིན་རྗེ།

Yama

The Lord of Death who judges the dead and rules over the hells.

Links to further resources:

[50 related glossary entries](#)