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## The Prayer of Good Conduct

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*Bhadracaryāpraṇidhāna*

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*'phags pa bzang po spyod pa'i smon lam gyi rgyal po*

The Noble King of Prayers of Good Conduct

*Āryabhadracaryāpraṇidhānarāja*

· Toh 1095 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol.101 (gzungs 'dus, waṃ), folios 262.b–266.a



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## SUMMARY

- s.1 *The Prayer of Good Conduct* is among the most popular and widely recited aspiration prayers (Skt. *praṇidhāna*, Tib. *smon lam*) in all Mahāyāna Buddhist traditions. It evokes, in the first person, the aspiration to worship all buddhas who pervade every atom of the multiverse, and to pursue enlightenment and the benefit of all beings. The prayer—and particularly its first twelve verses that cover the seven aspects of homage, offering, confession, rejoicing, entreaty, supplication, and dedication—is regularly recited as part of many practices in Tibetan Buddhism. There are numerous translations of the prayer in many modern languages made from Tibetan, Sanskrit, and Chinese.

ac.

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ac.1 This English translation was made by Peter Alan Roberts based on the Tibetan and Sanskrit. Emily Bower was the project manager and editor. Ling Lung Chen was the Chinese consultant and Tracy Davis was the copyeditor.

ac.2 The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha. George FitzHerbert edited the introduction, and Ven. Konchog Norbu copyedited the text. Martina Cotter was in charge of the digital publication process.

## INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 *The King of Prayers of Good Conduct* is among the few Kangyur texts familiar to most practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism, as it is regularly recited, and the first twelve verses in particular are often incorporated into sādhanas.

i.2 The full prayer, in sixty-three verses, commences with a form of the seven branches: homage, offering, confession, rejoicing, requesting that the wheel of Dharma be turned, requesting the buddhas not to pass into nirvāṇa, and the dedication of merit. This is followed by the aspiration to be pure in mind and conduct, and to benefit beings by teaching the Dharma through miraculous powers and the ability to speak many languages. Dedication is then made to benefiting infinite beings throughout all time, and to receiving teachings from the countless buddhas that pervade every atom of the multiverse. The prayer then describes the benefits that come from its recitation: purification of karma, excellence in life, rebirth in Sukhāvātī, and eventually buddhahood. The prayer concludes with the aspiration to be reborn in Sukhāvātī, and the aspiration that the prayer may benefit all beings.

i.3 *The Prayer of Good Conduct* is included in all the Kangyurs as a standalone text in sixty-three verses, and is also found, in sixty-two verses, at the end of *The Stem Array*,<sup>1</sup> which itself concludes the *Ornaments of the Buddhas* (Skt. *Buddhāvataṃsaka*, Tib. *phal chen*; Toh 44). In *The Stem Array*, it is stated that the prayer was put into verse by the bodhisattva Samantabhadra. As a result, it is also referred to as “The Prayer of Samantabhadra” (Tib. *kun tu bzang po’i smon lam*).

i.4 The prayer likely first appeared in textual form in Sanskrit sometime before the fifth century CE. Its inclusion at the end of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* is considered a relatively late accretion, since earlier versions of the sūtra, such as those translated into Chinese by Shengjian between 388 and 408 CE (Taishō 294), by Buddhahadra between 418 and 422 (Taishō 278), and by Śikṣānanda between 695 and 699 (Taishō 279), did not include it. It was first translated



into Chinese as a standalone prayer in forty-four verses by Buddhahadra between 418 and 420 (Taishō 296), though he did not include it in the translation of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* that he was working on in the same period.<sup>2</sup> Amoghavajra's eighth-century Chinese translation of the standalone prayer contains sixty-two verses (Taishō 297). The prayer then appears for the first time at the conclusion of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* in the Chinese translation made by Prajñā in 798 (Taishō 293), reputedly from a Sanskrit manuscript donated to the Tang emperor by the king of Orissa.<sup>3</sup>

i.5 The translation of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* into Tibetan in the early ninth century likewise includes the prayer in sixty-two verses. The translators, as stated in the colophon to the entire *Ornaments of the Buddhas* in the Degé Kangyur, were the Tibetan master-translator Yeshé Dé, together with Jinamitra and Surendrabodhi, indicating a translation made under Tibetan imperial sponsorship in the early ninth century. The colophons of the Narthang, Lhasa, Stok Palace, Ulaanbaatar, and Phukdrak Kangyurs, however, ascribe the translation to Vairotsana, while the catalog (Tib. *dkar chag*) of the Degé Kangyur mentions the three translators as above but adds that Lochen Vairotsana acted as the editor.<sup>4</sup>

i.6 The prayer is a fitting conclusion to *The Stem Array*, even if it was not originally a part of it. *The Stem Array* often repeats the phrase “the completely good conduct and aspiration of a bodhisattva,” and its longest chapter centers on the bodhisattva Samantabhadra. As the name Samantabhadra means “completely good,” it can be ambiguous in the Tibetan whether the sūtra is referring to “completely good conduct and aspiration” or to “Samantabhadra's conduct and aspiration.” The Sanskrit syntax makes it clear that it is the former, but in both name and qualities, Samantabhadra is perfect for the recitation of the prayer.

i.7 The Tibetan standalone version of the prayer in sixty-three verses has no colophon, which suggests that it was extracted from *The Stem Array*. However, the prayer is listed as a standalone text in both the Denkarma and Phangthangma translation catalogs.<sup>5</sup>

i.8 The Tibetan throughout is in nine-syllable meter and four-line verses for ease of recitation, and quickly became well known in Tibet. A verse from the prayer was inscribed on a temple bell at Yerpa (near Lhasa) in the early ninth century.<sup>6</sup> The prayer is also found in many iterations among the Tibetan manuscripts retrieved from the cave library at Dunhuang and now kept at the Bibliothèque National de France and the British Library.<sup>7</sup> A fine manuscript of the standalone prayer in sixty verses is found, for example, at the beginning of Pelliot tibétain 116.<sup>8</sup>

- i.9 Five commentaries on the prayer are included in the Sūtra Commentary (*mdo 'grel*) section of the Tengyur (Toh 4011–4015). These are attributed to Nāgārjuna (Toh 4011), Dignāga (Toh 4012), Śākyamitra (Toh 4013), \*Subhūṣita<sup>9</sup> (Toh 4014), and Vasubandhu (Toh 4015). It was also the subject of what may be among the first commentaries written in Tibetan, composed by the translator Yeshé Dé. This is found in the Miscellaneous (*sna tshogs*) section of the Tengyur (Toh 4359).
- i.10 The earliest extant Sanskrit manuscript of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* dates to 1166, several hundred years after the Chinese and Tibetan translations were made. It consists of 289 palm-leaf pages and was obtained from Nepal and presented to the Royal Asiatic Society in London by Brian Houghton Hodgson in 1835. Modern critical editions of the Sanskrit text are primarily based on this source.<sup>10</sup> The Sanskrit Buddhist tradition has continued in Nepal, where the *Gaṇḍavyūha* remains one of the nine central works (Skt. *navadharmā*) of Newar Buddhism.
- i.11 The Tibetan standalone text of *The Prayer of Good Conduct* is among a selection of important aspiration prayers found variously located in different Kangyurs. In Kangyurs of the Tshalpa lineage that have a Compendium of Dhāraṇīs (*gzungs 'dus*), it is found at the end of that section, and in those that do not, it is found at the end of the corresponding part of the Tantra (*rgyud*) section. In the Themphangma lineage of Kangyurs, it is found at the end of the General Sūtra (*mdo sde*) section. In the Yongle, Peking Qianlong, Lithang, Choné, and Berlin Kangyurs, the standalone text is also duplicated at the end of the Vinaya (*'dul ba*) section. The prayer is also found in the Dedication and Aspiration Prayers (*bsngo smon bkra shis*) section of the Degé Tengyur (Toh 4377). Though there are numerous small orthographic variations among these many Tibetan editions of *The Prayer of Good Conduct*, no major divergences have been identified. The main identifying features of the standalone prayer, as compared to the version at the end of *The Stem Array*, are the homage to Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta at the beginning, and an additional verse at the end.
- i.12 The prayer has been translated a number of times into English and other languages, particularly the first twelve verses that appear as part of many practices in Tibetan Buddhism. It has been the subject of many commentaries in the past, and in the present day continues to be a frequent subject of oral teachings. With the exception of the last verse of the prayer, this translation has been excerpted in its entirety from the 84000 translation of *The Stem Array*.

**The Noble King of  
Prayers of Good Conduct**

1.

## The Translation

[F.262.b]

- 1.1 Homage to Noble Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta.
- 1.2 However many<sup>11</sup> lions among men there are  
In the three times, in the worlds in the ten directions,  
I pay homage to them all without exception,  
With purity of body, speech, and mind. {1}
- 1.3 Thinking that all the jinas are before me,  
With the power of the prayer of good conduct,  
I bow down toward all the jinas [F.263.a]  
With as many bodies as there are atoms in the realms.<sup>12</sup> {2}
- 1.4 There are as many buddhas as atoms within a single atom,  
Seated in the midst of bodhisattvas.<sup>13</sup>  
I focus on the entire realm of phenomena,  
Without exception, being filled by jinas in that way. {3}
- 1.5 I recite a praise of all the sugatas,  
Enumerating the qualities of all the jinas,  
With unending oceans of eulogies  
And the sound of oceans of every quality of voice. {4}
- 1.6 I make an offering to those jinas  
Of perfect flowers, perfect garlands,  
Perfect music, ointments, and parasols,  
Perfect lights, and perfect incenses. {5}
- 1.7 I make offerings to those jinas  
Of perfect clothing and perfect perfumes,  
Pouches of scented powders equal to Mount Meru,

- And all perfect, sublime displays. {6}
- 1.8 Offerings that are unsurpassable and exalted  
I am resolved to offer to all the jinas.  
I praise and make offerings to all the jinas  
Through the power of devotion<sup>14</sup> to good conduct.{7}
- 1.9 Whatever bad actions I have done  
Under the power of desire, anger, and ignorance,  
With my body, speech, and mind,  
I make a confession of them all. {8}
- 1.10 I am rejoicing in the entirety of merit  
In the ten directions that is created by beings,  
By practicing and accomplished pratyekabuddhas,<sup>15</sup>  
By the bodhisattvas, and by all the jinas.<sup>16</sup> {9}
- 1.11 I make the request to all the lords,  
The lamps of the worlds in the ten directions,  
Who have attained without impediment the enlightenment of buddhahood,  
That they turn the unsurpassable wheel. {10}
- 1.12 With palms placed together, I supplicate  
Those who wish to manifest passing into nirvāṇa  
That they remain for as many kalpas as there are atoms in the realms,  
[F.263.b]  
For the benefit and happiness of all beings. {11}
- 1.13 Whatever little virtue<sup>17</sup> I have accumulated  
Through homage, offering, confession,  
Rejoicing, supplication, and entreating,  
I dedicate it all to enlightenment. {12}
- 1.14 May the buddhas of the past and those who are present  
In the worlds of the ten directions be offered to.  
May those in the future swiftly fulfill  
Their aspirations for the enlightenment of buddhahood. {13}
- 1.15 May the realms that are in the ten directions  
Become purified and sublime.<sup>18</sup>  
May they become filled with jinas, who have come  
To the Bodhi tree, the lord of trees, and with bodhisattvas. {14}
- 1.16 However many beings there are in the ten directions,  
May they all be always happy and healthy.

- May all beings be successful in their Dharma goals,  
And may their wishes be fulfilled. {15}
- 1.17 May I practice the conduct of enlightenment  
And remember my lives in all existences.  
May I always practice mendicancy  
In all my lifetimes of deaths and rebirths. {16}
- 1.18 Following the teaching of all the jinas  
And perfecting my good conduct,  
May I always practice stainless, pure,  
Correct conduct that is flawless and unblemished. {17}
- 1.19 May I teach the Dharma in all languages,  
Whatever the languages of beings:  
Through the languages of devas, the languages of nāgas,  
The languages of yakṣas, kumbhāṇḍas, and humans. {18}
- 1.20 May one who is gentle<sup>19</sup> and dedicated to the perfections  
Never forget the aspiration to enlightenment.  
May the obscurations of bad karma  
Be purified without any remainder. {19}
- 1.21 May my conduct, even in the worldly existences,  
Be free of karma, kleśas, and the actions<sup>20</sup> of Māra,  
Just as the lotus is unstained by water  
And the sun and moon are unobstructed in the sky. {20}
- 1.22 May I end all the sufferings of lower existences  
And establish all beings in happiness,  
Practicing a conduct that brings benefit to all beings  
Throughout the directions and the extent<sup>21</sup> of realms. {21}
- 1.23 May I practice this conduct in all future kalpas,  
Conforming with the conduct of beings,  
Perfecting the conduct of enlightenment,  
And teaching good conduct.<sup>22</sup> {22} [F.264.a]
- 1.24 May I always be in the company of those  
Whose conduct is in harmony with my conduct.  
May my body, my speech, and also my mind  
Practice the same conduct and have the same prayer.<sup>23</sup> {23}
- 1.25 May I always associate  
With friends who wish to benefit me

- And teach me the correct conduct,  
And may I never displease them. {24}
- 1.26 May I always see before me the jinas,  
The lords who are encircled by bodhisattvas,  
And may I make vast<sup>24</sup> offerings to them,  
Without wearying, throughout all future kalpas. {28}
- 1.27 Keeping the good Dharma of the jinas,  
Expounding<sup>25</sup> the conduct of enlightenment,  
And purifying the good conduct,  
May I practice that conduct in all future kalpas. {26}
- 1.28 While circling through all existences,  
May I obtain inexhaustible merit and knowledge.  
May I be<sup>26</sup> an inexhaustible treasure of wisdom,  
Methods, samādhis, liberations, and all good qualities. {27}
- 1.29 There are realms as numerous as atoms in each atom,  
And while practicing the conduct of enlightenment,  
May I see in those realms countless buddhas  
Who are seated in the midst of bodhisattvas. {28}
- 1.30 May I engage in practicing conduct for an ocean of kalpas  
Within every hair's breadth in every direction,  
Without exception, in which there are an ocean  
Of buddhas of the three times, and an ocean of realms. {29}
- 1.31 May I always comprehend<sup>27</sup> the speech of the buddhas,  
Which, through having an ocean of languages in a single syllable,  
Has the purity of the aspects of the speech of all the jinas  
And words that accord with the aspirations of all beings.<sup>28</sup> {30}
- 1.32 May I comprehend, through the power of the mind,  
The unceasing sounds of the voices  
Of the jinas in<sup>29</sup> the three times,  
Who are turning the wheel in various ways.<sup>30</sup> {31} [F.264.b]
- 1.33 May I enter all the future kalpas,  
Entering them in a single instant,  
And in a fraction of an instant practice  
The conduct throughout the kalpas of the three times. {32}
- 1.34 May I in a single instant see  
The lions among humans in<sup>31</sup> the three times.

- Through the power of the liberation of being an illusion,  
May I always enter into their conduct. {33}
- 1.35 May the displays of realms in the three times  
Be accomplished within a single atom.  
May I perceive such displays of the realms of the jinas  
That are in every direction without exception. {34}
- 1.36 May I go into the presence of all those lords,  
Those future lamps of the world, who will successively  
Attain enlightenment, turn the wheel,  
And demonstrate the final peace of entering nirvāṇa. {35}
- 1.37 Through the power of miracles that has complete speed,  
Through the power of yānas<sup>32</sup> that possesses every gateway,  
Through the power of conduct that has the complete qualities,  
Through the power of love that is universal, {36}
- 1.38 Through the power of merit that has complete goodness,  
Through the power of knowledge that is without impediment,  
Through the power of wisdom, methods, and samādhi,  
May I accomplish the power of enlightenment. {37}
- 1.39 May I purify the power of karma,  
Destroy the power of the kleśas,  
Render powerless the power of the māras,  
And make complete all the powers of good conduct. {38}
- 1.40 May I purify an ocean of realms,  
Liberate an ocean of beings,  
See an ocean of the Dharma,  
And realize<sup>33</sup> an ocean of knowledge. {39}
- 1.41 May I purify an ocean of conduct,  
Fulfill an ocean of prayers,  
Make offerings to an ocean of buddhas,  
And have tireless conduct for an ocean of kalpas. {40}
- 1.42 May I, through good conduct, realize enlightenment  
And fulfill, without exception,  
All the specific prayers of enlightened conduct  
That are made by the jinas in the three times. {41}
- 1.43 I dedicate all this virtue [F.265.a]  
So that I may have the same conduct as that wise one,



- The eldest son of all the jinas,  
Whose name is Samantabhadra.<sup>34</sup> {42}
- 1.44 Just as the good wise one made a dedication  
For a pure body, speech, and mind,  
A pure conduct, and a pure realm,  
May it be the same for me. {43}
- 1.45 May I practice the conduct of Mañjuśrī's prayer  
Of good conduct, for complete goodness,  
Without weariness throughout the kalpas to come.  
May I complete all those activities without exception. {44}
- 1.46 May there be no limit to that conduct;  
May there be no limit to those good qualities,  
And having maintained a conduct that has no limit,  
May I give rise to all those miraculous powers. {45}
- 1.47 If there were an end to space,  
There would be an end to all beings.  
Only when their karma and kleśas end  
Will my prayers also come to an end. {46}
- 1.48 If someone offered to the jinas the endless realms  
In the ten directions adorned with jewels  
And the most excellent pleasures of devas and humans  
For kalpas as numerous as the atoms in a realm, {47}
- 1.49 Someone who has faith just once  
On hearing this king of dedications  
And aspires to attain perfect enlightenment  
Will have a higher, superior merit. {48}
- 1.50 Whoever recites this prayer of good conduct  
Will be free from all<sup>35</sup> lower existences,  
Will be free from bad companions,  
And will quickly see Amitābha. {49}
- 1.51 They will have in this life the good fortune  
Of obtaining success, a happy life,  
And will soon become  
The same as Samantabhadra. {50}
- 1.52 If someone through the power of ignorance [F.265.b]  
Has the bad karma of the five actions with immediate results,

- They will be purified of it, without any remainder  
Through reciting this prayer of good conduct. {51}
- 1.53 They will have the wisdom, form,  
Features, family, and color,  
Be invincible to hosts of māras and tīrthikas,  
And be offered to by the entire three realms. {52}
- 1.54 They will soon go to the Bodhi tree, the lord of trees,  
And having reached there be seated for the benefit of beings,  
Become enlightened in buddhahood, turn the wheel of the Dharma,  
And overpower Māra and his entire army. {53}
- 1.55 The Buddha knows the result that ripens  
For the one who possesses, recites,  
Or teaches this prayer of good conduct.  
Do not doubt the supreme enlightenment! {57}
- 1.56 Just as the hero Mañjuśrī knows,  
In that way<sup>36</sup> so does Samantabhadra.<sup>37</sup>  
In practicing in the same way as they do,  
I am dedicating all this merit. {55}
- 1.57 With the prayer that is praised as supreme  
By all the jinas in the three times,  
I am dedicating all this merit  
For the supreme good conduct. {56}
- 1.58 When the time has come for me to die,  
May I dispel all obscurations,  
See Amitābha before me,  
And go to the Sukhāvātī realm. {57}
- 1.59 When I have gone there, may these prayers  
All become completely manifest.  
May I fulfill them all without exception  
And benefit beings for as long as there are worlds. {58}
- 1.60 May I be born from a beautiful, perfect lotus  
In that pleasant, beautiful circle of the jinas,  
And there obtain my prophecy  
Directly from the Jina Amitābha. {59}
- 1.61 Having obtained there the prophecy,  
May I through the power of mind [F.266.a]

- Bring many benefits to beings in the ten directions  
Through many billions of emanations. {60}
- 1.62 May what little merit I have accumulated  
Through reciting the good conduct prayer  
Cause the virtuous prayers of beings  
All to be fulfilled in an instant. {61}
- 1.63 Through the sublime, endless merit attained  
By my dedicating the good conduct,  
May the beings drowning in a river of suffering  
Depart to the supreme residence of Amitābha. {62}
- 1.64 The principal excellence of this King of Prayers  
Brings benefit to all beings without end,  
And being a text ornamented by Samantabhadra,  
May the three lower realms, without exception, be emptied.<sup>38</sup> {63}
- 1.65 *This concludes "The Noble King of Prayers of Good Conduct."*

n.

## NOTES

- n.1 *The Stem Array* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh44-45.html>) (Skt. *Gaṇḍavyūha*, Toh 44-45).
- n.2 According to *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, a version of the prayer does however appear in Buddhahadra's translation of *The Vows of Mañjuśrī Sūtra*. Buswell and Lopez (2014), p. 106.
- n.3 For further details on the textual history of the prayer, see Osto (2010), pp. 1–2. The entire *Buddhāvataṃsaka* has been translated from Chinese into English, based on the Śikṣānanda version (Taishō 279), by Thomas Cleary (1993).
- n.4 Situ Paṅchen, folio 120.a.6.
- n.5 Denkarma folio 303.a; Herrmann-Pfandt (2008), pp. 269–70. Phangthangma, p. 33. In both of these catalogs it is listed as having ninety-seven *ślokas* or verses, though this does not match its length in either the Kangyur or the Dunhuang manuscript iterations.
- n.6 Richardson (1985), pp. 144–47.
- n.7 Thirty-six manuscripts in the Pelliot tibétain archive and twelve in the India Office Library (IOL) archive contain the prayer in part or in full. For a full list, see [Resources for Kanjur and Tanjur Studies at the University of Vienna](http://www.rkts.org/cat.php?id=1095&typ=1) (<http://www.rkts.org/cat.php?id=1095&typ=1>).
- n.8 Scans of all the manuscripts in the Pelliot tibétain archive are available online through the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. [Pelliot tibétain 116](https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8307273k/f1.item) (<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8307273k/f1.item>) is dated to the second half of the tenth century. This version of *The Prayer of Good Conduct* is very close to the Kangyur versions but lacks the final three verses. PT116 has been described by van Schaik (2016) as *The Tibetan Chan Compendium*.

- n.9 The colophon in Tibetan attributes this commentary to Lopön Gyenzangpo (*slob dpon rgyan bzang po*), which could render a variety of possible Sanskrit names. Subhūṣita, Alamkārabhadra, and Bhadravaha have all been suggested.
- n.10 The two Sanskrit editions of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* are Suzuki and Idzumi 1949, and Vaidya 1960.
- n.11 Later on, in verse 15, this same phrase is translated less obscurely as *gang rnams ji snyed pa*. A more literal translation would be “whoever many,” and thus in the first verse it was translated as *ji snyed su dag*. The Chinese has “all.”
- n.12 According to the Sanskrit and the Chinese. The Tibetan repeats bowing with the synonym *phyag tshal*, presumably from a text that had *praṇāmaiḥ* in error for *pramāṇaiḥ*.
- n.13 The Sanskrit *buddhasuta* literally means “children of the buddhas,” and the Tibetan *sangs rgyas sras*, “sons of the buddhas.” The Chinese has “bodhisattvas.”
- n.14 According to the BHS *adhimukti*. Translated into Tibetan as *dad pa* (usually translated as “faith”). The Chinese includes related descriptions: 廣大勝解心 (*guang da sheng jie xin*, “vast, supreme understanding”), 深信 (*shen xin*, “deep faith or devotion”) in buddhas of the three times, and the power of devotion to good conduct.
- n.15 The Sanskrit text uses the synonym *pratyekajina*, and the Tibetan uses the equivalent *rang rgyal*. The Tibetan appears to separate “those practicing” and “those who are accomplished” from *pratyekabuddha*.
- n.16 The order is according to the Sanskrit; the Tibetan reverses it, beginning with “the jinas.” The Chinese has 二乘有學及無學 (*er sheng you xue ji wu xue*, “two yānas at learning and non-learning stages”).
- n.17 According to the Tibetan. “Little” is not present in the Sanskrit or the Chinese.
- n.18 According to the Sanskrit *udāra*. The Tibetan translates according to an alternative meaning as “vast.”
- n.19 According to the Tibetan *des* and the Sanskrit *peśalu*. The Vaidya edition of the Sanskrit has *ye khalu*. The Chinese translates *peśalu* as “pure,” but in reference to the practice of perfection rather than the person.

- n.20 According to the Tibetan *las*, which could be an error for *lam* or a translation of the Sanskrit *patha*, which can mean “path” or “way.” The Chinese has 境 (*jing*), translating from *patha*.
- n.21 According to the Tibetan. The Sanskrit is *patha*. Subhūṣita’s commentary interprets this as meaning “for as long as the realms last.” The Chinese includes both meanings.
- n.22 According to the Sanskrit, which is singular. The Tibetan has plural. The Chinese presents the first line as two lines and omits the fourth line of this verse.
- n.23 The Tibetan translates as *smon lam*, which is usually translated into English as “prayer” or “aspiration.” The BHS *praṇidhāna* can also mean “vow” or “resolution.” The Chinese translates as 願 (*yuan*, “prayer,” “aspiration,” “vow,” “resolution”).
- n.24 According to the Tibetan *rgya cher* and the Chinese 廣大 (*guang da*), translating the Sanskrit *udāra*.
- n.25 According to the BHS *paridīpayamāna*, translated into Tibetan as *snang bar byed* (“illuminate”). The Chinese translates as 光顯 (*guang xian*), incorporating both meanings.
- n.26 According to the BHS first-person singular optative *bhavi*. The Chinese translates as 獲 (*huo*, “attain”).
- n.27 As in other verses, the verb is *otari*, meaning here “to comprehend,” while the commentary specifies “comprehend through hearing.”
- n.28 According to the Tibetan, some Sanskrit versions and commentaries, and the Chinese. Some Sanskrit versions have *jina* instead of *jaga* (“beings”).
- n.29 The Tibetan translates *gata* literally as “gone,” though the meaning as used in the Sanskrit can mean “present in.” The Chinese has “tathāgatas.”
- n.30 The Sanskrit has *naya* in the singular, but the Tibetan has the plural *tshul rnams*. Yeshé Dé enumerates in his commentary these various ways of guiding beings.
- n.31 The Tibetan translates *gata* literally as “gone,” though the meaning in Sanskrit is “present in.” The Chinese does not include the preposition “in,” but it could be understood as such.

- n.32 According to the Tibetan *theg pa* (“vehicle”) and the Sanskrit *yāna*. The Vaidya edition has *jñāna*, and Cleary translates accordingly. The Chinese has 大乘 (*da sheng*, “Mahāyāna”).
- n.33 According to the Tibetan. The Sanskrit and the Chinese have “be immersed in.” The Chinese has 甚深入 (*shen shen ru*, “enter deeply into”).
- n.34 In the verse the name is given in the form “Samantatabhadra.” The Chinese has 普賢尊 (*pu xian zun*), “Lord Samantabhadra.”
- n.35 According to the Tibetan. “All” is not present in the Sanskrit, which is transcribed into Chinese as 文殊師利 (*wen shu shi li*).
- n.36 According to the Sanskrit that uses *yathā* and *tathā* in this sentence. The Tibetan could be interpreted to make this refer to one’s training being the same as both of them, which is anyway the meaning of the verse, but it lacks the statement that Samantabhadra is equal in wisdom to Mañjuśrī.
- n.37 The name as given at this point in the Sanskrit is Samantatabhadra.
- n.38 This final verse in the standalone prayer, not found in *The Stem Array*, is present in all Kangyurs of the Tshalpa line but is absent from those of the Themphangma line, such as the Stok Palace and Shey Kangyurs. None of the Tengyur commentaries, including the one attributed to Yeshé Dé, make any reference to it.

b.

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## GLOSSARY

· Types of attestation for names and terms of the corresponding ·  
source language

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in a manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other manuscripts with a parallel or similar context.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in dictionaries matching Tibetan to the corresponding language.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where the relationship between the Tibetan and source language 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 Amitābha

*'od snang mtha' yas pa · mi dpogs 'od*

འོད་སྣང་མགའ་ཡས་པ། · མི་དཔོགས་འོད།

*amitābha*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The buddha of the western buddhaheld of Sukhāvātī, where fortunate beings are reborn to make further progress toward spiritual maturity. Amitābha made his great vows to create such a realm when he was a bodhisattva called Dharmākara. In the Pure Land Buddhist tradition, popular in East Asia, aspiring to be reborn in his buddha realm is the main emphasis; in other Mahāyāna traditions, too, it is a widespread practice. For a detailed description of the realm, see *The Display of the Pure Land of Sukhāvātī*, Toh 115. In some tantras that make reference to the five families he is the tathāgata associated with the lotus family.

Amitābha, “Infinite Light,” is also known in many Indian Buddhist works as Amitāyus, “Infinite Life.” In both East Asian and Tibetan Buddhist traditions he is often conflated with another buddha named “Infinite Life,” Aparimitāyus, or “Infinite Life and Wisdom,” Aparimitāyurjñāna, the shorter version of whose name has also been back-translated from Tibetan into Sanskrit as Amitāyus but who presides over a realm in the zenith. For details on the relation between these buddhas and their names, see *The Aparimitāyurjñāna Sūtra* (1) Toh 674, i.9.

In this text:

The Tibetan translation of Amitābha in this sūtra differs from the usual translations, either ‘*od dpag med*’ or ‘*snang ba mtha’ yas*’. It is also the name in chapter 44 of a future buddha in this kalpa. In that instance the Tibetan is ‘*mi dpogs ’od*’.

g.2 Bodhi tree

*byang chub kyi shing*

བྱང་ལྷན་ཀྱི་ཤིང་།

*bodhiṛkṣa*

The tree beneath which every buddha will manifest the attainment of buddhahood.

g.3 jina

*rgyal ba*

རྒྱལ་བ།

*jina*

An epithet for a buddha meaning “victorious one.”

g.4 kalpa

*bskal pa*

བསྐལ་པ།

*kalpa*

The Indian concept of a period of millions of years, sometimes equivalent to the time when a world appears, exists, and disappears. There are also the intermediate kalpas during the existence of a world, the longest of which is called *asamkhyeya*, (literally “incalculable,” even though the number of its years is calculated).

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A cosmic period of time, sometimes equivalent to the time when a world system appears, exists, and disappears. According to the traditional Abhidharma understanding of cyclical time, a great eon (*mahākalpa*) is divided into eighty lesser eons. In the course of one great eon, the universe takes form and later disappears. During the first twenty of the lesser eons, the universe is in the process of creation and expansion; during the next twenty it remains; during the third twenty, it is in the process of destruction; and during the last quarter of the cycle, it remains in a state of empty stasis. A fortunate, or good, eon (*bhadrakalpa*) refers to any eon in which more than one buddha appears.

g.5 kleśa

*nyon mongs*

ཉོན་མོངས།

*kleśa*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The essentially pure nature of mind is obscured and afflicted by various psychological defilements, which destroy the mind’s peace and composure and lead to unwholesome deeds of body, speech, and mind, acting as causes for continued existence in saṃsāra. Included among them are the primary afflictions of desire (*rāga*), anger (*dveṣa*), and ignorance (*avidyā*). It is said that there are eighty-four thousand of these negative mental qualities, for which the eighty-four thousand categories of the Buddha’s teachings serve as the antidote.

*Kleśa* is also commonly translated as “negative emotions,” “disturbing emotions,” and so on. The Pāli *kilesa*, Middle Indic *kileśa*, and Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit *kleśa* all primarily mean “stain” or “defilement.” The translation “affliction” is a secondary development that derives from the more general (non-Buddhist) classical understanding of  $\sqrt{\text{kliś}}$  (“to harm,” “to afflict”). Both meanings are noted by Buddhist commentators.

g.6 kumbhāṇḍa

*grul bum*

གྲུལ་བྱུམ།

*kumbhāṇḍa*

Dwarf spirits said to have either large stomachs or huge pot-sized testicles.

g.7 liberations

*rnam par thar ba*

རྣམ་པར་ཐར་བ།

*vimokṣa*

This can include any method for liberation. There are numerous liberations described in this sūtra, each kalyāṇamitra having a specific liberation.

g.8 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. To his name, Mañjuśrī, meaning “Gentle and Glorious One,” is often added the epithet Kumārabhūta, “having a youthful form.” He is also called Mañjughoṣa, Mañjusvara, and Pañcaśikha.

g.9 Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta

*'jam dpal gzhon nur gyur pa*

འཇམ་དཔལ་གཞོན་ནུར་གྱུར་པ།

*mañjuśrīkumārabhūta*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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g.10 māra

*bdud*

བདུད།

*māra*

The deities ruled over by Māra, who attempted to prevent the Buddha's enlightenment; they do not wish any being to escape from saṃsāra. Also, they are symbolic of the defects within a person that prevents enlightenment. These four personifications are *devaputramāra* (*lha'i bu'i bdud*) the "divine māra," which is the distraction of pleasures; *mṛtyumāra* (*'chi bdag gi bdud*) the "māra of death"; *skandhamāra* (*phung po'i bdud*) the "māra of the aggregates," which is the body; and *kleśamāra* (*nyon mongs pa'i bdud*) the "māra of the kleśas."

g.11 Meru

*ri rab*

རི་རབ།

*meru*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

According to ancient Buddhist cosmology, this is the great mountain forming the axis of the universe. At its summit is Sudarśana, home of Śakra and his thirty-two gods, and on its flanks live the asuras. The mount has four sides facing the cardinal directions, each of which is made of a different precious stone. Surrounding it are several mountain ranges and the great ocean where the four principal island continents lie: in the south, Jambudvīpa (our world); in the west, Godāniya; in the north, Uttarakuru; and in the east, Pūrvavideha. Above it are the abodes of the desire realm gods. It is variously referred to as Meru, Mount Meru, Sumeru, and Mount Sumeru.

g.12 nāga

*klu*

ལུ།

*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.13 nirvāṇa

*mya ngan las 'das pa*

མྱ་ངན་ལས་འདས་པ།

*nirvāṇa*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In Sanskrit, the term *nirvāṇa* literally means “extinguishment” and the Tibetan *mya ngan las 'das pa* literally means “gone beyond sorrow.” As a general term, it refers to the cessation of all suffering, afflicted mental states (*kleśa*), and causal processes (*karman*) that lead to rebirth and suffering in cyclic existence, as well as to the state in which all such rebirth and suffering has permanently ceased.

More specifically, three main types of nirvāṇa are identified. (1) The first type of nirvāṇa, called nirvāṇa with remainder (*sopadhīśeṣanirvāṇa*), is the state in which arhats or buddhas have attained awakening but are still dependent on the conditioned aggregates until their lifespan is exhausted. (2) At the end of life, given that there are no more causes for rebirth, these aggregates cease and no new aggregates arise. What occurs then is called nirvāṇa without remainder (*anupadhīśeṣanirvāṇa*), which refers to the unconditioned element (*dhātu*) of nirvāṇa in which there is no remainder of the aggregates. (3) The Mahāyāna teachings distinguish the final nirvāṇa of buddhas from that of arhats, the nirvāṇa of arhats not being considered ultimate. The buddhas attain what is called nonabiding nirvāṇa (*apraṭiṣṭhitanirvāṇa*), which transcends the extremes of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, i.e., existence and peace. This is the nirvāṇa that is the goal of the Mahāyāna path.

g.14 pratyekabuddha

*rang sangs rgyas*

རང་སངས་རྒྱས།

*pratyekabuddha · pratyekajina · pratyekasambuddha*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Literally, “buddha for oneself” or “solitary realizer.” Someone who, in his or her last life, attains awakening entirely through their own contemplation, without relying on a teacher. Unlike the awakening of a fully realized buddha (*samyaksambuddha*), the accomplishment of a pratyekabuddha is not regarded as final or ultimate. They attain realization of the nature of

dependent origination, the selflessness of the person, and a partial realization of the selflessness of phenomena, by observing the suchness of all that arises through interdependence. This is the result of progress in previous lives but, unlike a buddha, they do not have the necessary merit, compassion or motivation to teach others. They are named as “rhinoceros-like” (*khadgaviṣāṇakalpa*) for their preference for staying in solitude or as “congregators” (*vargacārin*) when their preference is to stay among peers.

g.15 samādhi

*ting nge 'dzin*

ཉིང་ལེ་འཛིན།

*samādhi*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In a general sense, *samādhi* can describe a number of different meditative states. In the Mahāyāna literature, in particular in the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras, we find extensive lists of different samādhis, numbering over one hundred.

In a more restricted sense, and when understood as a mental state, *samādhi* is defined as the one-pointedness of the mind (*cittaikāgratā*), the ability to remain on the same object over long periods of time. The *Draḥor Bamponyipa* (*sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*) commentary on the *Mahāvīyūtpatti* explains the term *samādhi* as referring to the instrument through which mind and mental states “get collected,” i.e., it is by the force of samādhi that the continuum of mind and mental states becomes collected on a single point of reference without getting distracted.

g.16 Samantabhadra

*kun tu bzang po*

ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ།

*samantabhadra*

Presently classed as one of the eight principal bodhisattvas, he is distinct from the primordial buddha with the same name in the Tibetan Nyingma tradition. He is prominent in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, and also in *The White Lotus of the Good Dharma* (Toh 113, *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*) and *The White Lotus of Compassion Sūtra* (Toh 111, *Mahākaruṇāpuṇḍarīkasūtra*).

g.17 sugata

*bde bar gshegs pa*

བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ།

*sugata*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the standard epithets of the buddhas. A recurrent explanation offers three different meanings for *su-* that are meant to show the special qualities of “accomplishment of one’s own purpose” (*svārthasampad*) for a complete buddha. Thus, the Sugata is “well” gone, as in the expression *su-rūpa* (“having a good form”); he is gone “in a way that he shall not come back,” as in the expression *su-naṣṭa-jvara* (“a fever that has utterly gone”); and he has gone “without any remainder” as in the expression *su-pūrṇa-ghaṭa* (“a pot that is completely full”). According to Buddhaghosa, the term means that the way the Buddha went (Skt. *gata*) is good (Skt. *su*) and where he went (Skt. *gata*) is good (Skt. *su*).

g.18 Sukhāvātī

*bde ba yod pa · bde ba can*

བདེ་བ་ཡོད་པ། · བདེ་བ་ཅན།

*sukhāvātī*

The realm of the Buddha Amitābha, also known as Amitāyus, which was first described in the f (Toh 115, *The Display of the Pure Land of Sukhāvātī*).

g.19 three realms

*khamṣ gsum*

ཁམས་གསུམ།

*trāidhātuka*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

g.20 tīrthika

*mu stegs ldan pa · mu stegs · mu stegs can*

མུ་སྟེགས་ལྡན་པ། · མུ་སྟེགས། · མུ་སྟེགས་ཅན།

*tīrthya · tīrthika*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Those of other religious or philosophical orders, contemporary with the early Buddhist order, including Jains, Jāṭilas, Ājīvikas, and Cārvākas. Tīrthika (“ford”) literally translates as “one belonging to or associated with (possessive suffix *-ika*) stairs for landing or for descent into a river,” or “a bathing place,” or “a place of pilgrimage on the banks of sacred streams” (Monier-Williams). The term may have originally referred to temple priests at river crossings or fords where travelers propitiated a deity before crossing.

The Sanskrit term seems to have undergone metonymic transfer in referring to those able to ford the turbulent river of saṃsāra (as in the Jain tīrthaṅkaras, “ford makers”), and it came to be used in Buddhist sources to refer to teachers of rival religious traditions. The Sanskrit term is closely rendered by the Tibetan *mu stegs pa*: “those on the steps (*stegs pa*) at the edge (*mu*).”

g.21 yakṣa

*gnod sbyin*

གནོད་སྦྱིན།

*yakṣa*

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings who inhabit forests, mountainous areas, and other natural spaces, or serve as guardians of villages and towns, and may be propitiated for health, wealth, protection, and other boons, or controlled through magic. According to tradition, their homeland is in the north, where they live under the rule of the Great King Vaiśravaṇa.

Several members of this class have been deified as gods of wealth (these include the just-mentioned Vaiśravaṇa) or as bodhisattva generals of yakṣa armies, and have entered the Buddhist pantheon in a variety of forms, including, in tantric Buddhism, those of wrathful deities.