

། མཐ་མེ་མཛད་ཀྱིས་ལུང་བསྟན་པ།

The Prophecy of Dīpaṅkara

Dīpaṅkaravyākaraṇa

འཕགས་པ་མར་མེ་མཛད་གྱིས་ལུང་བསྟན་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་འི་མདོ།

'phags pa mar me mdzad kyis lung bstan pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra “The Prophecy of Dīpaṅkara”

Āryadīpaṅkaravyākaraṇanāmahāyānasūtra

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SUMMARY

- s.1 In *The Prophecy of Dīpaṅkara*, the Buddha narrates the famous story of how, in a former life as a brahmin ascetic many eons ago, he first received the prophecy of his future awakening. This story of the young brahmin ascetic Megha's encounter with the former Buddha Dīpaṅkara is here told to illustrate for Ānanda the importance of not being complacent about one's roots of virtue.

ac.

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ac.1 Translated, introduced, and annotated by Laura Goetz, in consultation with a draft translation by Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltzen and Chodrungma Kunga Chodron of the Sakya Pandita Translation Group.

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

INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 In the context of teaching Ānanda the importance of not being complacent about one's roots of virtue, the Buddha explains that although he had venerated countless buddhas in the past, it was not until he encountered the Buddha Dīpaṅkara, during a former life as a brahmin ascetic, that he first received a prophecy of his future awakening.

i.2 There follows the account of the former Buddha Dīpaṅkara. This begins with his birth, in a far distant past, as the son of a king called Endowed with Islands. This king had himself formerly been the royal priest of a king named Ajātaśatru, who held him in such high esteem that he gave him half his kingdom. The account of the young prince Dīpaṅkara's early life loosely parallels the biography of the Buddha Śākyamuni himself in the present eon as told in accounts such as the *Lalitavistara*¹—from his transmigration from Tuṣita Heaven into his mother's womb, to his first encounter with old age, sickness, and death and his decision to abandon his inheritance, to his arrival at the seat of awakening.

i.3 In the case of Dīpaṅkara, however, according to the Tibetan version translated here, after his awakening to complete buddhahood he remains at the seat of awakening for fifty years, during which time not a single being approaches him or pays him homage. Dīpaṅkara, realizing that the people of the area are so happy that they have become careless, and wanting to rouse them from their complacency, then magically emanates a city even more impressive than their own. When this does not disturb them, he destroys it in a great blaze, leading the distressed population to finally consider their own impermanence. The Buddha Dīpaṅkara then rises from the seat of awakening and gives his first Dharma teaching. Accepting an invitation from King Ajātaśatru, he then travels to the palace Padmāvati.

i.4 Meanwhile, in the remote mountains, a young brahmin ascetic named Megha, who in a future life will be the Buddha Śākyamuni, is completing his training with the brahmin Ratna, whom he must provide with a fee of a bolt

of fabric, a staff, a water flask, and five hundred coins. Lacking the five hundred coins, Megha descends from the mountain to seek the payment for his teacher, and in the city Gone to Bliss he encounters a large offering being made to brahmins by the wealthy Suviśākha. When Megha defeats the brahmin elder Giver of Pieces in a contest of knowledge of the Vedas, mantras, and treatises, Suviśākha offers Megha lavish gifts that include five hundred coins and his daughter Receiver of Goodness. Repulsed by the thought of marriage, Megha takes the gifts but refuses the girl, and he heads back toward the mountains while the girl, firmly considering him to be her husband, follows a few hours behind him.

i.5 On the way back, Megha's course is diverted by one of the gods from the Śuddhāvāsa realm so that he arrives instead at Ajātaśatru's capital Padmāvati, which has been cleaned and decorated in honor of Dīpaṅkara's imminent arrival. As soon as Megha hears of the newly awakened Dīpaṅkara, he looks for flowers with which to make an offering to the Buddha. However, since King Ajātaśatru has decreed that all flowers are to be offered to the Buddha and that no one has permission to buy or sell them, Megha fails to find a single flower anywhere. Meanwhile, the girl Receiver of Goodness has begged seven flowers from a garland maker, and with them she approaches Megha.

i.6 In the conversation that follows in prose, the girl proposes that she will give her flowers to Megha in exchange for his vow to always be her husband in lives to come, to which he eventually agrees. Here Megha reveals that the flowers are a metaphor for roots of virtue, saying that he "will plant them in a field of merit in which they will grow as soon as they are planted."

i.7 The verses that follow, spoken by the Buddha Śākyamuni, retell previous events of the sūtra, giving a much more elaborate account of the conversation between Megha and Receiver of Goodness and then continuing up to their approaching the Buddha Dīpaṅkara and Megha's intent to receive a prophecy. The prose then resumes with their agreement that they will both offer the flowers and their departure to find the Buddha.

i.8 Seeing Dīpaṅkara and, through a miraculous display, all his thirty-two marks of a great being, Megha is overjoyed. While the other people in the gathering lay out costly garments for the Buddha to walk on, Megha lays out his humble, dirty deer skin, which is angrily tossed away by the others. Megha retreats down a side path, away from the crowds, praying that the Buddha will think of him and place his feet on his matted hair. The Buddha then does so, and Megha is able to scatter his flowers over the head of the Buddha, who then prophesies that he will become the Buddha Śākyamuni in a future eon.

- i.9 The account of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara’s awakening and his prophecy to the young brahmin who would later become the Buddha Śākyamuni has long been a popular tale in the Buddhist world, and accordingly we find a number of retellings, with significant variation, in Tibetan, Sanskrit, Chinese, and Pali literature. Numerous depictions of the meeting between Śākyamuni as a bodhisattva in a former life and the Buddha Dīpaṅkara are found in Gandhāran art from present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan, the northwestern fringes of the Indian cultural sphere.² Junko Matsumura is perhaps not exaggerating when she writes, “The story is so popular and important in both Northern and Southern Buddhism that there is a plethora of many different versions, so that, if we were to include short references and mentions of the motif, the number of related texts would be almost uncountable.”³
- i.10 Corresponding narratives extant in Sanskrit are found in the *Divyāvadāna*⁴ and Kṣemendra’s (ca. 990–ca. 1070 CE) *Bodhisattvāvadānakalpalatā*, where the young brahmin is called Sumati.⁵ There are also lengthy accounts in the *Mahāvastu*⁶ and *The Collected Teachings on the Bodhisattva (Bodhisattvapīṭaka)*,⁷ where, as in this text, he is called Megha. The story told in *The Collected Teachings on the Bodhisattva* is recounted by Butön Rinchen Drup (bu ston rin chen grub, 1290–1364) in his *chos ’byung (History of Buddhism)*.⁸
- i.11 The parallel Pali story, known as the *Sumedhakathā* (Sumedha being the name of the young brahmin), is found in a number of sources.⁹ Perhaps the earliest is the *Buddhavaṃsa*, but the best known are the *Nidānakathā*, an introduction to the Pali jātakas from approximately the fifth century CE,¹⁰ and Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the *Dhammapada*.¹¹
- i.12 There are also a considerable number of Chinese parallels that shed some light on the development of the narrative throughout its history. While we have not given much consideration to these passages here, they are listed and compared in detail in the works of Matsumura.¹² While Matsumura notes that the Tibetan version translated here is “the only extant independent sūtra on the Dīpaṅkara Prophecy,” she also cites evidence from Chinese sources indicating that several independent versions may have existed.¹³
- i.13 The Tibetan translation of *The Prophecy of Dīpaṅkara* is listed in both the Denkarma and Phangthangma catalogs (under sūtras consisting of 210 ślokas),¹⁴ which date to the ninth century. Given that the colophon cites the initial translators as Viśuddhasiṃha and Gepal, who are thought to have lived in the late eighth to the early ninth century, we can safely assume that this translation dates to the same time period. The translation was revised by Jñānagarbha and Lui Gyaltzen.

i.14 As the language in this Tibetan translation tends to be rather terse and elliptical, the narrative has been at times clarified using other versions of the story, particularly those in the *Divyāvadāna*, the *Mahāvastu*, and *The Collected Teachings on the Bodhisatva*, and we have noted these readings in the endnotes. We have also benefited from previous translations of *The Prophecy of Dīpaṅkara* by Léon Feer (into French)¹⁵ and Matsumura (into English).¹⁶ While the translation is primarily based on the Degé Kangyur edition, we also consulted the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) of the Kangyur and the Stok Palace (*stog pho brang*) Kangyur.

**The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra
The Prophecy of Dīpaṅkara**

1.

The Translation

[F.191.b]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was dwelling in Śrāvastī, in Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍada’s Park, together with a great saṅgha of 1,250 monks. At that time, the Blessed One, surrounded and attended by a retinue of many hundreds of thousands, was teaching the Dharma.

1.2 The Blessed One said to the venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda, you must make your motivation very pure by examining each root of virtue. If you ask why, Ānanda, though I respectfully venerated hundreds of thousands of buddhas, those blessed buddhas did not prophesy that I would achieve unsurpassed complete and perfect awakening, but after I saw the Thus-Gone Dīpaṅkara and offered him five utpala flowers, I developed confidence in the selflessness of phenomena and gained the acceptance that phenomena are unarisen. That is why, Ānanda, you should not be content with your roots of virtue.

1.3 “If you ask why, Ānanda, in the past, long ago—an uncountable, exceedingly uncountable, vast, immeasurable, and inconceivable number of eons ago—at that time, on that occasion, here in Jambudvīpa, there was a king known as Ajātaśatru, who was shapely, handsome, pleasant to behold, and provided with a supremely rich and fine complexion.

1.4 “Ānanda, that king, Ajātaśatru, had eighty-four thousand cities, every one of them dazzling and pleasant to behold, with magnificent gardens, magnificent ponds, magnificent flowers, magnificent fruits, delightful good harvests, and a joyful atmosphere. [F.192.a] They were wealthy, prosperous, and filled with a great multitude of people.

1.5 “Ānanda, that king, Ajātaśatru, had a royal palace known as Padmāvātī, and there the king, Ajātaśatru, resided. Now, there was a royal priest of King Ajātaśatru, the brahmin known as Endowed with Islands, who was dear to

the king's heart and never a disagreeable sight. At that time, Ānanda, Ajātaśatru gathered all the people of the four castes and summoned the brahmin Endowed with Islands. Having tied a crown upon his head, he then gave him half his kingdom and proclaimed, 'Brahmin, you must return to your country and build a royal palace, which you should also name Padmāvati.'

1.6 "Then, Ānanda, King Endowed with Islands built a royal palace in his country, and he also named it Padmāvati. Thus, Ānanda, at that time, on that occasion, here in Jambudvīpa there ruled two kings. One was Ajātaśatru, and the other was Endowed with Islands.

1.7 "Then, Ānanda, when Endowed with Islands' principal queen was sleeping blissfully at the top of the palace, the bodhisattva Dīpaṅkara passed away and transmigrated from Tuṣita Heaven, transforming into a white elephant calf. He emanated light rays and entered his mother's right side. At that time, the principal queen related this event to King Endowed with Islands.

1.8 "Then, Ānanda, King Endowed with Islands gathered brahmins who were skilled in interpreting omens, those skilled in divination, and those skilled in making offerings, and he related to them the events of this dream. A brahmin who was skilled in interpreting omens said, 'O great king, you have gained a great boon! A son of yours, a precious being, is to be born.'

1.9 "Then, Ānanda, when King Endowed with Islands heard this dream prophecy, he was transported with satisfaction and delight, and in his great joy he was elated and cheered. King Endowed with Islands gave gifts to everyone within the bounds of his kingdom: for those who desired food there was food, for those who desired drinks there were drinks, and for those who desired a vehicle there was a vehicle. [F.192.b] He gave what was suitable and not unwholesome—incense, garlands, ointments, and bedding—and he gave anything, whatever was desired.

1.10 "Then, Ānanda, ten months passed and the son of King Endowed with Islands was born—shapely, handsome, pleasant to behold, and provided with a supremely rich and fine complexion. As soon as he was born, there emerged from his body a light such as this: by that light, the whole of the royal palace of King Endowed with Islands was illuminated. Then, at that time, Śakra, the lord of the gods, vanished from his own abode and went to where the child was. There, he spoke benedictions to that child, and he said, 'As soon as he was born, there emerged from his body a light such as this: by that light, the whole of the royal palace of King Endowed with Islands was illuminated. Because of that, the child should be named Dīpaṅkara.' Then the child was named Dīpaṅkara.

- 1.11 “Then, Ānanda, King Endowed with Islands was transported with satisfaction and delight, and in his great joy he was elated and cheered. Again, he gave gifts to everyone within the bounds of his kingdom: for those who desired food there was food, for those who desired drinks there were drinks, and for those who desired a vehicle there was a vehicle. He gave what was suitable and not unwholesome—incense, garlands, ointments, and bedding—and he gave anything, whatever was desired.
- 1.12 “Later, Ānanda, King Endowed with Islands summoned Prince Dīpaṅkara. Having tied a crown upon his head, he gave him half the kingdom and proclaimed, ‘Youth, you must go and stay among the queen’s retinue and play. Be happy and enjoy yourself!’
- 1.13 “Shortly thereafter, Ānanda, Prince Dīpaṅkara went among the queen’s retinue and mounted a great carriage. Surrounded by a host of ladies, he went to the garden. One of the gods of the Śuddhāvāsa realm displayed people like us—one old and feeble, one struck by illness, [F.193.a] and one who was dead—and he also set a mendicant among them.¹⁷ Prince Dīpaṅkara, having seen this, asked the charioteer, ‘Hey, charioteer, what are these various sights?’
- 1.14 “The charioteer replied, ‘Youth, these are so-called aging, illness, and death. Youth, as long as there are imputations placed upon the true nature, there will be the phenomena of aging, illness, and death. Youth, it is the same for you and the rest of us, for we are merely the residents of saṃsāra.’
- 1.15 “The youth asked, ‘Charioteer, who is this one whose head is shaven, who has donned maroon robes, and who is pacified and gazes the mere length of a yoke?’
- 1.16 “ ‘Youth, this is a monk,’ said the charioteer. ‘Having relinquished all sin and developed the sense of delight in regard to liberation, he went forth into homelessness.’
- 1.17 “The boy replied, ‘Very good, charioteer! The path of this monk is to be desired,’ and then he turned around and went home.
- 1.18 “Then, Ānanda, right away, Prince Dīpaṅkara went again to the garden. In the garden he saw the seat of awakening, which had supported¹⁸ many hundreds of thousands of buddhas.
- 1.19 “Then, Ānanda, the bodhisattva Dīpaṅkara, having seen that seat of awakening, left behind the entire assembly of men and women a short distance and proceeded in the direction of the seat of awakening. He saw the seat of awakening and circumambulated it three times, and then at the seat of awakening he sat down with his legs crossed. As soon as the bodhisattva Dīpaṅkara took his seat, at that moment, at the first break of dawn, he reached unsurpassed complete and perfect awakening, the highest perfect buddhahood.

- 1.20 “Ānanda, as soon as the Thus-Gone Dīpaṅkara reached unsurpassed complete and perfect awakening, the highest perfect buddhahood, [F.193.b] there emerged from his body a light such as this: by that light the entire trichiliocosm was illuminated. Then, at that time, Śakra, the lord of the gods, vanished from his own abode and went to where the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara was. There he bowed his head at the feet of the Blessed One and, having made offerings to the Blessed One, he proclaimed these words: ‘Ah! The Thus-Gone Dīpaṅkara has emerged in the world! Thus, by that light are all the world realms illuminated.’
- 1.21 “The Thus-Gone Dīpaṅkara remained at the seat of awakening for fifty years, and not a single being approached to see him, pay homage to him, or serve him. If you ask why, because the residents of the royal city of King Endowed with Islands were happy, they did not approach to see him, pay homage to him, or serve him.
- 1.22 “Then, Ānanda, the Thus-Gone Dīpaṅkara thought, ‘These residents of the royal city of King Endowed with Islands, because they are happy, have become exceedingly careless. Surely I should cause them a little distress.’
- 1.23 “Then, at that time, the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara manifested a display of miraculous power such that through the manifestation of the display of miraculous power, among the residents of the royal city of King Endowed with Islands, he emanated a great city made of beryl that was pleasant to behold and filled with a great multitude of people. Those people, moreover, were more beautiful, more pleasant to behold, and adorned with all types of ornaments. However, the residents of the royal city of King Endowed with Islands, although they were troubled by the people dwelling in the city made of beryl, [F.194.a] were not in the least bit discouraged.
- 1.24 “The blessed, thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara thought, ‘Since the residents of the royal city of King Endowed with Islands have become exceedingly careless, surely I should also generate in them a little discouragement.’
- 1.25 “Then the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara again manifested a display of miraculous power such that through the manifestation of the display of miraculous power he took control of that great city of beryl so that it would blaze with a great fire. As soon as he took control of it, it caught fire. Then, at that time, those beings and that great city were destroyed, came to an end, and disappeared. Having seen this unpleasant sight, those beings¹⁹ were distressed.
- 1.26 “Then, Ānanda, the residents of the royal city of King Endowed with Islands, having seen the fall of the beryl city, were frightened and discouraged such that their hair stood on end. They thought, ‘If there is a

reason that that city was destroyed, came to an end, and disappeared, it will not be long before we, too, encounter the circumstances of impermanence in this way. Who will protect us?’

1.27 “The thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara then thought, ‘Since these residents of the royal city of King Endowed with Islands have been matured, they are able to understand the Dharma taught by me, they have become worthy of it, and they have developed the competence for it.’

1.28 “At that moment the Thus-Gone Dīpaṅkara, knowing the thoughts of those people, rose from the seat of awakening with mindfulness and alertness. [F.194.b] He then set out for the palace of King Endowed with Islands, together with Śakra, the lord of the gods, as his śramaṇa attendant.²⁰

1.29 “Ānanda, as soon as the Thus-Gone Dīpaṅkara arrived, then, at that time, on the occasion of the first Dharma teaching of the Thus-Gone Dīpaṅkara, twenty thousand beings went forth, and all their minds were liberated from defilements without further appropriation. At the time of the second Dharma teaching, thirty thousand beings went forth, and all their minds were liberated from defilements without further appropriation. At the time of the third Dharma teaching, forty thousand beings went forth, and for all of them the eye of Dharma was purified so that it became stainless and free of blemishes with regard to phenomena. At the time of the fourth Dharma teaching, fifty thousand beings went forth, and all their minds were liberated from defilements without further appropriation.

1.30 “Ānanda, the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara, surrounded and attended by a large saṅgha of monks, taught the Dharma.

1.31 “Then, Ānanda, when King Ajātaśatru heard that a son of King Endowed with Islands was born and had reached unsurpassed complete and perfect awakening, the highest perfect buddhahood, he sent a messenger with the words ‘I request that he come into my presence, for I wish to make an offering.’

1.32 “When that messenger heard from King Ajātaśatru, he traveled to the royal palace of King Endowed with Islands and then to King Endowed with Islands himself, and there, he relayed the message. King Endowed with Islands then went to the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara, and having gone there he bowed his head at the Blessed One’s feet. Having sat to one side, he informed him of the situation.

1.33 “The Blessed One replied, ‘Be at ease, great king, and return home. I will travel to the palace Padmāvātī.’

1.34 “Then the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara, [F.195.a] surrounded by the saṅgha of monks and an assembly of bodhisattvas and by gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas,

- kinnaras, mahoragas, humans, and nonhumans, set out together with King Endowed with Islands, who was surrounded and attended by royal power, a large royal assembly, great royal displays, great royal possessions, great royal wealth, and great royal pageantry.²¹
- 1.35 “Thus, Ānanda, the Thus-Gone Dīpaṅkara gradually made his way to the palace Padmāvati.
- 1.36 “At that time, at the king of mountains, Himālaya, there was a brahmin known as Ratna who was instructing some five hundred young brahmin boys in the treatises, the Vedas, and all the secret mantras. Among those five hundred or so brahmin boys, there was a brahmin boy known as Megha, who was in the prime of youth, shapely, handsome, pleasant to behold, provided with a supremely rich and fine complexion, and skilled in all the varieties of secret mantras, treatises, and rituals.²²
- 1.37 “At that time, Ānanda, the brahmin boy Megha bowed his head at the feet of the master and said, ‘O master, I will go to the villages, cities, provinces, countries, and royal cities.’²³
- 1.38 “The master replied, ‘O young brahmin, this is the law among us brahmins: anyone who has mastered all the treatises, Vedas, and secret mantras must give the master five hundred coins,²⁴ one bolt of fabric, a staff, and a water flask.’
- 1.39 “The brahmin boy Megha said, ‘Master, since I have nothing at all except a skin, a staff, and a water flask, I will go.’
- 1.40 “After he requested a third time, the master said, ‘So be it!’ ” [F.195.b]
- 1.41 “The brahmin boy Megha gradually descended from the king of mountains, Himālaya, and entered the villages, cities, provinces, countries, and royal cities. At that time, in the great city Gone to Bliss,²⁵ there dwelled a brahmin known as Suviśākha.²⁶ He had a daughter called Receiver of Goodness, who was shapely, beautiful, pleasant to behold, and provided with a supremely rich and fine complexion. Every day, for her sake, he had food given to forty thousand brahmins, thinking, ‘I will give my daughter to whomever is especially exalted among them.’
- 1.42 “One of the gods from the Śuddhāvāsa realm showed the brahmin boy Megha the path to the great city Gone to Bliss. The brahmin boy Megha arrived at the site of the offering, and as soon as the brahmin boy Megha reached the site of the offering, the girl said to her parents, ‘Father, if the qualities of this one are indeed as they seem, may he become my husband.’
- 1.43 “The brahmin boy Megha then engaged in conversation with all the other brahmins, and among them the brahmin Megha was superior in the treatises and secret mantras. At that time, at the site of the offering, there was a brahmin known as Giver of Pieces, who performed offerings sitting among the elders. The brahmin boy Megha went to where the brahmin Giver of

- Pieces was. There he engaged in conversation about the Vedas and mantras with the brahmin Giver of Pieces, and it turned out that Megha was superior in the Vedas, secret mantras, and treatises.
- 1.44 “The brahmin boy Megha then said to the brahmin Giver of Pieces, ‘O brahmin, the law among us brahmins is that whoever has understood and mastered the treatises should sit on the best seat.’
- 1.45 “Then the brahmin boy Megha again spoke to the brahmin Giver of Pieces: ‘Great brahmin, I will sit here, [F.196.a] so get up from this seat.’
- 1.46 “The brahmin Giver of Pieces replied, ‘Young brahmin, do not make me get up from this seat. I will give you five hundred coins that I have obtained.’
- 1.47 “ ‘I do not need them.’²⁷
- 1.48 “He did not stand, so Megha grabbed him by the neck and made him get up. The brahmin Giver of Pieces said to the brahmin boy Megha, ‘Young brahmin, in making me get up from this seat, you have treated me with contempt and startled me, so I swear that wherever you take birth, your giving will always be interrupted.’
- 1.49 “Then the brahmin boy Megha sat on the lion throne.
- 1.50 “The brahmin Suviśākha, holding his daughter Receiver of Goodness with his right hand and carrying a golden staff, a water flask, a bolt of fabric, and five hundred coins, went to where the brahmin boy Megha was. On arriving there, he said to the brahmin boy Megha, ‘Noble son, take these.’
- 1.51 “The brahmin boy Megha took the five hundred coins, the bolt of fabric, the staff, and the water flask, but he did not accept the girl. He said, ‘What is the use of this woman? Women are like monkeys—they give rise to agitation and create obstacles to virtue. Since I dwell in hermitages and solitary places, I have no need for this.’
- 1.52 “ ‘Noble son, please accept out of compassion for me.’²⁸
- 1.53 “He did not accept. The brahmin boy Megha left the place of offering and set out for Himālaya, the king of mountains.
- 1.54 “Then the brahmin Suviśākha said to the girl Receiver of Goodness, ‘Daughter, why do you not follow your husband?’
- 1.55 “Having heard his words, the girl set out in the direction of Himālaya, the king of mountains.
- 1.56 “At that time, one of the gods from the Śuddhāvāsa realm had obscured the path to Himālaya, the king of mountains, and made the path that led to the king’s palace, Padmāvati, clear. Wherever the brahmin boy Megha stopped for a midday meal, the daughter Receiver of Goodness stayed overnight. [F.196.b]
- 1.57 “When the brahmin boy Megha spotted the king’s palace, Padmāvati, which was adorned with silken tassels, scattered with flowers, and set with an arrangement of containers of incense, he asked, ‘Why is this great city so

- finely decorated?’
- 1.58 “The residents of the royal city of the king’s palace, Padmāvati, replied to the brahmin boy Megha, ‘Young brahmin, have you not heard? A thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect buddha called Dīpaṅkara has emerged in the world. King Ajātaśatru invited him, and because he has come here, the great city has been finely decorated.’
- 1.59 “The brahmin boy Megha thought, ‘If among us brahmins it is rare to find one who is clear in conduct and learned in all the treatises, why mention having such a precious being emerge in the world? I should without a doubt spend these five hundred coins on flowers and offer them to the Thus-Gone One.’
- 1.60 “He searched everywhere for flowers but was unable to find them anywhere. The residents of the royal city of the king’s palace, Padmāvati, said, ‘Young brahmin, have you not heard? King Ajātaśatru has declared, “All flowers must be offered to the Thus-Gone Dīpaṅkara. Thus, no one has permission to purchase flowers, or to sell them. I will punish severely anyone who buys or sells them.” ’
- 1.61 “When he continued to search for flowers, the girl Receiver of Goodness sat before him and asked, ‘Young brahmin, what are you looking for?’
- 1.62 “The brahmin boy Megha replied, ‘I am looking for flowers, girl.’
- 1.63 “The girl Receiver of Goodness then went to the house of a garland maker. When she arrived there, she requested the garland maker, ‘Noble son, give me flowers. My husband needs them.’
- 1.64 “The garland maker said, ‘Girl, have you not heard? King Ajātaśatru declared thus: [F.197.a] “All flowers must be offered to the Thus-Gone Dīpaṅkara. Thus, no one has permission to sell flowers, or to purchase them. I will punish severely anyone who buys or sells them.” ’
- 1.65 “Three times the girl asked, until he said, ‘So be it!’²⁹ The girl Receiver of Goodness then took up a vase and placed in it seven utpala flowers.
- 1.66 “Departing for the city, she saw the brahmin boy Megha. She sat before him and asked, ‘Young brahmin, what are you looking for?’
- “He replied, ‘I am looking for flowers, girl.’
- 1.67 “ ‘Young brahmin, what for?’ she asked.
- “He replied, ‘Girl, I will plant them.’
- 1.68 “The girl said, ‘I have never heard of or seen an utpala flower that, already plucked, will grow again.’
- 1.69 “ ‘Girl, I will plant them in a field of merit in which they will grow as soon as they are planted.’³⁰
- 1.70 “She replied, ‘If you promise that in all lifetimes, wherever and whenever I take birth, you will always be my husband, I will give you these utpala flowers.’

- 1.71 “The brahmin boy Megha thought, ‘I am someone who dwells in hermitages and solitary places. Since women create agitation, excitement, and obstacles to roots of virtue, what use is this woman?’
- 1.72 “She repeated this seven times, until he said, ‘So be it!’ ”³¹
- 1.73 Then, at that time, the Blessed One spoke these verses:
- 1.74 “Thus did I hear. In times past
The Buddha Dīpaṅkara emerged in the world
And traveled to Padmāvati
With a large retinue of seven thousand.
- 1.75 “For that reason victory banners were raised.
That is why drums, hundreds of them, were beaten.
For that purpose the whole city was cleaned,
And the four streets were decorated.
- 1.76 “Seeing that city adorned,
The brahmin boy asked,
‘Why have victory banners been raised?
For what reason are hundreds of drums beaten?
Why was the city cleaned
And the four streets decorated?
Someone please explain this matter!’
- 1.77 “ ‘Knower of Vedas, have you not heard? [F.197.b]
The Buddha Dīpaṅkara has emerged,
And he comes to Padmāvati
With a large retinue of seven thousand.
- 1.78 “ ‘For that reason were victory banners raised.
That is why hundreds of drums are beaten.
For that purpose the whole city was cleaned
And the four streets decorated.’
- 1.79 “Hearing mention of the Buddha,
He was impressed by the Buddha’s qualities
And traveled there swiftly without hesitation.
- 1.80 “From afar he saw a brahmin girl
With darting eyes like utpala flowers.
Sitting at the door holding a lotus,
She spied the brahmin boy.
- 1.81 “To converse with pleasant words,

With the voice of the kalavinka and the peacock,
With the pleasing sounds of the goose and the cuckoo,
Abandoning cacophony and with the voice of Brahmā,
The girl spoke to the brahmin boy:

- 1.82 “ ‘What is it, boy? When you were in the forest
Making burnt offerings and reciting mantras,
Were you harassed by the king’s army?³²
You are disturbed and wander the streets.’
- 1.83 “ ‘Girl, I have neither home nor family,
And I have no possessions.³³
I do not desire the pleasures of the senses,
So, girl, the king’s army does not harm me.
- 1.84 “ ‘I do not eat food that comes from them—
Even though I wear robes I do not accept it.
I do not knowingly tell lies,
So, girl, the king’s army does not harm me.
- 1.85 “ ‘I live in the forest on fruits and roots,
So, girl, the king’s army does not harm me.’
- 1.86 “ ‘Were you attacked by lion cubs,
Or were there no fruits or roots in the forest?
Why did you come to this settled place?’
- 1.87 “ ‘I was not harmed by lion cubs,
And in the forest there are fruits and roots.
Good lady, it is because I need utpala flowers
That I came here to the city.’
- 1.88 “ ‘Perhaps, young brahmin, my utpala flowers
Would be suitable to adorn the proud body
Of some young man.’
- 1.89 “ ‘I do not buy them for my own garland.
I do not desire to carry around utpala flowers.
It is for the sake of the compassionate Dīpaṅkara,
Good lady, that I beg for these utpala flowers.’
- 1.90 “ ‘In Gone to Bliss,
When you ate my father’s food,
You disregarded his pleading words.
How can you shamelessly beg for flowers?’

- 1.91 “ ‘Good lady, as payment for your utpalas,
I will give these five hundred coins.³⁴
May the noble lady grant them to me
In my search for qualities of the Buddha. [F.198.a]
- 1.92 “ ‘Good lady, do not be a hindrance.
Good lady, being made to settle down
Is a hindrance for those who seek alms.’
- 1.93 “ ‘Forget about others, young brahmin.
If I give to one who seeks alms,
I will not be a hindrance.
My aspiration is for this and nothing else.’³⁵
- 1.94 “The two of them made the aspiration,
And the brahmin boy took the utpalas
And, holding the utpala flowers,
Bowed at the feet of the Victor:
- 1.95 “ ‘Even if my body dries up
And my bones turn white,
Until I receive a prophecy of awakening
I will not stand up today.
My aspiration is that and nothing else.’
- 1.96 “The girl Receiver of Goodness then held up five utpala flowers and gave them to the brahmin boy Megha. ‘Young brahmin,’ she said, ‘take these utpalas and present them in your name. And, young brahmin, present these two utpala flowers in my name.’
- 1.97 “The brahmin boy Megha, carrying those utpala flowers, went outside the city, where he saw the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara, who was handsome and bright, with his faculties tamed and his mind tamed, supremely tamed, one who had attained the perfection of calm and peace, one who had attained the highest perfection of restraint and peace, a great elephant who guarded and controlled his senses, and like a clear and tranquil lake in which emerges an unsullied golden pillar, elevated, resplendent with glory, and blazing with splendor.
- 1.98 “When he also saw the many trillions of beings, the many hundreds of boys and girls, the many gods, asuras, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, garuḍas, kinnaras, and mahoragas, and King Ajātaśatru with his retinue of queens, all arriving together holding flowers, flower garlands, incense, and balms in order to make offerings to the Blessed One, he thought, ‘I have heard that the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara [F.198.b] is a

thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect buddha with the thirty-two marks of a great being, yet only thirty marks appear on this thus-gone one. Since two marks do not appear, he is not endowed with the thirty-two marks.'

1.99 "The thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara, understanding the thoughts of the brahmin boy Megha, then manifested a display of miraculous power such that those thirty-two marks of a great being appeared—thus did he manifest a display of miraculous power. On seeing this, the brahmin boy Megha was transported with satisfaction and delight. With the rising of great joy and happiness, he spread out a skin, but the residents of the royal city Padmāvātī lifted up the skin, and together they tossed it away. They said to the brahmin boy Megha, 'Brahmin child, are you crazy? In the place where the king's robes³⁶ should be placed, you lay out this dirty skin!'

1.100 "The brahmin boy Megha picked up the skin and stepped aside from the road. Sitting down on a side path, he spoke these words of truth: 'By the truth and these words of truth, if the Thus-Gone One, who is all-knowing and all-seeing, has compassion for the world, may he redirect his path and place his feet upon my matted hair.'

1.101 "The thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara looked behind him and said to the monks, 'Monks, where I put my two feet, there you must not stand. If you ask why, it is because that is the matted hair of one who has honored many hundreds of sextillions of buddhas.'

1.102 "The thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect [F.199.a] Buddha Dīpaṅkara then stepped away from the road and went to where the brahmin boy Megha was. Arriving there, he placed his two feet on the matted hair. Then the brahmin boy Megha stood up from the ground and scattered the utpala flowers upon the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara. The moment he scattered them, they came to rest directly above the crown of the Thus-Gone One as a pinnacled temple of utpala flowers built with four corners and four columns, equally proportioned and symmetrical, delightful and attractive. In that pinnacled temple, moreover, appeared the body of the Thus-Gone One.

1.103 "Then the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect Buddha Dīpaṅkara said to the brahmin boy Megha, 'Young brahmin, by these roots of virtue, in future times, after countless eons, you will become the thus-gone, worthy, complete and perfect buddha known as Śākyamuni, who will be endowed with knowledge and conduct, a well-gone one, a knower of the world, a charioteer who guides beings, an unsurpassed one, a teacher of gods and humans, a blessed buddha.'

- 1.104 “The brahmin boy Megha, having heard his own prophecy, was transported with satisfaction—with the rising of great joy and happiness, at that moment, he attained the acceptance of phenomena as unarisen. Having attained that acceptance, he rose in the space of the sky above to the height of seven tala trees and manifested six thousand samādhis, and there appeared as many tathāgatas as there are grains of sand in the river Ganges. Then the brahmin boy Megha descended from the sky. Offering prostrations at the feet of the Blessed One, he requested the Blessed One that he might go forth and become a monk.
- 1.105 “Ānanda, if you are doubtful, uncertain, or suspicious, thinking that the one who was, at that time, on that occasion, known as the brahmin boy Megha was someone else, Ānanda, you must not see it that way. [F.199.b] If you ask why, it was I myself who was, at that time, on that occasion, the one known as the brahmin boy Megha.
- 1.106 “Ānanda, if you are doubtful, uncertain, or suspicious, thinking that the one who was, at that time, on that occasion, known as the brahmin girl Receiver of Goodness was someone else, Ānanda, you must not see it that way. If you ask why, it was the Śākya girl Gopā who was, at that time, on that occasion, the one known as the girl Receiver of Goodness.
- 1.107 “Ānanda, if you are doubtful, uncertain, or suspicious, thinking that the one who was, at that time, on that occasion, known as the brahmin Giver of Pieces, who was sitting in the row of elders making burnt offerings, was someone else, Ānanda, you must not see it that way. If you ask why, it was the ignorant person Devadatta who was, at that time, on that occasion, the brahmin Giver of Pieces.
- 1.108 “This, Ānanda, is why you must not be content with your roots of virtue.”
- 1.109 When the Blessed One had spoken those words, the venerable Ānanda and the assembly consisting of the entire world with its gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas rejoiced and praised the words of the Blessed One.
- 1.110 *This completes the noble Mahāyāna sūtra “The Prophecy of Dīpaṅkara.”*

c.

Colophon

c.1 Translated by the Indian preceptor Viśuddhasiṃha and the translator Bandé Gepal. The Indian preceptor Jñānagarbha and the great translator-editor Bandé Lui Gyaltzen edited and finalized it.

n.

NOTES

- n.1 *The Play in Full* (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh95.html>) (*rgya cher rol pa*, Toh 95).
- n.2 Nattier 2004, p. 72.
- n.3 Matsumura 2011b, p. 63. For a more extensive and more thoroughly researched overview of texts that share major plot elements with *The Prophecy of Dīpaṅkara*, see Matsumura 2011a, 2011b, and 2012.
- n.4 Translation in Rotman 2017, pp. 24ff.
- n.5 Matsumura 2011b, p. 65.
- n.6 See Jones 1949, pp. 188–203.
- n.7 *The Collected Teachings on the Bodhisatva* (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh56.html>) (*byang chub sems dpa'i sde snod*, Toh 56). For more cases, see Anālayo 2010, p. 87, n. 95; and Matsumura 2011b, pp. 1138–39. A retelling of the story of the brahmin boy (not extant in Sanskrit), in which he is called Sumati, can be found in *The Hundred Deeds* (*Karmaśataka*, Toh 340), 2.288 (<https://84000.co/translation/toh340#UT22084-073-001-997>)–2.341 (<https://84000.co/translation/toh340#UT22084-073-001-1069>).
- n.8 Butön, *chos 'byung*, p. 75.
- n.9 See Matsumura 2010.
- n.10 Nattier 2004, p. 72. Translation in Ānandajoti, “Nidānakathā.”
- n.11 Translation in Burlingame 1921, pp. 193–94. See also sources listed in Lamotte 1944, p. 248, n. 2.

- n.12 See Matsumura 2011b and 2012.
- n.13 Matsumura 2011a, pp. 132–33.
- n.14 Denkarma, folio 299.a; Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, p. 98; Phangthangma 2003, p. 15.
- n.15 Feer 1883, pp. 305–21.
- n.16 Matsumura 2011a, pp. 121–38.
- n.17 The translation of this sentence is tentative: *gnas gtsang ma'i ris kyi lha'i bu dag gcig gis bdag cag nyid rgas shing 'khogs pa dang / nad kyis btab pa dang / shi ba yang bstan* [Stok: *bsten*] *te dge sbyong zhig kyang der bzhag pa*. Possibly there are several gods creating the display, as Feer (1883, p. 308) and Matsumura (2011a, p. 102) have translated the passage. The role of *bdag cag nyid* (“we ourselves,” or possibly “singly” if translating the Sanskrit *pratyātma*) is unclear. It has been rendered here as “like us.”
- n.18 Reading Yongle, Lithang, Kangxi, Narthang, Choné, and Lhasa *bsten pa*. The Degé has *bstan pa* (“taught”).
- n.19 That is, the residents of the royal city of King Endowed with Islands.
- n.20 Degé *phyi bzhin 'brang ba'i dge sbyong lha'i dbang po brgya byin dang thabs cig tu*. Yongle and Kangxi add *dang* here, such that there is a śramaṇa attendant in addition to Śakra. It is not clear where this attendant would have come from, so we have read Degé as referring only to Śakra. Matsumura (2011a, p. 109) and Feer (1883, p. 310) agree. Feer further assumed that Śakra appears in the form of a śramaṇa (“qui le suivait [sous la forme d']un ascète”).
- n.21 This description of the king’s procession is puzzling in the Tibetan: *rgyal po'i mthu chen po dang / rgyal po'i tshogs mang po dang / rgyal po'i rnam par 'phrul pa chen po dang / rgyal po'i bdog pa chen po dang / rgyal po'i 'byor pa chen po dang / rgyal po'i rnam par rtse ba chen po dang chas te yongs su bskor cing mdun gyis bltas*. Here we have opted for a literal translation. Matsumura’s (2011a, p. 111 and n. 68) interpretation of this passage, which is based on a set phrase appearing in Chinese translations, perhaps makes more sense: “together with his great army (*mthu chen po*), his many ministers (*tshogs mang po*), his great, high-ranking officials (*rnam par 'phrul pa chen po*), his great merchants (*bdog pa chen po*; śreṣṭin?), his great householders (*'byor pa chen po*), and his great, high-ranking Brahmans (*rnam par rtse ba chen po*).” However, we have not yet confirmed the concordance here.

- n.22 Reading *Stok cho ga shes pa*. The Degé and other editions consulted read *chog shes pa*, “contentment.”
- n.23 While here Megha’s reason for wanting to leave is not immediately clear, in *The Collected Teachings on the Bodhisatva* (Toh 56, 11.260) Megha states that he will return to his home country because he has mastered the Vedas (*kya mkhan po bdag gis rig byed lobs te bdag ni yul du mchi na bdag gis bgyi ba ci mchis*).
- n.24 Although the Tibetan *zong* is often interpreted to mean articles of merchandise or salable goods, as a translation of the Sanskrit *paṇa* it can refer to a type of coin. Sanskrit versions of the story have five hundred *kārṣāpaṇas* (e.g., the *Divyāvadāna*, Rotman 2017, p. 25; and *The Collected Teachings on the Bodhisatva*, 11.260) or *purāṇas* (e.g., the *Mahāvastu*, Jones 1949, p. 188, n. 9), both also coins of varying values depending on what they were made of. We find this to be more plausible than Megha wandering around with or being handed five hundred “articles of merchandise.”
- n.25 On the name of this city, see Matsumura (2011a, p. 113, n. 76), who notes correspondences with Chinese translations. As the Tibetan lacks the usual *zhes bya ba* (“so-called”) after the name, it would be easy to read *grong khyer chen po bde bar pha rol tu ’gro ba na* as “when (*na*) he was going (*pha rol tu ’gro ba*) to the great city Bliss (*grong khyer chen po bde bar*).”
- n.26 Although not attested as the name of this figure in Sanskrit sources, as Viśākha (Tib. *sa ga*) is most likely a proper name referring to the constellation of the same name, we have provided a tentative reconstruction. The name Suviśākha is fairly well attested in Indian literature compared to other possible back-translations.
- n.27 As is often the case in this sūtra, where it is not clear at which point or even if the speaker changes, here it is ambiguous which of the brahmins says “I do not need them” (*kho bo la mi dgos*). We follow both Feer and Matsumura and interpret this last statement as being the words of Megha.
- n.28 Again, the speaker here is unclear. According to Matsumura (2011a, p. 118), the girl is speaking. We are inclined to think it is the father, given the girl’s later reprimand of the boy for not remembering her father’s plea (1.90). In the *Divyāvadāna*, according to Rotman’s translation (2017, p. 26), the girl speaks: “Accept me, brahman.” It is also said there that “since the king had surrendered the girl with the intention of giving her away as a gift, he wouldn’t take her back again,” which could explain why the girl has to leave in this version.

- n.29 Here again the change of speaker is assumed but not evident in the Tibetan: *lan gsum gyi bar du bslang ba dang de bzhin bya'o zer ro*. Matsumura (2011a, p. 121) agrees with the change of speaker, and Feer (1883, p. 315) has it that the girl continues speaking—“Après la troisième demande, elle se leva en disant: il faut bien agir ainsi”—although in note 1 he admits that something is missing, notably in this case that she is taking the flowers without permission.
- n.30 *bu mo gang la bskyed pa tsam gyis skye ba'i bsod nams kyi zhing de lta bu la* [Yongle, Lithang, Kangxi, Narthang, and Choné las] *bskyed do*. See Matsumura 2011a, p. 122, n. 109, for a similar passage in the Chinese translation of the *Ekottarikāgama*. On that basis she interprets Megha's statements as referring to the Buddha Dīpaṅkara as the field of merit.
- n.31 Here again the change of speaker is assumed but not evident in the Tibetan: *lan bdun gyi bar du smras pa dang / de bzhin du gyur cig ces smras so*. Matsumura (2011a, p. 122) again agrees with the change of speaker, as does Feer (1883, p. 316): “Qu'ainsi soit!”
- n.32 Translation tentative: *khye'u ci nags kyi nang na de/ /sbyin sreg byed cing rig 'don la/ /rgyal po'i dmag gis ma gtses sam*. Here we follow Matsumura's (2011a, p. 126) interpretation in which the girl is essentially asking why he has come to the city.
- n.33 As a translation of the Sanskrit *parigraha*, *yongs su gzung ba* (here translated as “possessions”) has a number of meanings relevant to the context, including marriage, a wife, or something that binds or constrains.
- n.34 Here, rather than five hundred *zong* (“coins”), the Tibetan has five hundred *dbyig*. According to the *Mahāvvyutpatti* (no. 5959; 155/14), the latter corresponds to the Sanskrit *hiraṇya*. This might suggest that the coins are made of gold, but it could also refer to any generic wealth or riches.
- n.35 It is unclear if the aspiration (*smon*) referred to here is the aspiration later made before the Buddha, or if it refers to the marriage vow.
- n.36 In other versions of the story, the people are laying down costly robes for the Buddha, hence their disgust when Megha throws down his deer skin. See Matsumura 2012, p. 85.

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 acceptance that phenomena are unarisen

mi skye ba'i chos la bzod pa

མི་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཚོས་ལ་བཟོད་པ།

anutpattikadharmakṣānti

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The bodhisattvas' realization that all phenomena are unproduced and empty. It sustains them on the difficult path of benefiting all beings so that they do not succumb to the goal of personal liberation. Different sources link this realization to the first or eighth bodhisattva level (*bhūmi*).

g.2 Ajātaśatru

ma skyes dgra

མ་སྐྱེས་དགའ།

ajātaśatru^{AA}

A king in the distant past, at the time of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara. Not to be confused with the king of the same name during the time of the Buddha Śākyamuni, although it has been suggested that in earlier versions of *The Prophecy of Dīpaṅkara* this king had a different name and was said to be a past life of the later Ajātaśatru (Matsumura 2011a, pp. 84–85). In *The Collected Teachings on the Bodhisattva* (Toh 56), he is known as Jitaśatru.

g.3 Ānanda

kun dga' bo

ཀུན་དགའ་བོ།

ānanda^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A major śrāvaka disciple and personal attendant of the Buddha Śākyamuni during the last twenty-five years of his life. He was a cousin of the Buddha (according to the *Mahāvastu*, he was a son of Śuklodana, one of the brothers of King Śuddhodana, which means he was a brother of Devadatta; other sources say he was a son of Amṛtodana, another brother of King Śuddhodana, which means he would have been a brother of Aniruddha).

Ānanda, having always been in the Buddha's presence, is said to have memorized all the teachings he heard and is celebrated for having recited all the Buddha's teachings by memory at the first council of the Buddhist saṅgha, thus preserving the teachings after the Buddha's parinirvāṇa. The phrase "Thus did I hear at one time," found at the beginning of the sūtras, usually stands for his recitation of the teachings. He became a patriarch after the passing of Mahākāśyapa.

g.4 asura

lha ma yin

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།

asura^{AO}

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.5 beryl

bai dUr+ya

བི་དུ་རྩ།

vaiḍūrya^{AO}

Although it has often been translated as “lapis lazuli,” the descriptions and references in the literature, both Sanskrit and Tibetan, match the characteristics of beryl. The Pali form is *veḷuriya*. The Prākṛit form *verulia* is the source for the English “beryl.” This normally refers to the blue or aquamarine beryl, but there are also white, yellow, and green beryls, though green beryl is called emerald.

g.6 blessed one

bcom ldan 'das

བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས།

bhagavat^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

g.7 control

byin gyis brlabs

བྱིན་གྱིས་བརྒྱབ་སྐྱོབ་པ།

adhiṣṭhā^{AO}

This term is usually translated into English with “to bless.” However, the verb *adhiṣṭhā* conveys the notions of control (of one’s environment as a result of meditative absorption), authority, or protection.

g.8 defilement

zag pa

ཟག་པ།

āśrava^{AO} . *āśrava*^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Literally, “to flow” or “to ooze.” Mental defilements or contaminations that “flow out” toward the objects of cyclic existence, binding us to them.

Vasubandhu offers two alternative explanations of this term: “They cause beings to remain (*āsayanti*) within saṃsāra” and “They flow from the Summit of Existence down to the Avīci hell, out of the six wounds that are the sense fields” (*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* 5.40; Pradhan 1967, p. 308). The Summit of Existence (*bhavāgra*, *srid pa’i rtse mo*) is the highest point within saṃsāra, while the hell called Avīci (*mnar med*) is the lowest; the six sense fields (*āyatana*, *skye mched*) here refer to the five sense faculties plus the mind, i.e., the six internal sense fields.

g.9 Devadatta

lhas byin

ལྷས་བྱིན།

devadatta^{AO}

A cousin of the Buddha Śākyamuni who broke with him and established his own community. His tradition was still continuing during the first millennium CE. He is portrayed as engendering evil schemes against the Buddha and even succeeding in wounding him. He is usually identified with wicked beings in accounts of previous lifetimes.

g.10 Dīpaṅkara

mar me mdzad

མར་མེ་མཛད།

dīpaṅkara^{AO}

A buddha who lived incalculable eons ago, he was the first to prophesy the bodhisattva Megha (also known as Sumati or by the Pali Sumedha) as the future Buddha Śākyamuni. The Sanskrit name literally means “Light Maker.”

g.11 Endowed with Islands

gling ldan

གླིང་ལྗན།

—

The royal priest of King Ajātaśatru, a king at the time of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara. The name in the Tibetan, meaning Endowed with Islands, may be a conflation with the name of the city of Dīpaṅkara’s birth in earlier sources for the narrative related in *The Prophecy of Dīpaṅkara* (see [i.10–i.12](#)), for example, the city of Dvīpavati in the *Divyāvadāna* and *Bodhisattvāvadānakalpalatā*. In other sources the father’s (or the priest’s or king’s) name is the graphically similar Dīpa (Lamp), Dīpavat (Endowed with Lamps), and so forth, which is reflected also in the name Arcimat (Shining). See, for example, Matsumura 2011b: 1140–43.

g.12 endowed with knowledge and conduct

rig pa dang zhabs su ldan pa

རིག་པ་དང་ཞབས་སུ་ལྗན་པ།

vidyācaraṇasampanna ^{AO}

The *Nibandhana* explains this as a metaphor of the eye and the feet, which, operating together, allow one to move. Knowledge, interpreted as either “right view” or as “the training in wisdom,” is like the eye, while the other seven parts of the noble eightfold path, or the two other trainings in discipline and samādhi, function as the “feet.” This explanation is also found in the *sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa* commentary on the *Mahāvīyutpatti*, which further clarifies that *zhabs* is here simply the honorific term for “foot” (*caraṇa ni rkang pa*).

g.13 eon

bskal pa

བསྐལ་པ།

kalpa ^{AO}

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.14 eye of Dharma

chos kyi mig

ཚོས་ཀྱི་མིག

dharmacakṣus^{AO}

One of the “five eyes,” representing superior insights of the buddhas and bodhisattvas. The five eyes consist of five different faculties of vision: the physical eye (Skt. *māṃsacakṣus*), the divine eye (Skt. *divyacakṣus*), the wisdom eye (Skt. *prajñācakṣus*), the eye of Dharma (Skt. *dharmacakṣus*), and the Buddha eye (Skt. *buddhacakṣus*).

g.15 gandharva

dri za

དྷི་ཟ།

gandharva^{AO}

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 ruled by the Great King Dhṛtarāṣṭra. They are most renowned as celestial musicians who serve the gods. In the Abhidharma, the term is also used to refer to the mental body assumed by sentient beings during the intermediate state between death and rebirth. Gandharvas are said to live on fragrances (*gandha*) in the desire realm, hence the Tibetan translation *dri za*, meaning “scent eater.”

g.16 Ganges

gang gA

གང་གླ།

gaṅgā^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The Gaṅgā, or Ganges in English, is considered to be the most sacred river of India, particularly within the Hindu tradition. It starts in the Himalayas, flows through the northern plains of India, bathing the holy city of Vārāṇasī, and meets the sea at the Bay of Bengal, in Bangladesh. In the sūtras, however, this river is mostly mentioned not for its sacredness but for its abundant sands—noticeable still today on its many sandy banks and at its delta—which serve as a common metaphor for infinitely large numbers.

According to Buddhist cosmology, as explained in the *Abhidharmakośa*, it is one of the four rivers that flow from Lake Anavatapta and cross the southern continent of Jambudvīpa—the known human world or more specifically the Indian subcontinent.

g.17 garuḍa

nam mkha' lding

ནམ་མཁའ་ལྗིང།

garuḍa^{AO}

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.18 Gepal

dge dpal

དགེ་དཔལ།

—

A Tibetan translator active in Tibet in the late eighth to early ninth century, also known as Gewa Pal (dge ba dpal).

g.19 Giver of Pieces

dum bu byin

དུམ་བུ་བྱིན།

—

A brahmin elder in the city Gone to Bliss during the time of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara.

g.20 god

lha · lha'i bu

ལྷ། · ལྷའི་བུ།

deva^{AO} · *devaputra*^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

g.21 Gone to Bliss

bde bar pha rol 'gro ba · bde bar pha rol 'gro ba

བདེ་བར་ཕ་རོལ་འགྲོ་བ། · བདེ་བར་ཕ་རོལ་འགྲོ་བ།

—

A city during the time of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara.

g.22 Gopā

sa 'tsho ma

ས་འཚོ་མ།

gopā^{AO}

One of the wives of Prince Siddhārtha prior to his leaving his kingdom and attaining awakening as the Buddha.

g.23 Himālaya

gangs ri · gangs

གངས་རི། · གངས།

himālaya^{AO} · *himavat*^{AO}

The mountain or mountain range where Megha resides with his teacher Ratna.

g.24 Jambudvīpa

'dzam bu'i gling

འཛམ་བུ་རྒྱུད།

jambudvīpa ^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

g.25 jātaka

skyes rabs

སྐྱེས་རབས།

jātaka ^{AO}

One of the twelve sections of Buddhist scripture; it contains the accounts of the Buddha’s previous lifetimes.

g.26 Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍada’s Park

rgyal bu rgyal byed kyi tshal mgon med zas sbyin gyi kun dga' ra ba

རྒྱལ་བུ་རྒྱལ་བྱེད་གྱི་ཚལ་མགོན་མེད་ཟས་སྦྱིན་གྱི་ཀུན་དགའ་རབ།

jetavanam anāthapiṇḍadasyārāmaḥ ^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the first Buddhist monasteries, located in a park outside Śrāvastī, the capital of the ancient kingdom of Kośala in northern India. This park was originally owned by Prince Jeta, hence the name Jetavana, meaning Jeta’s grove. The wealthy merchant Anāthapiṇḍada, wishing to offer it to the Buddha, sought to buy it from him, but the prince, not wishing to sell, said he would only do so if Anāthapiṇḍada covered the entire property with gold

coins. Anāthapiṇḍada agreed, and managed to cover all of the park except the entrance, hence the name Anāthapiṇḍadasyārāmaḥ, meaning Anāthapiṇḍada’s park. The place is usually referred to in the sūtras as “Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍada’s park,” and according to the *Samghabhedavastu* the Buddha used Prince Jeta’s name in first place because that was Prince Jeta’s own unspoken wish while Anāthapiṇḍada was offering the park. Inspired by the occasion and the Buddha’s use of his name, Prince Jeta then offered the rest of the property and had an entrance gate built. The Buddha specifically instructed those who recite the sūtras to use Prince Jeta’s name in first place to commemorate the mutual effort of both benefactors.

Anāthapiṇḍada built residences for the monks, to house them during the monsoon season, thus creating the first Buddhist monastery. It was one of the Buddha’s main residences, where he spent around nineteen rainy season retreats, and it was therefore the setting for many of the Buddha’s discourses and events. According to the travel accounts of Chinese monks, it was still in use as a Buddhist monastery in the early fifth century CE, but by the sixth century it had been reduced to ruins.

g.27 Jñānagarbha

dz+nyA na gar+bha

ཇཱ་ན་ག་བྱ།

*jñānagarbha^{RP}

The Indian preceptor who, along with Lui Gyaltzen, revised the translation of *The Prophecy of Dīpaṅkara*. It is unlikely, but not impossible, that this is the famous eighth-century scholar. (See Eckel 2019, pp. 261–62.)

g.28 kalaviṅka

ka la ping ka

ཀ་ལ་པིང་ཀ་

kalaviṅka^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In Buddhist literature refers to a mythical bird whose call is said to be far more beautiful than that of all other birds, and so compelling that it can be heard even before the bird has hatched. The call of the kalaviṅka is thus used as an analogy to describe the sound of the discourse of bodhisattvas as being far superior to that of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, even before bodhisattvas attain awakening. In some cases, the kalaviṅka also takes on mythical characteristics, being depicted as part human, part bird. It is also the sixteenth of the eighty designs on the palms and soles of a tathāgata.

While it is equated to an Indian bird renowned for its beautiful song, there is some uncertainty regarding the identity of the kalaviṅka; some dictionaries declare it to be a type of Indian cuckoo (probably *Eudynamys scolopacea*, also known as the asian koel) or a red and green sparrow (possibly *Amandava amandava*, also known as the red avadavat).

g.29 kinnara

mi'am ci

མིའམ་ཅི།

kinnara^{AO}

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.30 Lui Gyaltzen

klu'i rgyal mtshan

ལུའི་རྒྱལ་མཚན།

—

The Tibetan translator who, along with Jñānagarbha, revised the translation of *The Prophecy of Dīpaṅkara*.

g.31 mahoraga

lto 'phye chen po

ལྷོ་འཕྱེ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahoraga^{AO}

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.32 Megha

sprin

མེག་

megha^{AO}

Lit. “Cloud.” A brahmin boy, a past life of the Buddha Śākyamuni during the time of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara, from whom he received a prophecy of his future awakening. In other iterations of the story he is known in Sanskrit as Sumati, and in Pali as Sumedha.

g.33 mendicant

dge sbyong

དགེ་སྦྱོང་།

śramaṇa^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A general term applied to spiritual practitioners who live as ascetic mendicants. In Buddhist texts, the term usually refers to Buddhist monastics, but it can also designate a practitioner from other ascetic/monastic spiritual traditions. In this context *śramaṇa* is often contrasted with the term *brāhmaṇa* (*bram ze*), which refers broadly to followers of the Vedic tradition. Any renunciate, not just a Buddhist, could be referred to as a *śramaṇa* if they were not within the Vedic fold. The epithet Great Śramaṇa is often applied to the Buddha.

g.34 miraculous power

rdzu 'phrul

རྩུ་འཕྲུལ་།

ṛddhi^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The supernatural powers of a śrāvaka correspond to the first *abhijñā*: “Being one he becomes many, being many he becomes one; he becomes visible, invisible; goes through walls, ramparts and mountains without being impeded, just as through air; he immerses himself in the earth and emerges from it as if in water; he goes on water without breaking through it, as if on [solid] earth; he travels through the air crosslegged like a winged bird; he takes in his hands and touches the moon and the sun, those two wonderful, mighty beings, and with his body he extends his power as far as the Brahma world” (*Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, trans. Lamotte 2003).

The great supernatural powers (*maharddhi*) of bodhisattvas are “causing trembling, blazing, illuminating, rendering invisible, transforming, coming and going across obstacles, reducing or enlarging worlds, inserting any matter into one’s own body, assuming the aspects of those one frequents,

appearing and disappearing, submitting everyone to one's will, dominating the supernormal power of others, giving intellectual clarity to those who lack it, giving mindfulness, bestowing happiness, and finally, emitting beneficial rays" (*Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, trans. Lamotte 2003).

g.35 nāga

klu

ལྷ

nāga^{AO}

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 one hundred sextillion

bye ba khrag khrig brgya stong

བྱེ་བ་ལྷན་ལྷན་བརྒྱ་སྟོང་།

koṭiniyutaśatasahasra

If the Abhidharma system is followed, this is a number calculated by multiplying a *koṭi* (*bye ba*), or ten million, by a *niyuta* (*khrag khrig*), or a hundred billion, and by a *śatasahasra* (*brgya stong*), or one hundred thousand, which all together equals ten to the 23rd power or a hundred sextillion. This term is often used to express a number so large as to be inconceivable.

g.37 Padmāvātī

pad ma can

པད་མ་ཅན།

padmāvātī^{AO}

The name of the palace of King Ajātaśatru, a king in the distant past during the time of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara, and also the name of the palace of his royal priest Endowed with Islands, to whom he gave half his kingdom.

g.38 pillar

mchod sdong

མཚོད་རྗེ་དུང་།

yaṣṭi^{AO} . *yūpa*^{AO}

“Pillar” is a rather loose rendering for this term, which refers more specifically to ceremonial or memorial columns, or to the sacrificial posts used in Vedic rituals.

g.39 pinnacled temple

khang pa brtsegs pa

ཁང་པ་བརྗེགས་པ།

kūṭāgāra^{AO}

A distinctive Indian assembly hall or temple with one ground-floor room and a high ornamental roof, sometimes a barrel shape with apses but more usually a tapering roof, tower, or spire; it contains at least one additional upper room within the structure. *Kūṭāgāra* literally means “upper chamber” and is short for *kūṭāgāraśālā*, “hall with an upper chamber or chambers.” The Mahābodhi temple in Bodhgaya is an example of a *kūṭāgāra*.

g.40 preceptor

mkhan po

མཁན་པོ།

upādhyāya

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A person’s particular preceptor within the monastic tradition. They must have at least ten years of standing in the saṅgha, and their role is to confer ordination, to tend to the student, and to provide all the necessary requisites, therefore guiding that person for the taking of full vows and the maintenance of conduct and practice. This office was decreed by the Buddha so that aspirants would not have to receive ordination from the Buddha in person, and the Buddha identified two types: those who grant entry into the renunciate order and those who grant full ordination. The Tibetan translation *mkhan po* has also come to mean “a learned scholar,” the equivalent of a *paṇḍita*, but that is not the intended meaning in Indic Buddhist literature.

g.41 provided with a supremely rich and fine complexion

kha dog bzang po rgyas pa mchog dang ldan pa

ཁ་དོག་བཟང་པོ་རྒྱས་པ་མཚོག་དང་ལྷན་པ།

paramayā śubhavarṇapuṣkalatayā samanvāgataḥ (mvy)^{AD}

Part of a repeat phrase found in this and other sūtras (*gzugs bzang ba/ mdzes pa/ blta na sdug pa/ kha dog bzang po rgyas pa mchog dang ldan pa*), probably more literally meaning having a fullness of excellent color over the entire body. The *Mahāvīyūtpatti* suggests this is to be read as a single feature.

g.42 Ratna

rin po che

རིན་པོ་ཆེ།

ratna^{AO}

The brahmin master of Megha, the future Buddha Śākyamuni, who resides in the Himālayas.

g.43 Receiver of Goodness

bzang len ldan

བཟང་ལེན་ལྷན།

—

The daughter of a wealthy brahmin in the city Gone to Bliss during the time of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara. She aids the bodhisattva Megha, the future Buddha Śākyamuni, in offering flowers to the newly awakened Dīpaṅkara. A past life of Śākyamuni's wife Gopā, when he was still Prince Siddhārtha, although in some accounts said to become his wife Yaśodharā.

g.44 residents of the royal city

rgyal po'i pho brang 'khor ba'i mi rnams

རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཕོ་བླང་འཁོར་བའི་མི་རྣམས།

—

Literally “those in the vicinity of the king's palace.”

g.45 royal priest

mdun na 'don

མདུན་ན་འདོན།

purohita^{AO}

A brahmin who serves as the king's chaplain and chief ritual officiant for Vedic sacrifices.

g.46 Śakra

brgya byin

བརྒྱ་བྱིན།

śakra ^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The lord of the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three (*trāyastriṃśa*). Alternatively known as Indra, the deity that is called “lord of the gods” dwells on the summit of Mount Sumeru and wields the thunderbolt. The Tibetan translation *brgya byin* (meaning “one hundred sacrifices”) is based on an etymology that *śakra* is an abbreviation of *śata-kratu*, one who has performed a hundred sacrifices. Each world with a central Sumeru has a Śakra. Also known by other names such as Kauśika, Devendra, and Śacipati.

g.47 Śākyamuni

shAkya thub pa

ལྷན་ལྷན་ལྷན་ལྷན་

śākyamuni ^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

An epithet for the historical Buddha, Siddhārtha Gautama: he was a *muni* (“sage”) from the Śākya clan. He is counted as the fourth of the first four buddhas of the present Good Eon, the other three being Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, and Kāśyapa. He will be followed by Maitreya, the next buddha in this eon.

g.48 samādhi

ting nge 'dzin

ཉིང་ལྷན་ལྷན་ལྷན་ལྷན་

samādhi ^{AO}

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 *Drajor Bamponyipa* (*sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*) commentary on the *Mahāvīyutpatti* 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.49 saṅgha

dge 'dun

དགེ་འདུན།

saṅgha ^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Though often specifically reserved for the monastic community, this term can be applied to any of the four Buddhist communities—monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen—as well as to identify the different groups of practitioners, like the community of bodhisattvas or the community of śrāvakas. It is also the third of the Three Jewels (*triratna*) of Buddhism: the Buddha, the Teaching, and the Community.

g.50 seat of awakening

byang chub kyi snying po

བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་སྡིང་པོ།

bodhimaṇḍa ^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The place where the Buddha Śākyamuni achieved awakening and where every buddha will manifest the attainment of buddhahood. In our world this is understood to be located under the Bodhi tree, the Vajrāsana, in present-day Bodhgaya, India. It can also refer to the state of awakening itself.

g.51 śramaṇa

dge sbyong

དགེ་སྦྱོང་།

śramaṇa ^{AO}

See “mendicant.”

g.52 śramaṇa attendant

phyi bzhin 'brang ba'i dge sbyong

ཕྱི་བཞིན་འབྲང་བའི་དགེ་སྦྱོང་།

paścācchramaṇa ^{AO}

A junior monk who is an attendant or disciple of an elder monk, literally one who follows behind.

g.53 Śrāvastī

mnyan yod

མཉམ་ཡོད།

śrāvastī ^{AO}

The capital of the ancient Indian kingdom of Kośala and the setting for many sūtras, as the Buddha spent most rainy seasons in a park outside the city called Jeta's Grove. The city has been identified with the present-day Sāhet Māhet in Uttar Pradesh on the banks of the river Rapti.

g.54 Śuddhāvāsa

gnas gtsang ma

གནས་གཙང་མ།

śuddhāvāsa ^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The five Pure Abodes are the highest heavens of the Form Realm (*rūpadhātu*). They are called “pure abodes” because ordinary beings (*prthagjana*; *so so'i skye bo*) cannot be born there; only those who have achieved the fruit of a non-returner (*anāgāmin*; *phyir mi 'ong*) can be born there. A summary presentation of them is found in the third chapter of Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*, although they are repeatedly mentioned as a set in numerous sūtras, tantras, and vinaya texts.

The five Pure Abodes are the last five of the seventeen levels of the Form Realm. Specifically, they are the last five of the eight levels of the upper Form Realm—which corresponds to the fourth meditative concentration (*dhyāna*; *bsam gtan*)—all of which are described as “immovable” (*akopya*; *mi g.yo ba*) since they are never destroyed during the cycles of the destruction and reformation of a world system. In particular, the five are Abṛha (*mi che ba*), the inferior heaven; Atapa (*mi gdung ba*), the heaven of no torment; Sudṛśa (*gya nom snang*), the heaven of sublime appearances; Sudarśana (*shin tu mthong*), the heaven of the most beautiful to behold; and Akaniṣṭha (*'og min*), the highest heaven.

Yaśomitra explains their names, stating: (1) because those who abide there can only remain for a fixed amount of time, before they are plucked out (\sqrt{brh} , *br̥ṃhanti*) of that heaven, or because it is not as extensive (*abr̥ṃhita*) as the others in the pure realms, that heaven is called the inferior heaven (*abr̥ha*; *mi che ba*); (2) since the afflictions can no longer torment (\sqrt{tap} , *tapanti*) those who reside there because of their having attained a particular samādhi, or because their state of mind is virtuous, they no longer torment (\sqrt{tap} , *tāpayanti*) others, this heaven, consequently, is called the heaven of no torment (*atapa*; *mi gdung ba*); (3) since those who reside there have exceptional (*susṭhu*) vision because what they see ($\sqrt{dṛś}$, *darśana*) is utterly pure, that heaven is called the heaven of sublime appearances (*sudṛśa*; *gya nom snang*); (4) because those who reside there are beautiful gods, that

heaven is called the heaven of the most beautiful to behold (*sudarśana*; *shin tu mthong*); and (5) since it is not lower (*na kaniṣṭhā*) than any other heaven because there is no other place superior to it, this heaven is called the highest heaven (*akaniṣṭha*; 'og min) since it is the uppermost.

g.55 Suviśākha

sa ga bzang po

ས་ག་བཟང་པོ།

**suviśākha* ^{RS}

A wealthy brahmin in the city Gone to Bliss during the time of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara, father of the girl Receiver of Goodness. See note 25.

g.56 thirty-two marks of a great being

skyes bu chen po'i mtshan sum cu rtsa gnyis po

སྐྱེས་བུ་ཆེན་པོའི་མཚན་སུམ་རུལ་གཉིས་པོ།

dvātriṃśanmahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa

The main identifying physical characteristics of both buddhas and universal monarchs, to which are added the so-called “eighty minor marks.”

g.57 treatise

bstan bcos

བསྟན་བཅོས།

śāstra ^{AO}

May refer to a specific genre or style of scholastic Sanskrit literature, or simply to scholastic literature in general; in Buddhist traditions the term *śāstra* usually signifies a text that was composed by a human author, as opposed to texts first spoken, composed, or revealed by an enlightened being.

g.58 trichiliocosm

*stong gsum gyi stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi kham*s

སྟོང་གསུམ་གྱི་སྟོང་ཆེན་པོའི་འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི་ཁམས།

trisāhasramahāsāhasralokadhātu

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The largest universe described in Buddhist cosmology. This term, in Abhidharma cosmology, refers to 1,000³ world systems, i.e., 1,000

“dichiliocosms” or “two thousand great thousand world realms” (*dvīsāhasra-*

mahāsāhasralokadhātu), which are in turn made up of 1,000 first-order world systems, each with its own Mount Sumeru, continents, sun and moon, etc.

g.59 true nature

chos nyid

ཚོས་ཉིད།

dharmatā^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The real nature, true quality, or condition of things. Throughout Buddhist discourse this term is used in two distinct ways. In one, it designates the relative nature that is either the essential characteristic of a specific phenomenon, such as the heat of fire and the moisture of water, or the defining feature of a specific term or category. The other very important and widespread way it is used is to designate the ultimate nature of all phenomena, which cannot be conveyed in conceptual, dualistic terms and is often synonymous with emptiness or the absence of intrinsic existence.

g.60 Tuṣita Heaven

dga' ldan gyi gnas

དགའ་ལྷན་གྱི་གནས།

tuṣita^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Tuṣita (or sometimes Saṃtuṣita), literally “Joyous” or “Contented,” is one of the six heavens of the desire realm (*kāmadhātu*). In standard classifications, such as the one in the *Abhidharmakośa*, it is ranked as the fourth of the six counting from below. This god realm is where all future buddhas are said to dwell before taking on their final rebirth prior to awakening. There, the Buddha Śākyamuni lived his preceding life as the bodhisattva Śvetaketu. When departing to take birth in this world, he appointed the bodhisattva Maitreya, who will be the next buddha of this eon, as his Dharma regent in Tuṣita. For an account of the Buddha’s previous life in Tuṣita, see *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 2.12, and for an account of Maitreya’s birth in Tuṣita and a description of this realm, see *The Sūtra on Maitreya’s Birth in the Heaven of Joy*, (Toh 199).

g.61 utpala flower

ud pa la · ud pal

ལུང་པ་ལ། · ལུང་པ་ལ།

utpala^{AO}

Nymphaea caerulea. The “blue lotus” is actually a lily, so it is also known as the blue water lily.

g.62 Vedas

rig byed

རིག་བྱེད།

veda^{AO}

The ancient sacred scriptures of Hinduism.

g.63 Viśuddhasiṃha

bi shud+dha sing ha

བི་ཤུད་སིང་ཧ།

**viśuddhasiṃha*^{RP}

An Indian paṇḍita active in Tibet in the late eighth to early ninth century.

g.64 voice of Brahmā

tshangs pa'i sgra

ཚངས་པའི་སྒྲ།

—

A voice that has the qualities of the voice of the god Brahmā. This is one of the thirty-two marks of a great being.

g.65 well-gone one

bde bar gshegs pa

བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ།

sugata^{AO}

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 Buddhaghōṣa, 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.66 went forth

rab tu phyung

རབ་ཏུ་ལྷུང་།

pra √vraj ^{AO}

To renounce settled, household life (“going forth from home to homelessness”) to become a monk or wandering spiritual practitioner.

g.67 without further appropriation

len pa med pa

ལེན་པ་མེད་པ།

anupādāna ^{AO}

g.68 yakṣa

gnod sbyin

གནོད་སྦྱིན།

yakṣa ^{AO}

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.