

༄། །མད་སྲུབ་བའི་ཚུལ་གྱི་རྣམ་གྲངས།

The Marvelous Dharma Discourse

Adbhutadharmaparyāya

འཕགས་པ་མད་དུ་བྱུང་བ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་ཚོས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་གྲངས།

'phags pa rmad du byung ba zhes bya ba'i chos kyi rnam grangs

The Noble Marvelous Dharma Discourse

Āryādbhutadharmaparyāya

· Toh 319 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 72 (mdo sde, sa), folios 194.a–196.b

TRANSLATED INTO TIBETAN BY

· Bandé Yeshé Dé · Jinamitra · Surendrabodhi ·



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co.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ti. Title
- im. Imprint
- co. Contents
- s. Summary
- ac. Acknowledgements
- i. Introduction
- tr. The Translation
 - 1. The Noble Marvelous Dharma Discourse
- c. Colophon
- n. Notes
- b. Bibliography
 - Tibetan Sources
 - Sanskrit and Secondary Sources
- g. Glossary

s.

SUMMARY

- s.1 In *The Marvelous Dharma Discourse* Ānanda asks the Buddha about the relative merit accrued by huge offerings made to revered beings as compared to the merit accrued by making even a miniature stūpa for the veneration of a buddha who has passed into parinirvāṇa. The Buddha replies that the merit accrued by creating even a tiny stūpa the size of a small fruit for the veneration of a buddha is greater than that accrued by offering the entire world, or even the universe and its palaces, to all stream enterers, once-returners, non-returners, arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and the saṅgha in the four directions.

ac.

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ac.1 Translated by the Mārgaphala Translation Team. Bianba Deji produced the draft translation and introduction. Daigengna Duoer checked the translation against the Tibetan and edited the text. Geshe Samten Gyatso of Drepung Gomang Monastery offered kind advice. Thanks to Cynthia White for her kind help and support.

ac.2 The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha. Rory Lindsay and Wiesiek Mical edited the translation, compared it against the Sanskrit, and finalized the introduction. Dawn Collins copyedited the text. Martina Cotter was in charge of the digital publication process.

i.

INTRODUCTION

i.1

The Marvelous Dharma Discourse is a short Mahāyāna sūtra concerned with the merit resulting from making stūpas. The sūtra takes place in the Bamboo Grove near Rājagṛha, where the Buddha Śākyamuni regularly stayed and gave teachings. The text begins when Ānanda, while on an alms round in the city of Rājagṛha, notices a fine palace and wonders whether the merit accrued by offering such a palace to the saṅgha in the four directions would exceed the merit produced from constructing a miniature stūpa the size of a small fruit for the veneration of a buddha. Resolving to ask the Buddha about this, he returns to the Bamboo Grove and asks his question. The Buddha replies that the merit accrued by creating even a very small stūpa for the veneration of a perfect buddha is far greater than the merit accrued by any form of offering made to all stream enterers, once-returners, non-returners, arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and the saṅgha in the four directions.¹

i.2

The Marvelous Dharma Discourse is found in the General Sūtra section of the Kangyur. Its colophon states that it was translated by the translator-editor Bandé Yeshé Dé and the Indian preceptors Jinamitra and Surendrabodhi, who were regular collaborators in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. The text is also included in the Denkarma catalog, dated to 812 CE,² while in the Phangthangma inventory there are two texts listed with this name, one among the short Mahāyana sūtras and one among the Hīnayāna discourses.³

i.3

Three Sanskrit manuscripts of the text have so far been identified in the Gilgit collection, and all three have been published in facsimile in *Gilgit Buddhist Manuscripts*.⁴ Yael Bentor has published an edition and translation from Sanskrit, as well as a comparison of redactional differences between the manuscripts.⁵

i.4

Two translations of this sūtra are available in Chinese. The first (Taishō 688)⁶ was produced by an unknown translator sometime during the late Han dynasty (25–220 CE). The second (Taishō 689)⁷ was translated by Xuanzang

in 649 CE. According to Bentor, these two Chinese versions, which are supposed to be translations of *The Marvelous Dharma Discourse*, are in fact closer to the Sanskrit text of *The Great Rumble*⁸ (Toh 208).⁹

i.5 The basis for this translation was the Degé version in consultation with the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) and the version included in the Stok Palace Kangyur. Bentor's edition and translation of the Sanskrit were also consulted, and all significant differences between the Tibetan and the Sanskrit are mentioned in the notes to this translation.

The Noble Marvelous Dharma Discourse

1.

The Translation

[F.194.a]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.¹⁰

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was staying in Rājagṛha at the Bamboo Grove in the Kalandakanivāpa. One morning, the venerable Ānanda donned his Dharma robe and lower garment, took up his alms bowl, and went into Rājagṛha on his alms round. As he was making his alms round through the city of Rājagṛha, the venerable Ānanda noticed, in a certain direction, a multistoried palace with eighty gateways. It was plastered inside and out; parasols, banners, and pennants were hoisted; and it was adorned with many silken tassels.

1.2 Seeing this, the venerable Ānanda thought, “If a faithful son or daughter of good family were to construct such a building and offer it to the saṅgha of monks in the four directions, or if someone were to erect for a thus-gone, worthy, completely perfect buddha a stūpa the size of a gooseberry fruit, provide it with a central pillar the size of a needle and a parasol the size of a jujube leaf, commission a statue the size of a grain of barley, and place in there a relic the size of a mustard seed, which of these two would have the greater merit?” Then it occurred to the venerable Ānanda, “Since the Teacher is here with me, the Well-Gone One is here with me, I should ask the Blessed One to clarify this matter. As the Blessed One explains it, so I will remember it.”

1.3 Then the venerable Ānanda completed his alms rounds in the city of Rājagṛha and finished his meal. Since he was abstaining from accepting subsequent alms food, he put away his Dharma robe and alms bowl.¹¹ He then washed his feet and went to see the Blessed One. Once there, he prostrated at the Blessed One’s feet [F.194.b] and sat down to one side.

- 1.4 Seated to one side, the venerable Ānanda addressed the Blessed One: “Honorable One, earlier this morning, I donned my Dharma robe and lower garment, took up my alms bowl, and went into Rājagṛha on my alms round. As I went from one house to the next collecting alms in the city of Rājagṛha, I saw, in a certain direction, a multistoried palace with eighty gateways. It was plastered inside and out; parasols, banners, and pennants were hoisted; and it was adorned with many silken tassels. Seeing this, I thought to myself, ‘If a faithful son or daughter of good family were to offer such a building to the saṅgha in the four directions, or if someone were to erect for a thus-gone, worthy, completely perfect buddha, who has passed into parinirvāṇa, a stūpa the size of a gooseberry fruit made of clay, provide it with a central pillar the size of a needle and a parasol the size of a jujube leaf, commission a statue the size of a grain of barley, and place in there a relic the size of a mustard seed, which of these two would have the greater merit?’ Then it occurred to me, ‘Since the Teacher is here with me, the Well-Gone One is here with me, I should ask the Blessed One to clarify this matter. As the Blessed One explains it, so I will remember it.’ If I make this request to the Blessed One, may the Blessed One instruct me thoroughly on this matter by virtue of his compassionate mind.”¹²
- 1.5 When this request was thus made, the Blessed One replied to the venerable Ānanda, “Ānanda,¹³ you are dedicated to the welfare of many beings. It is for the happiness of many beings, out of compassion for the world, and for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans that you ask the Thus-Gone One about this issue. Excellent! Excellent! Therefore, [F.195.a] Ānanda, listen well and keep this in mind. I will explain.
- 1.6 “Ānanda, the continent of Jambudvīpa is seven thousand leagues in length and width. In the north it is expansive. To the south, it has the shape of an axe. If it were made of the seven precious substances and a faithful son or daughter of good family were to offer it to all stream enterers, once-returners, non-returners, arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and the saṅgha in the four directions, or if someone were to erect for a thus-gone, worthy, completely perfect buddha, who has passed into parinirvāṇa, a stūpa the size of a gooseberry fruit made of clay, provide it with a central pillar the size of a needle and a parasol the size of a jujube leaf, commission a statue the size of a grain of barley, and place in there a relic the size of a mustard seed, I say, Ānanda, the merit of this one would be far greater than the former.
- 1.7 “Ānanda, leave aside the continent of Jambudvīpa. There is, Ānanda, an eastern continent named Pūrvavideha. It is eight thousand leagues in length and width and it is shaped like a crescent. If it were made of the seven precious substances and a faithful son or daughter of good family were to offer it to all stream enterers, once-returners, non-returners, arhats,

pratyekabuddhas,¹⁴ and the saṅgha in the four directions, or if someone were to create for a thus-gone, worthy, completely perfect buddha, who has passed into parinirvāṇa, a stūpa the size of a gooseberry fruit made of clay, provide it with a central pillar the size of a needle and a parasol the size of a jujube leaf, commission a statue the size of a grain of barley, and place in there a relic the size of a mustard seed, I say, Ānanda, the merit of this one would be far greater than the former.

1.8 “Ānanda, leave aside the continent of Jambudvīpa [F.195.b] and the eastern continent of Pūrvavideha.¹⁵ There is, Ānanda, a continent named Avaragodānīya. It is nine thousand leagues in length and width and it is shaped like a full moon. If it were made of the seven precious substances and a faithful son or daughter of good family were to offer it to the all stream enterers, once-returners, non-returners, arhats, pratyekabuddhas,¹⁶ and the saṅgha in the four directions, or if someone were to create for a thus-gone, worthy, completely perfect buddha, who has passed into parinirvāṇa, a stūpa the size of a gooseberry fruit made of clay, provide it with a central pillar the size of a needle and a parasol the size of a jujube leaf, commission a statue the size of a grain of barley, and place in there a relic the size of a mustard seed, I say, Ānanda, the merit of this one would be far greater than the former.

1.9 “Ānanda leave aside the continent of Jambudvīpa, the eastern continent of Pūrvavideha, and the western continent of Avaragodānīya. There is, Ānanda, a continent named Uttarakuru. It is ten thousand leagues in length and width and is entirely square. If it were made of the seven precious substances and a faithful son or daughter of good family were to offer it to all stream enterers, once-returners, non-returners, arhats, pratyekabuddhas,¹⁷ and the saṅgha in the four directions, or if someone were to create for a thus-gone, worthy, completely perfect buddha, who has passed into parinirvāṇa, a stūpa the size of a gooseberry fruit made of clay, provide it with a central pillar the size of a needle and a parasol the size of a jujube leaf, commission a statue the size of a grain of barley, and place in there a relic the size of a mustard seed, I say, Ānanda, the merit of this one would be far greater than the former. [F.196.a]

1.10 “Ānanda, leave aside the continent of Jambudvīpa, the eastern continent of Pūrvavideha, the western continent of Avaragodānīya, and the northern continent of Uttarakuru. There is, Ānanda, the palace of Śakra, the lord of the gods, named Vaijayanta. If it were made of the seven precious substances and a faithful son or daughter of good family were to offer it to all stream enterers, once-returners, non-returners, arhats, pratyekabuddhas,¹⁸ and the saṅgha in the four directions, or if someone were to create for a thus-gone, worthy, completely perfect buddha, who has passed into parinirvāṇa, a

stūpa the size of a gooseberry fruit made from clay, provide it with a central pillar the size of a needle and a parasol the size of a jujube leaf, commission a statue the size of a grain of barley, and place in there a relic the size of a mustard seed, I say, Ānanda, the merit of this one would be far greater than the former.

1.11 “Ānanda, leave aside the continent of Jambudvīpa, the eastern continent of Pūrvavideha, the western continent of Avaragodāniya, the northern continent of Uttarakuru, and the palace of Śakra, the lord of the gods, named Vaijayanta. There is, Ānanda, the three-thousandfold universe. If it were made of the seven precious substances and a faithful son or daughter of good family were to offer it to all the stream enterers, once-returners, non-returners, arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and the saṅgha in the four directions, or if someone were to create for a thus-gone, worthy, completely perfect buddha, who has passed into parinirvāṇa, a stūpa the size of a gooseberry fruit made of clay, provide it with a central pillar the size of a needle and a parasol the size of a jujube leaf, [F.196.b] commission a statue the size of a grain of barley, and place in there a relic the size of a mustard seed, I say, Ānanda, the merit of this one would be far greater than the former.

1.12 “Why is this so? Ānanda, it is because a thus-gone one has immeasurable generosity,¹⁹ immeasurable discipline, immeasurable patience, immeasurable effort, immeasurable concentration, immeasurable insight,²⁰ immeasurable loving-kindness, immeasurable compassion, immeasurable joy, and immeasurable equanimity. Ānanda, possessing the eighteen unique qualities of a buddha, the ten powers of a thus-gone one, and the four types of fearlessness, a thus-gone, worthy, completely perfect buddha is endowed with immeasurable qualities.”

1.13 When the Blessed One had spoken, the venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, this Dharma discourse is indeed marvelous! O Well-Gone One, it is marvelous! What is the name of this Dharma discourse? How should it be remembered?”

1.14 The Buddha replied, “Ānanda, know this Dharma discourse as *The Marvelous Dharma Discourse*. Hence, designate this marvelous Dharma discourse as *The Marvelous Dharma Discourse*.”²¹

1.15 The Blessed One having instructed thus, the monks and the venerable Ānanda rejoiced and thoroughly praised what the Blessed One had said.²²

1.16 *This concludes “The Noble Marvelous Dharma Discourse.”*

c.

Colophon

c.1 It was edited and finalized by the Indian preceptors Jinamitra and Surendrabodhi, as well as the great translator Bandé Yeshé Dé.

n.

NOTES

- n.1 This theme—the enormous merit accrued by creating even a miniature stūpa the size of a small fruit for the veneration of a perfect buddha—is also mentioned in *The Sūtra on Dependent Arising* (Toh 212, 1.6). See also the Knowledge Base article on stūpas (<https://read.84000.co/knowledgebase/stupa.html>).
- n.2 Denkarma, folio 299.b. See also Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, pp. 116–17, no. 220.
- n.3 Phangthangma, pp. 17 and 21.
- n.4 Vira and Chandra (eds.) 1959–74.
- n.5 Bentor 1988. Bentor’s edition has also been published online by Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages (GRETIL) (http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/corpustei/transformations/html/sa_adbhutadharmaparyAya.htm).
- n.6 *Fo shuo wei ceng you jing* 佛說未曾有經 (*Adbhutadharmaparyāya*), Taishō 688 (CBETA (<https://cbetaonline.dila.edu.tw/en/T0688>); SAT (<https://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT2018/T0688.html>)).
- n.7 *Shen xi you jing* 甚希有經 (*Adbhutadharmaparyāya*), Taishō 689 (CBETA (<https://cbetaonline.dila.edu.tw/en/T0689>); SAT (<https://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT2018/T0689.html>)).
- n.8 *The Great Rumble* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh208.html>) (translated 2022).
- n.9 Bentor 1988, p. 47.
- n.10 This homage is not in the Sanskrit.

- n.11 This refers to the ascetic practice (*dhūtaguṇa, sbyangs pa'i yon tan*) of eating only what can be consumed in one sitting. The ascetic practices are an optional set of practices that mendicants can adopt to cultivate greater detachment. The list of practices varies in different sources. When thirteen practices are listed, they consist of (1) wearing patched robes made from discarded cloth rather than from cloth donated by laypeople; (2) wearing only three robes; (3) going for alms; (4) not omitting any house while on the alms round, rather than begging only at those houses known to provide good food; (5) eating only what can be eaten in one sitting; (6) eating only food received in the alms bowl, rather than more elaborate meals presented to the Saṅgha; (7) refusing more food after indicating one has eaten enough; (8) dwelling in the forest; (9) dwelling at the root of a tree; (10) dwelling in the open air, using only a tent made from one's robes as shelter; (11) dwelling in a charnel ground; (12) satisfaction with whatever dwelling one has; and (13) sleeping in a sitting position without ever lying down.
- n.12 The last sentence of this paragraph is not in the Sanskrit.
- n.13 Here the Sanskrit text includes "Excellent! Excellent!" This does not appear at this point in the Tibetan; instead, it appears several lines down.
- n.14 The phrase "stream enterers, once-returners, non-returners, arhats, pratyekabuddhas" is not in the Sanskrit.
- n.15 "And the eastern continent of Pūrvavideha" is not in the Sanskrit.
- n.16 The phrase "stream enterers, once-returners, non-returners, arhats, pratyekabuddhas" is not in the Sanskrit.
- n.17 In the Sanskrit text, the phrase "stream enterers, once-returners, non-returners, arhats, pratyekabuddhas" is replaced with the words "up to" (*yāvāt*), which implies an ellipsis.
- n.18 The phrase "stream enterers, once-returners, non-returners, arhats, pratyekabuddhas" is not in the Sanskrit.
- n.19 "Generosity" is translated based on the Sanskrit. All Tibetan witnesses read "wisdom" (*ye shes*).
- n.20 In place of "immeasurable concentration, immeasurable insight," the Sanskrit has "immeasurable renunciation" (*tyāga*). The Sanskrit *tyāga* can also mean "largess."
- n.21 In the Sanskrit text, the phrase *dharmaparyāyam adbhutam* is reiterated in a compounded form, *adbhutadharmaparyāya*. This distinction is lost in the

English translation, where the reiteration becomes a tautology.

n.22 The Sanskrit version states only that the monks and the venerable Ānanda rejoiced in what the Blessed One said.

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 alms bowl

lhung bzed

ལུང་བཟེད།

pātra^{AS}

A monastic's begging bowl.

g.2 alms round

bsod snyoms

བསོད་སྟོན་མཁའ་ལྷོད་

piṇḍapāta ^{AS}

The food deposited (*pāta*) in a monastic's alms bowl.

g.3 Ānanda

kun dga' bo

ཀུན་དགའ་བོ།

ānanda ^{AS}

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 arhat

dgra bcom pa

དགའ་བཅོམ་པ།

arhat

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

According to Buddhist tradition, one who is worthy of worship (*pūjām arhati*), or one who has conquered the enemies, the mental afflictions (*kleśa-ari-hata-vat*), and reached liberation from the cycle of rebirth and suffering. It is the fourth and highest of the four fruits attainable by śrāvakas. Also used as an epithet of the Buddha.

g.5 Avaragodānīya

nub kyi ba lang spyod

ལུ་གྲི་བ་ལང་སྤྱོད།

avaragodānīya ^{AS}

The western continent of the human world according to traditional Indian cosmology, characterized as “rich in the resources of cattle.” It is more commonly rendered Aparagodānīya or Aparagoyāna, but in the Sanskrit version of this text, it is identified as Avaragodānīya. It has a circular shape and is about 7,500 leagues in circumference. Humans who live there are very tall and live for five hundred years.

g.6 Bamboo Grove

'od ma'i tshal

འོད་མའི་ཚལ།

veṇuvana ^{AS}

The famous bamboo grove near Rājagṛha where the Buddha regularly stayed and gave teachings. It was situated on land donated by King Bimbisāra of Magadha and was the first of several landholdings donated to the Buddhist community during the time of the Buddha.

g.7 Bandé Yeshé Dé

ban de ye shes sdes

བན་དེ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྡེ་ས།

—

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

g.8 Blessed One

bcom ldan 'das

བཙེ་མ་ལྷན་འདས།

bhagavān ^{AS}

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 $\sqrt{bhañj}$ (“to break”).

g.9 central pillar

srog shing

སྟོག་ཤིང་།

yaṣṭi^{AS}

The pillar in the center of a stūpa.

g.10 completely perfect buddha

yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas

ཡང་དག་པར་རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས།

samyaksambuddha^{AS}

An epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni and other buddhas. A perfect buddha teaches the Dharma and brings it into a world, as opposed to a *pratyekabuddha*, who does not teach the Dharma or bring it into a world.

g.11 concentration

bsam gtan

བསམ་གཏན།

dhyāna^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Dhyāna is defined as one-pointed abiding in an undistracted state of mind, free from afflicted mental states. Four states of *dhyāna* are identified as being conducive to birth within the form realm. In the context of the Mahāyāna, it is the fifth of the six perfections. It is commonly translated as “concentration,” “meditative concentration,” and so on.

g.12 Dharma discourse

chos kyi rnam grangs

ཚཱ་ཀྱི་རྣམ་གྲངས།

dharmaparyāya ^{AS}

The Sanskrit word *paryāya* regularly has the sense of “method,” “procedure,” and “approach,” but here it means simply “Dharma teaching,” “Dharma discourse,” or, more literally, “approach to the Dharma.” The Chinese 法門 *fa men* (lit. “door to the Dharma”) conveys the sense of “access/approach” and, by extension, “teaching.” The Tibetan *rnam grangs* can be misread as having something to do with “enumeration.”

g.13 Dharma robe

chos gos

ཚཱ་གོས།

cīvara ^{AS}

In common parlance, this denotes the patched, yellow upper robe worn by renunciants.

g.14 discipline

tshul khrims

ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས།

śīla ^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Morally virtuous or disciplined conduct and the abandonment of morally undisciplined conduct of body, speech, and mind. In a general sense, moral discipline is the cause for rebirth in higher, more favorable states, but it is also foundational to Buddhist practice as one of the three trainings (*triśikṣā*) and one of the six perfections of a bodhisattva. Often rendered as “ethics,” “discipline,” and “morality.”

g.15 effort

brtson 'grus

བརྩོན་འགྲུས།

vīrya ^{AS}

One of the six perfections, the seven limbs of awakening, the five abilities, the four bases of magical power, and the five powers.

g.16 eighteen unique qualities of a buddha

sangs rgyas kyi chos ma 'dres pa bco brgyad

སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཚཱ་མ་འདྲེས་པ་བཅོད་བརྒྱད།

aṣṭādaśāveṇīkabuddhadharma^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Eighteen special features of a buddha's behavior, realization, activity, and wisdom that are not shared by other beings. They are generally listed as: (1) he never makes a mistake, (2) he is never boisterous, (3) he never forgets, (4) his concentration never falters, (5) he has no notion of distinctness, (6) his equanimity is not due to lack of consideration, (7) his motivation never falters, (8) his endeavor never fails, (9) his mindfulness never falters, (10) he never abandons his concentration, (11) his insight (*prajñā*) never decreases, (12) his liberation never fails, (13) all his physical actions are preceded and followed by wisdom (*jñāna*), (14) all his verbal actions are preceded and followed by wisdom, (15) all his mental actions are preceded and followed by wisdom, (16) his wisdom and vision perceive the past without attachment or hindrance, (17) his wisdom and vision perceive the future without attachment or hindrance, and (18) his wisdom and vision perceive the present without attachment or hindrance.

g.17 four types of fearlessness

mi 'jigs pa bzhi

མི་འཇིགས་པ་བཞི།

caturabhaya^{AS}

Fearlessness in declaring that one has (1) awakened, (2) ceased all illusions, (3) taught the obstacles to awakening, and (4) shown the way to liberation.

g.18 generosity

sbyin pa

སྤྱོན་པ།

dāna

The practice of giving or making offerings to others. One of the six perfections of bodhisattvas.

g.19 gooseberry

skyu ru ra

སྦྱུ་རུ་ར།

āmalaka^{AS}

The Indian gooseberry, or *Emblic myrobalan*.

g.20 insight

shes rab

ཤེས་རབ།

prajñā^{AS}

The mind that sees the ultimate truth. One of the six perfections of bodhisattvas.

g.21 Jambudvīpa

'dzam bu gling

འཛམ་བུ་སྐྱིད།

jambudvīpa^{AS}

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.22 Jinamitra

dzi na mi tra

ཇི་ན་མི་བླ།

**jinamitra*^{RP}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Jinamitra was invited to Tibet during the reign of King Trisong Detsen (*khri srong lde btsan*, r. 742–98 CE) and was involved with the translation of nearly two hundred texts, continuing into the reign of King Ralpachen (*ral pa can*, r. 815–38 CE). He was one of the small group of paṇḍitas responsible for the *Mahāvīyutpatti* Sanskrit–Tibetan dictionary.

g.23 jujube

rgya shug

རྒྱ་ཤུག

badarī^{AS}

Ziziphus jujuba or *Ziziphus mauritiana*. A small deciduous tree or shrub with edible fruits. The leaf of jujube is from three to seven centimeters long and from one to three centimeters wide.

g.24 Kalandakanivāpa

bya ka lan da ka gnas pa

བྱ་ཀ་ལན་དཀ་གནས་པ།

kalandakanivāpa ^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A place where the Buddha often resided, within the Bamboo Park (Veṇuvana) outside Rajagṛha that had been donated to him. The name is said to have arisen when, one day, King Bimbisāra fell asleep after a romantic liaison in the Bamboo Park. While the king rested, his consort wandered off. A snake (the reincarnation of the park's previous owner, who still resented the king's acquisition of the park) approached with malign intentions. Through the king's tremendous merit, a gathering of *kalandaka*—crows or other birds according to Tibetan renderings, but some Sanskrit and Pali sources suggest flying squirrels—miraculously appeared and began squawking. Their clamor alerted the king's consort to the danger, who rushed back and hacked the snake to pieces, thereby saving the king's life. King Bimbisāra then named the spot Kalandakanivāpa ("Kalandakas' Feeding Ground"), sometimes (though not in the *Vinayavastu*) given as Kalandakanivāsa ("Kalandakas' Abode") in their honor. The story is told in the *Samṅhabhedavastu* (Toh 1, ch.17, Degé Kangyur vol.4, folio 77.b et seq.). For more details and other origin stories, see the 84000 Knowledge Base article [Veṇuvana and Kalandakanivāpa](#).

g.25 lower garment

sham thabs

ཤམ་ཐབས།

nivāsana ^{AS}

One of a Buddhist monastic's three robes.

g.26 multistoried palace

khang pa brtsegs pa

ཁང་པ་བརྗེན་པ།

kūṭāgāra ^{AS}

A distinctive Indian building structure used for mansions, palaces, or temples. Usually it has a tapering roof, tower, or spire, containing at least one additional upper room within the structure. The Sanskrit *kūṭāgāra* literally means “upper chamber.”

g.27 non-returner

phyir mi 'ong ba

ཕྱིར་མི་འོང་བ།

anāgāmin ^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The third of the four attainments of śrāvakas, this term refers to a person who will no longer take rebirth in the desire realm (*kāmadhātu*), but either be reborn in the Pure Abodes (*śuddhāvāsa*) or reach the state of an arhat in their current lifetime. (*Provisional 84000 definition. New definition forthcoming.*)

g.28 once-returner

phyir 'ong ba

ཕྱིར་འོང་བ།

sakṛdāgāmin ^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One who has achieved the second of the four levels of attainment on the śrāvaka path and who will attain liberation after only one more birth. (*Provisional 84000 definition. New definition forthcoming.*)

g.29 parasol

gdugs

གདུགས།

chattra ^{AS}

In general Indian iconography, a parasol is a symbol of protection and royalty. In Buddhism, it symbolizes protection from the blazing heat of afflictions, desire, illness, and harmful forces, just as a physical parasol protects one from the blazing sun or the elements. It is also included in the eight auspicious emblems.

g.30 patience

bzod pa

བཟོད་པ།

—

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A term meaning acceptance, forbearance, or patience. As the third of the six perfections, patience is classified into three kinds: the capacity to tolerate abuse from sentient beings, to tolerate the hardships of the path to buddhahood, and to tolerate the profound nature of reality. As a term referring to a bodhisattva's realization, *dharmakṣānti* (*chos la bzod pa*) can refer to the ways one becomes "receptive" to the nature of Dharma, and it can be an abbreviation of *anutpattikadharmakṣānti*, "forbearance for the unborn nature, or nonproduction, of dharmas."

g.31 pennant

ba dan

བ་དན།

patāka^{AS}

A kind of chevron made of silk. It is one of the ten different things mentioned in the sūtras as items suitable for offering.

g.32 pratyekabuddha

rang sangs rgyas

རང་སངས་རྒྱས།

pratyekabuddha^{AS}

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" (*khadḡgaviṣāṇakalpa*) for their preference for staying in solitude or as "congregators" (*vargacārin*) when their preference is to stay among peers.

g.33 Pūrvavideha

shar gyi lus 'phags

ཤར་གྱི་ལུས་འཕགས།

pūrvavideha^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the four main continents that surround Sumeru, the central mountain in classical Buddhist cosmology. It is the eastern continent, characterized as “sublime in physique,” and it is semicircular in shape. The humans who live there are twice as tall as those from our southern continent, and live for 250 years. It is known as Videha and Pūrvavideha.

g.34 Rājagṛha

rgyal po'i khab

རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཁབ།

rājagṛha ^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The ancient capital of Magadha prior to its relocation to Pāṭaliputra during the Mauryan dynasty, Rājagṛha is one of the most important locations in Buddhist history. The literature tells us that the Buddha and his saṅgha spent a considerable amount of time in residence in and around Rājagṛha—in nearby places, such as the Vulture Peak Mountain (Gṛdhrakūṭaparvata), a major site of the Mahāyāna sūtras, and the Bamboo Grove (Veṇuvana)—enjoying the patronage of King Bimbisāra and then of his son King Ajātaśatru. Rājagṛha is also remembered as the location where the first Buddhist monastic council was held after the Buddha Śākyamuni passed into parinirvāṇa. Now known as Rajgir and located in the modern Indian state of Bihar.

g.35 relic

ring bsrel

རིང་བསྐྱེལ།

dhātu ^{AS}

The physical remains or personal objects of a previous tathāgata, arhat, or other realized person that are venerated for their perpetual spiritual potency. They are often enshrined in stūpas and other public monuments so the Buddhist community at large can benefit from their blessings and power.

g.36 seven precious substances

rin po che sna bdun

རིན་པོ་ཆེ་སྣ་བདུན།

—

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The set of seven precious materials or substances includes a range of precious metals and gems, but their exact list varies. The set often consists of gold, silver, beryl, crystal, red pearls, emeralds, and white coral, but may also contain lapis lazuli, ruby, sapphire, chrysoberyl, diamonds, etc. The term is frequently used in the sūtras to exemplify preciousness, wealth, and beauty, and can describe treasures, offering materials, or the features of architectural structures such as stūpas, palaces, thrones, etc. The set is also used to describe the beauty and prosperity of buddha realms and the realms of the gods.

In other contexts, the term *saptaratna* can also refer to the seven precious possessions of a cakravartin or to a set of seven precious moral qualities.

g.37 stream enterer

rgyun du zhugs pa

རྒྱལ་ལུ་བྱུགས་པ།

srotāpanna^{AS} · *srotaāpanna*^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One who has achieved the first level of attainment on the path of the śrāvakas, and who has entered the “stream” of practice that leads to nirvāṇa. (*Provisional 84000 definition. New definition forthcoming.*)

g.38 stūpa

mchod rten

མཚོད་རྟེན།

stūpa^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The Tibetan translates both *stūpa* and *caitya* with the same word, *mchod rten*, meaning “basis” or “recipient” of “offerings” or “veneration.” Pali: *cetiya*.

A caitya, although often synonymous with *stūpa*, can also refer to any site, sanctuary or shrine that is made for veneration, and may or may not contain relics.

A stūpa, literally “heap” or “mound,” is a mounded or circular structure usually containing relics of the Buddha or the masters of the past. It is considered to be a sacred object representing the awakened mind of a buddha, but the symbolism of the stūpa is complex, and its design varies throughout the Buddhist world. Stūpas continue to be erected today as objects of veneration and merit making.

g.39 Surendrabodhi

su ren dra bo dhi

ལུ་རེན་བོ་དྲོ་

**surendrabodhi* ^{RP}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

g.40 ten powers

stobs bcu

སྟོབས་བརྒྱ

daśabala ^{AS}

One set among the different qualities of a thus-gone one. The ten powers can be listed as (1) the knowledge of what is possible and not possible, (2) the knowledge of the ripening of karma, (3) the knowledge of the variety of aspirations, (4) the knowledge of the variety of natures, (5) the knowledge of the supreme and lesser faculties of sentient beings, (6) the knowledge of the destinations of all paths, (7) the knowledge of various states of meditation, (8) the knowledge of remembering previous lives, (9) the knowledge of deaths and rebirths, and (10) the knowledge of the cessation of defilements.

g.41 three-thousandfold universe

stong gsum gyi stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams

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

trisāhasra-mahāsāhasra-lokadhātu ^{AS}

The largest universe spoken of in Buddhist cosmology, which consists of one thousand to the power of three, or one billion, smaller world systems.

g.42 Uttarakuru

byang gi sgra mi snyan pa

བྱང་གི་སྒྲུ་མི་སྟོན་པ།

uttarakuru ^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The continent to the north of Sumeru according to Buddhist cosmology. In the *Abhidharmakośa*, it is described as square in shape. Its human inhabitants enjoy a fixed lifespan of a thousand years and do not hold personal property or marry.

g.43 Vaijayanta

khang bzang rnam par rgyal byed

ཁང་བཟང་རྣམ་པར་རྒྱལ་བྱེད།

vaijayanta^{AS}

The palace or meeting hall of the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three.

g.44 Well-Gone One

bde bar gshegs pa

བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ།

sugata^{AS}

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*).