

༄༅། །སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས་དབང་ཕྱུག་གི་མཚན་བརྒྱ་ཅུ་བརྒྱད་པ།

**The Hundred and Eight Names of
Avalokiteśvara [1]**

Avalokiteśvarasyanāmāṣṭaśatakam

འཕགས་པ་སྐྱེད་རས་གཟིགས་དབང་ལྷག་གི་མཚན་བརྒྱ་ཙུ་བརྒྱད་པ།

'phags pa spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug gi mtshan brgya rtsa brgyad pa

The Noble Hundred and Eight Names of Avalokiteśvara [1]

Āryāvalokiteśvarasyanāmāṣṭaśatakam

· Toh 705 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 93 (rgyud, rtsa), folios 171.b–173.a



First published 2025

Current version v 1.0.1 (2025)

Generated by 84000 Reading Room v2.26.1

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co.

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SUMMARY

s.

- s.1 This is one of two short texts with the same title, *The Noble Hundred and Eight Names of Avalokiteśvara*, each of which enumerates the hundred and eight “names” of Avalokiteśvara, which are more like descriptive epithets. The first part of the text describes his many excellent qualities. The second part of the text describes the benefits that result from praising Avalokiteśvara with these names.

ac.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ac.1 This publication was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

ac.2 The text was translated, edited, and introduced by the 84000 translation team. Catherine Dalton produced the translation and wrote the introduction. Torsten Gerloff edited the translation and the introduction, and Dawn Collins copyedited the text. Martina Cotter was in charge of the digital publication process.

i.

INTRODUCTION

i.1

The Noble Hundred and Eight Names of Avalokiteśvara [1] opens with the Blessed One residing at Avalokiteśvara's palace, teaching the Dharma to a vast retinue. After the teaching, Brahmā and others extensively praise the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, enumerating his "names" in the form of descriptive qualities, including qualities specific to Avalokiteśvara, along with a number of qualities corresponding with more general lists of the major and minor marks of an awakened being. The text concludes by describing the benefits that result from praising Avalokiteśvara with these names, including protection from illness, rebirth in Sukhāvātī, and obtaining positive qualities, such as intelligence, heroism, fortune, and skill in the sciences.

i.2

The Noble Hundred and Eight Names of Avalokiteśvara [1] is one of several canonical texts that focus on Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva of compassion. It belongs to a genre of "Hundred and Eight Names" texts that extoll deities by listing their "names," which are often more like descriptive epithets. Sixteen such "Hundred and Eight Names" works are included in the Kangyur and the present text is one of three such texts dedicated to Avalokiteśvara. One of these three, *The Dhāraṇī-Mantra of the One Hundred and Eight Names of Avalokiteśvara* (Toh 634/874), is a completely different text from the present one. However, the other, also titled *The Noble Hundred and Eight Names of Avalokiteśvara* [2] (Toh 706),¹ is essentially a different recension of the present text.

i.3

Toh 705/900 and Toh 706 are similar enough to be considered different versions of the "same" text. However, the differences between them are significant enough that the editors of the Degé Kangyur elected to include both works, side-by-side. We have likewise elected to translate them separately. These two works share a very large percentage of their content, especially in the introductory and concluding narrative sections. The structure of the praise by way of the hundred and eight names, however, is

distinct in the two works. In Toh 705/900, the praise has been rendered into Tibetan in verse, while in Toh 706 the praise is rendered in prose. There are also additional differences in some of the content in the praise section, suggesting that the two versions likely represent translations of different Sanskrit recensions of the work. The close relationship between Toh 705 and Toh 706 is further highlighted by the fact that the final colophons at the end of both versions append the additional title “*The Receptacle of the Precious Relics of all Victors,*” with the only difference being that the attribute “precious” is not contained in Toh 706.

i.4 *The Noble Hundred and Eight Names of Avalokiteśvara* [1] does not appear to survive in Sanskrit. However, a text by the same name was translated into Chinese and is preserved in the Taishō canon as Taishō 1054, translated by Tian Xizai, who was active in the tenth century.² Although the Tibetan translation of *The Noble Hundred and Eight Names of Avalokiteśvara* [1] (Toh 705/900) lacks a translators’ colophon (as does Toh 706), we can date it to the imperial period, since the title is listed in both the Denkarma and Phangthangma imperial catalogs.³ It is also one of the texts that appears most frequently at Dunhuang.⁴ According to Dalton and van Schaik, the Dunhuang recensions correspond with Toh 705.⁵

i.5 Like many dhāraṇī texts, *The Noble Hundred and Eight Names of Avalokiteśvara* [1] is found in the Tantra section of both the Tshalpa and Thempangma lineage Kangyurs as a Kriyā tantra.⁶ In the Degé Kangyur and other Tshalpa lineage Kangyurs that have a Dhāraṇī section,⁷ it is additionally found there. The recension found in the Tantra section of the Degé Kangyur (Toh 705) and the one found in the Dhāraṇī section (Toh 900)⁸ are almost identical, containing only minor differences. There are occasional word variances between the two recensions, where the variant word has the same meaning. There are also a few places where a word is found replaced by a word with a different meaning. Occasionally, the order of items in a list appears differently or a word may be added or missing in one version or the other. In most cases where there are differences, the Stok Palace Kangyur recension agrees with Toh 900 rather than Toh 705. However, it also contains additional variations.

i.6 This English translation follows the readings in Toh 705. We have noted in the footnotes the variants in Toh 900 that would affect the meaning of the translation or its word order. We did not note the instances where the variants would not affect the translation. We also consulted the notes to the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) of the Kangyur and the Stok Palace Kangyur recension of the text in preparing this translation, as well as Toh 706, the largely parallel text discussed above.⁹

**The Noble Hundred and Eight Names of
Avalokiteśvara [1]**

1.

The Translation

[F.171.b]

Homage to all the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

- 1.1 Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was residing at the noble Avalokiteśvara’s abode at the summit of Mount Potala, a place that was arrayed¹⁰ with many different fragrant flowers, golden like the color of the Jambu River, and shining with a variety of jewels. There he was surrounded by many trillions of gods, nāgas, yakṣas, rākṣasas,¹¹ gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas,¹² humans, and non-humans, who honored him, took him as their teacher, respected him, made offerings to him, and revered him. In front of this group, he taught the Dharma.
- 1.2 He exclusively taught, in a perfect manner, the pure conduct—virtuous in the beginning, virtuous in the middle, and virtuous in the end, excellent in meaning, beautiful in expression, completely cleansed, and completely pure, unmixed,¹³ complete, and utterly clear. Thereafter, Brahmā and so forth praised the bodhisattva great being, noble Avalokiteśvara, as follows:
- 1.3 “Ah, Blessed Buddha!¹⁴
You have done what is to be done, accomplished the task,¹⁵
Cast off the burden, achieved your own aims,
And utterly cleared away the ties to existence.
- 1.4 Your words are authentic and your mind completely free.
Your wisdom is completely liberated.
Like the Great Elephant, you know all.
You have attained the supreme perfection
- 1.5 Of completely controlling your mind.
You have perfected the accumulation of wisdom.
You have crossed the wilderness of existence.

- You strive in actions for others' benefit.
- 1.6 Your mind is suffused with compassion,
And you have love for every being. [F.172.a]
Arisen from love, you strive toward virtue
And are skilled in freeing limitless beings.
- 1.7 You have been born from the sugatas themselves
And are the word of the sugatas.
You are the single friend of the three worlds.
Free from desire, anger, and delusion,
- 1.8 You have left behind the three stains,
And are the perfection of the three knowledges.
You have the six superknowledges.
Your body is rounded¹⁶ like the nyagrodha tree.¹⁷
- 1.9 You possess the thirty-two
Marks of a great being
And your body is also fully adorned
With the eighty minor marks.
- 1.10 Golden in color,
Your body is tall and edged with white.
Like the young nāgakesara,¹⁸
You are slightly reddish in color.
- 1.11 You have a crowning topknot
Wrapped with many locks.
Amitābha sits upon your crown,
Radiating out rays of light.
- 1.12 Your aura of light, a fathom in size, blazes
Like a golden mountain, spreading with renown.
Your magnificence is great.
You are endowed with an uṣṇīṣa,
- 1.13 Radiant like the sun shining on an eastern ridge.
A sash blazing with precious gems
Is an adornment across your body.
You are extremely learned about the bhūmis.
- 1.14 You practice the ten perfections.
Your moral conduct is uncorrupted, untorn.
Your breast is like a protective lion.¹⁹

- Your body is smooth and supple.
- 1.15 You gaze and depart like a chief.
Similar to a right-coiling conch,
Your forehead is like the half-moon.
Your forehead is extremely broad
- 1.16 And there is no break between your eyebrows.
Your eyes blaze like precious gems.²⁰
Your nose is slightly raised.
Your teeth are pressed down by your lips
- 1.17 And your tongue can cover the three thousand worlds.
The openings of your ears are very deep,²¹
Your throat is like the neck of a vase,
And your shoulders are extremely round.
- 1.18 The fingers and²² joints of your hands are long,
Your fingernails are smooth and slightly red,
And your hands are webbed.
At the palms of your hands and soles of your feet,
- 1.19 You are adorned with wheels.
You are beautiful like an autumn lotus. [F.172.b]
Your complexion is smooth and your body strong.²³
Your speech is deep²⁴ like Brahmā's voice.
- 1.20 You are lovely and delightful,
A joy to see, and your splendor pleasing.
Arisen from a lotus, you are lotus colored.²⁵
You are born from a pure lotus
- 1.21 And seated upon a pure lotus seat.
You hold a beautiful lotus in your hand.
You hold a round anointing vase in your hand.
You wear the skin of a black deer
- 1.22 And you hold a staff and a rosary.
Due to auspiciousness, you are pure.
You are the first to speak, and you speak sincerely.
You shower down a rain of nectar.
- 1.23 You are like a precious, wish-fulfilling gem.
You delight all beings.
You are like a beautiful tree.

- You are the sustenance of all beings.
- 1.24 You are the emanation of all buddhas.
You possess the sugatas' accoutrements.
You bear the relics of the sugatas.
Each and every bodily hair of yours
- 1.25 Is the sovereign of all²⁶ beings.
You make merit and carry out virtue.
You act without delay and with certainty.
Your diligence is renowned.²⁷
- 1.26 You have gone completely beyond saṃsāra.
You are empowered as a regent of the True Dharma.
You turn with delight the wish-fulfilling wheel.²⁸
As Amoghapāśa, you draw out the afflictive emotions.
- 1.27 As noble²⁹ Hayagrīva, you conquer the four māras.
As the wrathful Nīlakaṇṭha, you clear away poison.
You liberate from fear of makaras and crocodiles.³⁰
The goddess Tārā follows you.
- 1.28 Bhṛkuṭī carries out your commands.
You follow the way of the Victors.
You have great power and good recall.
You have excellent qualities and loving kindness.
- 1.29 You are endowed with wisdom and glory.
You have moral conduct and are purposeful.
You are a knower of all things.
You cut off every doubt.
- 1.30 You are a propounder of every dharma.
You are the teacher of the whole³¹ world.
Your face is like the full moon.
Your lower body is adorned with every gem.
- 1.31 You are like a golden sacrificial post,
More radiant than a thousand suns.
Brahmā and the others bow before you—
Homage to the world's protector!"³² [F.173.a]
- 1.32 Whoever praises noble Avalokiteśvara by means of these one hundred and eight names will utterly purify the karmic obscuration caused by having engaged in the five actions of immediate consequence. They will enter into

all maṇḍalas. They will also accomplish all mantras. For a thousand eons, they will not be born in the lower realms. They will not fall into Avīci.

1.33 Whoever rises at dawn and reads this, or has someone read it, or recites it aloud, will be free from all physical illnesses—like leprosy, boils, lung diseases, difficulty breathing, and so forth. They will recall all of their previous births. They will be like the children of the gods. Also, at the time of death, they will take rebirth in the realm of Sukhāvātī. Wherever they are born and wherever they reside, they will never be separated from noble Avalokiteśvara. If they recite this continually, they will become intelligent. They will become heroic. They will become sweet voiced. They will become fortunate.³³ They will become skilled in all the sciences. They will become someone who speaks nobly.

1.34 If one offers praise with this praise, the result will be no different at all from the result that would come from making offerings to blessed ones equal in number to the grains of sand in sixty-two Ganges River.

1.35 *This completes “The Noble Hundred and Eight Names of Avalokiteśvara,” called “The Receptacle of the Precious Relics of all Victors.”*

n.

NOTES

- n.1 *Avalokiteśvarasyanāmāṣṭaśatakam* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh706.html>), (Toh 706).
- n.2 See http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/index.html (http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/index.html) for an online catalog of the Taishō Canon, including text titles, translators, as well as corresponding texts from the Tibetan canon.
- n.3 Denkarma, folio 304.b; Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, pp. 254-55; Phangthangma 2003, p. 31.
- n.4 Dalton and van Schaik 2006, p. 79. The most complete recension found at Dunhuang is IOL Tib J 351/3.
- n.5 That is, they note that IOL Tib J 351/3, the most complete of the many versions of the work found among the Dunhuang manuscripts, is “very similar to the canonical edition,” which they identify as Q 381 (Dalton and van Schaik 2006, p. 79). Q 381 corresponds with Toh 705, rather than Toh 706. Scans of IOL Tib J 351/3 were not available to view on the International Dunhuang Project website at the time of our research. Therefore, we were unable to independently verify this identification.
- n.6 Toh 705 is found in both sections of the Kangyur, but Toh 706 is only found in the Tantra section.
- n.7 Regarding this topic, see the 84000 Knowledge Base article, “[Compendium of Dhāraṇīs \(Kangyur Section\)](https://84000.co/kb-articles/compendium-of-dharanis-kangyur-section) (<https://84000.co/kb-articles/compendium-of-dharanis-kangyur-section>).”
- n.8 Note that there is a discrepancy among various databases for cataloging the Toh 900 version of this text within vol. 100 or 101 of the Degé Kangyur. See Toh 900, n.8 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh900.html#UT22084-093->

020-211), for details.

- n.9 The Stok Palace recension mostly follows the readings in Toh 900 rather than those in Toh 705. There are differences between the two Degé recensions, but the Stok Palace recension also has several differences of its own. For example, it adds a list of additional items found neither in Toh 705 nor Toh 900.
- n.10 Toh 900 here reads *brgyan pa*, “adorned.” S agrees with Toh 900.
- n.11 Toh 900 omits this word. S agrees with Toh 900.
- n.12 S adds to this list Indra, Brahmā, and the World Protectors (*brgya byin dang/ tshangs pa dang/ 'jig rten skyong ba dang/*).
- n.13 Toh 900 has a slightly different order: *ma 'dres pa/ yongs su byang ba/ yongs so dag pa*, “in an unmixed way, completely cleansed, and completely pure...” S agrees with Toh 900.
- n.14 S here just reads “Ah, Blessed One,” which is the reading from the parallel text, Toh 706.
- n.15 Toh 900 here reads *byed la mkhas*, “are skilled in action.” S agrees with Toh 900.
- n.16 Tib. *zlum*. This figurative expression is an allusion to the marks of a great being (Skt. *mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa*), and meant to evoke the picture that the tips of the outstretched arms, spread legs, and the top of the head of a standing figure are aligned in a perfect circle.
- n.17 The nyagrodha tree is commonly identified either as the Indian fig tree (*Ficus Indica*) or the Banyan tree (*Ficus benghalensis*). Regarding it, see Pandanus Database of Plants. This simile can be found in a number of sources, e.g. in *The Stem Array* (14.3, 20.5, 43.98), in *The Question of Maitreya* (135), and in *The Play in Full* (26.157).
- n.18 The plant *nāgakesara*, also known as *nāgapuṣpa*, presumably refers to the *Mesua ferrea* L., for which see Pandanus Database of Plants (<http://iu.ff.cuni.cz/pandanus/database/>).
- n.19 *thong ka seng ge 'phyong ba 'dra*. Toh 900 here reads *mthon ka seng ge 'i ral pa 'dra*, “you are blue like a lion’s mane.” S agrees with Toh 900. We have tentatively followed the reading transmitted in Toh 705. Nonetheless, the text in both versions remains ambiguous or problematic, and it is possible that both readings are corruptions. What is relatively certain is that this line alludes to

the common description of the broadness of great beings' chests. The same picture is evoked also in other texts such as, for example, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eighteen Thousand Lines* (Toh 10), 73.90, and *The Long Explanation of the Noble Perfection of Wisdom in One Hundred Thousand, Twenty-Five Thousand, and Eighteen Thousand Lines* (Toh 3808), 5.1319.

- n.20 This line is omitted in S.
- n.21 These three lines are omitted in S.
- n.22 Here we read *kyi* as *dang* following the parallel line in Toh 706.
- n.23 "Stout" renders the Tibetan *sha rgyas*.
- n.24 Toh 900 reads *snyan*, "melodious." S agrees with Toh 900.
- n.25 Toh 900 reads *padma 'dra*, "lotus-like." S agrees with Toh 900.
- n.26 Toh 900 omits this word. S agrees with Toh 900.
- n.27 Toh 900 instead reads *rab tu drag pa'i*, "fierce." S agrees with Toh 900.
- n.28 Toh 900 instead reads *yid bzhin 'khor lo dge ba sbyor*, "You are a wish-fulfilling wheel, engaging in virtue." S agrees with Toh 900.
- n.29 Toh 900 omits this word. S agrees with Toh 900.
- n.30 S omits this line.
- n.31 Toh 900 omits this word.
- n.32 Toh 900 omits this line. S agrees with Toh 900.
- n.33 S omits this sentence.

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 accumulation of wisdom

ye shes tshogs

ཡེ་ཤེས་རྫོགས།

jñānasambhāra

g.2 afflictive emotion

nyon mongs

ཉོན་མོངས།

kleśa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

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

g.3 Amitābha

’od dpag med

འོད་དཔག་མེད།

amitābha

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

Amitābha, “Infinite Light,” is also known in many Indian Buddhist works as Amitāyus, “Infinite Life.” In both East Asian and Tibetan Buddhist traditions he is often conflated with another buddha named “Infinite Life,” Aparimitāyus, or “Infinite Life and Wisdom,” Aparimitāyurjñāna, the shorter version of whose name has also been back-translated from Tibetan into

Sanskrit as Amitāyus but who presides over a realm in the zenith. For details on the relation between these buddhas and their names, see *The Aparimitāyurjñāna Sūtra* (1) Toh 674, i.9.

g.4 Amoghapāśa

don yod zhags pa

དོན་ཡོད་ཞགས་པ།

amoghapāśa

Name of a Buddhist deity (lit. “unfailing lasso”), and one of the forms of Avalokiteśvara.

g.5 anger

zhe sdang

ཞེ་སྒང།

dveṣa

g.6 asura

lha ma yin

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།

asura

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A type of nonhuman being whose precise status is subject to different views, but is included as one of the six classes of beings in the sixfold classification of realms of rebirth. In the Buddhist context, asuras are powerful beings said to be dominated by envy, ambition, and hostility. They are also known in the pre-Buddhist and pre-Vedic mythologies of India and Iran, and feature prominently in Vedic and post-Vedic Brahmanical mythology, as well as in the Buddhist tradition. In these traditions, asuras are often described as being engaged in interminable conflict with the devas (gods).

g.7 Avalokiteśvara

spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug

སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས་དབང་ཕྱུག།

avalokiteśvara

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the “eight close sons of the Buddha,” he is also known as the bodhisattva who embodies compassion. In certain tantras, he is also the lord of the three families, where he embodies the compassion of the buddhas. In

Tibet, he attained great significance as a special protector of Tibet, and in China, in female form, as Guanyin, the most important bodhisattva in all of East Asia.

g.8 Avīci
mnar med
མན་མེད།
avīci

g.9 Bhr̥kuṭī
khro gnyer can
ལྷོ་གཉེན་ཅན།
bhr̥kuṭī

g.10 bhūmi
sa
ས།
bhūmi

g.11 Blessed One
bcom ldan 'das
བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས།
bhagavat

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.12 bodhisattva
byang chub sems dpa'
བྱང་ལྡན་སེམས་དཔའ།

bodhisattva

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A being who is dedicated to the cultivation and fulfilment of the altruistic intention to attain perfect buddhahood, traversing the ten bodhisattva levels (*daśabhūmi, sa bcu*). Bodhisattvas purposely opt to remain within cyclic existence in order to liberate all sentient beings, instead of simply seeking personal freedom from suffering. In terms of the view, they realize both the selflessness of persons and the selflessness of phenomena.

g.13 **Brahmā**

tshangs pa

ཚངས་པ།

brahman

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A high-ranking deity presiding over a divine world; he is also considered to be the lord of the Sahā world (our universe). Though not considered a creator god in Buddhism, Brahmā occupies an important place as one of two gods (the other being Indra/Śakra) said to have first exhorted the Buddha Śākyamuni to teach the Dharma. The particular heavens found in the form realm over which Brahmā rules are often some of the most sought-after realms of higher rebirth in Buddhist literature. Since there are many universes or world systems, there are also multiple Brahmās presiding over them. His most frequent epithets are “Lord of the Sahā World” (*sahāṃpati*) and Great Brahmā (*mahābrahman*).

g.14 **buddha**

sangs rgyas

སངས་རྒྱས།

buddha

g.15 **compassion**

thugs rje

ཐུགས་རྗེ།

karuṇā · karuṇa

g.16 **crocodile**

'dzin khri

འཛིན་ཁྲི།

grāha

g.17 delusion

gti mug

གཏི་མུག

moha

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the three poisons (*dug gsum*) along with aversion, or hatred, and attachment, or desire, which perpetuate the sufferings of cyclic existence. It is the obfuscating mental state which obstructs an individual from generating knowledge or insight, and it is said to be the dominant characteristic of the animal world in general. Commonly rendered as confusion, delusion, and ignorance, or bewilderment.

g.18 desire

'dod chags

འདོད་ཆགས།

rāga

g.19 Dharma

chos

ཚོས།

dharma

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The term *dharma* conveys ten different meanings, according to Vasubandhu's *Vyākhyāyukti*. The primary meanings are as follows: the doctrine taught by the Buddha (Dharma); the ultimate reality underlying and expressed through the Buddha's teaching (Dharma); the trainings that the Buddha's teaching stipulates (dharmas); the various awakened qualities or attainments acquired through practicing and realizing the Buddha's teaching (dharmas); qualities or aspects more generally, i.e., phenomena or phenomenal attributes (dharmas); and mental objects (dharmas).

g.20 diligence

brtson 'grus

བརྩོན་འགྲུས།

vīrya

g.21 eighty minor marks

dpe byad bzang po brgyad cu

དཔེ་བྱད་བཟང་པོ་བརྒྱད་ཅུ།

aśītyanuṣyañjana

g.22 five actions of immediate consequence

mtshams med pa lnga

མཚམས་མེད་པ་ལྔ།

pañcānantarya

The five extremely negative actions that, once those who have committed them die, result in immediate rebirth in the hells without the experience of the intermediate state. They are killing an arhat, killing one's mother, killing one's father, creating a schism in the Saṅgha, and maliciously drawing blood from a tathāgata's body.

g.23 four māras

bdud bzhi

བདུད་བཞི།

caturmāra

g.24 gandharva

dri za

དྷི་ཟ།

gandharva

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of generally benevolent nonhuman beings who inhabit the skies, sometimes said to inhabit fantastic cities in the clouds, and more specifically to dwell on the eastern slopes of Mount Meru, where they are 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.25 Ganges River

gang gA'i klung

གང་གཱི་ཀླུང་།

gaṅgānadī

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.26 garuḍa

nam mkha' lding

ནམ་མཁའ་ལྗིང།

garuḍa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In Indian mythology, the garuḍa is an eagle-like bird that is regarded as the king of all birds, normally depicted with a sharp, owl-like beak, often holding a snake, and with large and powerful wings. They are traditionally enemies of the nāgas. In the Vedas, they are said to have brought nectar from the heavens to earth. *Garuḍa* can also be used as a proper name for a king of such creatures.

g.27 god

lha

ལྷ།

deva

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.28 Great Elephant

klu chen po

ལྷ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahānāga

An epithet of the Buddha.

g.29 Hayagrīva

rta mgrin

རྟ་མགྲིན།

hayagrīva

Name of a Buddhist deity (lit. “horse-necked”), and one of the forms of Avalokiteśvara.

g.30 Jambu River

'dzam bu chu bo

འཛམ་བུ་ཚུབོ།

jambunadī

g.31 kinnara

mi'am ci

མི་འམ་ཅི།

kinnara

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

g.32 love

byams

བྱམས།

maitrī

g.33 lower realms

ngan 'gro

དན་འགྲོ།

durgati

g.34 mahoraga

lto 'phye chen po

ལྷོ་འཕྲེ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahoraga

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

g.35 makara

chu srin

ཚུ་སྲིན།

makara

g.36 maṇḍala

dkyil 'khor

དཀྱིལ་འཁོར།

maṇḍala

g.37 mantra

sngags

སྔགས།

mantra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A formula of words or syllables that are recited aloud or mentally in order to bring about a magical or soteriological effect or result. The term has been interpretively etymologized to mean “that which protects (*trā*) the mind

(*man*)”.

g.38 māra

bdud

འཇིགས་པ།

māra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Māra, literally “death” or “maker of death,” is the name of the deva who tried to prevent the Buddha from achieving awakening, the name given to the class of beings he leads, and also an impersonal term for the destructive forces that keep beings imprisoned in saṃsāra:

(1) As a deva, Māra is said to be the principal deity in the Heaven of Making Use of Others’ Emanations (*paranirmitavaśavartin*), the highest paradise in the desire realm. He famously attempted to prevent the Buddha’s awakening under the Bodhi tree—see *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 21.1—and later sought many times to thwart the Buddha’s activity. In the sūtras, he often also creates obstacles to the progress of śrāvakas and bodhisattvas. (2) The devas ruled over by Māra are collectively called *mārakāyika* or *mārakāyikadevatā*, the “deities of Māra’s family or class.” In general, these māras too do not wish any being to escape from saṃsāra, but can also change their ways and even end up developing faith in the Buddha, as exemplified by Sārthavāha; see *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 21.14 and 21.43. (3) The term māra can also be understood as personifying four defects that prevent awakening, called (i) the divine māra (*devaputramāra*), which is the distraction of pleasures; (ii) the māra of Death (*mṛtyumāra*), which is having one’s life interrupted; (iii) the māra of the aggregates (*skandhamāra*), which is identifying with the five aggregates; and (iv) the māra of the afflictions (*kleśamāra*), which is being under the sway of the negative emotions of desire, hatred, and ignorance.

g.39 merit

bsod nams

བསོད་ནམས།

punya

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In Buddhism more generally, merit refers to the wholesome karmic potential accumulated by someone as a result of positive and altruistic thoughts, words, and actions, which will ripen in the current or future lifetimes as the experience of happiness and well-being. According to the Mahāyāna, it is important to dedicate the merit of one’s wholesome actions to the

awakening of oneself and to the ultimate and temporary benefit of all sentient beings. Doing so ensures that others also experience the results of the positive actions generated and that the merit is not wasted by ripening in temporary happiness for oneself alone.

g.40 moral conduct

tshul khrims

ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས།

śīla

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.41 Mount Potala

ri po Ta la

རི་པོ་ཏ་ལ།

poṭala

g.42 nāga

klu

ལྷ།

nāga

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings who live in subterranean aquatic environments, where they guard wealth and sometimes also teachings. Nāgas are associated with serpents and have a snakelike appearance. In Buddhist art and in written accounts, they are regularly portrayed as half human and half snake, and they are also said to have the ability to change into human form. Some nāgas are Dharma protectors, but they can also bring retribution if they are disturbed. They may likewise fight one another, wage war, and destroy the lands of others by causing lightning, hail, and flooding.

g.43 nāgakesara

nA ga ge sar

ནྟ་ག་གེ་སར།

nāgakesara

The plant *nāgakesara*, also known as *nāgapuṣpa*, presumably refers to the *Mesua ferrea* L., for which see [Pandanus Database of Plants](#).

g.44 Nīlakaṇṭha

mgrin sngon

མགྲིན་སྒྲོན།

nīlakaṇṭha

An epithet of Śiva (lit. “blue-throated one”), here apparently understood as a form of Avalokiteśvara. This epithet references the Purāṇic narrative in which Śiva drank the poison that arose when the gods churned the cosmic ocean, thus saving the world. Śiva did not die, but his neck turned blue. There are many parallels between Śiva and Avalokiteśvara, and here the text appears to explicitly understand Śiva as a form of Avalokiteśvara.

g.45 nyagrodha tree

n+ya gro d+ha

ཉལ་གྲོད་མེ།

nyagrodha

The nyagrodha tree is commonly identified either as the Indian fig tree (*Ficus Indica*) or the Banyan tree (*Ficus benghalensis*). Regarding it, see [Pandanus Database of Plants](#).

g.46 praise

bstod pa

བསྟོད་པ།

stotra · stuti

g.47 rākṣasa

srin po

སྲིན་པོ།

rākṣasa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings that are often, but certainly not always, considered demonic in the Buddhist tradition. They are often depicted as flesh-eating monsters who haunt frightening places and are ugly and evil-natured with a yearning for human flesh, and who additionally have miraculous powers, such as being able to change their appearance.

g.48 sacrificial post

mchod sdong

མཚོད་སྒྲིང་།

yūpa · yaṣṭi

g.49 saṃsāra

'khor ba

འཁོར་བ།

saṃsāra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A state of involuntary existence conditioned by afflicted mental states and the imprint of past actions, characterized by suffering in a cycle of life, death, and rebirth. On its reversal, the contrasting state of nirvāṇa is attained, free from suffering and the processes of rebirth.

g.50 six superknowledges

mngon par shes pa drug

མངོན་པར་ཤེས་པ་དྲུག།

ṣaḍabhijñā

g.51 sugata

bde bar gshegs pa

བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ།

sugata

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the standard epithets of the buddhas. A recurrent explanation offers three different meanings for *su-* that are meant to show the special qualities of “accomplishment of one’s own purpose” (*svārthasampad*) for a complete buddha. Thus, the Sugata is “well” gone, as in the expression *su-rūpa* (“having a good form”); he is gone “in a way that he shall not come back,” as in the expression *su-naṣṭa-jvara* (“a fever that has utterly gone”); and he has gone “without any remainder” as in the expression *su-pūrṇa-ghaṭa* (“a pot that is completely full”). According to 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.52 Sukhāvātī

bde ba can

བདེ་བ་ཅན།

sukhāvātī

Sukhāvātī (Blissful) is the buddhafiield to the west inhabited by the Buddha Amitāyus, more commonly known as Amitābha. It is classically described in *The Display of the Pure Land of Sukhāvātī* (*Sukhāvātīvyūha Sūtra*).

g.53 Tārā

sgrol ma

སྒྲོལ་མ།

tārā

g.54 ten perfections

pha rol phyin pa bcu

ཕ་རོལ་ཕྱིན་པ་བརྒྱ།

daśapāramitā

g.55 thirty-two marks of a great being

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

སྐྱེས་བུ་ཚེན་པོའི་མཚན་རྣམས་ནི་སུམ་རྩ་ཚ་གཉིས།

dvātriṃśanmahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa

g.56 three knowledges

rig pa gsum

རིག་པ་གསུམ།

trividya

These comprise (1) knowledge through recollecting past lives (*sngon gyi gnas rjes su dran pa'i rig pa*); (2) knowledge of beings' death and rebirth (*tshe 'pho ba dang skye ba shes pa'i rig pa*), in some definitions expressed as knowledge through clairvoyance (*lha'i mig gi shes pa*); and (3) knowledge of the cessation of contaminants (*zag pa zad pa shes pa'i rig pa*).

g.57 three thousand worlds

stong gsum

སྟོང་གསུམ།

trisāhasra

g.58 True Dharma

dam chos

དམ་ཚཱུམ་།

saddharma

g.59 uṣṇīṣa

gtsug tor

གུམ་ཏེ་ར།

uṣṇīṣa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the thirty-two signs, or major marks, of a great being. In its simplest form it is a pointed shape of the head like a turban (the Sanskrit term, *uṣṇīṣa*, in fact means “turban”), or more elaborately a dome-shaped extension. The extension is described as having various extraordinary attributes such as emitting and absorbing rays of light or reaching an immense height.

g.60 Victors

rgyal ba

རྒྱལ་བ།

jina

An epithet for the buddhas, signifying their victory over the māras.

g.61 virtue

dge ba

དགེ་བ།

kuśala · kalyāṇa · śubha

g.62 wisdom

shes rab

ཤེས་རབ།

prajñā

g.63 yakṣa

gnod sbyin

གནོད་སྦྱིན།

yakṣa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings who inhabit forests, mountainous areas, and other natural spaces, or serve as guardians of villages and towns, and may be propitiated for health, wealth, protection, and other boons, or controlled

through magic. According to tradition, their homeland is in the north, where they live under the rule of the Great King Vaiśravaṇa.

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