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The Tantra on the Origin of All Rites of Tārā, Mother of All the Tathāgatas

Sarvatathāgatamātr̥tārāvīśvakarmabhavatantranāma

· Toh 726 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 94 (rgyud 'bum, tsha), folios 202.a–217.a

TRANSLATED INTO TIBETAN BY

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SUMMARY

s.

- s.1 In this scripture of the Action Tantra genre, the Buddha gives instructions to the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī on the rituals and mantras associated with the goddess Tārā. The tantra includes a description of Tārā, a nine-deity maṇḍala and related initiations, and a litany of ritual practices associated with the four activities.

ac.

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ac.1 Translated by Samye Translations under the guidance of Phakchok Rinpoche. The translation was produced by Laura Dainty with the assistance of Khenpo Tsöndrü Sangpo. Oriane Lavolé checked the translation against the Tibetan and edited it. Paul Thomas checked all the mantras and their variants. Stefan Mang and Oriane Lavolé wrote the introduction.

The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

i.

INTRODUCTION

i.1

The Tantra on the Origin of All Rites of Tārā, Mother of All the Tathāgatas (hereafter *The Tārā Tantra*), is a tantra of the Action Tantra (*Kriyātantra*) class that offers a wealth of instructions on the rites associated with the goddess Tārā. Tārā, whose name can be translated as “Savior,” is revered in diverse Buddhist communities for her ability to quickly respond to the needs of supplicants facing worldly and spiritual dangers. The worship of Tārā in India can be traced to at least the sixth century CE, and since at least that time Tārā has become one of the most popular deities in the Buddhist pantheon.¹

i.2

In the Degé Kangyur, *The Tārā Tantra* is part of a set of eight action tantras specifically dedicated to the goddess Tārā.² In his *Introduction to the Buddhist Tantric Systems* (*rgyud sde spyi'i rnam par gzhag pa rgyas par brjod pa*), Khedrup Jé (*mkhas grub rje*, 1385–1438), a close disciple of Tsongkhapa (*tsong kha pa*, 1357–1419), singles out *The Tārā Tantra* as the most important Tārā tantra of the genre in Tibet at the time.³

i.3

The Tārā Tantra is framed as a dialogue between the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī and the Buddha Śākyamuni that is divided into thirty-five chapters on specific themes and ritual topics. Chapter 1 opens with a description of the location and audience, followed by the invocation of the goddess Tārā and her arrival. Chapter 2 focuses on the initial worship of Tārā, which is followed in chapter 3 by a presentation of the famous *Praise to Tārā with Twenty-One Verses of Homage*.⁴ Chapters 4 and 5 describe a maṇḍala of nine Tārās and their respective initiations. Chapter 6 presents a veritable catalog of ritual instructions and a long list of mantras. Chapters 7 to 11 are concerned with the rituals for accomplishing the four activities: pacifying (*śānti*), increasing (*pauṣṭika*), enthralling (*vaśīkaraṇa*), and assaulting (*abhicāra*). Chapters 12 to 16 establish Tārā as the mother of each of the five buddha families, and chapter 17 describes a fire offering ritual. The following seventeen chapters (18–34) provide brief instructions on making talismanic circles (*cakra*) for such purposes as protection, enhancement, and the

expulsion of enemies. The final chapter (35) provides a versified list of the samayas and vows for these rites.⁵ Taken together, the topics of *The Tārā Tantra* serve as a comprehensive collection of rites that take Tārā as their primary deity. As the Tibetologist Stephan Beyer pointed out in his overview of the cult of Tārā, *The Tārā Tantra* “is the closest thing we have to a complete textbook on the practice of Tara’s [sic] cult.”⁶

i.4 There is, at present, no known Sanskrit witness for *The Tārā Tantra*, nor is there an extant Chinese translation. It is also not recorded in the Denkarma (*ldan dkar ma*) or Phangthangma (*’phang thang ma*) inventories of translations compiled in ninth-century Tibet. According to its colophon, *The Tārā Tantra* was translated by the Tibetan translator Chökyi Sangpo (*chos kyi bzang po*) and the Indian scholar Dharmasrīmitra. Stephan Beyer argues that the name of this Tibetan translator corresponds to the translator Chel Lotsāwa Chökyi Sangpo (*dpyal lo tsā ba chos kyi bzang po*, d. 1216), a contemporary of Śākyaśrībhadrā (1127–1225) during the latter’s sojourn in Tibet (1204–13).⁷ The English translation presented here is based on the Tibetan version in the Degé Kangyur, in consultation with the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) and the Stok Palace Kangyur edition. The text has previously been introduced and translated into English by Martin Willson.⁸

The Translation

**The Tantra on the Origin of All Rites of Tārā, Mother
of All the Tathāgatas**

1.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

[F.202.a]

1.1 Homage to noble Mañjuśrī!

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was residing in Tuṣita with Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, Kurukullā, Paṃśāvari, Brahmā, Śakra, and countless other bodhisattvas, gods, and goddesses, who circumambulated him clockwise while holding up an array of offerings beyond count, including heavenly flowers such as lotuses, water lilies, and mandārava flowers, heavenly instruments such as conches, vīṇās, drums, clay drums, and śūrpavīṇās,² and heavenly parasols, banners, flags, and the like. They worshiped him with clouds of diverse offerings.

1.2 The Blessed One then entered the vajra-like samādhi that vanquishes all opponents. The entire earth shook immediately, the maṇḍala of māras was defeated, and the Blessed One radiated intense light in a spectrum of different colors—white, red, yellow, green, dark blue, and a combination of colors—that purified everyone who was suffering. Tārā, the mother of all the buddhas, then descended to the goddess Kurukullā’s crown. At that very instant, rain showered down from the offering clouds, [F.202.b] and the goddess became like the orb of the sun unobscured by clouds. The Blessed One then lauded her with this verse of praise:

1.3 “Throughout all utterly pure realms,
Precious flowers are raining down.
Mother of all the buddhas throughout the three times,
Mother Tārā, I praise and revere you!”

1.4 At that moment, the bodhisattva Youthful Mañjuśrī draped his shawl over one shoulder, knelt on his right knee, and addressed the Blessed One: “Blessed One, the buddhas of the three times are so profound. How are they

- produced? Who says that Tārā is their mother?"
- 1.5 The Blessed One replied, "Mañjuśrī, what you say is indeed true. The buddhas of the three times are not born and do not cease; they are neither defiled nor free of defilement, they do not increase or decrease, and are by nature nirvāṇa. Thus, they are the very nature of all things."
- 1.6 The bodhisattva Youthful Mañjuśrī then asked, "Blessed One, if the buddhas of the three times are not born and do not cease, are neither defiled nor free of defilement, do not increase or decrease, and are by nature nirvāṇa, how do they take birth?"
- 1.7 The Blessed One replied, "Mañjuśrī, nirvāṇa is the ultimate; nirvāṇa is the realm of phenomena. These are all synonyms for the very limit of reality. *Great compassion* and *relative essence* are synonyms for *saṃsāra*. Beyond these is the mother who gives birth to the buddhas of the three times. Thus, she is beyond saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. Mañjuśrī, this is why she is considered a mother."
- 1.8 "Therefore, Mañjuśrī," the Blessed One continued, "knowing the essential nature of all things, meditate upon her. [F.203.a] Recite the following dhāraṇī-mantra, practice assiduously, know her qualities, and make offerings to her. Receive instructions and rid yourself of all doubt. Apply yourself to her rites, keep her praise in mind, and reach accomplishment by means of these different rites."¹⁰
- 1.9 Thus, the Blessed One taught the bodhisattva Youthful Mañjuśrī.
- 1.10 *This was the first chapter, "Providing an Introduction."*

2.

Chapter 2

OFFERING

2.1 The bodhisattva Youthful Mañjuśrī then asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, how should I meditate? How should I assiduously practice this?”

“Mañjuśrī,” replied the Blessed One, “apply your mind as follows. Mañjuśrī, you should meditate on the fact that all phenomena are unborn, all phenomena are unceasing, all phenomena are undefiled, and all phenomena are nirvāṇa and naturally pure.

2.2 “Mañjuśrī, to that end, recite this mantra:

“om svabhāvaśuddhāḥ sarvadharmāḥ svabhāvaśuddho ‘ham.”¹¹

2.3 The Blessed One continued, “Cultivate loving kindness while reflecting on those who are born from the womb, from eggs, and from heat and moisture, and those born miraculously. Generate great compassion focusing on birth, aging, illness, and death. Cultivate joy and equanimity in emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, and the naturally unconditioned. Mañjuśrī, the four immeasurables thus are the cause that produces bodhicitta, so take this earnestly to heart.

2.4 “Furthermore, Mañjuśrī, recite the following mantra:

“om bodhicittam utpādaya aham.”¹²

2.5 The Blessed One continued, [F.203.b] “You should offer worship with the following offerings:

2.6 “To the mother who gave birth to the victors
I offer dishes of different powdered incenses
That have been blessed by the buddhas
Who dwell in the worlds of the ten directions.

2.7 “To Buddhalocanā, supreme mother of the tathāgatas¹³

- Who dwell in the worlds of the ten directions,
The mother who gave birth to the victors,
I offer flower petals and garlands of every type.
- 2.8 “To the precious supreme mother of the tathāgatas
Who dwell in the worlds of the ten directions,
The mother who gave birth to the victors,
I offer rows of exquisite lamps.
- 2.9 “To Pāṇḍaravāsinī, supreme mother of the tathāgatas
Who dwell in the worlds of the ten directions,
The mother who gave birth to the victors,
I offer the most fragrant water, delicious and pure.
- 2.10 “To the supreme mother who gave birth to the victors
Who dwell in the worlds of the ten directions,
The mother of the victors who is rich with activity,
I offer a feast of food and drink.
- 2.11 “May the sounds of song, instruments, and cymbals,
Assuaging each and every ill,
As well as parasols, banners, flags, and streamers,
Fill the ten directions like clouds!
- 2.12 “May trees that grant all wishes,
Trees rich with fruit, trees fragrant with scent,
And trees laden with leaf boughs
Cover all of the ten directions!
- 2.13 “May rains infused with perfumed fragrance,
Rains with the delicious scent
Of grains, flowers, and all pleasing things,
Pour down regularly in all directions!
- 2.14 “To the mother who gave birth to the victors,
I offer dwellings that delight the mind—
Exquisite mansions made of jewels
Adorned with long and short garlands,
With the shining sun and moon in the east and west
And with rivers, reservoirs, and ponds,
Lakes and pools,
And seas of a hundred flavors,
All with geese¹⁴ and other birds.” [F.204.a]

2.15 “Mañjuśrī, to this end, recite the following offering mantra:

“om sarva-tathāgata-dhūpa-pūjā-megha-samudra-spharaṇa-samaye hūm.

om sarva-tathāgata-puṣpa-pūjā-megha-samudra-spharaṇa-samaye hūm.

om sarva-tathāgata-āloka-pūjā-megha-samudra-spharaṇa-samaye hūm.

om sarva-tathāgata-gandha-pūjā-megha-samudra-spharaṇa-samaye hūm.

om sarva-tathāgata-naivedya-pūjā-megha-samudra-spharaṇa-samaye hūm.

om sarva-tathāgata-śabda-pūjā-megha-samudra-spharaṇa-samaye hūm.”¹⁵

2.16 *This was the second chapter, “Offering.”*

3.

Chapter 3

PRAISE

3.1 The Blessed One again addressed the bodhisattva Youthful Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, this mother is the mother of all the buddhas of the three times. Therefore, Mañjuśrī, memorize this praise used by all the buddhas of the three times.”

3.2 The Blessed One then recited this dhāraṇī-mantra of praise:¹⁶

3.3 *“namaḥ sarva-tathāgatānāṃ tadyathā om namaḥ sūkaṣaṇḍī¹⁷ namaḥ tārāyai tārāmātā.¹⁸*

3.4 *“namas tāre ture vīre kṣana-dyuti-nibhekṣaṇe.¹⁹ trailokya-nātha-vaktrābja-vikasat-keśarodbhave.*

3.5 *“namaḥ śata-śarac-candra-saṃpūrṇa-ṣaṭalānane tārā-sahasra-nikara-prahasat-kiraṇojjvale.*

3.6 *“namaḥ kanaka-nīlābja-pāṇi-padma-vibhūṣite dāna-vīrya-tapaḥ-śānti-titikṣā-dhyāna-gocare.*

3.7 *“namas tathāgatoṣṇīṣa-vijayānanta-cārīṇi aśeṣa-pāramitā-prāpta-jina-putra-niṣevite.*

3.8 *“namas tuttāra-hūm-kāra-pūritāsā-dig-antare sapta-loka-kramākrānti niḥśeṣākarsaṇakṣame.*

3.9 *“namaḥ śakrānala-brahma-marud-viśveśvarārcite bhūta-vetāla-gandharva-gaṇa-yakṣa-puras-kṛte.*

3.10 *“namas traḍ iti phaṭ-kāra-para-yantra-pramardini pratyālīḍha-pada-nyāse śikhi-jvālākulekṣane.*

3.11 *“namas ture mahā-ghore māra-vīra-vināśane*

bhṛkuṭī-kṛta-vaktrābja-sarva-śatru-niṣūdani.

- 3.12 *“namas tri-ratna-mudrāṅka-hṛdyāṅguli-vibhūṣite
bhūṣitāśeṣa-dik-cakra-nikara-svakarākule. [F.204.b]*
- 3.13 *“namaḥ pramuditāṭopa-mukuṭā-kṣipta-mālini
hasat-prahasa-tuttāre māra-loka-vaśāṅkari.*
- 3.14 *“namaḥ samanta-bhūpāla-paṭalākaraṣaṅga-kṣame
calad-bhṛkuṭī-hūm-kāra-sarvāpada-vimocani.*
- 3.15 *“namaḥ śikhaṅḍa-khaṅḍendu-mukuṭābharaṅojjvale
amitābha-jaṭābhāra-bhāsure kiraṅga-dhruve.*
- 3.16 *“namaḥ kalpānta-hutabhug-jvālā-mālāntara-sthite
ālīḍha-muditā-bandha-ripu-cakra-vināśani.*
- 3.17 *“namaḥ kara-talāghāta-caraṅāhata-bhūtale
bhṛkuṭī-kṛta-hūm-kāra-sapta-pātāla-bhedini.*
- 3.18 *“namaḥ śive śubhe śānte śānta-nirvāṅga-gocare
svāhā-praṅava-saṅyukte mahā-pātaka-nāśani.*
- 3.19 *“namaḥ pramuditābandha-ripu-gātra-prabhedini
daśākṣara-pada-nyāse vidyā-hūm-kāra-dīpīte.*
- 3.20 *“namas ture padāghāta-hūm-kārākāra-bījīte
meru-mandara-kailāsa-bhuvana-traya-cālīni.*
- 3.21 *“namaḥ sura-sarākāra-hariṅāṅka-kara-sthite
tāra-dvīr-ukta-phaṭ-kāra aśeṣa-viṣa-nāśani.*
- 3.22 *“namaḥ sura-gaṅādhyaṅga-sura-kinnara-sevite
ābandha-muditā-bhoga-kali-duḥsvapna-nāśani.*
- 3.23 *“namaś candrārka-sampūrṅa-nayana-dyuti-bhāsure
hara-dvīr-ukta-tuttāre viṣama-jvara-nāśani.*
- 3.24 *“namas tri-tattva-vinyāsa-śiva-śakti-samanvite
graha-vetāla-yakṣaughā-nāśani pravare ture.*
- 3.25 *“mantra-mūlam idaṅ stotraṅ namaś-kāraika-viṃśakam
yaḥ paṭhet prayato dhīmān devyām bhakti-samanvitaḥ.*
- 3.26 *“sāyaṅ vā prātar utthāya smaret sarvābhaya-pradam
sarva-pāpa-prasāmanam sarva-durgati-nāśanam.*

- 3.27 *“abhiṣikto bhavet tūrṇaṃ saptabhir jina-koṭibhiḥ
asmin mahattvam āsādyā so ’nte bauddha-padaṃ vrajet.*
- 3.28 *“viṣaṃ tasya mahā-ghoraṃ sthāvaram cātha jaṅgamam
smaraṇāt pralayaṃ yāti khāditam pītam eva vā.*
- 3.29 *“graha-joara-viṣārtānām paramārti-vināśanam
anyeṣāṃ caiva sattvānām dviṣ-tri-saptābhivartanam.*
- 3.30 *“putra-kāmo labhet putraṃ dhana-kāmo labhed dhanam
sarva-kāmān avāpnoti na vighnaih pratihanyate.*
- 3.31 *“tārā-bhagavatīyaṃ sūtraṃ samyak-sambuddha-bhāṣitam.²⁰*
- 3.32 *“sarva-kara | samayā ulakaraye²¹
buddhaṃ ca dharmam ca saṅgham ca²² tāraye svāhā.*
- 3.33 *“Mañjuśrī, [F.205.a] this dhāraṇī was blessed by all the buddhas of the three times. It extols Tārā, the mother of all the buddhas of the three times, by vanquishing all evil. Its benefits are inconceivable. Therefore, Mañjuśrī, recite it!*
- 3.34 *“The person who recites this dhāraṇī will never be reborn as a hell being, as a hungry ghost, as an animal, or in any other such miserable state. They will never be reborn in borderlands, as a barbarian, with impaired faculties, or the like. They will be freed from the dangers of fever, boils, infectious diseases, and all other illnesses, and such perils will not reoccur. They will be freed from the eight great dangers and the like.*
- 3.35 *“Mañjuśrī, the person who memorizes this praise used by all the buddhas of the three times makes offerings to all of them. All the acts with immediate retribution and other misdeeds of the person who memorizes this will be purified, and that person will see all the buddhas. They will not meet an untimely death, and, when the time of death comes, they will see Tārā, the mother of all the buddhas of the three times. The person who memorizes this will be able to accomplish whatever they have in mind. They will obtain a perfect body, a perfect complexion, and all other perfect attributes.²³ Nightmares, bad omens,²⁴ and interference by nonhumans will all be pacified. They will come to see the truth of the three times and behold Tārā’s form in person.*
- 3.36 *“One should recite this:*
- “namaḥ sarva-tathāgata-samyak-sambuddhāya trāyate tārāte tu tāra.”²⁵*
- 3.37 *This was the third chapter, “Praise.”*

4.

Chapter 4

DEITIES

4.1 The bodhisattva Youthful Mañjuśrī then asked the Blessed One, “In what way should I earnestly focus on this dhāraṇī-mantra?” [F.205.b]

4.2 The Blessed One replied, “You should earnestly focus on this dhāraṇī while wishing to be free of suffering and pursuing the profound. You should then visualize light rays, streaming forth from the syllable *tām*,²⁶ that transform everything above and below into vajra. Next, Mañjuśrī, you should recite the mantra *om vajra jvala vajra tana hūm phaṭ*.²⁷ Then, visualize a white syllable *e*²⁸ appearing from *tām*. Above that, visualize a blue *vaṃ*,²⁹ on top of which is a yellow *laṃ*, on top of which is a green *yaṃ*, on top of which is a red *raṃ*. All of these syllables emanate and reabsorb light rays.

“om dharmadhātu-viśuddha hūm | om aṃ dhātu-viśuddha hūm | om samanta-viśuddha hūm | om pakṣa-viśuddha³⁰ hūm | om kṣata-vyutthāna³¹-viśuddha hūm | om namaḥ sarva-tathāgata-maṇḍala samanta-viśuddha³² hūm.³³”

4.3 “Mañjuśrī, while reciting this mantra generate the maṇḍala mansion: a square³⁴ building sitting on a four-petaled, multicolored lotus and encircled by a fence of vajras. It has four gateways with eight pillars and is beautified by short and long garlands, tassels of jewels, and other festooned decorations. Generate the maṇḍala mansion in this way.

4.4 “In the center of the mansion, on the anthers of the lotus, sits a moon and lotus. Atop this lotus is a green syllable *tām*, from which appears an utpala flower marked by *tām*. Light rays stream forth from it, filling the entire world with multicolored light so that the whole world is seen as an apparition, an illusion, a rainbow, a mirage, a reflection in water, and an image in a mirror. Tārā appears from the utpala flower, green bodied and with one face and two arms. Her right hand makes the boon-granting gesture,³⁵ and her left hand holds an utpala flower by the stem. Her gorgeous body is adorned with a long necklace, earrings, and armlets, all made of jewels, as well as

many other types of ornaments. She is in the prime of youth, has a smiling face, [F.206.a] and is seated on a moon and lotus with her legs evenly crossed.

4.5 “On a moon and lotus in the east, visualize the syllable *tāṃ* transforming into a dark blue utpala flower marked by the seed syllable. Light rays stream forth from it, filling the entire world with multicolored light so that the whole world is seen as an apparition, an illusion, a rainbow, a mirage, a reflection in water, and an image in a mirror. From that utpala flower appears a dark blue Tārā with two arms. She holds a trident in her right hand and an utpala flower, by the stem, in her left. Her gorgeous body is adorned with a long necklace, earrings, and armlets, all made of jewels, as well as many other types of ornaments. She is in the prime of youth, has a smiling face, and is seated on a moon and lotus with her legs evenly crossed.

4.6 “On a moon and lotus in the south, visualize the syllable *re* transforming into a yellow utpala flower marked by the seed syllable. Light rays stream forth from it, filling the entire world with multicolored light so that the whole world is seen as an apparition, an illusion, a rainbow, a mirage, a reflection in water, and an image in a mirror. The Tārā who appears from this utpala is the color of molten gold and has two arms. She holds a sword in her right hand and an utpala flower, by the stem, in her left. Her gorgeous body is adorned with a long necklace, earrings, and armlets, all made of jewels, as well as many other types of ornaments. She is in the prime of youth, has a smiling face, and is seated on a moon and lotus with her legs evenly crossed.

4.7 “On a moon and lotus in the west, visualize the syllable *tu* transforming into a red utpala flower marked by the seed syllable. Light rays stream forth from it, filling the entire world with multicolored light so that the whole world is seen as an apparition, an illusion, a rainbow, a mirage, a reflection in water, and an image in a mirror. From that utpala flower appears a red Tārā with two arms. She holds a wheel in her right hand and an utpala flower, by the stem, in her left. [F.206.b] Her gorgeous body is adorned with a long necklace, earrings, and armlets, all made of jewels, as well as many other types of ornaments. She is in the prime of youth, has a smiling face, and is seated on a moon and lotus with her legs evenly crossed.

4.8 “On a moon and lotus in the north, visualize the syllable *tāṃ* transforming into a green utpala flower marked by the seed syllable. Light rays stream forth from it, filling the entire world with multicolored light so that the whole world is seen as an apparition, an illusion, a rainbow, a mirage, a reflection in water, and an image in a mirror. From that utpala flower appears a green Tārā with two arms. She holds a parasol in her right hand and an utpala flower, by the stem, in her left. Her gorgeous body is adorned with a long

necklace, earrings, and armlets, all made of jewels, and many other ornaments. She is in the prime of youth, has a smiling face, and is seated on a moon and lotus seat with her legs evenly crossed.

4.9 “On a moon and lotus at the eastern gate, visualize the syllable *tām* transforming into an utpala flower marked by the seed syllable. Light rays stream forth from it, filling the entire world with multicolored light so that the whole world is seen as an apparition, an illusion, a rainbow, a mirage, a reflection in water, and an image in a mirror. From that utpala flower appears Hook Tārā, white bodied and holding hooks in her two hands. Her wrathful form is adorned with a long necklace, earrings, and armlets, all made of jewels, and many other ornaments. She is in the prime of youth, has a slightly wrathful face, and is seated on a moon and lotus with one leg extended and the other drawn in.

4.10 “On a moon and lotus at the southern gate, visualize the syllable *re* transforming into an utpala flower marked by the seed syllable. Light rays stream forth from it, filling the entire world with multicolored light so that the whole world is seen as an apparition, an illusion, a rainbow, a mirage, a reflection in water, and an image in a mirror. From that utpala flower appears Lasso Tārā, yellow bodied, one faced,³⁶ and holding lassos in her two hands. [F.207.a] Her wrathful form is adorned with a long necklace, earrings, and armlets, all made of jewels, and many other ornaments. She is in the prime of youth, has a slightly wrathful face, and is seated on a moon and lotus with one leg extended and the other drawn in.

4.11 “On a moon and lotus at the western gate, visualize the syllable *tu* transforming into an utpala flower marked by the seed syllable. Light rays stream forth from it, filling the entire world with multicolored light so that the whole world is seen as an apparition, an illusion, a rainbow, a mirage, a reflection in water, and an image in a mirror. From that utpala flower appears Shackles Tārā, red bodied and holding shackles in her two hands. Her wrathful form is adorned with a long necklace, earrings, and armlets, all made of jewels, and many other ornaments. She is in the prime of youth, has a wrathful face, and is seated on a moon and lotus seat³⁷ with one leg extended and the other drawn in.

4.12 “On a moon and lotus at the northern gate, visualize the syllable *re* transforming into an utpala flower marked by the seed syllable. Light rays stream forth from it, filling the entire world with multicolored light so that the whole world is seen as an apparition, an illusion, a rainbow, a mirage, a reflection in water, and an image in a mirror. From that utpala flower appears Bell Tārā, green-blue in color and holding bells in her two hands. Her wrathful form is adorned with a long necklace, earrings, and armlets, all

made of jewels, and many other ornaments. She is in the prime of youth, has a wrathful face, and is seated on a moon and lotus with one leg extended and the other drawn in.

“Mañjuśrī, visualize the circle of deities in this way.”

4.13 Mañjuśrī then asked, “Blessed One, what is meant by ‘apparition’ and so forth?”

The Blessed One replied, “Mañjuśrī, being afflicted is the basic constitution of the six classes of beings. Therefore, understand them to be like apparitions, illusions, rainbows, mirages, reflections in water, and images in a mirror.”

4.14 *This was the fourth chapter, “The Deities.”*

5.

Chapter 5

INITIATION

5.1 Mañjuśrī then asked, [F.207.b] “Blessed One, how are these deities to be empowered by deities?”

The Blessed One replied, “In the manner, Mañjuśrī, of apparitions, illusions, rainbows, mirages, reflections in water, and images in a mirror.”

Mañjuśrī then asked, “Blessed One, what is an ‘apparition’?”

5.2 The Blessed One replied, “An ‘apparition’ is something unreal that is mistaken by both.³⁸ An ‘illusion’ is something mistaken by others.³⁹ A ‘rainbow’ is empty. A ‘mirage’ is a mistaken, empty appearance. A ‘reflection in water’ is causal. An ‘image in a mirror’ is like a city of gandharvas. Mañjuśrī, this is delusion; this is the constitution of the afflicted. Therefore, Mañjuśrī, the empowerment of deities by deities is similar to this.

5.3 “Mañjuśrī, apparitions, illusions, rainbows, mirages, reflections in water, and images in a mirror are unimpeded; they are free of all impediments. They are not differentiated and lack differentiation. Therefore, Mañjuśrī, think of their nature in this way.”

5.4 The Blessed One then granted empowerment with the vajra mudrā: palms joined so that there is an empty space between them,⁴⁰ the two middle fingers raised so that they join at the tips, the two index fingers and two ring fingers pressed against the sides of the middle fingers, and the little fingers and thumbs placed inside with their tips touching.

5.5 The mantra to be recited is:

*om sarva-tathāgata ahaṃ vajras tana sarva-tathāgata-vajras tana hūm.*⁴¹

5.6 Following that, the Blessed One conferred empowerment with the jewel mudrā: hands joined at the palms, the little fingers and ring fingers spread out, the tips of the middle fingers joined, and the thumbs pressing down on the two index fingers.

5.7 Placing his hands above his head, he recited this mantra:

“om sarva-tathāgata-cintāmaṇi-jvālani sarva-tathāgata ahaṃ śuddha-pariśuddhāya svāhā.”⁴²

All buddhas throughout all ten directions conferred initiation and bestowed empowerment with this mantra. [F.208.a]

5.8 Then, the Blessed One formed the samaya mudrā of all the heart families: hands joined at the palms with the fingertips interlaced, middle fingers stretched out, and thumbs and little fingers joined and stretched out. This is the samaya mudrā.

The mantra is:

*om sarva-tathāgata-vajra-samaya hūm.*⁴³

5.9 *This was the fifth chapter, “Initiation.”*

6.

Chapter 6

MANTRAS

6.1 The bodhisattva Youthful Mañjuśrī then spoke these lines of praise for the Mother:

6.2 “Her moon-and-sun-like form,
Green in color and graceful in bearing,
Is poised atop a lotus and moon.
I salute and praise the mother of all the buddhas
And protector of all beings,
Who holds an utpala in her hand!”

6.3 He then asked, “Blessed One, how is the mantra of the Mother practiced?
The Blessed One replied, “Her dhāraṇī-mantra is as follows:

“om namo ratna-trayāya | namas traiyadhva-sarva-tathāgatānāṃ namas tārāyai.

*“namas tāre ture vīre kṣāṇa-dyuti-nibhekṣane
trailokya-nātha-vaktrābja-vikasat-keśarodbhave.*

*“namaḥ śata-śarac-candra-sampūrṇa-paṭalānane
tārā-sahasra-nikara-prahasat-kiraṇojjvale.*

*“namaḥ kanaka-nīlābja-pāṇi-padma-vibhūṣite
dāna-vīrya-tapaḥ-śānti-titikṣā-dhyāna-gocare.*

*“namas tathāgatoṣṇīṣa-vijayānanta-cārīṇi
aśeṣa-pāramitā-prāpta-jina-putra-niṣevite.*

“tāre tuttāre ture svāhā.

“That is the dhāraṇī-mantra you should recite.

6.4 “The heart mantra is:

“om täre tuttāre ture svāhā.

6.5 “The heart mantra for the lotus family is:

“om tuttāre ture ture svāhā.

6.6 “The heart mantra for the jewel family is:

“om täre ture ture svāhā.

6.7 “The heart mantra for the karma family is:

“om ture tuttāre svāhā.

6.8 “The heart mantra for the vajra family is:

“om täre tuttāre täre svāhā.

6.9 “The heart mantra for the various rites is:

“om täre tuttāre ture svāhā. [F.208.b]

6.10 “The mantra for enthralling is:

*“om täre täre tuttāre hūm-kāra-pūritāsā-dig-antare | sapta-loka-kramākrānti⁴⁴ |
aśeṣākaraṣaṇa-kṣami hrīḥ.*

6.11 “The mantra for increasing is:

*“om täre täre tuttāre hūm svāhā-kāra-pūritāsā-dig-antare | sapta-loka-kramākrānti
aśeṣa-puṣṭim kuru ākarṣaṇa-kṣami ho.*

6.12 “The mantra for rites is:

*“om täre täre tuttāre hūm-kāra-pūritāsā-dig-antare | sapta-loka-kramākrānti uṣṇīṣa
alīkaraya-⁴⁵ ākarṣaṇa-kṣami phaṭ.*

6.13 “The mantra for pacifying nāgas is:

*“om täre täre tuttāre ture hūm-kāra-pūritāsā-dig-antare⁴⁶ | sapta-loka-kramākrānti
aśeṣa-śāntim kuru-ākarṣaṇa-kṣami svāhā.⁴⁷*

6.14 “The mantra for the various rites is:

“om täre täre ture tuttāre svāhā.

*“śakrānala-brahma-rudraīś ceśvarārcite
bhūta-vetāla-gandharva-gaṇa-yakṣa-puras-kṛte.*

*“phaṭ-kāra-parayantra-pramardani
pratyālīḍha-pada-nyāsa-sīkhi-joālākulekṣaṇe.⁴⁸*

*“mahā-ghori māra-vīra-vināśani
bhṛkuṭī-kṛta-vāktrābja-sarva-śatru-niṣūdani.*

*“ratna-mudrāṅka-hṛdyāṅguli-vibhūṣite
bhūṣitāśeṣa⁴⁹-dik-cakra-nikara⁵⁰-sva-karākule.*

“hūm hūm hūm phaṭ phaṭ phaṭ.

6.15 “The mantra for accomplishing all rites is:

*“om indrāya | yamāya | varuṇāya | yakṣāya | agnaye | vāyave | nairṛtyai
rakṣase. | |*

*“om indra-pālāya | sūryāya candrāya | udaya-bhūmaye⁵¹ | a-kāro mukhaṃ sarva-
dharmānām | ādyanutpannatvāt om āḥ hūm phaṭ svāhā.”⁵²*

6.16 *This was the sixth chapter, “Mantra.”*

7.

Chapter 7

THE PACIFYING RITE

7.1 “Mañjuśrī, the pacifying rite is as follows. Sprinkle scented water in a shrine chamber, arrange a white maṇḍala there, anoint it with water infused with white sandalwood,⁵³ and scatter flower petals over it. In a white⁵⁴ vase made of precious materials, place the five precious substances comprising gold, pearl, crystal, coral, and sapphire; the five types of incense comprising sandalwood, aloeswood, frankincense, camphor, and vetiver; the five types of grain comprising barley, wheat, pulses, rice, and sesame oil; and the five essences comprising molasses, honey, butter, salt, and sesame seeds. Wrap the vase in a clean piece of cloth that has its fringe intact and place it in the center. Arrange a further four full vases, [F.209.a] as well as four incense burners, four sets of flowers, and so on. Having completed these preparations, meditate as follows.

7.2 “Visualize the heroine Tārā, the mother rich in diligence who takes the form of a yoginī, emerging from the syllable *tām*. She springs from a blossoming lotus and sits on a full moon disk. Her body is white like the autumn moon, she is in the prime of youth, and she is beautifully adorned with a long necklace, armlets, jewel tassels, and other ornaments. She wears a skirt made of Pañcāla cloth and a top made of silk from Kāśī. She is seated in the half-lotus posture, has one face and two hands, and smiles with darting eyes. Her right hand is in the boon-granting gesture, and her left holds an utpala flower by the stem. Light rays stream from her body, and amṛta flows down from the center of the white lotus and its anthers. She is accompanied by countless bodhisattvas, whose bodies also emit light. As you imagine this, recite the following mantra:

“om täre tuttāre ture svāhā.

- 7.3 “If you then recite this together with the mantra for the rite, either one, seven, twenty-one, or one hundred and eight times, and make a request, it will be fulfilled.
- 7.4 “Mañjuśrī, the benefits of this are such that the five acts with immediate retribution, the five secondary acts with immediate retribution, and all hostility and nightmares will be pacified. Mañjuśrī, the benefits of this are such that the suffering of the three lower realms will be pacified, and you will never again be reborn in any of the eight unfree states. Mañjuśrī, the benefits of this are such that you will come to remember your past lives, have lucid faculties, be intelligent, and become expert in all arts and crafts. You will be endowed with perfect strength, complexion, and charisma. All the worldly protectors will watch over you, protect you, conceal you, and assist you. Wherever you go, everything will be auspicious.”
- 7.5 *This was the seventh chapter, “The Pacifying Rite.”* [F.209.b]

8.

Chapter 8

THE INCREASING RITE

8.1 “Mañjuśrī, the rite for increasing is as follows. Smear the floor of a shrine chamber with the five substances of a red-brown cow and arrange a maṇḍala anointed with scented water. Pile heaps of flowers on it and set out an illustration for the increasing rite. Prepare twenty-one pills made from the five precious substances, grains, medicinal substances, and so on, place them in an amulet made of precious materials, and set the amulet in the center of the maṇḍala. Also arrange four incense burners, flowers, and so on. Then, cultivate the following meditation.

8.2 “Visualize the single heroine⁵⁵ Tārā, the mother rich in swift diligence who takes the form of a yoginī, emerging from the syllable *tāri*. She springs from a blossoming lotus and sits upon a full moon disk. Her extensive body is yellow in color, radiant like the autumn moon, and aglow with youthfulness like the sun unobscured by clouds. She is beautifully adorned with a long necklace, armlets, jewel tassels, and other ornaments. She wears a skirt made of Pañcāla cloth and a top made of silk from Kāśī. She is seated in the half-lotus posture, has one face and two hands, and smiles with darting eyes. Her right hand is in the boon-granting gesture, while her left holds an utpala flower by the stem. Light rays stream from her body, and amṛta flows down from the center of the lotus and its anthers. She is accompanied by countless bodhisattvas, who emit light from their bodies and overcome the power of the throngs of gods, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, humans,⁵⁶ gandharvas, mahoragas, and rākṣasas. Visualizing this, recite the following mantra:

“om tāre tāre tuttāre ture svāhā.

8.3 “If you then recite it together with the mantra for the rite, either one, seven, twenty-one, or one hundred and eight times, and make a request, it will be fulfilled.

- 8.4 “Mañjuśrī, the benefits of this rite are such that even the throngs of gods, asuras, [F.210.a] garuḍas, kinnaras, humans, gandharvas, mahoragas, and rākṣasas will be unable to withstand its power. Rather, they will guard and protect you. You will remain unharmed by untimely death, conflict, nightmares, bad omens, fever, boils, infectious diseases, and the like. Even at the time of death, you will remain strong, and you will not be reborn in the lower realms.
- 8.5 “Mañjuśrī, through this rite you will acquire all necessary goods, longevity, vibrancy,⁵⁷ and strength. You will come to see the tathāgatas and be imbued with strength.”⁵⁸
- 8.6 *This was the eighth chapter, “The Increasing Rite.”*

9.

Chapter 9

THE ENTHRALLING RITE

9.1 “Mañjuśrī, the rite for enthralling is as follows. Practice this rite in a charnel ground, by a lone tree, on the bank of a large river, or in a temple. Smear the site with the five substances from a cow, and scatter flower petals over the maṇḍala that has been anointed with fragrant water. Arrange an image of the Mother, together with incense burners, flowers, and so forth. Fill an amulet made of precious materials with flowers, fruits, and other potent substances, and install it in the center of the maṇḍala. Then cultivate the following meditation.

9.2 “Visualize the heroine Tārā, the mother rich in swift diligence who takes the form of a yoginī, emerging from the syllable *tārī*. She springs from a blossoming lotus and sits upon sun and moon disks.⁵⁹ Her body is red in color like the bandhūka flower and is in the prime of youth. She is beautifully adorned with a long necklace, armlets, jewel tassels, and other ornaments. She wears a skirt of Pañcāla cloth and a top made of silk from Kāśī. She stands with a graceful poise, has one face and two hands, smiles, and laughs with darting eyes. Her right hand is at her heart in a gesture of reverence, and her left hand holds an utpala flower by the stem. [F.210.b] Her body radiates light, and from this light appear countless bodhisattvas together with countless goddesses,⁶⁰ all vividly aglow with a flurry of light like her own. While visualizing this, recite the following mantra:

“oṃ tuttāre ture svāhā.

9.3 “If you then recite this together with the mantra for the rite, either one, seven, twenty-one, or one hundred and eight times, and make a request, it will be fulfilled.

9.4 “Mañjuśrī, the benefits of this are such that you will enthrall the entire threefold universe, including the lords of the earth, and have the ability to bring everything under your control.”

10.

Chapter 10

THE AGGRESSIVE RITE

10.1 “Mañjuśrī, if you wish to perform the aggressive rite you should do so in a charnel ground, by a lone tree, on the bank of a large river, or in a temple. Sprinkle the site with the five substances from a cow, arrange a maṇḍala anointed with fragrant water, set out an image, and so forth. Use neem water to draw an image of the king or other patron on birch bark, cloth, or other kind of bark, put the drawing inside a clay amulet atop the maṇḍala, and set the amulet on the maṇḍala. In addition, arrange incense burners and other offerings. Cultivate the following meditation.

10.2 “Visualize the heroine Tārā, the mother rich in swift diligence who appears in the form of a yoginī, emerging from the syllable *tārī*. She springs from a blossoming lotus and sits upon sun and moon disks.⁶¹ Her body is green, radiant, and in the prime of youth. She is beautifully adorned with a long necklace, armlets, jewel tassels, and other ornaments. She wears a skirt of Pañcāla cloth and a top made of silk from Kāśī. She is seated with her right leg outstretched and her left leg drawn in, has one face and two hands, and bares her teeth with her eyes ablaze. Her hair streams upward, Amitābha sits on a moon disk above her head, and she is surrounded by apocalyptic fire. [F.211.a] In her right hand she holds a wheel, and with her left she makes the threatening gesture while holding an utpala flower by the stem. Countless wrathful beings, both male and female, radiate from her body. The mantra recitation is:

“om ture tuttāre ture soāhā.

10.3 “If you then recite it together with the mantra for the rite either one, seven, twenty-one, or one hundred and eight times, three times a day and three times a night, and make a request, it will be fulfilled.

- 104 “Mañjuśrī, the benefits of this are such that afflictions, karma, karmic ripening, rebirth in lower realms, and so on will all be overcome. Mañjuśrī, vicious enemies, māras, obstructers, and other such harmful influences will also all be overcome.”
- 105 *This was the tenth chapter, “The Aggressive Rite.”*

11.

Chapter 11

THE RITE FOR ALL ACTIVITIES

- 11.1 “Mañjuśrī, the rite that can be used for all activities is as follows. It should be performed in a charnel ground, by a lone tree, before a stūpa, or on the bank of a large river. Smear the site with the five substances from a cow, scatter flower petals over a maṇḍala that has been anointed with fragrant water, and set out an image of the Mother. At the heart of a wax effigy, insert a piece of charnel-ground shroud inscribed with the ten-syllable mantra⁶² and the two sets of syllables⁶³ appended with the target’s name, and place the effigy in the center of the maṇḍala. In addition, arrange incense burners, flowers, and so on. Then cultivate the following meditation.
- 11.2 “Visualize the heroine Tārā, the mother rich in swift diligence who appears in the form of a yoginī, emerging from the syllable *tārīṃ*. She springs from a blossoming lotus and sits upon sun and moon disks. Her body is black, gleaming, and in the prime of youth. She is beautifully adorned with a long necklace, armlets, jewel tassels, and other ornaments. She wears a skirt of Pañcāla cloth and a top made of silk from Kāśī. She is seated with one leg outstretched and the other drawn in, and she has one face and two hands. [F.211.b] Baring her fangs in a shape like a crescent moon, her face is drawn in a frown, and she resounds with *hūṃ*. Her orange hair rises from her head, above which sits Amitābha upon a moon disk. She is surrounded by apocalyptic fires from which emanate the eight goddesses that grant protection from the eight dangers. In her right hand she holds a curved knife, and in her left she holds an utpala flower by the stem, on top of which is a brahmin’s skull filled with flowers. She is surrounded by a horde of wrathful deities. Visualizing this, recite the following mantra:

“om tāre ture tuttāre svāhā.

- 11.3 “If you then recite it together with the mantra for the rite either one, seven, twenty-one, or one hundred and eight times, three times a day and three times a night, and make a request, it will be fulfilled.
- 11.4 “Mañjuśrī, the benefits of this are such that all four activities will be accomplished, and you will be protected from all danger.”
- 11.5 *This was the eleventh chapter, on the rite for all activities.*

THE MOTHER OF THE VAJRA FAMILY

12.1 Mañjuśrī again asked the Blessed One, “How is the mother who gives birth to all buddhas also the mother who is the essential identity of the five families?”

The Blessed One explained, “Mañjuśrī, the mother of the vajra family has four faces and eight hands, is the color of a conch, and is in the prime of youth. Her four faces are white, black, red, and yellow. Her head is marked by the five families, and she has three eyes. Her four right hands hold a vajra, an arrow, and a short spear,⁶⁴ while the lowermost hand is in the boon-granting gesture. In her left hands she holds an utpala flower, a bow, and a vajra hook, and she wields a lasso while making the threatening gesture. She sits in the vajra posture and is of dharmakāya nature.

12.2 “Mañjuśrī, this is her mantra:

*“namo ratna-trayāya | nama ārya-jñāna-sāgarāya | akṣobhya-vyūha-rājāya |
tathāgatāya | arhate samyak-sambuddhāya | nama āryāvalokiteśvarāya |
bodhisattvāya | mahāsattvāya | mahā-kāruṇikāya | tadyathā | om tāre ture tuttāre
svāhā.”*⁶⁵ [F.212.a]

“With this, the entire vajra family makes offerings of flowers, lamps, scented water, and fine foods.

12.3 “Mañjuśrī, her rite is as follows. Mold a wax effigy of whoever is the target, and insert into the effigy’s heart the expelling substances—the flesh of a crow and owl⁶⁶—together with the name, and then recite this mantra:

*“om amukam me vaśam ānaya svāhā.”*⁶⁷

12.4 “If you recite this and then hide the effigy in the northwest, Mañjuśrī, the target will meet with conflict and division and flee elsewhere.”

12.5 *This was the twelfth chapter, “The Mother of the Vajra Family.”*

13.

Chapter 13

THE MOTHER OF THE LOTUS FAMILY

13.1 “Mañjuśrī, the mother of the lotus family has four faces and eight hands. Her main face is red like a bandhūka flower, as is her youthful body. Her right face is white, her left face black, and her rear face yellow. Each is marked on its crown with the four families and has three eyes. In her right hands she holds a lotus, an arrow, and a spear, while the lowermost hand is in the boon-granting gesture. In her left hands she holds an utpala flower, a bow, and a vajra hook, and she wields a lasso while making the threatening gesture. She sits in the vajra posture and is of dharmakāya nature.

13.2 “Mañjuśrī, this is her mantra:

*“namo ratna-trayāya | nama ārya-jñāna-sāgarāya | amitābha-deva-vyūha-rājāya |
tathāgatāya | arhate samyak-sambuddhāya | nama āryāvalokiteśvarāya |
bodhisattvāya | mahāsattvāya | mahā-kāruṇikāya | tadyathā | om tuttāre ture
svāhā.”*⁶⁸

“With that, the entire lotus family makes offerings of flowers, incense, lamps, scented water, and foods.

13.3 “Mañjuśrī, her rite is as follows. Grind datura, neem, and aśoka flowers, use honey to make the powder into an ointment with honey, and then recite this mantra:

*“om amukābhidhānāṇi kumārīm mahyam udvāhena tasyaḥ pitā prayacchatu hūm
hrīḥ.”*⁶⁹

13.4 “If you then apply the ointment to your body, the target will be helplessly drawn to you.”

13.5 *This was the thirteenth chapter, “The Mother of the Lotus Family.” [F.212.b]*

14.

Chapter 14

THE MOTHER OF ALL THE TATHĀGATAS

14.1 “Mañjuśrī, the mother of the tathāgata family has four faces and eight hands. Her body is yellow like molten gold and in the prime of youth. Her main face is yellow, her right face is white, her left face is red, and her rear face is black. Each is marked on its crown with the four families and has three eyes. In her right hands she holds a wheel, an arrow, and a spear, while the lowermost hand is in the boon-granting gesture. In her left hands she holds an utpala flower, a bow, and a vajra hook, and she wields a lasso while making the threatening gesture. She sits in the vajra posture and is of dharmakāya nature.

14.2 “Mañjuśrī, this is her mantra:

*“namo ratna-trayāya | namo ārya-jñāna-sāgarāya vairocana-vyūha-rājāya |
tathāgatāya | arhate samyak-sambuddhāya | tadyathā | om tāre tuttāre ture svāhā.”*⁷⁰

14.3 “With that, the entire tathāgata family makes offerings of flowers, lamps, incense, fragrances, and so on.

14.4 “Mañjuśrī, her rite is as follows. Make an effigy from corpse ash and the saturated earth beneath it, and into its heart insert the name ending with the two sets of syllables. Then recite this mantra:

*“om mārāya mārāya | kāraya kāraya | stambhaya stambhaya | jambhaya
jambhaya. | hūṛṇ hūṛṇ hūṛṇ | laṛṇ laṛṇ laṛṇ laṛṇ laṛṇ.”*⁷¹

“Say that and then bury the effigy at a crossroads.”

14.5 *This was the fourteenth chapter, “The Mother of All Tathāgatas.”*

15.

Chapter 15

THE MOTHER OF THE JEWEL FAMILY

15.1 “Mañjuśrī, the mother of the jewel family has four faces and eight hands. Her main face is dark blue, as is her youthful body. Her right face is white, her left face is red, and her rear face is yellow. Each is marked on its crown with the four families and has three eyes. In her right hands she holds a jewel, an arrow, and a spear, while the lowermost hand is in the boon-granting gesture. In her left hands she holds an utpala flower, a bow, and a vajra hook, and she wields a lasso while making the threatening gesture. She sits in the vajra posture and is of dharmakāya nature. [F.213.a]

15.2 “Mañjuśrī, this is her mantra:

“namo ratna-trayāya | nama ārya-jñāna-sāgarāya ratnasambhava⁷²-vyūha-rājāya | tathāgatāya | arhate samyak-sambuddhāya | nama āryāvalokiteśvarāya | bodhisattvāya | mahāsattvāya | mahā-kāruṇikāya | tadyathā | om tāre tāre tuttāre ture svāhā.⁷³

“With that, the entire jewel family make offerings of flowers, incense, lamps, and scented water.

15.3 “Mañjuśrī, her rite is as follows. Mix together rotten rhododendron root,⁷⁴ bugs born from manure, and two seeds. Insert them into a clay amulet, and recite this mantra:

“om amukābhīdhānam ākarṣaya ākarṣaya | amukīm mamepsitam svapnam kathaya hūm hrīḥ.⁷⁵

15.4 “If you then hide it under the bed, you will gain knowledge of good qualities and become steadfast.”

15.5 *This was the fifteenth chapter, “The Mother of the Jewel Family.”*

16.

Chapter 16

THE MOTHER OF THE KARMA FAMILY

16.1 “Mañjuśrī, the mother of the karma family has four faces and eight hands. Her main face is green, and she is in the prime of youth. Her right face is white, her left face is red, and her rear face is green. Each is marked on its crown with the four families and has three eyes. In her right hands she holds a sword, an arrow, and a spear, while the lowermost hand is in the boon-granting gesture. In her left hands she holds an utpala flower, a bow, and a vajra hook, and she wields a lasso while making the threatening gesture. She sits in the vajra posture and is of dharmakāya nature.

16.2 “Mañjuśrī, this is her mantra:

“namo ratna-trayāya | nama ārya-jñāna-sāgarāya⁷⁶ amoghasiddhi-vyūha-rājāya | tathāgatāya | arhate samyak-sambuddhāya | nama āryāvalokiteśvarāya | bodhisattvāya | mahāsattvāya | mahā-kāruṇikāya | tad-yathā | om ture tuttāre svāhā.⁷⁷

16.3 “With that, the entire karma family makes offerings of flowers, incense, lamps, and scented water.

16.4 “Mañjuśrī, her rite summons all women in a way that leaves them free of jealousy. To perform it, mix together the eyes, tongue, and heart of a pigeon, cow bezoar, and silver ore. Make this mixture into pills with neem. [F.213.b] Then recite this mantra:

“cala pracala śīghragāmiṇi devadattam⁷⁸ uccāṭaya amukavasanam muktaṃ kuru ānaya mahārihate hrīḥ svāhā.⁷⁹

16.5 “If you apply the substance while repeating this, all women will be drawn to you and brought under your influence, without any jealousy.”

16.6 *This was the sixteenth chapter, “The Mother of the Karma Family.”*

17.

Chapter 17

FIRE PŪJĀ

17.1 Once these different types of rites had been taught, Youthful Mañjuśrī asked, “How should one earnestly perform the fire pūjā that completes all rites?”

The Blessed One replied, “Mañjuśrī, following these rites, a fire pūjā needs to be performed in order to bring them to fulfillment.

17.2 “To perform a fire pūjā for the first of the rites, the pacifying rite, do as follows. On the third day of the lunar month, build a small hut of the corresponding color⁸⁰ and set out a white vajra. For firewood, use the wood of white sandalwood trees and the like. Light the fire, place an image before it, and incant rice, beautyberry, millet, and white sesame seeds with the following mantra, reciting it either seven or twenty-one times:

“oṃ tāre tuttāre ture svāhā.

17.3 “Then throw the grains and seeds into the fire. Incant yogurt and milk with the mantra and offer them while saying *śāntiṃ kuru*.⁸¹ Offer wood from a tree with milky sap, along with white butter, and say *sarva-pāpaṃ*,⁸² and then render praise.⁸³

17.4 “Mañjuśrī, in a fire hut adorned with white flowers, light a fire of sandalwood or other such fragrant wood, and set an image in front of it. Incant water and white mustard seeds with the mantra, and recite the following mantra while throwing them into the fire:

“tadyathā | oṃ sarva-tathāgata | tāre tuttāre ture svāhā.”⁸⁴

“And:

“sarva-pāpaṃ śāntiṃ kuru svāhā.”⁸⁵

“While chanting these, offer one hundred and eight handfuls of water.

- 17.5 “Mañjuśrī, the benefits of this are such that misdeeds, including the acts with immediate retribution, will be pacified, infectious diseases, harmful spirits, and the like will all be pacified, and you will recall all your past lives in each of your rebirths. [F.214.a]
- 17.6 “Mañjuśrī, anoint the fire hut with the five substances from a cow, and in this odorous hut, burn an effigy made⁸⁶ of wax while reciting this mantra:
- “om t̄are tuttāre ture svāhā.*
- 17.7 “Once it has been burned, the target will be overpowered or even annihilated.”
- 17.8 *This was the seventeenth chapter, “Fire Pūjā.”*

18.

Chapter 18

THE PROTECTIVE CIRCLE FOR PACIFYING
RITES

- 18.1 The Blessed One then smiled and taught Youthful Mañjuśrī the procedures for the circles.
- 18.2 “In a circle with nine compartments, write *om* and *hā* with the target’s name in between. Use the words *rakṣaḥ rakṣaḥ*⁸⁷ for protection. In the surrounding compartments, write *om tāre tuttāre ture svāhā*, with *svāhā* written between each syllable. Written on birch bark with saffron and then fastened to the upper arm, this serves as the best protection.”
- 18.3 *This was the eighteenth chapter, “The Protective Circle for Pacifying Rites.”*

19.

Chapter 19

THE PROTECTIVE CIRCLE FOR ENTHRALLING
RITES

- 19.1 “For protection during enthralling rites, write *om* and *hā*, with the target’s name in between, within a nine-compartment circle. Use the words *rakṣaḥ rakṣaḥ* for protection. In the surrounding compartments, write *tāre tuttāre ture svāhā*,⁸⁸ with the syllable *mu* between each of those syllables. Write this on red birch bark with lac dye and fasten it to the navel so that it cannot be seen. This will be the best protection and will enthrall.”
- 19.2 *This was the nineteenth chapter, “The Protective Circle for Enthralling Rites.”*

20.

Chapter 20

THE PROTECTIVE CIRCLE FOR INCREASING
RITES

20.1 “For protection during increasing rites, make an eight-spoked wheel and write *om t̄āre tuttāre ture* on each of the eight spokes. In the center, write the target’s name appended with *svāhā* along with *rakṣaḥ rakṣaḥ*. Write it on birch bark with saffron and then fasten it to the upper arm or neck, and it will be the best protection.”

20.2 *This was the twentieth chapter, “The Protective Circle for Increasing Rites.”*

21.

Chapter 21

A MORE ELABORATE PROTECTIVE CIRCLE
FOR INCREASING RITES

- 21.1 “For a protective circle that guards against all obstacles,⁸⁹ use a triple-rimmed circle with eight compartments in the outermost circle. In its central compartment write *svāhā* appended to the target’s name along with *rakṣaḥ*. In the innermost rim, write *u u u u u u u u*.⁹⁰ [F.214.b] In the outer, eight-compartment rim, write *om tāre ture tuttāre*, bracketing each syllable with *u*. Draw this with saffron on birch bark or other bark. Tie it to the crown of the head or under the arm so that people cannot see it, and one will be freed from all harm. Recite the mantra as many times as you can.”
- 21.2 *This was the twenty-first chapter, “A More Elaborate Protective Circle for Increasing Rites.”*

22.

Chapter 22

THE MAGICAL PROTECTIVE CIRCLE FOR
GREAT PACIFICATION

- 22.1 “Now for the circle that accomplishes all activities, on birch bark or cloth, draw a circle with nine compartments using water infused with white sandalwood. In the outermost rim, write *a ā i ī u ū e ai o au ṛ ̄ ṛ ! Ī aṃ aḥ*. In the inner rim, write *tāre tuttāre ture svāhā*. Write *rakṣaḥ śāntiṃ kuru svāhā*²¹ between *om* and *hā* in the upper part of the circle, and reverse the mantra in the lower part of the circle. Know that the vowels on the outside are to be reversed. In the center, write *rakṣaḥ śāntiṃ kuru* between *om* and *hā*.”
- 22.2 *This was the twenty-second chapter, “The Magical Protective Circle for Great Pacification.”*

23.

Chapter 23

THE PACIFYING CIRCLE

23.1 “Next are the circles for the individual rites of the four activities. For pacifying, make a clay amulet with a lid, bake it, and color it white. Inside it, draw a circle with nine compartments. The mantra *om t̄are tutt̄are ture* should be written in the eight surrounding panels as follows: *ru ru om ru ru | ru ru t̄a ru ru | ru ru re ru ru | ru ru tut ru ru | ru ru t̄a ru ru | ru ru re ru ru | ru ru tu ru ru | ru ru re ru ru*. In the central compartment, write *kuru śāntiṃ kuru svāhā*. Close the amulet and place it, along with a white thread, on the maṇḍala. If you then worship at the three times with white flowers and the five kinds of offerings, the pacification will succeed.”

23.2 *This was the twenty-third chapter, “The Pacifying Circle.”*

24.

Chapter 24

GREAT PACIFICATION

24.1 “To accomplish the activity of great pacification, make a clay amulet with a lid. Make ink out of white sandalwood⁹² and use it to draw a nine-compartment circle with inner and outer sections. In the central compartment write the mantra *svā śāntiṃ kuru hā*.⁹³ [F.215.a] Inside the inner rim, write eight sets of *a a*. Inside the outer rim, write *a om a | a tā a | a re a | a tut a | a tā a | a re a | a tu a | a re a*. Tie a flower garland around the amulet and place it on the maṇḍala. Make offerings to it at the four times and recite the mantra without error for seven days. If you do, the great pacification will succeed.”

24.2 *This was the twenty-fourth chapter, “Great Pacification.”*

25.

Chapter 25

THE INCREASING CIRCLE

- 25.1 “To perform the increasing rite, draw a nine-compartment circle with an inner and outer rim on birch bark, using either saffron or bezoar. In the central compartment write *sarvapušṭim kuru om a,*⁹⁴ and in each of the eight inner compartments, write *om*. In the eight outer compartments, write *om om om | om tā om | om re om | om tut om | om tā om | om re om | om tu om | om re om*. Then place the circle inside a clay amulet and worship it with yellow flowers, such as the nāga flower, and the five offerings at the four times each day for seven days, starting on the full moon. Your lifespan and merit will thereby be increased.”
- 25.2 *This was the twenty-fifth chapter, “The Increasing Circle.”*

26.

Chapter 26

THE FORCEFUL ENTHRALLING CIRCLE

- 26.1 “If you wish to enthrall, draw a circle with nine compartments on a rhinoceros hide or an amulet using pigment made of the extracts of the bark of areca, catch, and caragana trees.⁹⁵ In the central compartment of the circle write the mantra *a svā ca amogha a hrīḥ hā*.⁹⁶ In the eight compartments write *a om a | a tā a | a re a | a tut a | a tā a | a re a | a tu a | a re a*. Then, place it inside a skull cup covered with a lid, and bind it with blue thread. When the moon is full, worship it during the four times using red flowers and the five offerings. If you do, everything will be enthralled.”
- 26.2 *This was the twenty-sixth chapter, “The Forceful Enthralling Circle.”*

27.

Chapter 27

THE ISOLATING AND ENTHRALLING CIRCLE

27.1 “To enthrall, use blood from your ring finger, lac dye,⁹⁷ charnel-ground charcoal, and gold⁹⁸ to draw a circle with nine compartments on a charnel-ground shroud⁹⁹ or the clothes of a dead person. [F.215.b] In its central compartment write *amogha hrīḥ ha*.¹⁰⁰ On the eight spokes, write *om̐ de om̐ | t̄a va t̄a | re dat re | tut ta tut | t̄a a t̄a | re mo re | tu gha tu | re hrīḥ re*.¹⁰¹ Insert the circle into an amulet along with the head of a worm. Breaking it in two, conceal each part on opposite sides of a riverbank. If you do that, isolating and enthralling will be accomplished.”

27.2 *This was the twenty-seventh chapter, “The Isolating and Enthralling Circle.”*

28.

Chapter 28

THE BANISHING CIRCLE

28.1 “If you wish to banish, use a mixture of the goat poison plant,¹⁰² blood, and indigo to draw two circles with nine compartments on a charnel-ground shroud. In the central compartment write *ha sa u ca ha ha ha*, and in the eight surrounding compartments write *ha ori ha | ha tā ha | ha re ha | ha tut ha | ha tā ha | ha re ha | ha tu ha | ha re ha*. Place the circle into a skull cup covered with a lid, bind it with blue thread, and conceal it in a charnel ground. The banishment will then be successful.”

28.2 *This was the twenty-eight chapter, on the banishing circle.*

29.

Chapter 29

THE ISOLATING CIRCLE

- 29.1 “To make an isolating circle, use ink made from a mixture of equal parts of charnel-ground charcoal, crow blood, owl blood, and poison to draw nine compartments with an inner and outer circle. In the central compartment write *phaṭ svā devadatta¹⁰³ hā phaṭ*. In the eight inner compartments write *phaṭ phaṭ phaṭ phaṭ phaṭ phaṭ phaṭ phaṭ*. In the eight outer compartments write *phaṭ om phaṭ | phaṭ tā phaṭ | phaṭ re phaṭ | phaṭ tut phaṭ | phaṭ tā phaṭ | phaṭ re phaṭ | phaṭ tu phaṭ | phaṭ re phaṭ*. Place it in a crow and owl egg and conceal it at the base of a waterfall. Isolating will thereby be successful.”
- 29.2 *This was the twenty-ninth chapter, “The Isolating Circle.”*

30.

Chapter 30

THE SLAYING CIRCLE

- 30.1 “The circle for slaying is as follows. Use a mixture of equal parts of poison, blood, and mustard seed to draw a nine-compartment circle with inner and outer sections. In the central compartment write *hūm svā mārāya hā phaṭ*.¹⁰⁴ In the inner compartments write *hūm phaṭ hūm | phaṭ hūm phaṭ | hūm phaṭ hūm | phaṭ hūm phaṭ | hūm phaṭ hūm | phaṭ hūm phaṭ | hūm phaṭ hūm | phaṭ hūm phaṭ*. In the outer compartments write *hūm om phaṭ | hūm tā phaṭ | hūm re phaṭ | hūm tut phaṭ | hūm tā phaṭ | hūm re phaṭ | hūm tu phaṭ | hūm re phaṭ*. [F.216.a] Write these on the skull of a childless man or woman, repeat the mantra many times, and then hide it in a charnel ground. If you do so, death will ensue.”
- 30.2 *This was the thirtieth chapter, “The Slaying Circle.”*

31.

Chapter 31

THE INSANITY-INDUCING CIRCLE

- 31.1 “To make a circle that will induce insanity, use water infused with datura to draw a nine-compartment circle with inner and outer sections on cloth or paper. In the central compartment write *ha ha devadatta ha ha*. In the inner compartments write *hha hha hha hha hha hha hha hha*. In the eight outer compartments write *hha om hha | hha tā hha | hha re hha | hha tut hha | hha tā hha | hha re hha | hha tu hha | hha re hha*. Place the circle into a grass amulet and recite the mantra as fast as you can. Then conceal it at a crossroads¹⁰⁵ and pile datura on it. Insanity will then be induced. To relieve the insanity, wash an effigy with butter, honey, and cow’s milk. The target will thereby recover.”
- 31.2 *This was the thirty-first chapter, “The Insanity-Inducing Circle.”*

32.

Chapter 32

THE SUPPRESSING CIRCLE

32.1 “The circle that suppresses is as follows. Draw a nine-compartment circle on slate. In the central compartment, use water infused with turmeric to write *ga svā stambhaya | stambhaya ga hā*.¹⁰⁶ In the eight compartments, write *ga orī ga | ga tā ga | ga re ga | ga tut ga | ga tā ga | ga re ga | ga tu ga | ga re ga*. If the circle is folded and hidden at a crossroads, the target will be unable to move.”

32.2 *This was the thirty-second chapter, on the suppressing circle.*

33.

Chapter 33

THE GREAT SUPPRESSION CIRCLE

- 33.1 “For the great suppression circle, use ink made of turmeric to draw nine compartments with inner and outer circles inside a clay amulet. In the central compartment write this mantra: *ṛga svā staṃbhaya staṃbhaya ṛga hā*.¹⁰⁷ In the inner compartments write *ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha* eight times. In the eight outer compartments write *ṛga om ṛga | ṛga tā ṛga | ṛga re ṛga | ṛga tut ṛga | ṛga tā ṛga | ṛga re ṛga | ṛga tu ṛga | ṛga re ṛga* and finalize it with the addition of the Ārya Tārā mantra.¹⁰⁸ Conceal it in the direction from which the enemy is approaching, and it will grant protection. If you conceal it by the enemy’s door, they will be suppressed.”
- 33.2 *This was the thirty-third chapter, “The Circle That Suppresses Enemies.”* [F.216.b]

34.

Chapter 34

THE CIRCLE THAT SUPPRESSES THE SORCERY
OF VIDYĀ-MANTRA

- 34.1 “To make the circle that suppresses the sorcery of vidyā-mantra, draw the circle—a nine-compartment circle with inner and outer sections—with liquid turmeric on two slabs of either slate or mica. As for the mantras, in the central compartment write *va svā staṃbhaya staṃbhaya hā*.¹⁰⁹ In the inner section write *va va va va va va va va va*. In the outer section write *va om va | va tā va | va re va | va tut va | va tā va | va re va | va tu va | va re va*. Then conceal the two circles separately, side by side, and the sorcery of vidyā-mantra will be suppressed.”
- 34.2 *This was the thirty-fourth chapter, “Suppressing the Sorcery of Vidyā-Mantra.”*

TEACHING THE SAMAYAS AND VOWS

35.1 The bodhisattva Youthful Mañjuśrī then scattered an inconceivable¹¹⁰ array of flowers—mandāra flowers, lotuses, water lilies, and many others—over the Blessed One, while a symphony of divine music resounded. He asked the Blessed One, “How are the samayas to be fulfilled?”

The Blessed One replied:

35.2 “Those who maintain their respective samayas
And are connected to the circle of deities
Should abandon the killing of beings,
Not take what is not given,

35.3 “Not frequent women or abuse them,
Avoid all types of lies,
Relinquish intoxicants, meat,
And all types of stealing,

35.4 “Cast aside lustful attitudes
Toward each and every woman,
And show them benevolent respect
As if they were one’s own mother.

35.5 “For those who maintain these samaya commitments,
All rites will be effective.”

Thus spoke the Blessed One.

35.6 *This was the thirty-fifth chapter, “Teaching the Samayas and Vows.”*

36.

Chapter 36

THE CONCLUSION

- 36.1 The vast gathering of countless gods—including the lord of gods Indra, Brahmā, and others—the bodhisattva Youthful Mañjuśrī, a countless retinue of other bodhisattvas, [F.217.a] and the world with its gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas¹¹¹ rejoiced and praised what the Blessed One had said.
- 36.2 *This completes “The Tantra on All Rites of Blessed Lady Tārā.”*

c.

Colophon

c.1 Translated by the Indian preceptor Dharmaśrīmitra and the Tibetan translator and monk Chökyi Sangpo.

ab.

ABBREVIATIONS

C Choné

D Degé

H Lhasa (Zhol)

J Lithang

K Kangxi (Peking late 17th c.)

N Narthang

S Stok Palace

U Urga

Y Yongle

n.

NOTES

- n.1 There have been a number of modern studies on the history of Tārā worship in India and Tibet. While scholars present varying theories on its origin, they commonly agree that the goddess's worship gained increasing popularity in India from the sixth century onward. Tibetan histories recount the story of Tārā's introduction to Tibet in the early seventh century in the form of a sandalwood statue included in the Nepalese princess Bhṛkūtī's dowry when she married the Tibetan king Songtsen Gampo (*srong btsan sgam po*, 617–50). A few texts dedicated to Tārā were translated into Tibetan in the following centuries, but Stephan Beyer (1978, pp. 5–13) argues that the worship of Tārā did not take firm root in Tibet until the eleventh century, when it was actively promoted by Atiśa (982–1054). Rachael Stevens provides a comprehensive introduction to Tārā in her 2010 dissertation.
- n.2 Toh 724–31.
- n.3 Lessing and Wayman 1983, pp. 126–27.
- n.4 Skt. *Namastāraikaviṃśatistotraguṇāhitasahita*, Tib. *sgrol ma la phyag 'tshal nyi shu rtsa gcig gis bstod pa phan yon dang bcas pa*. See *Praise to Tārā with Twenty-One Verses of Homage* (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh438.html>) (Toh 438), Samye Translations 2020. The Tibetan translators chose not to translate the praise into Tibetan but instead followed the common practice of rendering a dhāraṇī or mantra in a Tibetan transliteration of the Sanskrit. This untranslated transcription represents an important witness of the Sanskrit manuscript it was based upon, and it was deemed significant enough by Alex Wayman to be used as the basis of his own edition and translation of the praise (Wayman 2002, p. 443). Notably, in this tantra alone, and in no other version of the text, the praise is preceded by the mantra *namaḥ sarva-tathāgatānāṃ tadyathā om namaḥ sūkaṣaṃ namaḥ tārāyai pārantāre*. Noteworthy also is that the translators treated the concluding colophon that follows the

twenty-seventh verse of the praise as part of the incantation and rendered it in transliterated Sanskrit as well.

- n.5 See also Willson (1996, pp. 44–49) for his summary of *The Tārā Tantra*.
- n.6 Beyer 1978, p. 476.
- n.7 Beyer 1978, p. 476, n. 53. See also Willson 1996, p. 49.
- n.8 See Willson 1996, pp. 44–86.
- n.9 This translation follows H, K, Y, N, and S in reading *dgu po rgyud mang* (Skt. *śūrpavīṇā*). D, C, K, J, and U have *gau rgyud mangs*.
- n.10 This translation follows C, D, J, K, Y, and U in reading *las so so'i sgo nas* (“by means of these different rites”); H, N, and S read *so so'i sgo nas* (“by individual means”).
- n.11 “*Om*, all phenomena are pure by nature. I am pure by nature.”
- n.12 “*Om*, may I generate bodhicitta.”
- n.13 Here and below, this translation follows D, H, N, S, and U in reading *de bzhin gshegs pa'i yum* (“mother of the tathāgatas”). C, J, K, and Y read *bde bar gsheg pa'i yum* (“mother of the sugatas”).
- n.14 This translation follows S in reading *ngang pa* (“goose”) rather than D: *dad pa* (“faith”).
- n.15 “*Om*, an ocean of offering clouds of incense (*dhūpa*) radiates out to all tathāgatas. *Samaya hūm*.” The same phrasing is then repeated, with the word “incense” replaced with, respectively, flowers (*puṣpa*), light (*āloka*), perfume (*gandha*), food (*naivedya*), and music (*śabda*).
- n.16 What follows is the famous *Praise to Tārā with Twenty-One Verses of Homage*, which the Tibetan translators of *The Tārā Tantra* elected to preserve in transliterated Sanskrit. That practice has been followed here. In doing so, the standalone Tibetan translation of *Praise to Tārā with Twenty-One Verses of Homage* (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh438.html>) (Toh 438; see Samye Translations 2020) has been consulted, as well as the Sanskrit editions of the praise prepared by Wayman and Pandey. Though these witnesses are largely in agreement and without major variants, minor emendations to the Sanskrit text have been made here.

- n.17 It is unclear what the correct Sanskrit for the Tibetan transliteration *sūkasam* might have been.
- n.18 *Tāramātā* is a conjectural emendation. D, S: *tA ra mi tA*; N: *tA ra ma mi tA*; H: *tA ra mi mi tA*; Y, K: *tA ra mi tA ra*. This line is not included in the Tibetan translation (Toh 438) or Sanskrit editions of the praise.
- n.19 Reading *kṣana-dyuti-nibheṣaṇe* for *kṣanair dyuti-nibheṣaṇe*, as the former rendering appears below and is supported by the published Sanskrit editions.
- n.20 “This sūtra of Blessed Lady Tārā was spoken by the completely perfect Buddha.”
- n.21 The Sanskrit underlying what we have rendered here as *samayā ulakaraye* is unclear.
- n.22 *Buddhaṃ ca dharmam ca saṅgham ca* is a conjecture based on D and S: *bud+d+ha ni tsa d+har+ma Ni tsa saM g+ha ni tsa*.
- n.23 C, J, K, and Y read *yum sgrol ma'i gzugs phun sum tshogs par 'gyur ro/ 'khor phun sum tshogs pa la sog pa phun sum tshogs pa thams cad thob par 'gyur ro*, which would translate as “they will have the perfect form of Tārā and obtain a perfect retinue as well as all other perfect attributes.”
- n.24 N, H, and S read *sdang ba* (“hostility”) where C, D, J, K, and Y read *ltas ngan pa* (“bad omens”).
- n.25 *Trāyate tārāte* is a conjectural emendation of the Degé reading *tre ya te tA ra te*: C, J, and KY read *tre yaM te tra ra te*, N has *tre ya te tra ra te*, and H has *tre ya te tA ra tra*. The emended text could be translated as “Homage to all tathāgatas, perfect buddhas! O Tārā, who protects and liberates!”
- n.26 All the Tibetan editions of this text read *taṃ* throughout for the seed syllable of Tārā. However, it is consistently found in the *Sāadhanamālā*, other Sanskrit sources, and the Tibetan tradition as *tāṃ*. Thus, we emend from *taṃ* to *tāṃ* when appropriate.
- n.27 “Om! Vajra, blaze! Vajra, expand! Hūṃ phaṭ!”
- n.28 H, N, and S read *a* in place of *e*.
- n.29 H and N read *paṃ*.
- n.30 This reading follows H and N: *pakṣa-viśuddha*. D has *prakṣa-viśuddha*.

- n.31 *Vyutthāna* is a conjectural emendation of *bu thA na*.
- n.32 C, K, and U have *samantaśuddha*; Y has *samantavidha*.
- n.33 “*Oṃ*, the purity of the realm of phenomena, *hūṃ!* *Oṃ aṃ*, the purity of the sphere, *hūṃ!* *Oṃ*, complete purity, *hūṃ!* *Oṃ*, the purity of the full moon, *hūṃ!* *Oṃ*, the purity of the revival of what has been damaged, *hūṃ!* *Oṃ*, homage to the maṇḍala of all tathāgatas, the complete purity, *hūṃ!*”
- n.34 This translation follows S in reading *gru chad bzhi dang ldan pa*, rather than D: *gru tshad bzhi dang ldan pa*.
- n.35 This translation follows H, N, and S in reading *phyag g.yas kyis mchog sbyin*. C, D, J, K, and Y read *phyag g.yas pa mchod sbyin*.
- n.36 “One faced” (*zhal gcig*) is absent from H, N, and S.
- n.37 “Seat” (*gdan*) is absent from H, N, and S.
- n.38 The text does not clarify who or what “both” (Tib. *gnyis ka*) refers to. Willson (1996, p. 66) suggests that it refers to the person who conjures the apparition and the person witnessing it.
- n.39 Here, Willson (1996, p. 66) conjectures that only the viewer is confused by an illusion, not the one who conjures it.
- n.40 “With an empty space between them” (*khong stong du*) is absent from H, N, and S.
- n.41 There is wide variation in this mantra across the versions of the Tibetan translation. This rendering of the mantra and the translation that follows are tentative: “*Oṃ*, all tathāgatas! I am the vajra, expand! I am the vajra of all tathāgatas, expand! *Hūṃ!*”
- n.42 “*Oṃ*, the blazing wish-fulfilling jewel of all tathāgatas! All tathāgatas, I do this for purification, for complete purification, *svāhā!*”
- n.43 “*Oṃ*, the vajra samaya of all tathāgatas, *hūṃ!*”
- n.44 This mantra has been emended based on the reading in N and H: *kramakrānti*; S: *kramakranti*; as well as a similar reading in D below. Here, D reads *tramātrānti*.
- n.45 The Sanskrit word transliterated in Tibetan here is ambiguous.

- n.46 This line, which is also found in *Praise to Tārā with Twenty-One Verses of Homage*, has been emended based on the Sanskrit editions of that text.
- n.47 The mantras for enthralling, increasing, rites, and pacifying nāgas begin with the same formula, of which the seed syllable changes for the increasing mantra; this formula is then followed by a phrase appropriate to the activity. The first mantra can be translated as “*Om, Tārā, Tārā! Tuttārā!* All space is filled with the syllable *hūm!* You who traverse the seven worlds!” The syllable *hūm* is used for the enthralling, rites, and nāga-pacification mantras. It is replaced by *svāhā* for the increasing mantra. The second part of the mantra for enthralling reads, “You who are able to magnetize all without exception, *hṛīḥ!*” For increasing, it reads, “Increase all without exception, you who are able to magnetize, *ho!*” For rites it reads, “Uṣṇīṣa! *Alīkaraya* [?], you who are able to magnetize, *phaṭ!*” For pacifying nāgas it reads, “Pacify all without exception, you who are able to magnetize, *phaṭ!*”
- n.48 The reading *ḥvālākulekṣaṇe* is a conjecture and is based on similar readings from *Praise to Tārā with Twenty-One Verses of Homage*.
- n.49 The reading *vibhūṣite bhūṣitāśeṣa* follows S: *bi b+hU Shi te b+hU Shi tA she Sha*. S offers the most intelligible transliteration of the mantra among versions of the Tibetan translation.
- n.50 This reading follows S: *tṣa kra ni ka ra*. D has *tṣa kra kA ra*.
- n.51 The reading *udaya-bhūmaye* is conjectural. D has *u ti a ya bu mi ye*, while S reads *u ti a ya b+hu mi ye*.
- n.52 This mantra consists of an homage to the guardians of the directions, plus the sun and moon. The deities from Indra to Kubera guard the east, south, west, and north respectively; from here one would expect Agni, Nairṛti, Vāyu, and Īśa/Īśāna to be listed for the southeast, southwest, northwest, and northeast respectively. Indrapāla, whose name is unexpected in this list, is perhaps intended to be understood as Īśa/Īśāna. The mantra, including the emendations made here, can be translated as “*Om, to Indra! To Yama! To Varuṇa! To the Yakṣa (= Kubera)! To Agni! To Vāyu! To the rākṣasa Nairṛti! Om, to Indrapāla! To the Sun! To the Moon! To the earth from which they arise! The letter a is at the head, as all phenomena are unarisen from the beginning. Om āḥ hūm phaṭ svāhā!*”
- n.53 “Infused with white sandalwood (*tsan+dan dkar po*)” is absent from N and S.
- n.54 “White” (*dkar po*) is absent from N and S.

- n.55 Commonly translated as “single form,” *dpa’ mo gcig ma* (Skt. *ekavīrā*) refers to the sole visualization of the chief deity without her accompanying maṇḍala deities. It is translated here as “single heroine” to echo the use of *dpa’ mo* (“heroine,” Skt. *vīrā*) in the same context in paragraphs above and below to designate Tārā as the chief deity of the maṇḍala.
- n.56 “Throngs of humans” (*mi’i tshogs*) is absent from H, N, and S.
- n.57 “Vibrancy” (*bkrag*) is absent from K and Y.
- n.58 K and Y read *thabs* (“skill”) instead of *stobs* (“strength”).
- n.59 C, D, J, K, Y, and U read *nyi zla’i steng* (“upon sun and moon disks”) where H, N, and S have *nyi ma’i steng* (“upon a sun disk”).
- n.60 H, N, and S omit “together with countless goddesses” (*lha mo dpag tu med pa dang bcas pa*).
- n.61 S reads *nyi ma’i steng* (“on a sun disk”).
- n.62 The ten-syllable mantra referred to here is most likely the one associated with this rite: *om tāre ture tuttāre svāhā*.
- n.63 This is a speculative translation of *gsal ba’i yi ge gnyis*. The two sets of syllables would refer to vowels and consonants, i.e., the *ali kali* mantra.
- n.64 This reading follows C, D, J, K, and Y in reading *mdung thung* (“short spear”). H, N, and S have *mdung* (“spear”).
- n.65 The mantras of the mothers of the five families share the same formula, replacing the name of the primary buddha of the family, in this instance Akṣobhya, and rearranging the Tārā mantra at the end. The mantra in this section reads, “Homage to the Three Jewels! Homage to the ocean of awakened wisdom! To Akṣobhya, king of the array! To the tathāgata, the arhat, the perfect Buddha! Homage to noble Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva, the great being of great compassion! It is thus: *om tāre ture tuttāre svāhā!*”
- n.66 Translated according to K and Y (*’ug pa*) and C and J (*hu lu’i ’ug pa*), which mean “owl.” D and S read *hu lu*, which Willson misinterpreted as a transliteration of the Sanskrit for “ram” (*hulu*) in his translation.
- n.67 The term *amukam* is meant to serve as a placeholder for the name of the target of the rite. “Om, bring so-and-so under my power, *svāhā!*” *Vaśam ānaya* is an emendation based on the *Vajratārāsādhana*, sādhana no. 110 in the *Sāadhanamālā*

(vol. 1, p. 233). C, D, J, and K read *ba sha ma na ya*; and H, Y, N, and S have *sha ma na ya*.

- n.68 “Homage to the Three Jewels! Homage to the ocean of awakened wisdom! To Amitābha, king of the array! To the tathāgata, the arhat, the perfect Buddha! Homage to noble Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva, the great being of great compassion! It is thus: *oṃ tuttāre ture svāhā!*”
- n.69 This mantra has been emended based on close parallels of this mantra found in two Vajratārā sādhanas in the *Sādhanamālā*, no. 94 (vol. 1, p. 186) and no. 110 (vol. 1, p. 234). Though it is clear the same mantra is intended to be recorded in this text, it has been significantly corrupted by scribal errors. The mantra can be translated as “ *Oṃ*, may the father of this so-named maiden give her to me in marriage, *hūṃ hrīḥ!*”
- n.70 “Homage to the Three Jewels! Homage to the ocean of awakened wisdom! To Vairocana, king of the array! To the tathāgata, the arhat, the perfect Buddha! It is thus: *oṃ tāre tuttāre ture svāhā!*”
- n.71 “*Oṃ*, kill, kill! Force, force! Stun, stun! Break, break! *Hūṃ, hūṃ, hūṃ! Laṃ, laṃ, laṃ, laṃ, laṃ!*”
- n.72 *Ratnasambhava* according to C, J, K, Y, and S. Domits *ratna*.
- n.73 “Homage to the Three Jewels! Homage to the ocean of awakened wisdom! To Ratnasambhava, king of the array! To the tathāgata, the arhat, the perfect Buddha! Homage to noble Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva, the great being of great compassion! It is thus: *oṃ tāre tāre tuttāre ture svāhā!*”
- n.74 N and S read *stag pa* (“birch”) instead of *stag ma* (“rhododendron”).
- n.75 “*Oṃ*, summon, summon so-and-so! Tell her of my desired dream, *hūṃ, hrīḥ!*”
The mantra here is reconstructed based on similar mantras found in the sādhanas to Vajratārā from the *Sādhanamālā*, no. 94 (vol. 1, p. 187) and no. 110 (vol. 1, p. 238).
- n.76 This reading follows S, rather than reading *sagāra* as in other recensions.
- n.77 “Homage to the Three Jewels! Homage to the ocean of awakened wisdom! To Amoghasiddhi, king of the array! To the tathāgata, the arhat, the perfect Buddha! Homage to noble Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva, the great being of great compassion! It is thus: *oṃ ture tuttāre svāhā!*”
- n.78 *Devadatta* is a placeholder for the name of the patron or target, depending on the purpose of a specific rite. This is a way of directing the ritualist to insert

the relevant name at this place in the mantra.

- n.79 This is a tentative reconstruction of the corrupt mantra found in the Tibetan editions. It is based in part on similar mantras from the Vajratārā sādhanas in the *Sādhanamālā*, no. 94 (vol. 1, p. 186) and no. 110 (vol. 1, p. 234). The mantra reconstructed here can be translated as “Move, move at once, O swift one! Extirpate so-and-so! Remove the clothes of this so-named [woman] and summon her here, having destroyed my great enemy! *Hriḥ svāhā!*”
- n.80 It is unclear what the “corresponding color” (Tib. *kha dog mthun pa*) is. It is possible that the color of the hut is linked to the type of fire pūjā being performed.
- n.81 “Pacify!”
- n.82 “All evil.”
- n.83 “Render praise” (*bstod pa bya*) is absent from H, N, and S.
- n.84 “It is thus: all tathāgatas! O Tārā, Tuttārā, the swift one, *svāhā!*”
- n.85 “Pacify all evil, *svāhā!*”
- n.86 H and N have *bris* (“drawn”) rather than *byas* (“made”) here.
- n.87 “Protection, protection.”
- n.88 In H, N, and S this mantra begins with *om*, which is omitted in D.
- n.89 H, N, and S read *bar chod sel ba’i srung ba’i ’khor lo* (“protective circle that dispels all obstacles”).
- n.90 S reads *u u u u*.
- n.91 “Protection! Pacify, *svāhā!*”
- n.92 N and S read *tsan+dan dmar po* (“red sandalwood”).
- n.93 N and S read *hoḥ* instead of *ha* here.
- n.94 “Increase in all ways, *om, a!*”
- n.95 The Skt. equivalent of the Tib. term *mdzo mo* could not be identified, so the identification of the final tree in this list as caragana is conjectural.
- n.96 “A *svā ca*, unfailing! A *hrīḥ hā.*”
- n.97 “Lac dye” (*rgya skyegs kyi khu ba*) is absent from N and S.

- n.98 H and N read *khaṅḍaka* (Tib. *kan da ka*, “molasses”) instead of *kanaka* (“gold”).
- n.99 N and S read *dur khrod kyi sol ba* (“charnel-ground charcoal”) instead of *dur khrod kyi ras* here.
- n.100 “Unfailing! *Hriḥ ha.*”
- n.101 According to N, *re hriḥ re*, rather than *re hriḥ* in C, D, J, K, Y, and U; or *hriḥ re* in H and S.
- n.102 This is a conjectural translation of *ra dug pa*. H, N, and S omit *ra*.
- n.103 As above, *devadatta* is a placeholder for the name of the person targeted by the rite.
- n.104 “*Hūm svā. Kill! Hā phaṭ.*”
- n.105 Y reads *lam rgya gram du rong dang bcas par* (“at a crossroads near a ravine”), and H, N, and S read *lam rgya gram du dong dang bcas par* (“at a crossroads with a ditch”).
- n.106 “*Ga svā, stun! Stun, ga hā!*”
- n.107 “*Ṛga svā, stun! Stun, rga hā!*”
- n.108 “Finalize it with the addition of the Ārya Tārā mantra” is a conjectural translation as the Tibetan text is unclear here.
- n.109 “*Va svā. Stun! Stun! Hā.*”
- n.110 “Inconceivable” (*bsam gyis mi khyab pa*) is absent from H, N, and S.
- n.111 H, N, and S omit “gandharvas” (*dri za*).

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 Acts with immediate retribution

mtshams med pa

མཚམས་མེད་པ།

ānantarya

See “five acts with immediate retribution.”

g.2 Aggressive rite

drag po'i phrin las · drag po'i las

དྲག་པོའི་ཕྱིན་ལས། · དྲག་པོའི་ལས།

raudrakarman

Roughly synonymous with *abhicāra* (assaulting), this broad category of rites includes those ritual practices and magical acts that are used to curse, exorcise malevolent influences, deter, harm, and kill enemies, and otherwise engage in hostile activities directed towards human and nonhuman targets.

g.3 Agni

me lha

མེ་ལྷ།

agni

A yakṣa, a guardian of the southeast.

g.4 Akṣobhya

mi 'khrugs pa · a k+Sho b+h+ya

མི་འཁྲུགས་པ། · ཨ་ཁོ་བློ་བྱ།

akṣobhya

One of the five primary tathāgatas, he presides over the vajra family.

g.5 Amitābha

a mi tA b+ha

ཨ་མི་ཏུ་བླ།

amitābha

One of the five primary tathāgatas, he presides over the lotus family.

g.6 Amoghasiddhi

don yod grub pa · a mo g+ha sid+d+hi

དོན་ཡོད་གྲུབ་པ། · ཨ་མོ་གླ་སི་དྷི།

amoghasiddhi

One of the five primary tathāgatas, he presides over the karma family.

g.7 amṛta

bdud rtsi

བདུད་རྩི།

amṛta

The ambrosia that prevents death or spiritual death (hence the Tibetan term meaning “crushes spiritual death”). The Sanskrit term literally means “immortality.” It is often used metaphorically to mean the Dharma.

g.8 apocalyptic fire

bskal pa'i me

བསྐྱལ་པའི་མེ།

kalpāgni

The fire that will destroy the universe at the end of the eon, according to Indic cosmogony.

g.9 Assaulting

mngon spyod

མངོན་སྟོན།

abhicāra

One of the four primary categories of ritual activities that includes rites for aggressively overcoming adversarial influences, both human and nonhuman.

g.10 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.11 Avalokiteśvara

spyan ras gzigs

སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས།

avalokiteśvara

One of the main bodhisattva disciples of the Buddha Śākyamuni, he is renowned for his compassion.

g.12 bandhūka

ban+du ka

བརྟུ་ཀ

bandhūka

Pentapetes phoenicea.

g.13 Bell Tārā

sgrol ma dril bu ma

སྐྱོལ་མ་རྗིལ་བུ་མ།

—

A wrathful form of the goddess Tārā.

g.14 blessed lady

bcom ldan 'das ma

བཙེམ་ལྷན་འདས་མ།

bhagavatī

The female form of the epithet commonly applied to buddhas and other awakened beings. The Sanskrit word *bhaga* means, among other factors, “good fortune,” “happiness,” “prosperity,” and “excellence.” The suffix *-vat* indicates possession. A common English translation is thus “blessed one” or “fortunate one.” The three syllables of the Tibetan translation mean that the being has “overcome” or “conquered” (Tib. *bcom*), is “endowed [with qualities]” (Tib. *ldan*), and has “gone beyond [saṃsāra]” (Tib. *'das*).

g.15 blessed one

bcom ldan 'das

བཙེམ་ལྷན་འདས།

bhagavat

The male form of the epithet commonly applied to buddhas and other awakened beings. The Sanskrit word *bhaga* means, among other factors, “good fortune,” “happiness,” “prosperity,” and “excellence.” The suffix *-vat* indicates possession. A common English translation is thus “blessed one” or “fortunate one.” The three syllables of the Tibetan translation mean that the being has “overcome” or “conquered” (Tib. *bcom*), is “endowed [with qualities]” (Tib. *ldan*), and has “gone beyond [saṃsāra]” (Tib. *'das*).

g.16 bodhicitta

byang chub kyi sems

བྱང་ལྡན་གྱི་སེམས།

bodhicitta

Literally “the mind of awakening,” but more technically a person’s aspiration to become fully awakened for the specific purpose of liberating all sentient beings. This is the necessary and sufficient condition to be a bodhisattva.

g.17 boon-granting gesture

mchog sbyin

མཚོག་སྦྱིན།

varada

Gesture in which the arm is extended down and the palm faces outward.

g.18 Brahmā

tshangs pa

ཚངས་པ།

brahmā

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 (*Mahābrahmā*).

g.19 Buddhalocanā

sangs rgyas spyan

སངས་རྒྱས་སྦྱིན།

buddhalocanā

Literally “The Eye of the Buddha,” a female deity in the esoteric Buddhist pantheon.

g.20 charnel-ground shroud

dur khrod kyi ras

དུར་ཁོད་ཀྱི་རས།

śmaśānakarpaṭa

A piece of cloth that covers corpses being carried to a cremation ground and that remains draped over them on the funeral pyre.

g.21 Chel Lotsāwa Chökyi Sangpo

dpyal lo tsA ba chos kyi bzang po

དཔལ་ལོ་ཙཱ་བ་ཚེས་ཀྱི་བཟང་པོ།

—

Chel Lotsāwa Chökyi Sangpo (d. 1216) was a Tibetan translator active in the thirteenth century.

g.22 city of gandharvas

dri za'i grong khyer

དྷི་ཟའི་གྲོང་ཁྱེར།

—

Cloud formations that look like elaborate celestial cities, one classical example of illusory phenomena.

g.23 clay drum

rdza rnga

རྩ།

mṛdaṅga

A kettledrum played horizontally that is wider in the middle, with the skin at both ends played by the hands. One drumhead is smaller than the other. A South Indian drum, it maintains the rhythm in Karnatak music.

g.24 constitution

khams

ཁམས།

dhātu

A word that can refer, in different formulations, to the fundamental constituents of material and/or mental phenomena, or to the realms of existence. It also has the general meaning of the nature of something.

g.25 cow bezoar

go ro tsa na

གོ་རོ་ཙ་ན།

gorocanā

Crystalized bile deposits of cattle.

g.26 crystal

man shel

མན་ཤེ།

śilā

g.27 dhāraṇī

gzungs

གཟུངས།

dhāraṇī

An incantation, spell, or mnemonic formula that distils essential points of the Dharma and is used by practitioners to attain mundane and supramundane goals. It also has the sense of “retention,” referring to the special capacity of practitioners to memorize and recall detailed teachings.

g.28 dharmakāya

chos sku

ཚོས་སྐྱ།

dharmakāya

In distinction to the *rūpakāya*, or form body of a buddha, this is the eternal, imperceivable realization of a buddha. In origin it was a term for the presence of the Dharma, and it has since become synonymous with the true nature.

g.29 Dharmaśrīmitra

d+harmā shrī mi tra

དྷམ་ཤྲི་མི་ཏྲ།

dharmāśrīmitra

An Indian paṇḍita active in the eleventh century.

g.30 eight goddesses that grant protection from the eight dangers

'jigs pa brgyad las bsrung ba'i lha mo brgyad

འཇིགས་པ་བརྒྱད་ལས་བསྐྱེད་བའི་ལྷ་མོ་བརྒྱད།

—

Eight manifestations of the female buddha Tārā who grant protection from the eight fears, which are commonly enumerated as the fear of lions, elephants, fire, snakes, water, imprisonment, thieves, and cannibals.

g.31 eight great dangers

'jigs pa chen po brgyad

འཇིགས་པ་ཚེན་པོ་བརྒྱད།

aṣṭamahābhaya

Dangers posed by lions, elephants, fire, snakes, drowning, bondage, thieves, and demons.

g.32 eight unfree states

mi khom pa brgyad

མི་ཁོམ་པ་བརྒྱད།

aṣṭākṣaṇa

Circumstances that do not provide the freedom to practice the Buddhist path, i.e., being born in the realms of (1) the hells, (2) pretas, (3) animals, and (4) long-lived gods; in the human realm (5) among barbarians, (6) among extremists, and (7) in places where the Buddhist teachings do not exist; and (8) without adequate faculties to understand the teachings where they do exist.

g.33 enthralling

dbang du bsdu ba

དབང་དུ་བསྐྱུ་བ།

vaśīkaraṇa

One of the four primary categories of ritual activities, it involves summoning and controlling a desired target. Though the target is often a person, this category of rite also includes “magnetizing” (*ākarṣaṇa*; *dgug pa*) objects, wealth, and so forth.

g.34 essential nature

de kho na nyid

དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད།

tattva

The ultimate nature of things, the way things are in reality as opposed to the way they appear to beings who have not awakened.

g.35 fire pūjā

sbyin sreg

སྦྱོན་སྦྱེག

homa

The casting of a prescribed offering into a ritual fire. The practice of *homa* is first attested in pre-Buddhist Vedic literature and serves as a core, pervasive ritual paradigm in exoteric and esoteric rites in both Buddhist and non-Buddhist traditions into modern times. In Buddhist esoteric rites, the ritual offerings are made repeatedly, with each throw accompanied by a single repetition of the respective mantra.

g.36 five acts with immediate retribution

mtshams med pa lnga

མཚམས་མེད་པ་ལྔ།

pañcānantarya

Five actions that bring immediate and severe consequences at death, such that the person who commits them will take rebirth in the lower realms directly after they die. The five are patricide, matricide, killing an arhat, intentionally injuring a buddha, and causing a schism within the saṅgha.

g.37 five families

rigs lnga

རིགས་ལྔ།

pañcakula

The vajra family, lotus family, tathāgata family, jewel family, and karma family.

g.38 five kinds of offerings

mchod pa rnam pa lnga

མཚོད་པ་རྣམ་པ་ལྔ།

—

Fragrances, flowers, incense, lamps, and food items.

g.39 five offerings

mchod pa lnga

མཚོད་པ་ལྔ།

pañcopacāra

Fragrances, flowers, incense, lamps, and food items.

g.40 five precious substances

rin po che lnga · rin po che rnam pa lnga

རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ལྔ། . རིན་པོ་ཆེ་རྣམ་པ་ལྔ།

pañcaratna

Here the five are listed as gold, pearl, crystal, coral, and sapphire.

g.41 five secondary acts with immediate retribution

mtshams med pa lnga dang de dang nye ba lnga

མཚམས་མེད་པ་ལྔ་དང་དེ་དང་ཉེ་བ་ལྔ།

pañcopānantarīya

A subsidiary set of actions that bring immediate and severe consequences at death, such that the person who commits them will take rebirth in the lower realms directly after they die. These five are damaging a caitya, killing a bodhisattva, violating a woman who has exhausted her afflictions, killing a novice student, and stealing from the saṅgha.

g.42 five substances from a cow

ba'i rnam lnga

བའི་རྣམ་ལྔ།

pañcagavya

Milk, yogurt, clarified butter, cow urine, and cow dung.

g.43 four activities

las bzhi

ལས་བཞི།

catuṣkarman

The four primary categories of ritual activities: pacifying, increasing, enthralling, and assaulting.

g.44 four families

rigs bzhi

རིགས་བཞི།

catuṣkula

Seemingly the four families cited in this section; namely the lotus, tathāgata, jewel, and karma families.

g.45 four immeasurables

tshad med pa bzhi

ཚད་མེད་པ་བཞི།

catuspramāṇa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The meditations on love (*maitrī*), compassion (*karuṇā*), joy (*muditā*), and equanimity (*upekṣā*), as well as the states of mind and qualities of being that result from their cultivation. They are also called the four abodes of Brahmā (*caturbrahmavihāra*).

In the *Abhidharmakośa*, Vasubandhu explains that they are called *apramāṇa*—meaning “infinite” or “limitless”—because they take limitless sentient beings as their object, and they generate limitless merit and results. Love is described as the wish that beings be happy, and it acts as an antidote to malice (*vyāpāda*). Compassion is described as the wish for beings to be free of suffering, and acts as an antidote to harmfulness (*vihimsā*). Joy refers to rejoicing in the happiness beings already have, and it acts as an antidote to dislike or aversion (*arati*) toward others’ success. Equanimity is considering all beings impartially, without distinctions, and it is the antidote to attachment to both pleasure and malice (*kāmarāgavyāpāda*).

g.46 *gandharva*

dri za

དྲི་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 under the jurisdiction of 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.47 *garuḍa*

nam mkha' lding

ནམ་མཁའ་ལྗེ་དཀར།

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.48 goat poison

ra dug

ར་དུག

śrīṅaka

Possibly a poisonous plant of the Ranunculaceae family, known more commonly by names such as wolfsbane and monkshood.

g.49 god

lha

ལྷ།

deva

Cognate with the English term *divine*. The *devas* are most generically a class of divine, celestial beings who populate the narratives of Indian mythology. The term can also be used to refer to the major gods of the brahmanical pantheon.

g.50 harmful spirit

gdon

གདོན།

graha

A class of nonhuman beings able to enter and possess the human body. They have a harmful effect on physical and mental health, and are specifically said to cause seizures and insanity. Often this term is used to broadly refer to multiple classes of beings who can affect a person's physical and mental health.

g.51 heart mantra

snying po

སྨིང་པོ།

hṛdaya

The most essential mantra of a deity.

g.52 heroine

dpa' mo

དཔའ་མོ།

vīrā

A term applied to the central deity of a tantric maṇḍala.

g.53 Hook Tārā

sgrol ma lcags kyu ma

སྒྲོལ་མ་ལྷགས་ཀྱུ་མ།

—

A wrathful form of the goddess Tārā.

g.54 increasing

rgyas pa

རྒྱས་པ།

pauṣṭika

One of the four primary categories of ritual activities.

g.55 Indra

brgya byin

བརྒྱུ་བྱིན།

indra

A Vedic god who eventually emerged as one of the most important in the Vedic pantheon. Indra retains his role as the “Lord of the Gods” in Buddhist literature, where he is often referred to by the name Śakra. As a guardian of the directions, he guards the eastern quarter.

g.56 Indrapāla

—

—

indrapāla

See [note 52](#).

g.57 initiation

dbang

དབང་།

abhiṣeka

A ritual initiation into the maṇḍala and practice system of a specific tantric deity. The term means “to anoint,” as it evokes Indic rites of royal coronation that involve sprinkling consecrated water.

g.58 introduction

gleng gzhi

སྒྲེང་གཞི།

nidāna

The introductory section of a sūtra or other Buddhist scripture that establishes the time and setting of the discourse.

g.59 Īśāna

—

—

īśāna

A form of Śiva, a guardian of the northeast.

g.60 jewel family

rin po che'i rigs

རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་རིགས།

ratnakula

One of the five buddha families, it is presided over by the Tathāgata Ratnasambhava.

g.61 karma family

las kyi rigs

ལས་ཀྱི་རིགས།

karmakula

One of the five buddha families, it is presided over by the Tathāgata Amoghasiddhi.

g.62 Khedrup Jé

mkhas grub rje

མཁས་གུབ་རྗེ།

—

Khedrup Jé Gelek Palsang (*mkhas grub rje dge legs dpal bzang*, 1385–1438) one of the main disciples of Tsongkhapa.

g.63 kinnara

mi'am ci

མིའམ་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.64 Kubera

—

—

kubera

The king of yakṣas and an important wealth deity, he is also one of the Four Great Kings in Buddhist cosmology. In this capacity he is commonly known as Vaiśravaṇa, the guardian of the northern quarter.

g.65 Kurukullā

ku ru kul+le

ཀུ་རུ་ཀུ་ལྷོ།

kurukullā

A female deity of the lotus family, associated with the activity of enthralling.

g.66 lac dye

rgya skyegs kyi khu ba

རྒྱ་སྐྱེགས་ཀྱི་ཁུ་བ།

lākṣa

A dye made from the insect *Laccifer lacca*.

g.67 Lasso Tārā

sgrol ma zhags pa ma

སྐྱོལ་མ་ཞགས་པ་མ།

—

A wrathful form of the goddess Tārā.

g.68 lord of the earth

sa bdag gi rgyal po

ས་བདག་གི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

bhūpati

An epithet of kings.

g.69 lotus family

pad+ma'i rigs

པདྨ་འཇིགས།

padmakula

One of the five buddha families. This family is associated mainly with the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara and includes deities such as Tārā and Bhṛkuṭī. This family is presided over by the Tathāgata Amitābha.

g.70 mahoraga

lto 'phye chen po

ལྷོ་འཕྲེ་ཚན་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.71 Maitreya

byams pa

བྱམས་པ།

maitreya

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The bodhisattva Maitreya is an important figure in many Buddhist traditions, where he is unanimously regarded as the buddha of the future era. He is said to currently reside in the heaven of Tuṣita, as Śākyamuni’s regent, where he awaits the proper time to take his final rebirth and become the fifth buddha in the Fortunate Eon, reestablishing the Dharma in this world after the teachings of the current buddha have disappeared. Within the Mahāyāna sūtras, Maitreya is elevated to the same status as other central bodhisattvas such as Mañjuśrī and Avalokiteśvara, and his name appears frequently in

sūtras, either as the Buddha’s interlocutor or as a teacher of the Dharma. *Maitreya* literally means “Loving One.” He is also known as Ajita, meaning “Invincible.”

For more information on Maitreya, see, for example, the introduction to *Maitreya’s Setting Out* (Toh 198).

g.72 mandārava flower

man dA ra ba

མན་རྟ་བུ།

mandārava

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the five trees of Indra’s paradise, its heavenly flowers often rain down in salutation of the buddhas and bodhisattvas and are said to be very bright and aromatic, gladdening the hearts of those who see them. In our world, it is a tree native to India, *Erythrina indica* or *Erythrina variegata*, commonly known as the Indian coral tree, mandarava tree, flame tree, and tiger’s claw. In the early spring, before its leaves grow, the tree is fully covered in large flowers, which are rich in nectar and attract many birds. Although the most widespread coral tree has red crimson flowers, the color of the blossoms is not usually mentioned in the sūtras themselves, and it may refer to some other kinds, like the rarer *Erythrina indica alba*, which boasts white flowers.

g.73 Mañjuśrī

’jam dpal

འཇམ་དཔལ།

mañjuśrī

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Mañjuśrī is one of the “eight close sons of the Buddha” and a bodhisattva who embodies wisdom. He is a major figure in the Mahāyāna sūtras, appearing often as an interlocutor of the Buddha. In his most well-known iconographic form, he is portrayed bearing the sword of wisdom in his right hand and a volume of the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* in his left. In addition to the epithet Kumārabhūta, which means “having a youthful form,” Mañjuśrī is also called Mañjughoṣa, Mañjusvara, and Pañcaśikha.

In this text:

Also called here Youthful Mañjuśrī.

g.74 māra

bdud

བདུད།

māra

A class of beings portrayed as the primary adversaries and tempters of people who vow to take up the religious life, they are the personification of everything that functions as a hindrance to awakening.

g.75 **misdeed**

sdig pa

སྲིག་པ།

pāpa

g.76 **mudrā**

phyag rgya

ཕྱག་སྲུ།

mudrā

Ritual hand gesture.

g.77 **Nairṛti**

—

—

nairṛti

A rākṣasa, a guardian of the southwest.

g.78 **nirvāṇa**

mya ngan las 'das pa

མྱ་ངན་ལས་འདས་པ།

nirvāṇa

Literally meaning “extinction,” it is the state beyond sorrow, referring to the ultimate attainment of buddhahood, the permanent cessation of all suffering and of the afflicted mental states that lead to suffering.

g.79 **pacifying**

zhi ba

ཞི་བ།

śānti

One of the four primary categories of ritual activities.

- g.80 Pañcāla cloth
pany+tsa li ka'i gos
 བརྩུ་ལི་ཀའི་གོས།
pañcālikāvastra
 Fabric from the north Indian kingdom of Pañcāla.
- g.81 Pāṇḍaravāsini
na bza' dkar
 ན་བཟའ་དཀར།
pāṇḍaravāsini
 A female buddha of the lotus family.
- g.82 Parṇaśavarī
ri khrod lo ma can
 རི་ཁྲོད་ལོ་མ་ཅན།
parṇaśavarī
 A piśācī renowned for her ability to cure disease, avert epidemics, and pacify obstacles She is often, but not exclusively, considered a form of Tārā.
- g.83 pearl
mu tig
 མུ་ཏིག།
muktikā
- g.84 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.85 Ratnasambhava
rin chen 'byung gnas · saM b+ha va

རིན་ཆེན་འབྲུང་གནས། . སི་བླ་བ།

ratnasambhava

One of the five primary tathāgatas, he presides over the jewel family.

g.86 realm of phenomena

chos kyi dbyings

ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

dharmadhātu

A synonym for the nature of things.

g.87 Śakra

brgya byin

བརྒྱ་བྱིན།

śakra

An alternate name of Indra; a Vedic god who, along with Brahmā, first exhorted Śākyamuni to teach the Dharma. Śakra's importance in the Brahmanical pantheon was eventually eclipsed by Viṣṇu.

g.88 Śākyaśrībhadrā

—

—

śākyaśrībhadrā

1127–1225, an influential Kashmiri paṇḍita who visited Tibet from 1204–13.

g.89 samaya

dam tshig

དམ་ཚིག།

samaya

The commitments specifically associated with tantric practice.

g.90 sapphire

mu men

མུ་མེན།

indranīla

g.91 saturated earth

sa zhag

ས་ཞག

pr̥thivīparvataka

An enigmatic term that refers to a crust or deposit left on the earth after it is saturated by a fluid. When used together with a term for cremation ash, it seems to refer to the earth beneath the fire that has been saturated by the ghee used in the fire as well as by the melted bodily constituents.

g.92 Shackles Tārā

sgrol ma lcags sgrog ma

སྒྲོལ་མ་ལུགས་སྒྲོག་མ།

—

A wrathful form of the goddess Tārā.

g.93 shrine chamber

spos kyi khang pa

སྒྲོས་ཀྱི་ཁང་པ།

gandhakuṭi

Literally “perfumed chamber,” this was the name given to the Buddha’s personal room at the Jetavana monastery. The term was then later applied to the room in any monastery where an image of the Buddha was installed to signify his presence. In the context of an Action Tantra, the term seems to refer generically to a shrine chamber, perhaps one specifically enshrining the deity that is the focus of a given rite.

g.94 signlessness

mtshan ma med pa

མཚན་མ་མེད་པ།

animitta

One of the three gateways to liberation, it is the ultimate absence of marks and signs in perceived objects.

g.95 silk from Kāśī

ka shi ka’i ras

ཀ་ཤི་ཀའི་རས།

—

The perennially famous silk from the north Indian city now named Vārānasī/Benares.

g.96 single heroine

dpa' mo gcig ma

དཔལ་མོ་གཅིག་མ།

ekavīrā

The single form of a deity without its accompanying maṇḍala of deities.

g.97 śūrpavīṇā

gau rgyud mangs

གོ་རྒྱུད་མངས།

śūrpavīṇā

A type of vīṇā.

g.98 Tārā

sgrol ma

སྒྲོལ་མ།

tārā

A goddess (lit. “Savior”) known for giving protection. She is variously presented in Buddhist literature as a great bodhisattva or a fully awakened buddha.

g.99 tathāgata

de bzhin gshegs pa

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ།

tathāgata

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A frequently used synonym for *buddha*. According to different explanations, it can be read as *tathā-gata*, literally meaning “one who has thus gone,” or as *tathā-āgata*, “one who has thus come.” *Gata*, though literally meaning “gone,” is a past passive participle used to describe a state or condition of existence. *Tatha(tā)*, often rendered as “suchness” or “thusness,” is the quality or condition of things as they really are, which cannot be conveyed in conceptual, dualistic terms. Therefore, this epithet is interpreted in different ways, but in general it implies one who has departed in the wake of the buddhas of the past, or one who has manifested the supreme awakening dependent on the reality that does not abide in the two extremes of existence and quiescence. It is also often used as a specific epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.100 tathāgata family

de bzhin gshegs pa'i rigs

དེ་བཞིན་གསེགས་པའི་རིགས།

tathāgatakula

One of the five buddha families, it is presided over by the Tathāgata Vairocana.

g.101 threatening gesture

sdigs mdzub

སྡིགས་མཚུབ།

—

A ritual hand gesture (*mudrā*) of pointing the forefinger of the right hand menacingly.

g.102 Tsongkhapa

tsong kha pa

ཙོང་ཁ་པ།

—

Tsongkhapa Losang Drakpa (*tsong kha pa blo bzang grags pa*, 1357–1419) was an important Buddhist master and the founder of the Geluk (*dge lugs*) school.

g.103 Tuṣita

dga' ldan

དགའ་ལྷན།

tuṣita

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.104 Uṣṇīṣa
gtsug tor
 གཙུག་ཏོར།
uṣṇīṣa
 An unspecified deity invoked in the mantra used for rites.
- g.105 Vairocana
rnam par snang mdzad · bai ro tsa na
 རྣམ་པར་སྐྱང་མཛད། . བེ་རོ་ཙ་ན།
vairocana
 One of the five primary tathāgatas, he presides over the tathāgata family.
- g.106 vajra family
rdo rje'i rigs
 རྩ་རྩེ་རིགས།
vajrakula
 One of the five buddha families, it is presided over by the Tathāgata Akṣobhya.
- g.107 Vajratārā
rdo rje sgrol ma
 རྩ་རྩེ་སྐྱོལ་མ།
vajratārā
 A form of Tārā, the Buddhist goddess of compassion, commonly depicted as golden yellow in color, with four faces and eight arms.
- g.108 Varuṇa
chu lha
 ལུ་ལྷ།
varuṇa
 The Vedic god of the waters, he presides over the western direction.
- g.109 Vāyu
rlung lha
 ལྷུང་ལྷ།
vāyu
 The Vedic god of wind, he presides over the southeastern direction.

g.110 very limit of reality

yang dag pa'i mtha'

ཡང་དག་པའི་མཐའ།

bhūtakoṭi

The ultimate nature of things.

g.111 vetiver

pu shel tse

ཕུ་ཤེལ་ཙོ།

uśīra

Andropogon muricatus.

g.112 victor

rgyal ba

རྒྱལ་བ།

jina

A common epithet of the buddhas also used among the Jains, whose name is derived from the term *jina*.

g.113 vīṇā

pi bang

ཕི་བང།

vīṇā

A stringed instrument, similar to a sitar or lute, that is used in Indian classical music, especially of the Karnatak (South Indian) style.

g.114 wishlessness

smon pa med pa

སློན་པ་མེད་པ།

apraṇihita

One of the three gateways to liberation, it is the absence of any conceptual goal one may be focused on achieving; it comes about from knowing that all composite phenomena create suffering.

g.115 worldly protector

'jig rten skyong ba

འཇིག་རྟེན་སྐྱོང་བ།

—

A class of guardian deities, usually presiding over the quarters of the world.

g.116 Yama

gshin rje

གཤེན་རྗེ།

yama

The god of death, a guardian of the southern quarter.

g.117 yoginī

rnal 'byor ma

རྣལ་འབྱོར་མ།

yoginī

With a long history in South Asian folklore and religious traditions, yoginīs are liminal, transgressive, and often ferocious nonhuman female figures associated with the bestowal of temporal and transcendent spiritual accomplishment. In Buddhist tantra they are identical to ḍākinīs.

g.118 Youthful Mañjuśrī

'jam dpal gzhon nu

འཇམ་དཔལ་གཞོན་ནུ།

mañjuśrīkumārabhūta

A term of address for the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī.