

# Tibetan Buddhist canon

*From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*



Young monks printing scriptures. Sera Monastery, Tibet. 1993



Printing the scriptures. Sera Monastery.

The Tibetan Buddhist canon is a loosely defined list of sacred texts recognized by various sects of Tibetan Buddhism. In addition to sutrayana texts from Early Buddhist (mostly Sarvastivada) and Mahayana sources, the Tibetan canon includes tantric texts.[1] The Tibetan Canon underwent a final compilation in the 14th century by **Buton Rinchen Drub** (1290–1364).

The Tibetans did not have a formally arranged Mahayana canon and so devised their own scheme which divided texts into two broad categories:

**Kangyur** (Wylie: bka'-'gyur) or "Translated Words", consists of works supposed to have been said by the Buddha himself. All texts presumably have a Sanskrit original, although in many cases the Tibetan text was translated from Chinese or other languages.

**Tengyur** (Wylie: bstan-'gyur) or "Translated Treatises", is the section to which were assigned commentaries, treatises and abhidharma works (both Mahayana and non-Mahayana).

The Tengyur contains 3 626 texts in 224 Volumes.

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# The Kangyur

The Kangyur is divided into sections on Vinaya, Perfection of Wisdom Sutras, Avatamsaka, Ratnakuta and other sutras (75% Mahayana, 25% Nikaya / Agama or Hinayana), and tantras. When exactly the term Kangyur was first used is not known. Collections of canonical Buddhist texts already existed in the time of Trisong Detsen, the sixth king of Tibet.

The exact number of texts in the Kangyur is not fixed. Each editor takes responsibility for removing texts he considers spurious or adding new translations.

Currently there are about 12 available Kangyurs.

These include the **Derge**, **Lhasa**, **Narthang**, **Cone**, Peking, **Urga**, Phudrak and **Stog Palace** versions, each named after the physical location of its printing (or copying in the case of manuscripts editions). In addition, some canonical texts have been found in **Tabo** and **Dunhuang** which provide earlier exemplars to texts found in the Kangyur. The majority of extant Kangyur editions appear to stem from the so-called **Old Narthang Kangyur**, though the Phukdrak and Tawang editions are thought to lie outside of that textual lineage. The stemma of the Kangyur have been well researched in particular by **Helmut Eimer** and **Paul Harrison**.

## History

### Origin

From the seventh century onward, existing literature were compiled and catalogued from time to time which later extended, upgraded, classified, reorganized and put in different sets of different collections. A separate set of translation works was re-grouped into two major collections popularly known as bka'-'gyur and bstan-'gyur, translation of Buddha's discourses and translation of commentarial works respectively.

The very first Tibetan catalogue was introduced during the period of the 39th Tibetan King khri-lde srong-btsen, also known as sad-na legs-mjing-gyon (776-815), who issued decrees "requiring all translation works that were extant in Tibetan from their Indian original to be catalogued and subjected to be recurrently reviewed and to set guidelines of terminology in order to standardize all translation works". A team of Indian and Tibetan scholars was assigned for the purpose.

As a major step in this remarkable attempt at literary standardization, the bi-lingual glossary known as the **Mahavyutpatti** (sgra-sbyor bam-po gnyis-pa) was successfully accomplished in the Tibetan horse year. (814 CE)

Another great achievement was the cataloguing of the collections then available in royal libraries of the three famous Tibetan palaces under the supervision of the famous translator Bande sKa-ba dpal-brtsegs with help from his colleagues, Bande chos-kyi snying-po, Lo-tsa-wa Bande debendhara, Bande lhun-po and Bande klu'-dbang-po etc.

The earliest catalogue compilation was recorded from the manuscript of the royal collection housed in the palace- pho-brang 'phang-thang ka-med kyi gtsug-lag-kang in the Tibetan dog year. (818 CE) This cataloguing work became famous by the name of the palace and known as dkar-chag phang-thang-ma.

Soon afterwards two further catalogues of collections available in two other royal libraries- pho-brang bsam-yas mchims-phu-ma and pho-brang stong-thang Idan-dkar were compiled and came to be known as dkar-chag mchims-phu-ma and dkar-chag Idan-dkar-ma respectively. dkar-chag Idan-dkar-ma was compiled in the dragon year. (824 CE)

Among these three catalogues, Idan-dkar-ma, included in the volume Jo of sna-tsoqs in sde-ge bka'-bstan, is generally believed to be the only surviving so far. But recently a manuscript of dkar-chag phang-thang-ma is discovered and published from Tibet. It contains 961 titles listed under 34 subject headings with additional information of numbers of verses (soloka and bampo ) that contains in each text.

The Idan-dkar-ma catalogue comprises 735 titles and listed under a category of 27 subject headings. An interesting unique feature of Tibetan catalogue is that, alongside information about the source material of translation and the bibliographical details, it gives in physical descriptions, such as the nos. of words, verses, canto (bampo) and folios-pages in each of textual contents. Thus today we have a record of 73 million words contained in the bka'-'gyur & bstan-'gyur collection.

According to the latest edition of Dharma Publication, the bKa'-'gyur contains 1,115 texts, spread over 65,420 Tibetan folios amounting to 450,000 lines or 25 million words.

Likewise, the bsTan-'gyur contains 3,387 texts using 127,000 folios amounting to 850,000 lines and 48 millions words.

The sum total of both these collections is 4,502 texts in 73 millions words. By fixing bampo to verses and to words of each of the textual contents, the individual works are interpolation and alteration. This further strengthened the authenticity of Tibetan Buddhist literature. These are the first Tibetan catalogues in three versions that were compiled and published in the beginning of the ninth century by the great sgra-sgyur gyi lo-tsa-wa Bande sKa-ba dpal-brtsegs and his team. Tibet, thus, becomes the earliest to accomplish catalogue as inventory in the history of evolution of catalogue. **Bande sKa-ba dpal-brtsegs** is thus, honored as the pioneer of the Tibetan system. All the later compilers of the Tibetan Canon based their works extensively on sKa-ba dpal-brtsegs creation.

After the period of suppression during the reign of King glang-dar-ma's (803-842) which brought the first chapter of the history of Tibetan literature to an abrupt end, the second phase in its development is reactivated. Since the beginning of 11th century onward Tibetan translators together with Indian panditas once again resumed their literary activity to bring about a new chapter to be known as "the era of new translation" and also "revival or later promulgation of Buddhism in Tibet". In addition to the previous works Tibet has produced a huge literary wealth both in terms of volume and range of coverage by the 13th century and this growth imposed to carry a fresh comprehensive bibliographical record and control existing literature.

## Later period

In the mid 13th century a student of bcom-Idan rigs-ral (1200?), 'Jam-gag pak-shi, also known as mchims 'jam-dpal dbyangs (?-1267), who was the state priest of the Mongol emperor Ching Tsung, had managed to collect some amount of writing material and sent to his master with request for organizing and preparing catalogue

of literature that were scattered all over Tibet. bcom-ldan rigs-ral with the help of his pupils dbu-pa blo-gsal byang-chub ye-shes, lo tsa-wa bsod-nams 'od-zer and rgyang-ro byang-chub 'bum, surveyed various parts mostly covering central and western Tibet. Authenticating and rectifying, they carefully scrutinize all the manuscripts of old and new translations and arranged them in order, compiling a comprehensive catalogue of a proto-bka'-'gyur & bstan-'gyur. The catalogue was prepared into two sets of collections, entitled the dkar-chag bstan-pa rgyas-pa and dka-'gyur gyi dkar-chag nyi-ma'i 'od-zer respectively. Classification of Tibetan Buddhist canon or translation works into two main classes as bka'-'gyur & bstan-'gyur is basically derived from this catalogue.

'Jam-gag pak-shi was once again able to gather some good amount of writing materials and sent to Tibet with the requesting to re-inscribe all manuscripts and set in separate volumes. dbu-pa blo-gsal byang-chub ye-shes, who was the disciple of both bcom-ldan rigs-ral and 'jam-gag pak-shi, was entrusted for this new task. He with colleagues, dutifully accomplished the work and published for the first time a complete and new set of volumes of - bka'-'gyur & bstan-'gyur and placed at a temple, 'jam-lha-khang of the **snar thang monastery** which later became famous as **snar thang edition**. Unfortunately, both the catalogues and volumes of this hand-written oldest edition of the bka'-'gyur & bstan-'gyur are no longer available. [2]

### **Catalogues of Buddhist collections in Royal Palaces**

lhan dkar ma/ldan dkar ma (found in later Kanjurs)

'phang thang ma (recently rediscovered)

mchims bu ma (lost)

### **Later catalogues**

Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1147–1216)

Bcom ldan rig dral (13th century)

'Phags pa blo gros rgyal mtshan (1235–1280)

The Tibetan part of the Chinese tripitaka Zhonghua da zang jing was published in 2008.[3]

### **Kangyur Versions**

Old Narthang Kangyur (thought to have been a ms collection with multiple copies of texts) Not surviving. The versions Yongle , Wangli , Lithang , Kangxi , Zhuoli , Derge Narthang , Urga , Kulun , Lhasa , Walaand Qamdo are in printed forms. [4] [5] [6]

### **Tshal-pa Lineage**

These are all xylographic editions:

Yunglo Kanjur (1410) (largely lost)

Wanli Kanjur (1606) (largely lost, but available via 1680 Berlin ms copy)

Lithang Kanjur (1608–21)  
Kangxi Kanjur (1684–92) (with several corrected reprints)  
Cone Kanjur (1721–31)  
Narthang (1730–32) (with contamination from Them-spangs-ma line)  
Derge Kanjur (1733) (with contamination from Them-spangs-ma line)  
Qianlong Kanjur (1737)  
Urga Kanjur (with multiple contaminations)  
Lhasa Kanjur (with multiple contaminations)

### **Them-spangs-ma Lineage**

These are all manuscript editions:

Shel-dkar (available via London ms copy 1712)  
Tokyo Ms Kanjur (1858–78)  
sTog Palace Kanjur manuscript (c1700-50)  
Ulan Batur Ms Kanjur

### **Local Kangyurs**

Bathang Kangyur ms  
Mustang Kangyur ms  
Phug-drak Kangyur ms (1696–1706)  
Tabo Ms Fragments (individual texts, not apparently a complete Kanjur)  
Tawang Kangyurs (two copies extant)

### **Mongolian Version[7]**

### **Manchu Version [8] [9]**

# Tengyur

Derge

Cone

Narthang

Peking

Golden

## Publications/Issues of the Tibetan Buddhist canon

A number of catalogues have been published.[10]

Tohaku University (Ed.)(1934). A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons, Sde-dge Edition, Tohaku University

## Non-collected works[11]

Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang

Dongcang canon [12]

Nyingma Gyubum

the Treasury of Precious Termas (**rin chen gter mdzod**) or Rinchen Terdzö is a collection of secret Nyingma buddhism texts gathered under Rime movement published in 63 volumes by Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, New Delhi, India, with the addition of several more volumes of termas and commentaries.[13]

**Dudjom\_Tersar** (not included into Rinchen Terdzö)

Bon Kangyur

## Generic classification of Canonical texts

### Exoteric or Sutra tradition

In the Tibetan tradition, some collections of teachings and practices are held in greater secrecy than others. The sutra tradition comprises works said to be derived from the public teachings of the Buddha, and is taught widely and publicly. The esoteric tradition of tantra (below) is generally only shared in more intimate settings with those students who the teacher feels have the capacity to utilize it well.

### Esoteric or Tantra tradition

## Tantra categorization by the Ancient Translation School

The collection of the tantras of the Nyingma is known as the **Nyingma Gyubum**. The division used by the Nyingma or Ancient school:

### Three Outer Tantras:

Kriyayoga

Charyayoga

Yogatantra

### **Three Inner Tantras, which correspond to the Anuttarayogatantra:**

Mahayoga

Anuyoga

Atiyoga (Tib. Dzogchen), further divided into three classes:

Mental SemDe

Spatial LongDe

Esoteric Instructional MenNgagDe.

### **Tantra categorization by the New Translation School**

The Sarma or New Translation schools of Tibetan Buddhism (Gelug, Sakya, and Kagyu) divide the Tantras into four hierarchical categories, namely,

**Kriyayoga**

**Charyayoga**

**Yogatantra**

**Anuttarayogatantra**

further divided into "mother", "father" and "non-dual" tantras.

#### **Mother Tantra**

"The Yoginī Tantras correspond to what later Tibetan commentators termed the "Mother Tantras" (ma rgyud)" (CST, p. 5).

#### **Father Tantra**

In the earlier scheme of classification, the "class ... "Yoga Tantras," ... includes tantras such as the Guhyasamāja", later "classified as "Father Tantras" (pha rgyud) ... placed in the ultimate class ... "Unexcelled Yoga tantras" (rnal 'byor bla med kyi rgyud)." (CST, p. 5)

#### **Nondual Tantra or Advaya Class**

Manjushri-nama-samgiti

Kalachakra Laghutantra

## Authors of the Canon

In addition to texts attributed to Shakyamuni Buddha and other Buddhas, the Tibetan Buddhist canon (specifically the Tenjur) contains a number of commentaries composed by Indian authors. Below are the authors the tradition holds to be of paramount importance.

### Important Indian scholars

#### Two Supremes

Asanga founder of the Yogachara school

Nagarjuna founder of the Madhyamaka school

#### Six Scholarly Ornaments

**Aryadeva** foremost disciple of Nagarjuna, continued the philosophical school of Madhyamika

**Dharmakirti** famed logician, author of the Seven Treatises; student of Dignana's student Ishvarasena; said to have debated famed Hindu scholar **Shankara**

**Dignaga** famed logician

**Vasubandhu**, Asanga's brother[14][15][16]

**Gunaprabha** foremost student of Vasubandhu, known for his work the Vinayasutra

**Sakyaprabha** prominent exponent of the Vinaya

#### Seventeen Great Panditas

References are sometimes made to the Seventeen Great Panditas. This formulation groups the eight listed above with the following nine scholars.

**Atiśa** holder of the “mind training” (Tib. lojong) teachings

**Bhavaviveka** early expositor of the Svatantrika Madhyamika

**Buddhapalita** early expositor of the Prasangika Madhyamika

**Chandrakirti** considered the greatest exponent of Prasangika Madhyamika

**Haribhadra** commentator on Asanga's **Ornament of Clear Realization**

**Kamalashila** 8th-century author of important texts on meditation

**Shantarakshita** abbot of Nalanda, founder of the **Yogachara-Madhyamika** who helped Padmasambhava establish Buddhism in Tibet

**Shantideva** (8th century Indian) author of the Bodhicaryavatara

**Vimuktisena** commentator on Asanga's Ornament of Clear Realization

## Five traditional topics of study

Study of the Tibetan Buddhist canon is a focal point of the monastic curriculum. All four schools of Tibetan Buddhism generally follow a similar curriculum, using the same Indian root texts and commentaries. The further Tibetan commentaries they use differ by school, although since the 19th century appearance of the widely renowned scholars Jamgon Kongtrul, Ju Mipham and Khenpo Shenga, Kagyupas and Nyingmapas use many of the same Tibetan commentaries as well. Different schools, however, place emphasis and concentrate attention on different areas.

The exoteric study of Buddhism is generally organized into "**Five Topics**," listed as follows with the primary Indian source texts for each:

**Abhidharma** (Higher Knowledge, Tib. wylie: chos mngon)

\_Compendium of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma Samuccaya) by **Asanga**

\_Treasury of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma Kosha) by **Vasubandhu**

**Prajna Paramita** (Perfection of Wisdom, Tib. wylie: shes rab phar phyin)

\_Ornament of Clear Realization (Abhisamaya Alankara) by Maitreya as related to Asanga

\_The Way of the Bodhisattva (Bodhicharyavatara, Tib. wylie: sPyod-'jug) by Shantideva

**Madhyamaka** (Middle Way, Tib. wylie: dbu-ma)

\_Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way (Mulamadhyamakakarika, Tib. wylie: rTsa dbu-ma) by Nagarjuna

\_Four Hundred Verses on the Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas (Catuhsataka) by Aryadeva

\_Introduction to the Middle Way (Madhyamakavatara," Tib. wylie: "dBU-ma-la 'Jug-pa) by Chandrakirti

\_Ornament of the Middle Way (Madhyamakalamkara) by Shantarakshita

\_The Way of the Bodhisattva (Bodhicharyavatara, Tib. wylie: sPyod-'jug) by Shantideva

**Pramana** (Logic, Means of Knowing, Tib. wylie: tshad-ma)

\_Treatise on Valid Cognition (Pramanavarttika) by **Dharmakirti**

\_Compendium on Valid Cognition (Pramanasamuccaya) by **Dignaga**

**Vinaya** (Monastic discipline, Tib. wylie: 'dul-ba)

\_The Root of the Vinaya (Vinaya Mula Sutra, Dülwa Do Tsawa, 'dul-ba mdo rtsa-ba) by Gunaprabha

## Five treatises of Maitreya

Also of great importance are the "Five Treatises of Maitreya." These texts are said to have been related to Asanga by the Buddha Maitreya, and comprise the heart of the **Yogacara (or Cittamatra, "Mind-Only")** school of philosophy in which all Tibetan Buddhist scholars are well-versed. They are as follows:

\_Ornament for Clear Realization (Abhisamayalankara, Tib. mngon-par rtogs-pa'i rgyan)

\_Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras (Mahayanasutralankara, Tib. theg-pa chen-po'i mdo-sde'i rgyan)

\_Sublime Continuum of the Mahayana (Mahayanottaratantrashastra, Ratnagotravibhanga, Tib. theg-pa chen-po rgyud-bla-ma'i bstan)

\_Distinguishing Phenomena and Pure Being (Dharmadharmatavibhanga, Tib. chos-dang chos-nyid nam-par 'byed-pa)

\_Distinguishing the Middle and the Extremes (Madhyantavibhanga, Tib. dbus-dang mtha' nam-par 'byed-pa)

A commentary on the Ornament for Clear Realization called Clarifying the Meaning by the Indian scholar Haribhadra is often used, as is one by Vimuktisena.

### See also

Chinese Buddhist canon  
Karchag Phangthangma, imperial catalogue  
List of sutras  
Pali Canon  
Tripitaka Koreana  
Tripitaka

### Notes

1) Tibetan: rgyud. The distinction between sutra and tantra is not rigid. For example, in some editions the tantra section includes the Heart Sutra (Cf. Conze, The Prajnaparamita Literature, Mouton, the Hague, 1960, page 72.) and even versions of texts in the Pali Canon (Mahasutras, Peter Skilling, Pali Text Society, volume I, page xxiv. The abbreviation DN there is given in the author's list, page xv, as Digha Nikaya, which is part of the Pali Canon.)

2) Traditional Cataloguing and Classification of Tibetan Literature" (English) Dharamsala: LTWA Tibetan Journal, XXX- no- 2, Summer 2005. 50-60pp.

3 to 12 Notes in Chinese!

13)Treasury of Precious Termas — Rinchen Terdzö / Terdzo

15) Kalu Rinpoche, Luminous Mind: The Way of the Buddha. Wisdom Publications,1997. p.

16) Tashi Deleg! The Padma Samye Ling Bulletin, Enlightened Masters: Arya Asanga

### External links

Tibetan Canon

**Asian Classics Input Project** (Romanized Tibetan Kangyur, Tengyur & Sungbum)

**The Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center Digital Library** (Tibetan Buddhist texts)

Lotsawa House Translations of Tibetan Buddhist texts

Overview of typical Kagyu shedra curriculum



### Kangyur and Tengyur

The Tibetan Buddhist Canon is one of the three most important canons of Buddhist literature in the world, and hence one of its most important bodies of religious literature. Generally consisting of more than 5,250 texts and 230,000 folio sides, the canon exists in over twenty unique print and manuscript editions. These texts, written in India, Central Asia, China, and elsewhere between the second century BCE... [Explore!](#)



## The Tibetan Buddhist Canon: The Kangyur (Bka' 'gyur) and Tengyur (Bstan 'gyur)

by D. Phillip Stanley

### The Kangyur



The Buddhist canon (bka' 'gyur)  
in a case on the left wall of the kang tshan temple.

The term “Kangyur” (bka' 'gyur) means “translations of the pronouncements [of the Buddha]” and thus consists of the texts that are attributed to the Buddha. Esteemed and worshipped for centuries in Tibet, it is regarded as the single most authoritative repository of Buddhist thought by Tibetan speakers throughout Asia and beyond. The Kangyur unquestionably ranks among the most important

sources for the study of Buddhism in India and Tibet. Containing many hundreds of Buddhist texts translated in the eighth and ninth centuries by teams of scholars from India, China, Tibet and Central Asia in order to create the literary foundation for Buddhism in Tibet, it is unrivalled in doctrinal authority and historical value. On account of its vast scope and the reliability of its translations, the Kangyur is widely used as a principle point of access to centuries of Buddhist developments in the Indo-Tibetan cultural world.

## Structure of the Kangyur

All editions of The Tibetan Buddhist Canon are internally organized by categories which are a complex combination of doxographical / doctrinal categories and literary genres. These schemes are crucial for understanding how Buddhists traditionally understand affiliations between various texts, as well as the literary, intellectual, and practice traditions that organized these texts. The schemes are thus utilized within the Tibetan Buddhist Canonical Collections Project to provide browsing access to the canons both for individual editions and the integrated master. In the future, we will be documenting the character and history of each classification with scholarly essays.

These classifications are generally explicitly identified either in the volume title page and/or in the vertical left hand box on pages. However, some editions have groups of affiliated texts that were clearly grouped together in the compilation of the edition, yet are not explicitly identified as a separate classification. A few classification genres are apparently not explicitly cited in any traditional cataloging literature, and hence are here referred to as “hidden.” The genres that are hidden in this fashion vary by collection, but include Gzungs ’dus, Rnying rgyud, Smon lam, Paritta, and Myang ’das.

Three of these – Gzungs ’dus, Rnying rgyud, and Myang ’das – are identified as separate genres in some collections, while the Smon lam texts appear as a group at the end of the last genre in the four printed Kangyur of the database in which they occur and the Paritta texts appear as a group at the end of either Sher phyin or ’Dul ba. These hidden genres have been explicitly separated out in the following charts and placed after the classification genre which nominally includes those texts.

## Kangyur Organizations

The following five charts show the number of texts, number of non-standardized pages, number of standardized pages (standardized on an average Peking Kangyur and Tengyur page size), average text size in non-standardized pages, and average text size in standardized pages, for each genre in each of the six Kangyurs, arranged according to the genre order of the Derge Kangyur. This data was generated based on the analytical fields already present in the Filemaker Pro canonical database of **Naropa University** that not only includes searchable genre fields but summarizing fields for calculating sub-totals for numbers of pages in each genre in each collection and so forth.

**The Kangyur Genres: # of Texts**  
**Arranged According to the Derge Genre Order**  
**With Hidden Genres Identified Separately,**  
**With Standardized Treatment of Split/Combined Texts**

Kangyur Sūtra Genres							
	Peking	Cone	Derge	Urga	Narthatang	Lhasa	Combined
'Dul ba	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Sher phyin	17	17	23	23	23	23	23
Paritta*	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Phal chen	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Dkon brtsegs	49	49	49	49	49	49	49
Mdo sde	267	263	266	268	272	273	279
Myang 'das*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total Sūtra	356	352	361	363	367	368	374
Kangyur Tantra Genres							
Rgyud	454	456	472	466	394	425	482
Rnying rgyud	18	18	19	19	18	18	19
Dus 'khor 'grel bshad	N/A	N/A	1	1	N/A	N/A	1
Gzungs 'dus	266	266	245	245	8	1	267
Smon lam*	18	18	20	20	N/A	N/A	26
Total Tantra	756	758	757	751	420	444	795
Total Kangyur	1,112	1,110	1,118	1,114	787	812	1,169

**The Kangyur Genres: # of Non-Standardized Pages**  
**Pages Stated in Unique Page Sizes of Each Kangyur,**  
**Arranged According to the Derge Genre Order**  
**With Hidden Genres Identified Separately**

Kangyur Sūtra Genres							
	Peking	Cone	Derge	Urga	Narthatang	Lhasa	Combined
'Dul ba	7,510	9,092	7,859	7,859	12,163	11,402	7,510
Sher phyin	15,168	16,613	15,053	15,057	21,339	21,181	15,198
Paritta*	237	246	208	208	340	350	237
Phal chen	3,179	3,383	3,087	3,085	4,529	4,434	3,179
Dkon brtsegs	3,957	4,003	3,500	3,550	5,520	5,506	3,957
Mdo sde	19,421	21,365	18,286	18,629	29,019	29,520	20,064
Myang 'das*	1,431	1,586	1,360	1,360	2,239	2,109	1,431
Total Sūtra	50,903	56,287	49,353	49,747	75,148	74,502	51,576
Kangyur Tantra Genres							
Rgyud	11,837	12,629	12,199	12,191	16,482	17,791	13,064
Rnying rgyud	1,886	2,041	1,906	1,906	2,647	2,870	1,887
Dus 'khor 'grel bshad	N/A	N/A	936	936	N/A	N/A	59
Gzungs 'dus	1,781	1,821	1,070	1,070	25	17	2,349
Smon lam*	42	60	47	47	N/A	N/A	59
Total Tantra	15,546	16,550	16,158	16,149	19,153	20,678	18,402
Total Kangyur	66,449	72,837	65,511	65,897	94,301	95,181	69,978

**The Kangyur Genres: # of Standardized Pages  
Standardized into Equivalent # of Peking Pages,  
Arranged According to the Derge Genre Order  
With Hidden Genres Identified Separately**

Kangyur Sūtra Genres							
	Peking	Cone	Derge	Urga	Narthatang	Lhasa	Combined
'Dul ba	7,510	7,510	7,510	7,510	7,510	7,510	7,510
Sher phyin	15,168	15,168	15,198	15,198	15,198	15,198	15,198
Paritta*	237	237	237	237	237	237	237
Phal chen	3,179	3,179	3,179	3,179	3,179	3,179	3,179
Dkon brtsegs	3,957	3,957	3,957	3,957	3,957	3,957	3,957
Mdo sde	19,421	19,390	19,517	19,816	19,960	19,977	20,064
Myang 'das*	1,431	1,431	1,431	1,431	1,431	1,431	1,431
Total Sūtra	50,903	50,872	51,028	51,372	51,471	51,488	51,576
Kangyur Tantra Genres							
Rgyud	11,837	11,364	12,439	12,326	11,134	11,585	13,064
Rnying rgyud	1,886	1,886	1,887	1,887	1,886	1,886	1,887
Dus 'khor 'grel bshad	N/A	N/A	1,043	1,043	N/A	N/A	1,043
Gzungs 'dus	1,781	1,687	1,072	1,072	17	11	2,349
Smon lam*	42	42	43	43	N/A	N/A	59
Total Tantra	15,546	14,979	16,484	16,371	13,037	13,482	18,402
Total Kangyur	66,449	65,851	67,512	67,699	64,509	64,971	69,978

**The Kangyur Genres: Average Text Size In Non-Standardized Pages  
Pages Stated in Unique Page Sizes of Each Kangyur  
With Standardized Treatment of Split/Combined Texts,  
Arranged According to the Derge Genre Order  
With Hidden Genres Identified Separately**

Kangyur Sūtra Genres							
	Peking	Cone	Derge	Urga	Narthatang	Lhasa	Combined
'Dul ba	939	1,136	982	982	1,520	1,425	939
Sher phyin	892	977	654	655	928	921	661
Paritta*	18	19	16	16	26	27	18
Phal chen	3,179	3,383	3,087	3,085	4,529	4,434	3,179
Dkon brtsegs	81	82	71	72	113	112	81
Mdo sde	73	81	69	70	107	108	72
Myang 'das*	1,431	1,586	1,360	1,360	2,239	2,109	1,431
Total Sūtra	143	160	137	137	205	202	138
Kangyur Tantra Genres							
Rgyud	26	28	26	26	42	42	27
Rnying rgyud	105	113	100	100	147	159	99
Dus 'khor 'grel bshad	N/A	N/A	936	936	N/A	N/A	1,043
Gzungs 'dus	6.7	6.8	4.4	4.4	3.1	16.9	8.8
Smon lam*	2.3	3.3	2.4	2.4	N/A	N/A	2.3
Total Tantra	21	22	21	22	46	47	23
Total Kangyur	60	66	59	59	120	117	60

The Kangyur Genres: Average Text Size In Standardized Pages.  
Standardized into Equivalent # of Peking Pages  
With Standardized Treatment of Split/Combined Texts,  
Arranged According to the Derge Genre Order  
With Hidden Genres Identified Separately

Kangyur Sūtra Genres							
	Peking	Cone	Derge	Urga	Narthang	Lhasa	Combined
'Dul ba	939	939	939	939	939	939	939
Sher phyin	892	892	661	661	661	661	661
Paritta*	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
Phal chen	3,197	3,197	3,197	3,197	3,197	3,197	3,197
Dkon brtsegs	81	81	81	81	81	81	81
Mdo sde	73	74	73	74	73	73	72
Myang 'das*	1,431	1,431	1,431	1,431	1,431	1,431	1,431
Total Sūtra	143	145	141	141	140	140	138
Kangyur Tantra Genres							
Rgyud	26	25	26	26	28	27	27
Rnying rgyud	105	105	99	99	105	105	99
Dus 'khor 'grel bshad	N/A	N/A	1,043	1,043	N/A	N/A	1,043
Gzungs 'dus	6.7	6.3	4.4	4.4	2.1	11.1	8.8
Smon lam*	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2	N/A	N/A	2.3
Total Tantra	21	20	22	22	31	30	23
Total Kangyur	60	59	60	61	82	80	60

## Editions of the Kangyur

The Kangyur and Tengyur are commonly referred to as the canon of Tibetan Buddhism. They consists of over **5,250** texts translated from other Asian languages into Tibetan, primarily from Sanskrit and related Indian languages. A small number of texts were translated from Chinese and from various languages of Central Asia. The term “Kangyur” means “translations of the pronouncements [of the Buddha]” and thus consists of the texts that are attributed to the Buddha.

The term “Tengyur” means “translations of treatises [on the pronouncements of the Buddha]” and consists of texts attributed to subsequent learned and realized masters of Buddhism.

The Old Narthang Kangyur and Tengyur are traditionally viewed as the root source of all subsequent Kangyurs and Tengyurs and Western scholarship held this view until recently. At this point it is apparent that the Kangyur tradition in particular was diverse and fluid.

Two main lines of Kangyurs have been identified, the **Tshal pa** and **Them spangs ma** lines. Previously, scholars presumed that both of these lines stemmed from the Old Narthang Kangyur but this assumption has been abandoned with mounting evidence that the differences between the two lines make the assumption of a single source untenable.

In addition, there are a number of independent Kangyurs that stand aside from the two lines just noted. They often preserve alternate textual traditions and distinctive arrangements of the texts. It has also become clear that over time subsequent copies of these various different Kangyurs began influencing or “contaminating”

each other. The resulting picture of the history of the Kangyurs that is emerging is one of complexity and a certain fluidity.

The Kangyur has pride of place in Tibetan Buddhism. Many versions of the Kangyur collection were created in regions of Tibet. Royal families often viewed the publishing of a Kangyur as a meritorious activity that would bring benefit to their regions. At this point there are known to be at least **ten hand-written manuscript versions** of the Kangyur in existence:

**Four Independent Kangyur Manuscripts:** Newark, O rgyan gling (or Tawang), Phug Brag, and Gondhla.

**One Tshal pa Kangyur Manuscripts:** Berlin.

**Four Them spangs ma Kangyur Manuscripts:** Ulan Bator, London, **sTog Palace**, and Tokyo.

**One Translation of the Tibetan Kangyur in Manuscript form:** Petersburg manuscript of the Mongolian Kangyur.

There are also at least **eleven printed xylograph versions of the Kangyur** known to be in existence, if the many reprints of the Derge Kangyur--there are at least 8 of them with their varying changes--are not counted separately:

Four major xylograph Kangyurs of the Peking sub-group in the Tshal pa line: Yongle, Wanli, Kangzi, and Qianlong (plus their various reprinting).

Two xylograph Kangyurs of the 'Phying ba stag rtse sub-group in the Tshal pa line: Lithang (Li thang) or 'Jang sa tham and **Cone** (Co ne).

Three main mixed xylograph Kangyurs: **Narthang**, **Derge** (sde dge), and **Lhasa**, plus the numerous reprints of the Derge Kangyur: in addition to the original as represented by a par phud or "first fruits" copy, there is the retouched version of the par phud printing created under H.H. the 16th Karmapa known as the mTshal par "red print" version along with its Chendgu and Taipei reprints, the expanded Tohoku version of Derge and its reprinting in the Nyingma Edition of Dharma Publishing, plus the reprints of **Urga**, Ra rgya, and Wara.

There are varying amounts of editing and insertion of additional texts in such reprints so there are variations between these reprints.

Two xylograph translations of the Tibetan Kangyur: the Mongolian xylograph and Manchu xylograph Kangyurs are translations from Tibetan Kangyurs. There is also a Tangut lanauge canonical collection for which many of its texts were translated from Tibetan, though it is not itself specifically a translation of Tibetan Kangyur.

It is hoped that additional versions of the Kangyur will come to light, especially manuscript versions. In the Combined Kangyur created by the database work that is the basis of the Tibetan Buddhist Canonical Collections Project, **1,169 Kangyur texts** with **70,000 pages** of text have been identified. No single version of the Kangyur includes all these texts.

While there is substantial overlap between the versions there is no single version that established a norm for the Kangyur and the field of Kangyur studies generally does not view these collections as different editions of a putative root collection. The collections are rather fluid with respect to what texts they include

but they are intended to include only translations of Buddhist texts brought to Tibet. There is a complex history of lineages of Kangyur copies and cross-influences between such lineages. The discovery of new Kangyurs may help shed light on this history. The power of databases to facilitate new types of detailed analysis of the different versions of the Kangyur promises to shed new light on the history of these texts and collections.

## Descriptions of Kangyur Editions

The Kangyurs will be divided into five sections:

- 1) Independent Kangyurs: These do not belong to the two main lines of Kangyurs
- 2) Tshal pa (“Eastern Group”) Kangyurs: Peking Sub-Line
- 3) Tshal pa (“Eastern Group”) Kangyurs: ’Phying ba stag rtse Sub-Line
- 4) Them spang ma (“Western Group”) Kangyurs
- 5) Mixed Kangyurs
- 6) Canonical Translations From Tibetan Into Other Languages

Within these categories, individual Kangyurs are generally arranged chronologically based on their dates of completion, if known. The sigla for each Kangyur will be given first, followed by a description of the collection in question. The sigla for each Kangyur will be given first, followed by a description of the collection in question. The sigla used for the different Kangyur editions in the Tibetan Buddhist Canonical Collections will follow the proposal set forth in Paul Harrison and Helmut Eimer’s “Kangyur and Tengyur Sigla: A Proposal for Standardization.” In addition, as there will be recurring references to the The Nyingma Edition of the Derge Kangyur and Tengyur and this collection was not included in the standardized sigla list, the project will utilize the sigla “NE” for it. Note that in the list that follows, the symbol “#” indicates that the University of Virginia and/or Naropa University have the texts of these Kangyurs.

### a. Independent Kangyurs

A: Tabo manuscript fragments. An independent proto-Kangyur and Tengyur body of texts from the Tabo Monastery in western Tibet. Pre-13th century? There is also a body of texts from the Dunhuang caves toward the Chinese end of the Silk route that include Kangyur and Tengyur texts. The Tibetans controlled the Dunhuang region from 777 or 787 to 848.

E: Newark manuscript Kangyur, from Batang/Bathang in Khams, E. Tibet, from the 15th to 16th centuries. 23 volumes only. An independent Kangyur.

O: O rgyan gling or Tawang manuscript Kangyur from Tawang Monastery in Arunachal Pradesh, northeast India. Two copies are located at Tawang, one in gold and silver (which is incomplete) and one in black ink, the later apparently being a copy of the former. The black ink copy was completed in 1699-1700, so the gold and silver original precedes this date. Though it may be related to the Them

spangs ma line, this is an independent Kangyur, e.g., it has an usually large number of Nyingma tantra texts, 60 compared to the 18 or 19 in the later versions of the Tshal pa Kangyurs.

F #: Phug brag manuscript Kangyur. An independent Kangyur from W. Tibet. c. 1696-1706. Its texts are is sometimes related to the Tshal pa line and sometimes to the Them spangs ma line. Located at the Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, Dharamsala, India.

--: Gondhlla manuscript Kangyur. This Kangyur has been tentatively dated to the late 13th/early 14th centuries but this needs confirmation. It is in a private collection in Gondhla, Lahaul, Himachal Pradesh, India. It consists of 35 volumes of Mdo texts but with no Sher phyin texts and only a few Rgyud texts. It is said that other volumes of the collection are located in an unknown place in the Western Himalayas. Its relationship to other Kangyurs is currently unknown, but like the Tawang manuscript it includes Nyingma tantras not present in other collections, which suggests it is an independent Kangyur. No sigla has been assigned to this Kangyur.

## **b. Tshal pa (“Eastern Group”) Kangyurs: Peking Sub-Line**

Y \*: Xylograph edition of Kangyur prepared under the Yongle emperor. Dated 1410. 105 + 1 volumes. Begins the Peking sub-line of the Tshal pa Kangyur line and is the first xylograph edition. Two almost complete editions exist in Lhasa. One was known to exist on Wutai-shan in China c. 1940 but its present status is unknown.

W \*: Edition of Kangyur and Tengyur Supplement prepared under the Wanli emperor. Dated 1605. 105 + 1 volumes and 42 + 1 supplementary volumes. This is a reprint utilizing the blocks of the Yongle Kangyur.

B: Berlin manuscript Kangyur. This is a 1680 Kangyur based on the 1605 Peking xylograph Kangyur. Belongs to the Peking sub-line of the Tshal pa Kangyur line. There is another manuscript Kangyur based on the 1605 Peking Kangyur at the National Palace Museum in Taipei, Taiwan that has not been given a sigla.

K: Peking edition of the Kangyur prepared in 1684-92 under the Kangxi emperor. Belongs to the Peking sub-line of the Tshal pa Kangyur line. 105 + 1 volumes. This edition used new blocks created with a technique that produced virtual duplicates of the original Yongle blocks. There were subsequent reprinting of these blocks to which some changes were made over time that were apparently based on the Lithang Kangyur. Reprinting occurred in 1700 (106 + 1 volumes), 1717-1720 (106 + 1 volumes). A hand-emended version of the Kangyur is at the Harvard-Yenching Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts. A 1692 Kangyur is held at the Sung chu ssu in Peking. A 1700 Kangyur is held at the Pei-ching kuo-li t'u-shu-kuan (National Library) and at the Yung ho kung in Peking. A 1717-1720 Kangyur is held at Ōtani University in Kyōto. (The Kangzi Tengyur is dated 1724 with 225 + 1 volumes.)

Q #: Peking xylograph impression of the Kangyur prepared in 1737 under the Qianlong emperor. 107 + 1 volumes. The Kangyur belongs to the Peking sub-line of the Tshal pa Kangyur line. The Qianlong Kangyur is a reprint from the Kangzi blocks. A 1737 Kangyur is held at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. The modern photographic Otani reprint of both the Kangyur and Tengyur form 1955-58 is somewhat widely available. Its Kangyur is based on a combination of the 1717-20

and 1737 Kangyurs. There was another reprint after 1763, perhaps in 1765, but there is no sign yet of an extant copy. A copy of the Otani Kangyur and Tengyur are held by the University of Virginia.

### **c. Tshal pa (“Eastern Group”) Kangyurs: ’Phying ba stag rtse Sub-Line**

J: Lithang or ’Jang sa tham xylograph Kangyur. Belongs to the ’Phying ba stag rtse sub-line the Tshal pa Kangyur line. Dated 1609-1614. 108 volumes. A copy that is missing four volumes is located at the Nyingma monastery in Orissa, India. It has been microfilmed by the Naritasan Shishojin Temple of Japan in 1984 and by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project.

C #: **Cone** xylograph Kangyur (and Tengyur). The Cone Kangyur is a “straight copy” of the Lithang Kangyur and thus belongs to the ’Phying ba stag rtse sub-line of the Tshal pa Kangyur line. Dated 1721-1731. 108 volumes. The Cone Kangyur and Tengyur are relatively rare. Copies of the Kangyur are at the Ōtani University in Kyōto, at the Tōyō Library in Tōkyō, at the Institut narodov Azii in Leningrad, and at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. (University of Virginia has the texts for the Tengyur only.)

D#: The **Derge Kangyur**, along with its many derivatives, is a mixed Kangyur that is described in detail below but it is mentioned briefly here because it is based primarily on the Lithang Kangyur of the Tshal pa line.

### **d. Them spangs ma (“Western Group”) Kangyurs**

U #: Ulan Bator manuscript Kangyur of the Them spangs ma Kangyur line c. 1671. (There is also an ancient Them spangs ma manuscript Kangyur in Gyantse (Rgyal rtse) of Central Tibet, but it has not been given a sigla. Also note that “U” is used as the sigla for the **Urga** Kangyur that is of mixed lineage.)

L: London manuscript Kangyur. Copy of the Kangyur from the Shel dkar monastery of S. Tibet, 1712. Belongs to the Them spangs ma Kangyur line.

S #: **Stog Palace manuscript Kangyur**. From Ladakh in northwest India. Belongs to the Them spangs ma Kangyur line. Modern reprint from 1975-1980 of the sTog Palace manuscript still located at sTog that was made c. 1729 from a Bhutanese original. 109 volumes.

T: Tokyo or Kawaguchi manuscript Kangyur. Belongs to the Them spangs ma Kangyur line. 1858-78.

### **e. Mixed Kangyurs**

N #: **Narhang** xylograph Kangyur (and Tengyur). A mixed Kangyur: some of its volumes are from the ’Phying ba stag rtse manuscript (not extant, also the source of Lithang) of the Tshal pa line and some are from the Shel dkar rdzong manuscript (not extant, also the source of the London manuscript) of the Them spangs ma line. Dated 1730-32 with 100 + 1 volumes. The Narhang Kangyur and Tengyur are widely available.

D #: **Derge xylograph Kangyur (and Tengyur)**. Kangyur has a mixed lineage but is based primarily on the Lithang Kangyur of the Tshal pa line, with some emendations from the Lho rdzong Kangyur (not extant) of the Them spangs ma

line. The Derge Kangyur was completed in 1733 with 102 + 1 volumes. It is available in an original print at the Oriental Institute, Prague, and a 1976-1979 **reprint by H.H. the 16th Karmapa** in 103 volumes known as the mtshal par or “red printing” that was based on one of the first original copies--a par phud or “first fruits printing”--that had been given to H.H. the 13th Karmapa. This reprint was in turn the basis for three more reprinting: the Dharma Publishing reprint (Berkeley CA, c. 1982), a recent Chengdu reprint in China, and a recent Taipei reprint in Taiwan. The Karmapa reprint included touch-ups to the original which, however, introduced additional errors. There is also a Ra rgya/skya xylograph Kangyur copy of the Derge from the Amdo region of northwest Tibet, dated 1814-1820 with 103 volumes, and a Wara xylograph Kangyur copy of the Derge from East Tibet circa 1930 in 206 volumes. The Derge Tengyur is from 1737-1744 with 212 + 1 volumes. Derge Kangyurs are widely available.

**U #: Urga xylograph Kangyur** from 1908-1910 with 104 + 1 volumes is a copy of the Derge Kangyur (and is thus of the Tshal pa Kangyur line with some emendations from the Them spangs ma line) with several extra texts added in and some corrections based on Peking. (There is also an ancient Them spangs ma manuscript Kangyur in Gyantse of Central Tibet, but it has not been given a sigla. Also note that “U” is used as the sigla for the Ulan Bator manuscript Kangyur of the Them spangs ma Kangyur line of c. 1671.)

**H #: Lhasa xylograph Kangyur.** Based on Narthang, with some readings from Derge so a mixed Kangyur. Dated 1934 with 99 + 1 volumes. It is widely available.

**NE #:** Dharma Publishing’s Nyingma Edition of the Derge xylograph bKa’-’gyur and bsTan’gyur with texts of the Peking and Lhasa collections added that do not appear in the Derge. (Not part of Harrison & Eimer’s sigla list. See comments above.) 108 sets of this edition were made. It has 120 volumes of Kangyur and Tengyur texts plus some additional Chinese language texts. There is an eight volume catalog and a two volume guide. It was produced 1977-1983.

## **f. Canonical Translations From Tibetan Into Other Languages**

**P:** Petersburg manuscript of the Mongolian Kangyur. Once thought to be the Kangyur created in 1628-1629 with 113 volumes by order of the last Great Qayan of Mongolia, it now seems that it is possibly a draft to the final 1628-1629 Kangyur. Apparently both the preliminary and final drafts used translations from an earlier Kangyur of 108 volumes produced in 1602-1607 under Namudai sečen qayan, which is no longer extant. It is unclear what Tibetan Kangyur these manuscript Kangyurs were based on, if any, due to the unusual arrangement and large number of duplicate texts in the surviving manuscript.

**M:** Peking edition of the Mongolian xylograph Kangyur under the Kangxi emperor. Created 1718-20 in Peking in 108 volumes, based on the translations of the manuscript Mongolian Kangyur of 1628-29 but rearranged according to the 1684-92 Peking Tibetan Kangyur of the Kangxi emperor.

**--:** There is also a Manchu translation of the Tibetan Kangyur. This xylograph Kangyur was completed in 1794 and contains 108 volumes. The translations for this Kangyur were begun in 1773. A copy was recently found in the Potala in Lhasa and some of the printing blocks have been discovered in Peking. No sigla has been assigned to this Kangyur.

--: Tangut (or Hsi-hsia) xylograph canon was published after 1280 by Yuan authorities, perhaps c. 1330. Many of the Tangut translations were from Tibetan texts. A modern printing in nine volumes was done in India in 1971 from a copy in India. No sigla has been assigned to this canon.

## **Kangyur Catalogs**

### **Cataloging Project**

The Tibetan Buddhist Canonical Collections Project will be compiling an electronic catalog of the entire collection of texts within The Tibetan Buddhist Canon as represented by seventeen catalogs of the Kangyur and Tengyur, making it available not only to specialized scholars but to the general public as well. Users will be able to view the catalog information for an entire edition, for a single volume, or for a given thematic section of the canon. In addition, the master catalog will provide integrated access to comparative data across all the editions, including a comprehensive presentation for browsing organized thematically by traditional classification systems. Using a system of cataloging already developed by THDL, the current project will have the capacity to link the following directly to the catalog records: XML-encoded etexts and digital images of the physical artifact, as well as translations and modern scholarship.

### **Editions used for Catalogs**

The Project will include thirteen catalogs of various editions of the Kangyur, along with one early, very partial list of Kangyur texts (for full descriptions go to the Kangyur editions page)

7 xylograph Kangyurs: Narthang, Peking, Derge, Cone, Lhasa, Urga, and Mongolian (in translation); all proofed but the Mongolian.

1 manuscript Kangyur: London Shekar Kangyur; to be digitized and proofed (British Library permission secured).

2 early canon catalogs for no longer extant collections: Denkarma and Buton Rinchendrup's catalog embedded in his history of Buddhism.

2 catalogs of teachings received: 5th Dalai Lama and Minling Terchen.

1 early list of translation equivalents for sūtras: Mahavyutpatti.

We are excluding the following six catalogs until we obtain access through their copyright holders:

Catalogs to 4 manuscript Kangyurs: Berlin/Beckh, sTog, Phug brag, Ulan Bator.

Dharma Publishing (although this is just repaginated Tohoku with additional unique texts from other editions).

1 Taisho correspondence table to the Nyingma Edition of The Tibetan Buddhist Canon.

We will catalog one edition – the crucial Derge edition – to the chapter level, and will also input colophons. For texts not in the Derge but in another edition, their chapters and colophons will be input from at least one other edition in a set sequence (first Narthang, then Peking). The Derge Kangyur will also be directly linked to comprehensive sets of scanned page images and, in conjunction with The British Library, to electronic editions of the texts. For more about the electronic input project go to the Kangyur Text Input Project page.

## Kangyur Texts

At the level of individual texts, the Tibetan Buddhist Canonical Collections will make possible within the catalogs comparative analysis across editions of the length of a single text, its main and alternate titles, its chapter titles and lengths, its thematic category, and provenance (author, translator, reviser, etc.). Users will also be able to access this information for a text in an individual edition, as well as details of the physical artifact such as the volume in which it is located and its pagination. A framework will be established for accessing the texts themselves as well as scholarship on them.

In addition, the Kangyur Text Input Project has plans to input one complete edition of the Kangyur in unicode Tibetan for publishing on the web. When published within the Tibetan Buddhist Canonical Collections, these texts will be encoded in XML with enhanced searching capabilities.

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བཀའ་འགྱུར། བཞུགས་བྱང་དཀར་ཆག་དངོས་ལེགས་པར་བཤད་པ། Kangyur: The Catalog of Contents (D.1-D.1118; 1118 texts)

There are a variety of ways to describe how the texts in the Degé Kangyur are organized. One very basic map of the collection can be found in its section titles, which are printed in the margins of the individual volumes. According to these, the Kangyur contains nine sections:

- Monastic Conduct (8 titles; D.1-D.8)
- Perfection of Wisdom (36 titles, D.9-D.44)
- The Flower Ornament Sūtra (1 title; D.45)
- The Jewel Heap (49 titles; D.46-D.94)
- Sūtras (267 titles; D.95-D.361)
- Tantras (472 titles, D.362-D.833)
- Ancient Tantras (19 titles; D.834-D.852)
- Collected Spells (263 titles, D.854-D.1117)
- The Wheel of Time Commentary (1 title, D.853)

However, this simple structure belies the complex doxographical labors that have gone into organizing the Kangyur, for there are numerous subcategories to which its more than 1100 works have been assigned. The outline presented here in the THL Catalog Index is based on the work of Situ Chökyi Jungné (སུ་ཅོ་ཡི་འབྲུང་གནས་, 1699/1700-1774 CE), editor-in-chief of the Degé Kangyur and author of its principal history and catalog.

Situ's description of the Kangyur's organization is in many ways a simple one. As he states at the beginning of his catalog, the Kangyur essentially has only two sections: exoteric scripture (or sūtra) and esoteric scripture (or tantra). Here in the THL Catalog, we have followed these with two additional sections: the "spells" (dhāraṇī) and the commentary on the Wheel of Time Tantra (Kālacakra Tantra). For Situ, however, these latter two are not primary sections of the Kangyur, but are more like appendices. The Collected Spells are a sort of addendum to the tantra section, and the Wheel of Time commentary (which also appears in the Tengyur, where it more properly belongs) is appended to the end of the entire Kangyur, as a statement of this text's overwhelming importance for the Tibetan tradition.

Within the two primary categories of "Exoteric Scripture" and "Tantra," Situ classifies the individual texts into further sections and subsections, forming a very detailed nested hierarchy. His basic outline is as follows:

## **Exoteric Scripture**

Monastic Conduct

Perfection of Wisdom

Sūtra Texts Belonging to the Final Turning

    The Flower Ornament Sūtra

    The Jewel Heap

Greater Vehicle and Lesser Vehicle Sūtras

## **Tantra (or “Secret Mantra”)**

Highest Yoga Tantra

Yoga Tantra

Performance Tantra

Action Tantra

Dedications

## **Collected Spells**

## **The Wheel of Time Commentary**

Readers can view Situ's more detailed category headings the Catalog Index, by clicking on the + signs that appear next to each category.

## **Literature:**

Situ Chökyi Jungné's catalog can be found in Kangyur vol. 103 (lak+Sh+ml), p. 113a.

## **See Also:**

Introduction to the Degé Kangyur and Tengyur by Kurtis Schaeffer

Eimer, Helmut. “On the Structure of the Tibetan Kanjur.” In *The Many Canons of Tibetan Buddhism*, ed. Helmut Eimer and David Germano, 57-72. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2002.