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## Equal to the Sky

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*Khasama*

Translated into Tibetan by  
Drokmi Lotsāwa Śākya Yeshe · Gayādhara

དཔལ་ནམ་མཁའ་དང་མཉམ་པའི་རྒྱལ་གྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

*dpal nam mkha' dang mnyam pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po*

The Glorious King of Tantras “Equal to the Sky”

*Śrīkhasamatantrarāja*



Toh 386  
Degé Kangyur, vol. 79 (rgyud 'bum, ga), folios 199.a–202.a

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co.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ti. Title
- im. Imprint
- co. Contents
- s. Summary
- ac. Acknowledgements
- i. Introduction
- tr. The Translation
  - 1. Equal to the Sky
- c. Colophon
- n. Notes
- b. Bibliography
  - Tibetan Sources
  - English Sources
- g. Glossary

s.

## SUMMARY

s.1 *Equal to the Sky* belongs to a series of texts known as the *mali* tantras, which are primarily associated with the Cakrasaṃvara system but incorporate themes that are also prominent in the Hevajra and Kālacakra systems. The tantra presents a discourse in which the Buddha addresses three types of *ḍākinī*, explains their true natures, and correlates them with the practitioner's physical and subtle body. A primary concern of this text is to explain advanced yogic practices performed during the completion stage (Skt. *utpannakrama/niṣpannakrama*; Tib. *rdzogs rim*) in the Yoginī Tantras, but it also treats a wide range of topics including astrology, sacred geography, and tantric hermeneutics. The result is a text which, while very dense and quite difficult to engage with, rewards the reader by bringing together an astonishingly vast range of topics concerning both the theory and practice of Buddhist tantra.

ac.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ac.1 This text was translated by the Dharmachakra Translation Committee under the supervision of Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche. Daniel McNamara translated the text from Tibetan into English and wrote the introduction. Andreas Doctor compared the draft translation with the original Tibetan and edited the text. Daniel McNamara would like to thank Ven. Prof. Lobsang Norbu Shastri for reading through the entire text with him, and he also thanks Dr. Harunaga Isaacson and Tenzin Bhuchung for assistance in clarifying difficult points.

ac.2 The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

## INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 *Equal to the Sky* is a commentarial tantra on the Cakrasaṃvara cycle of *Yoginī Tantras*, as evidenced by both its content and its location in the Kangyur. In the Kangyur the tantra is part of a cluster of texts known as the *rāli* tantras (Tib. *ra li*; Toh 383–414) and, within that set, it is part of the class of “awakened mind tantras” (Tib. *thugs kyi rgyud*).<sup>1</sup> According to its colophon, this text was translated by Drokmi Lotsāwa Śākya Yeshé and the Indian paṇḍita Gayādhara. These two were both active in the late eleventh century. Since the tantra seems to be informed by Kālacakra literature—which was in wide circulation in India by the early eleventh century<sup>2</sup>—it is reasonable to posit that this text also circulated in India by the mid-eleventh century and was translated into Tibetan soon after.

i.2 The text’s title, *Equal to the Sky*, likely derives from the mythic source text of the Cakrasaṃvara cycle. The *Cakrasaṃvara Tantra* is alternatively called the *Laghusaṃvara*, meaning “the light version of the *Saṃvara*,” because it is held to be a condensation of a much longer tantra that was not transmitted in full to the human realm. This mythic source text, which is said to be one hundred thousand verses in length, is only known by its title, the *Khasama Tantra*, the same title of the present work.<sup>3</sup> By invoking this larger textual corpus, *Equal to the Sky* asserts itself as an authority for understanding the Cakrasaṃvara system as a whole, making it a very short text with very broad implications.

i.3 The central concern of *Equal to the Sky* is to explain the nature of three types of ḍākinī: the sky dweller (Skt. *khecari*), earth dweller (Skt. *bhūcari*), and subterranean dweller (Skt. *pātālacāriṇī*).<sup>4</sup> These three ḍākinīs are also the main audience for the tantra and are introduced after a preamble common to the *Yoginī Tantras* in which the discourse is located in the bhaga of the vajra queen.<sup>5</sup> *Equal to the Sky* first introduces the three types of ḍākinī together (verses 2–3) and then proceeds to elaborate on their individual attributes in terms of physiology and yogic practice.



- i.4 Verses 3–17 describe the sky-dwelling *ḍākinī*, who corresponds to the division of winds in the subtle body (totaling twenty-one thousand six hundred),<sup>6</sup> and their movements are discussed in terms derived from the first and second chapters of the *Kālacakra Tantra*. It is significant that this tantra references the Kālacakra system, suggesting an association—or, at the least, a theoretical alignment—between the rali tantras and the “three bodhisattva commentaries,”<sup>7</sup> which interpret the Kālacakra, Hevajra, and Cakrasaṃvara tantras. These “bodhisattva commentaries” integrate the cycles of Hevajra and Cakrasaṃvara into the larger rubric of the Kālacakra system.
- i.5 The second section of *Equal to the Sky* (verses 18–27) discusses the earth-dwelling *ḍākinī*, primarily in association with the practice of inner heat (Skt. *caṇḍālī*; Tib. *gtum mo*). Where the first section discussed winds, here the main focus is the seventy-two thousand channels<sup>8</sup> of the subtle body. The third section (verses 27–37) discusses the attributes of the subterranean *ḍākinī*, focusing primarily on the white and red drops that are found at the crown and navel, respectively. Throughout these discussions, the text emphasizes the distinction between ordinary, karmic conditioned experience, on the one hand, and the pure unconditioned experience that comes about as a result of yogic practice.
- i.6 The next section of the text (verses 38–43) treats the sixfold system for interpreting tantric texts. Sönam Tsemo (*bsod nams rtse mo*, 1142–82) draws on this set for its unique method of interpreting tantric literature. He glosses the six as “(1) symbolic syllable (implicit), (2) characteristic (explicit), (3) special contextual means of expression, (4) general purpose, (5) hidden purpose, and (6) ultimate intent.”<sup>9</sup> This text introduces these six as a set before treating them individually. The gloss of *ultimate intent* seamlessly transforms into a brief discussion of the divisions of tantra, with the Yoginī Tantras at the apex (verses 44–46) of what is a unique classification scheme: Action Tantra, Actionless Yoga, Inner Yoga, and Yoginī Tantra. It proceeds to offer a somewhat cryptic discussion of yogic practice (verses 47–49) before opening up to a discussion of twenty-four “jewels” (Tib. *rin chen*), which connect with the twenty-four sacred sites.
- i.7 The last major section of the tantra (verses 50–63) concerns the twenty-four sacred sites as presented in Cakrasaṃvara literature, describing them as places where the twenty-four *ḍākinīs* were entrusted with tantras associated with inner heat practice. Verses 63–65 conclude by admonishing the listener to serve the guru, and the final three lines of verse 65 admonish the audience (somewhat elliptically) to rely on the rali tantras together with the guru’s instructions. The text closes with a standard expression of the rejoicing of all who are present and concludes with a straightforward colophon.

- i.8        There is no available Sanskrit witness of this text, nor are there extant commentaries.<sup>10</sup> The text's relationships with the Kālacakra and Cakrasaṃvara literature have assisted in interpreting some difficult verses in this terse and enigmatic tantra. The lack of commentarial literature presents a further difficulty in parsing precisely thematic sections and individual verses. While the Tibetan translation is consistent in using quatrains, these are often forced. It is likely that the Sanskrit text used more than one meter, probably involving different numbers of lines per stanza.
- i.9        This English translation was based primarily on the Tibetan Degé edition in consultation with the Stok Palace Kangyur and the Comparative Edition (Tib. *dpe bsdur ma*) of the Degé Kangyur. This translation preserves the quatrain structure of the Tibetan text, but the reader should note that each stanza does not necessarily represent a single coherent idea. For example, major sections of the text describing the three ḍākinīs begin at the third, first, and fourth lines of their respective verses. The reader is therefore advised to attend to punctuation, as an attempt has been made to break themes and statements into discrete sentences.

The Glorious King of Tantras

**Equal to the Sky**

1.

## The Translation

[F.199.a]

1.1

Homage to the Glorious Great Well-Gone One! [F.199.b]

1.2

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was dwelling in the bhaga of the vajra queen—the awakened body, speech, and mind of all thus-gone ones. At that time, present among the assembly were the sky-dwelling, earth-dwelling, and subterranean ḍākinīs. Smiling at these three, the Blessed One gave this teaching on the secret topic:

1.3

With faith, compassion, and a one-pointed mind,  
Fix your body and your speech; set your mind toward others' benefit.  
Endeavoring toward fearless yogic discipline,  
With zeal for the profound path—listen well!

1.4

Ḍākinīs, to you I will explain  
Your distinctive characteristics.  
Sky dweller is the winds of the upper gate.  
Earth dweller is the drops of the middle gate.

1.5

Subterranean dweller is the lower gate of *śukra*.  
These three gates are awakened body, speech, and mind.  
First, the distinctive characteristics of the sky-dwelling ḍākinī  
Should be known as being of three types:

1.6

The physical wind, the cognitive wind,  
And the wisdom wind, which has the quality of all.  
To elaborate on this brief explanation in sequence:<sup>11</sup>  
The nondual wind is neither male nor female.

1.7

When in union, it is the wind of method and wisdom.  
When it flows upward and enters,<sup>12</sup> it is awakened body, speech, and mind.

- It then spreads throughout the body: the heart, sacrum,  
Mouth, throat, and navel.
- 1.8 The five families' winds then abide all-pervasively.  
The physical wind has four circulatory movements.  
Divided into pure or defiled, there are a total of eight.  
Each of these corresponds to one of eight three-hour periods.
- 1.9 Each three-hour period can be divided into two circulations.  
The circulations of wind are sixteen in number.  
Each circulation takes two hours.  
In each hour, there are two *daṇḍas*.
- 1.10 In terms of the winds, the *daṇḍas* number sixty-four.  
Similarly, there are thirty-two hours,  
Which can be divided into twenty-one thousand six hundred and so forth.<sup>13</sup>  
These winds are a mix of mental and nonmental.
- 1.11 In its coarse and subtle aspects,  
The wise should take hold of the mount of the mind,<sup>14</sup>  
The steed of the mind—concepts of grasper and grasped.  
When these two—grasper and grasped—have ceased, the winds come to  
rest at the center.
- 1.12 By itself, this is the wind of vajra wisdom.  
When divided it has two aspects, method and wisdom.  
It is the nature of the sky-dwelling *ḍākinī*.  
This should be studied by those who know the pith instructions.
- 1.13 By means of their qualities, faults, and indications,  
One must know the distinctive characteristics of the winds, [F.200.a]  
Along with all their supports.  
There is the “curved one” along with the one on the left.
- 1.14 These have the shape of a bow.  
They are the paths of the physical wind.  
Through the paths of direct sensory perceptions,  
One should strive diligently to understand
- 1.15 The various geographical features—Mount Sumeru and the four continents;  
The sun and moon in the north and west, orbiting to the south;  
The cycling of method and wisdom, and so forth—  
These are stabilized by the physical wind.
- 1.16 Due to the cataracts of ignorance,

- The jewel of the mind has become stained.  
This is the conceptual wind;  
This wind is itself the path.
- 1.17 There are the right channel and left channel,  
Their forms similar to a coiled snake.  
For one who focuses on yoga,  
The conceptual winds cease in their place.
- 1.18 Self-awareness, which is primordially unarisen,  
Is itself the wind of vajra wisdom.  
Supported by the channel in the center,  
Caṇḍālī is like its chariot.
- 1.19 The domain of its activity is the wisdom of self-awareness.  
One who strives to remain there will apprehend self-awareness.  
Because the sky-dwelling ḍākinī has the nature of these winds,  
They are themselves the vajra path.
- 1.20 Next, I will explain the earth-dwelling ḍākinī.  
One who desires the wisdom of self-awareness  
Should investigate the divisions of caṇḍālī.  
First is the *natural caṇḍālī*.
- 1.21 Second is the *inner heat caṇḍālī*.  
Third is the *caṇḍālī of union*.  
Likewise, there is the *naked caṇḍālī*.<sup>15</sup>  
These categories are also subdivided as follows:
- 1.22 There are *naked inner heat, extreme inner heat,*  
And the *perfect inner heat* of union with another.  
These should be applied to all the above categories.  
There are *naked, very naked, very nakedly naked,* and so forth;
- 1.23 All of these should be applied to each.  
Divided, there are twelve aspects  
And branches, forty-eight in number.  
This is the nature of earth-dwelling ḍākinī,
- 1.24 Seventy-two thousand, and so forth.  
Mere *fierce fire* produced from elsewhere  
Is the antithesis of this subtle inner heat.  
The tips of one hundred twenty hairs

- 1.25 And the tips of thirty-two hairs,  
The five pairs and the three main ones:<sup>16</sup>  
The place where these three unite is the size of a mustard seed.  
The relative widths of the central, right, and left,
- 1.26 And the twofold distinctions should all be known.  
There are places where they naturally reside  
As channels that are clear, and those that are impure.  
Also, the channel knots, similar to letters: [F.200.b]
- 1.27 These are known as the primordial sound.  
They are the nature of the earth-dwelling *ḍākinī*.  
Learn their locations and so forth from other sources.  
These instructions are a precious jewel;
- 1.28 Everything arises in dependence on them.  
There are mistaken lineages, mistaken placements, and mistaken  
measurements,  
Shapes, colors, numbers, and so forth.  
There is no attainment from mistakes.
- 1.29 The nature, which is free from those mistakes,  
Is the attainment of the earth-dwelling *ḍākinī*.  
She is the support for them all.  
Next, the nature of the subterranean *ḍākinī*
- 1.30 Will be correctly and excellently explained.  
There are three types of awakening mind.  
The first is the *suchness mind*.  
This is beyond the scope of expressible knowledge.
- 1.31 The second is the *self-aware awakening mind*.  
Like a crystal, its appearance is conditioned.  
The third is the *physical awakening mind*;  
Sandalwood and camphor.
- 1.32 These are described in two ways: ultimate and conventional.  
What moves by way of karmic winds and karmic fires  
Is conventional awakening mind.  
What moves by way of wisdom winds and wisdom fires
- 1.33 Is the ultimate awakening mind.  
They have these stages, pure and impure.  
They should be distinguished

- Through shapes and through colors.
- 1.34 Not moving through the karmic winds,  
Not burning through the karmic fires,  
Its attributes are similar to snow;  
The indestructible drop has the form of *hari*.
- 1.35 Like a jasmine-colored gem,  
Glossy-white and resplendent,  
It arises as the body of great bliss.  
This is the ultimate awakening mind.
- 1.36 As for the red one, naturally clear,  
There are four common distinctions.  
These are wisdom, awakening mind,  
And the two inferior ones, which are their opposites.
- 1.37 The latter two abide at the lower door; they give rise to cyclic existence  
When they are spurred to movement through negative conditions.  
Therefore, the attributes of the drops  
Must be known in their ultimate and their conventional aspects.
- 1.38 There is no attainment from mistaken causes,  
Nor, likewise, from mistaken conditions.  
These can be known from the teacher's words.  
The ultimate is not an object engaged by the mind.
- 1.39 The conventional has the feeling of bliss as its object.  
Its nature is the subterranean *ḍākinī*.  
She is the unshakable meditation on the three vajras.  
She, herself, is Vajrasattva.
- 1.40 The meaning of the letters, the branches, [F.201.a]  
The condensed meanings, the general meaning,  
The hidden meaning, and the ultimate meaning;  
The varieties of conventional phenomena
- 1.41 Arise from the mind. Like a jewel and like a cymbal,  
The varieties of ultimate phenomena  
Arise on the basis of nonconceptual awareness.  
The *āli* and *kāli*, along with the neuter phonemes,
- 1.42 Should be analyzed through these six modes.  
The letter marking the final sound<sup>17</sup> is inconceivable.  
There are three types of branch:



- Cause and result, signifier and signified,
- 1.43 And expression and expressed.  
To briefly explain their opposites:  
There are three vehicles; the rest is the mundane.  
These should be understood as common.
- 1.44 These divisions should be known for oneself.  
The hidden comprises the classifications of initiations and mantras.  
There are four types of mantra and two kinds of initiation.  
Dharmas are of two types, general and particular.
- 1.45 All these attributes  
Should be known from the mouth of the guru.  
The types of fit and unfit vessels  
Should also be well analyzed by the guru.
- 1.46 When suchness is correctly realized,  
There is no teacher, and nothing is taught.  
Concentration and so forth become unceasing,  
And buddhas arise in various forms.
- 1.47 They turn the various wheels of the Dharma,  
Performing the twelve deeds and so forth.  
For the lesser disciples, there is *Action Tantra*.  
For the rest, there is *Actionless Yoga*.
- 1.48 After that, *Yoga* is also taught.  
*Inner yoga* is for the rest.  
After that there is *Yoginī Tantra*.  
Using the churning stick of method and insight,
- 1.49 With the essence of wisdom at its tip,<sup>18</sup>  
The nondual awakened mind is churned;  
From it comes nectar of twenty-four tastes.  
This is known as the *flow of precious jewels*.
- 1.50 From this, all mundane and supramundane  
Attainments will arise.  
Just as unchurned milk  
Will not give rise to what is desired,<sup>19</sup>
- 1.51 Likewise, neither from many years of effort,  
Nor suddenly, will attainments arise.

- Therefore, there are twenty-four jewels,  
Which taste like nectar and have the form of a lion.
- 1.52 Their sacred sites are also twenty-four,  
Blessed by awakened body, speech, and mind.  
Entrusted to twenty-four ḍākinīs,  
They were sealed with four seals,
- 1.53 Carefully concealed and carefully disseminated.  
If the seals are broken, the sacred vows are corrupted.  
The natures of the mantras, visualized forms, and realizations [F.201.b]  
Are the natures of awakened body, speech, and mind.
- 1.54 These are constantly misconstrued as having an essence.  
There are two kinds of mantra, two kinds of realization.  
Visualized forms should be similarly understood in two ways.  
The classifications and the divisions
- 1.55 Of each should be learned from the guru.  
Outer, inner, hidden, and final—  
These are the four seals of all tantras.  
This classification should be analyzed by the wise.
- 1.56 When these are understood,  
The yogi possesses tantra,  
And hindrances are transcended.  
This is natural caṇḍālī.
- 1.57 There are twenty-four sacred sites,  
Blessed by the three channels.  
In these twenty-four sacred sites,  
To twenty-four ḍākinīs, twenty-four tantras were entrusted.<sup>20</sup>
- 1.58 Puru—very fierce secret vajra.  
Jaru—fierce eye, the secret is severed.  
Oru—the bright one not pervaded by thought.  
Āru—the tip of the nose is equal to space.
- 1.59 Goru—teaching the great space of the intellect.  
Raru—the body, speech, and mind of a dwarf.  
Deru—Lañka, jewel garland.  
Maru—dark woods, great vow.
- 1.60 Karueru—great power.  
Oru—terrifying secret wisdom.

- Triru—powerful winds, wisdom garland.  
Koru—beer is consumed, wisdom blazes.
- 1.61 Karuśyāma—garland of the moon.  
Laru—blazing with wealth and appeal.  
Karu—horse-ear, the wheel of the sun.  
Herukhakha—victorious wisdom.
- 1.62 Preru—secret place of ḍākinīs’ strength.  
Gīrukhaṇḍa—secret, blazing with fire.  
Saurushoṇḍi—secret nectar.  
Suru—the wheel ornamented with a cemetery.
- 1.63 Naru—very heroic victorious vajra.  
Siru—great power and victorious wisdom.  
Maru—this area confers victory over attachment.  
Kuru—enthusiastic ḍākinīs assemble.
- 1.64 These are the places of entrustment; they should be sought out well.  
Regarding inner caṇḍālī, twenty-four were entrusted.  
The first is secret, as is the second.  
These are the nature. Next comes empowerment.
- 1.65 Last is conditions. So it was said.  
These are the specific natures of the ḍākinīs.  
Any desired attainments will be bestowed.  
One who wants the supreme attainments
- 1.66 Should receive initiation and sacred vows.  
With horses, elephants and so forth,  
One’s children and wife,  
One’s wealth and jewels,
- 1.67 One should honor and serve the guru.  
From *ra* and *li*, which are the taste of nectar,  
One attains realization from the instructions of the guru;  
Remember to hold them in mind!
- 1.68 Following this discourse, all the gathered assemblies that were present  
rejoiced.
- 1.69 *This completes the glorious king of tantras “Equal to the Sky,” which has the nature of*  
[F.202.a] *awakened body, speech, and mind.*

c.

## Colophon

c.1 This was translated and edited by the paṇḍita Gayādhara and the monk Śākya Yeshé.

n.

## NOTES

- n.1 The rali tantras are divided into four sets: Mind, Speech, Body, and Miscellaneous. For further discussion see James Gentry's introduction to *The Glorious King of Tantras That Resolves All Secrets*, Toh 384. (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh384.html#UT22084-079-011-3>)
- n.2 See Newman, "The Epoch of the Kālacakra Tantra" (pp. 342–43) for discussion of these dates.
- n.3 Gray 2005, p. 429.
- n.4 The reconstruction of *pātālacāriṇī* from *sa 'og na spyod ma* was suggested by Harunaga Isaacson as a variant of *pātālavāsinī* (personal communication). This set of three is attested in both Buddhist and Śaiva tantric literature—see, for example, Hatley 2016, p. 12, n. 52. The *Hevajratantra* is likely informing this list. It describes the sky dweller and earth dweller as part of a triad (with Nairātmyā) and as part of sets of seven (I.ii.34) and ten ḍākinīs (I.viii.15 and I.ix.11–12).
- n.5 See also, for example, the opening verse of the *Hevajratantra* (e.g., Snellgrove 1959, Part II, pp. 1–2).
- n.6 According to *Kālacakra* astrology, the lunar year lasts twenty-one thousand six hundred hours, mapping the twenty-one thousand six hundred breaths a healthy human being takes over the course of twenty-four hours. For more information see *Ornament of Stainless Light* (Norsang Gyatso 2001, pp. 182–92).
- n.7 *byang chub sems 'grel skor gsum*. These are the bodhisattva Kalkī Puṇḍarīka's *Stainless Light (Vimalaprabhā)* commentary on the *Kālacakratantra*, Toh 1347; the bodhisattva Vajragarbha's *Summary of the Meaning of the Hevajra (Hevajra-piṇḍārthaṭīkā)* on the *Hevajratantra*, Toh 1180; and the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi's

*Summary of the Meaning of the Short [Cakrasaṃvara] Tantra*  
(*Lakṣābhidhanādudhṛtalaghutantraṇḍārthavivaraṇa*), Toh 1402.

- n.8 This number is based on the twenty-four sacred sites and the corresponding parts of the practitioner's body. Each of these is divided into three, making seventy-two, each of which multiplies to one thousand across the subtle body. See Beer 2003, p. 242.
- n.9 For a detailed explanation of this system see Tsemo 2012, pp. 467–92.
- n.10 Ratnākaraśānti's commentary, the *Khasamatantraṭīkā*, Toh 1424, is not a commentary on this text, but on the *Yathālabdhakhasamatantra*, Toh 441.
- n.11 The “sequence” being followed is not clarified, but based on the content that follows, it may refer to the three ḍākinīs. It may also refer to the sequence of completion-stage practices.
- n.12 The text does not specify what is being “entered,” but based on the context it could be the central channel, from which the wind would then diffuse to the areas mentioned in the following lines.
- n.13 See [i.4](#) and [n.6](#).
- n.14 The Choné, Lithang, Peking, and Yongle Kangyurs read “the wise should apprehend the ground of the mind” (Tib. *mkhas pas sems kyi gnas par gzung*).
- n.15 Kongtrul's *Treasury of Knowledge* cites this section while explaining *gtum mo* practice in the Marpa Kagyu tradition. This is translated in *Esoteric Instructions*, pp. 159–60.
- n.16 The number of hair-tips refers to the size of the relatively larger central channel vs. the smaller side channels. The five pairs are the five *cakras*.
- n.17 This refers to the *anusvāna*, the mark that indicates nasalization of the syllable it marks.
- n.18 This translation follows the Kangxi, Peking Yongle, and Stok Palace versions in reading *rtser gyur pa* (“at its tip”). Degé reads *brtser gyur pa* (“kind”).
- n.19 I.e., butter, curd, and cheese.
- n.20 For these twenty-four sacred sites the text gives cryptic syllables and a brief (and equally cryptic) description. The names given for the corresponding sites in the *Cakrasaṃvara Tantra* are as follows (Gray 2007, p. 67 and pp. 329–37): Pullīramalaya, Jālandhara, Oḍḍiyāna, Arbuda, Godāvārī, Rāmeśvarī, Devīkoṭa, Mālava, Kāmarūpa, Oḍra, Triśakuni, Kośala, Kaliṅga, Lampāka,

Kāñcī, Himālaya, Pretapuri, Gṛhadevatā, Saurāṣṭra, Suvarṇadvīpa, Nagara,  
Sindhu, Maru, Kulutā.

b.

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## GLOSSARY

## · Types of attestation for Sanskrit names and terms ·

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in the Sanskrit manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other Sanskrit manuscripts of the Kangyur or Tengyur.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where Tibetan-Sanskrit relationship 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 Action Tantra

*bya ba'i rgyud*

བྱ་བའི་རྒྱུད།

*kriyātantra*

A class of tantric scripture that generally features elaborate rites directed toward both mundane goals—such as health, prosperity, and protection—and to the ultimate goal of liberation. In this class of tantra, the practitioners do not identify themselves with the deity as in other classes of tantra, but rather seek their power, assistance, and intervention in pursuit of their goals. The *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* and *Amoghapāśakalparāja* exemplify this class of tantra.

g.2 āli and kāli

*A li kA li*

ཨ་ལི་ཀ་ལི།

*āli kāli*

The vowels (*āli*) and consonants (*kāli*) of the Sanskrit alphabet.

g.3 attainment

*dngos grub*

དངོས་གྲུབ།

*siddhi*

This can be a general term for realization, but it refers more specifically to a set of supranormal powers, such as longevity and clairvoyance.

g.4 awakening mind

*byang chub sems*

བྱང་ལྡན་སེམས།

*bodhicitta*

Conventionally, this refers to a pure compassion; ultimately it refers to empty awareness. It can also refer to drops in completion stage practice.

g.5 bhaga

*bha ga*

བླ་ག།

*bhaga*

In this context, the vagina. A number of Buddhist esoteric scriptures are set within the bhaga of a female deity from the Buddhist pantheon. As the root term from which the Sanskrit word *bhagavat*, “Blessed One,” is derived, the term *bhaga* also means “good fortune.” See “Blessed One.”

g.6 Blessed One

*bcom ldan 'das*

བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས།

*bhagavān*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

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

g.7 caṇḍālī

*tsaN+DA II*

ཅཱྲ་ལྷི།

*caṇḍālī*

Same as “inner heat.”

g.8 central channel

*dbu ma*

དབུ་མ།

*avadhūti*

Main subtle channel running roughly in front of the spine.

g.9 channel

*rtsa*

རྩ།

*nāḍī*

These are the veins of the subtle body, through which vital winds flow. While they can be divided into up to seventy-two thousand, the most important are the central, left, and right.

g.10 circulation

*'pho ba*

འཕོ་བ།

*sankranti*

In the context of the subtle body, a “circulation” consists of one thousand three hundred fifty breaths over ninety minutes

g.11 curved one

*gzhol ma*

གཞོལ་མ།

—

Lit. “bent, crooked.” In this tantra, this refers to the primary side channel that runs to the right side of the central channel.

g.12 ḍākinī

*mkha' 'gro*

མཁའ་འགྲོ།

*ḍākinī*

A class of powerful non-human female beings who play a variety of roles in Indic literature in general and Buddhist literature specifically. Essentially synonymous with yoginīs, ḍākinīs are liminal and often dangerous beings who can be propitiated to acquire both mundane and transcendent spiritual accomplishments. In the higher Buddhist tantras, ḍākinīs are often considered embodiments of awakening and feature prominently in tantric maṇḍalas. In this text, they are divided according to three types: sky dweller (Skt. *khecarī*), earth dweller (Skt. *bhūcarī*), and subterranean dweller (Skt. *pātālacāriṇī*).

g.13 daṇḍa

*dbyug gu*

དབུག་གུ།

*daṇḍa*

A measure used for astrological movements. This generally refers to a time span of approximately twenty-two and a half minutes or three hundred sixty breaths. This tantra correlates that with the sixty-four channels of the yogic subtle body.

g.14 direct sensory perception

*dbang po mngon sum*

དབང་པོ་མངོན་སུམ།

*indriyapratyakṣa*

The bare experience of sensory phenomena, without conceptual overlay.

g.15 distinctive characteristics

*mtshan nyid*

མཚན་ཉིད།

*lakṣaṇa*

The defining quality of a thing, such as the wetness of water and the heat of fire.

g.16 Drokmi Lotsāwa Śākya Yeshé

*'brog mi lo tsA ba shAkya ye shes · shAkya ye shes*

འབྲོག་མི་ལོ་མ་བུ་བ་ཤཱ་ཀྱ་ཡེ་ཤེས། · ཤཱ་ཀྱ་ཡེ་ཤེས།

—

Śākya Yeshé, commonly known by the title Drokmi Lotsāwa, was a Tibetan translator and important figure in the Lamdré (Tib. *lam 'bras*) lineage.

Drokmi's dates are uncertain, but Tibetan literature offers a range of possible dates beginning in 990 and ending in 1074.

For a hagiography of Drokmi, see Stearns 2010, pp. 83–101. For an academic appraisal of his life and works, see Davidson 2005, pp. 161–209.

g.17 earth-dwelling ḍākinī

*sa spyod ma*

ས་སྤྱོད་མ།

*bhūcarī*

The ḍākinī associated with the channels of the subtle body.

g.18 Gayādhara

*ga ya dha ra*

ག་ཡ་ན་ར།

*gayādhara*

Indian (possibly Bengali) paṇḍita (994–1043) who visited Tibet three times; teacher of Drokmi Śākya Yeshé; a complex personality and a key figure in the transmission to Tibet of the Hevajra materials later incorporated in the Lamdré (Tib. *lam 'bras*) tradition.

g.19 Glorious Great Well-Gone One

*dpal bde chen po*

དཔལ་བདེ་ཆེན་པོ།

*śrīmahāsukha*

In the tantric context, a common epithet that can refer to several awakened deities.

g.20 hour

*chu tshod*

མུ་ཚོད།

*ghaṭikā*

In this context, a technical term for a measure of astrological movements and human breaths

g.21 inner heat

*gtum mo*

གཏུམ་མོ།

*caṇḍālī*

Blissful heat cultivated in the completion stage of tantric practice.

g.22 left channel

*rkyang ma*

རྒྱུང་མ།

*lalanā*

One of subtle body's three primary channels, most often described as either white or red, depending on the system of practice.

g.23 Mount Sumeru

*ri rab*

རི་རབ།

*sumeru*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

According to ancient Buddhist cosmology, Meru is the great mountain forming the axis of the universe. At its summit lies Sudarśana, home of Śakra and his thirty-two gods, and on its flanks live the asuras. The mount has four sides facing the cardinal directions, each of which is made of a different precious stone. Surrounding it are several mountain ranges and the great ocean where the four great island continents lie: in the south, Jambudvīpa (our world); in the west, Godānīya; in the north, Uttarakuru; in the east, Pūrvavideha. Above it are the abodes of the gods of the realm of desire. Often also referred to as Mount Sumeru.



g.24 period

*thun*

ཐུན།

—

This most commonly refers to a meditation session but derives from the division of a twenty-four-hour day into eight three-hour periods. This also refers to the period in which a person takes two thousand seven hundred breaths.

g.25 physical wind

*bems po'i rlung*

བེམས་པོའི་རླུང།

—

The subtle wind which, when dividing between physical and mental, refers to the former and is connected with material experience.

g.26 pith instructions

*man ngag*

མན་ངག།

*upadeśa*

Instructions passed down orally by a qualified master that enable a reader to penetrate the full meaning of esoteric scriptures such as this.

g.27 primordial sound

*dang po'i sgra*

དང་པོའི་སྒྲ།

*ādivāc · ādiśabda*

The sounds indicated by the Sanskrit vowels and consonants (Skt. *ālikāli*), or possibly specifically the syllable *om* or *āḥ*.

g.28 right channel

*ro ma*

རོ་མ།

*rasanā*

One of the yogic subtle body's three primary channels, most often described as either white or red, depending on the system of practice.

g.29 sacred vow

*dam tshig*

དམ་ཚིག་

*samaya*

The pledges taken by a tantric practitioner in the course of initiation.

g.30 self-awareness

*rang rig*

རང་རིག་

*svasaṃvedana*

The nonconceptual wakefulness that is both the basis for and the result of tantric sādhana practice.

g.31 sky-dwelling ḍākinī

*mkha' spyod*

མཁའ་སྐྱོད།

*khecarī*

The ḍākinī associated with the winds of the subtle body

g.32 subterranean ḍākinī

*sa 'og spyod ma*

ས་འོག་སྐྱོད་མ།

*pātālacāriṇī*

The ḍākinī associated with the drops of the subtle body.

g.33 suchness

*chos nyid*

ཚོས་ཉིད།

*dharmatā*

The nature of phenomena.

g.34 śukra

*shu kra*

ཤུ་ཀྲ།

*śukra*

Resplendent or clear liquid; here, referring specifically to the seminal drop residing at the crown of all human bodies.

g.35 Thus-Gone One

*de bzhin gshegs pa*

དེ་བཞིན་གསེགས་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 also often used as a specific epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.36 twenty-four sacred sites

*gnas nyi shu rtsa bzhi*

གནས་ཉི་ལུ་ཚུ་བཞི།

*caturviṃśatipīṭha*

Twenty-four sites on the Indian subcontinent that are considered particularly powerful for the practices of the Yoginī Tantras. These map to twenty-four places on the human body in conjunction with the yogic practices of the perfection stage.

g.37 vajra queen

*rdo rje btsun mo*

རྡོ་རྗེ་བཙུན་མོ།

*vajrayosīt*

g.38 Vajrasattva

*rdo rje sems dpa'*

རྡོ་རྗེ་སེམས་དཔལ།

*vajrasattva*

Used as a proper name, Vajrasattva is one of the principle deities of the esoteric Buddhist pantheon, regarded as both a source of the Buddhist tantras and the exemplar of the awakened state. As an adjective, the term *vajrasattva*, literally “vajra being,” can also be applied to other esoteric Buddhist deities, particularly Vajrapāṇi.

g.39 yogic discipline

*brtul zhugs*

བརྟུལ་ལྷགས།

*vrata*

A prescribed mode of behavior, typically time-delimited, that is observed in connection with specific rites and practices. In the Yoginī Tantras, these often include transgressive practices such as engaging with impure substances.

g.40 Yoginī Tantra

*rnal 'byor ma'i gyud*

རྣལ་འབྱོར་མའི་གྱུད།

*yoginītantra*

A class of Buddhist tantra focused upon the figure of the yoginī and the meditative manipulation of the subtle energetic anatomy of the physical body. This genre is typified by the *Hevajratantra*, *Cakrasaṃvaratantra*, and *Mahāmāyātantra*.