



རྒྱལ་བའི་བཀའ་འགྱུར་ཡིད་བཞིན་ནོར་བུ་བཞུགས།

# The Yeshe De Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur



*Buddhist Wisdom for a New Millenium*

TEXT COLLECTION AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE







# རྒྱལ་བའི་བཀའ་འགྱུར་ཡིད་བཞིན་ནོར་བུ་བཞུགས། rGyal ba'i bka' 'gyur yid bzhin nor bu

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## *An Invitation*



For Buddhists around the world, the Tibetan Buddhist Canon is one of the most important compilations of sacred texts ever produced. Yet today, Tibetans young and old are struggling to protect their heritage in the face of political uncertainty, threats to the environment, profound economic change, and ongoing efforts to suppress Buddhism in their homeland.

The Yeshe De Project was created in 1983 to preserve and protect Tibet's endangered Buddhist literary heritage. Named for a legendary Tibetan translator, Yeshe De collects, compiles, prints, and distributes Tibet's sacred texts to those who need them most—the lamas, monks, nuns, and lay practitioners who safeguard the future of this extraordinary tradition.

***Now, we are pleased to offer to select universities, libraries and Dharma centers a special opportunity to acquire a set of the Yeshe De Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur, one of the most widely-read Tibetan editions of the Buddha's words in the world.***

# *At a Glance*

## ***About the collection:***

- ♦ Western-format texts
- ♦ 133 volumes
- ♦ 1,141 texts

## ***Of interest to:***

- ♦ Private collections
- ♦ University holdings
- ♦ Buddhist Studies and Religious Studies programs
- ♦ Tibetan Studies, especially focusing on widespread modern forms of study and practice in the diaspora community
- ♦ Dharma centers with a Tibetan emphasis or ecumenical focus

## ***About the publisher:***

- ♦ Established in 1983 by Tarthang Tulku Rinpoche
- ♦ Dharma Publishing/Yeshe De has 50 years of experience preserving and publishing Tibetan texts, including the Tibetan Buddhist Canon.

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## *Our Mission*



Tibet was once a land dedicated to studying, practicing, and embodying the wisdom of the Buddha. But in 1959, the Land of Snow was subjected to an occupying regime that nearly erased the foundations of Tibetan Buddhism. Since then, as Tibetans both inside and outside Tibet continue to struggle to preserve their inheritance of knowledge, we at the Yeshe De Project have tried to do our part to ensure that their irreplaceable sacred text traditions survive to benefit not only Tibetans, but all the world's people.

Modern knowledge has brought wondrous advances in science, medicine and technology. Yet the grievous events of recent years remind us that despite the almost miraculous character of our technological achievement, the troubles that beset the world we share—environmental catastrophes, global pandemics, pervasive anxiety and political violence—are growing more and more acute.

We at Yeshe De have chosen to give our time and energy to our task of preservation, for we believe that an antidote to these problems does exist. Our efforts have persuaded us that a profound and healing wisdom lies at the heart of the Dharma of Tibet—a wisdom that is every human being's birthright.







# The Tibetan Kangyur: A Treasury of Enlightened Teachings

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## THE TEACHINGS OF LIBERATION ENTER OUR WORLD

More than 2,500 years ago, a teacher with a revolutionary message walked across the kingdoms of India's heartland, sharing the pathway to a transformative state of realization that brought a definitive end to human suffering. He came to be known as the Buddha, the Awakened One.

After his Parinirvāṇa, the Buddha's teachings were gathered and transmitted—at first orally, and then, starting around the first century BCE, in written form. Gradually, carried on the trade roads by merchants and wandering monks, nurtured by great Buddhist leaders in India and Central Asia, the Dharma spread far, nourishing Buddhist kingdoms in Kashmir, Gandhāra, Sri Lanka and Burma. Following the Silk Road, the Dharma spread west to present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan, and east to China, Korea, and Japan; at the same time, it gradually permeated the lands of southeast Asia, reaching as far as Sumatra and Java.

In the seventh century, when these vast and deep teachings had begun to reach the zenith of their refinement in India, a new land drew near to the Dharma: the Tibetan Empire, whose territory encom-

passed the Silk Road and would come to cover a third of the Asian continent, stretching from eastern Afghanistan to the borders of China.

## BUDDHISM COMES TO TIBET

It is said that Tibet first encountered Buddhism in the fifth century, when its 28th king, Lha Thothori Nyantsen, became the recipient of Buddhist symbols and sacred texts. As Tibet had not yet become a literate culture, the king was unable to understand the texts, but sensing their importance, he paid them reverence, calling them the Nyenpo Sangwa, the 'secret powerful ones'. They became royal treasures of Tibet.

The builder of Tibet's first Buddhist temple, King Songtsen Gampo (d. 650 CE) is remembered today as Tibet's first Dharma King. With the help of his two Buddhist queens—one from Nepal, and one from China—Songtsen Gampo laid the foundations for the development of Tibetan Buddhism, commissioning the creation of Tibet's first script by his minister, Thönmi Sambhoṭa, who became the first translator in Tibetan history when, as traditional accounts relate, he translated the very texts that had been held in such high regard by Lha Thothori.

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'PHUG-PA-LHUN-GRUB	THERAVADIN SCHOOLS	CHINESE TRADITION	TWELVE ACTS OF THE BUDDHA
P: 962 B.C.E.	T: 621 B.C.E.	C: 567 B.C.E.	1. དང་པོ་དགའ་ལྷན་གྱི་གནས་ནས་འཕོ་བའི་མཛད་པ། BHAGAVATO UTRĀMTI, THE DESCENT FROM TUṢITA
P: 962 B.C.E.	T: 621 B.C.E.	C: 567 B.C.E.	2. གཉིས་པ་ལྷུ་མས་སུ་ཞུགས་པའི་མཛད་པ། GARBHA-AVAKRĀMTI, ENTERING THE WOMB
P: 961 B.C.E.	T: 620 B.C.E.	C: 566 B.C.E.	3. གསུམ་པ་སྐྱུ་བ་ལྷུ་མས་པའི་མཛད་པ། JANMA, BIRTH
P: 954 B.C.E.	T: 616 B.C.E.	C: 559 B.C.E.	4. བཞི་བ་བཟོའི་གནས་ལ་ལམས་པའི་མཛད་པ། KALĀ, EDUCATION AND SPORTS
61–51 B.N.			5. ལྷ་བ་བརྩམས་པའི་ལོ་ལོ་སྤྱད་གྱིས་རོལ་གྱི་མཛད་པ། KRĪḌĀMUDA, LIFE OF PLEASURE
P: 933 B.C.E.	T: 594 B.C.E.	C: 537 B.C.E.	6. རྩལ་པ་རིས་པར་འབྱུང་བའི་མཛད་པ། ABHINIṢKRAMANA, HOME-DEPARTURE
51–45 B.N.			7. བདུན་པ་དཀའ་བ་སྦྱད་པའི་མཛད་པ། DUṢKARĀCĀRYA, PRACTICE OF HARDSHIPS
45 B.N.			8. བརྒྱད་པ་བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་སྒྲིང་པོར་གཤེགས་པའི་མཛད་པ། BODHIMAṆḌA-KRAMAṆA, PROCEEDING TO THE SEAT OF ENLIGHTENMENT
45 B.N.			9. དགྲུ་བ་བདུད་ཀྱི་སྤྲེ་བཙོམ་པའི་མཛད་པ། MĀRAJIT, VICTORY OVER MĀRA
P: 927 B.C.E.	T: 588 B.C.E.	C: 531 B.C.E.	10. བརྩ་བ་མཛོལ་བར་བྱང་ཆུབ་པའི་མཛད་པ། ABHISAMBODHI, ENLIGHTENMENT
P: 927 B.C.E.	T: 588 B.C.E.	C: 531 B.C.E.	11. བརྩ་གཅིག་པ་ཚོས་འཁོར་བསྐྱོར་བའི་མཛད་པ། DHARMAKRAPRAVARTANA, TURNING THE WHEEL OF DHARMA
P: 881 B.C.E. 46 A.E.	T: 544 B.C.E.	C: 486 B.C.E.	12. བརྩ་གཉིས་པ་ལྷུ་དན་ལས་འདས་པའི་མཛད་པ། PERFECT AND COMPLETE PARINIRVĀṆA

B.C.E. Before Common Era (= B.C.) B.N. Before Nirvana A.E. After Enlightenment

This list of the Twelve Acts of the Buddha is based on *Crystal Mirror 10: The Buddha and His Teachings*, Dharma Publishing, 1995.



150 years later, five generations after Songtsen Gampo, three remarkable people nurtured the flowering of Buddhism in the Land of Snow. The brilliant ruler Thrisong Detsen, 39th Emperor of Tibet and its Second Dharma King, invited Śāntarakṣita, Abbot of the great monastic university of Nālandā, to help him transform his kingdom into a Buddhist country. Together, they sought the help of Guru Padmasambhava, a powerful Vajrayāna master of central Asia. With his aid, Tibetan Buddhism was established on a firm foundation at Samye, Tibet's first monastery. These three—the Guru, the Abbot, and the Dharma King—set in motion the translation of a vast body of Indic Buddhist teachings into Tibetan. The more than 1,000 texts translated during this era constitute the nucleus of the Tibetan Buddhist text tradition, and the basis of Tibet's Buddhist culture.

## PROTECTING THE WORLD'S TREASURE

While each of the schools of Tibetan Buddhism has its own unique texts and traditions, all revere the Kangyur.

This extraordinary collection holds Tibetan translations of thousands of texts whose originals, mainly in Sanskrit, have largely been lost since Buddhism was suppressed in India, starting around the end of the 12th century with the tragic destruction of Nālandā. These translations span the entire inheritance of Indian Buddhist teachings, ranging from rules of conduct for monks to the most advanced esoteric texts. Together, they offer a comprehensive view of the complete history of Buddhism in India. Until 1959, living knowledge of this nearly-lost tradition was transmitted

in Tibet from teacher to student, for generation after generation—a 1,200-year continuity of care of the teachings. The invasion disrupted this transmission, wreaking havoc on Tibet's wisdom tradition. In the chaos that followed, thousands of Tibet's monastic libraries were burned to the ground, in an ominous echo of the loss of the vast libraries of Nālandā.

While Kangyur collections have been successfully conserved in large libraries both in Asia and in the countries of the West, vibrant, experientially-engaged study and practice of the texts of the Kangyur urgently needs to be encouraged—not only within the Tibetan diaspora, but throughout the world. Supporting the study and practice of Kangyur is critical to the survival of Tibetan culture, and fundamental for the continuity of Buddhism as a living wisdom tradition.

***Supporting the study and practice of Kangyur is critical to the survival of Tibetan culture, and fundamental for the continuity of the Dharma.***



# The Pugyal Emperors of Tibet

ca 390 BCE–842 CE

1232 Years

## The Seven Sky Thri Emperors

ca 390–102 BCE

### 1 གཤམ་ཁྲི་བཙན་པོ།

Mugyal Nyatri Tsenpo (gNya' khri btsan po):  
lived ca 417–345 BCE & reigned ca 390–345 BCE

### 2 མུག་ཁྲི་བཙན་པོ།

Mugyal Mukthri Tsenpo (Mu khri btsan po):  
reigned ca 345– BCE

### 3 དིང་ཁྲི་བཙན་པོ།

Mugyal Dingthri Tsenpo (Ding khri btsan po)

### 4 སོ་ཁྲི་བཙན་པོ།

Mugyal Sotri Tsenpo (So khri btsan po)

### 5 དེ་ཁྲི་བཙན་པོ།

Mugyal Dethri Tsenpo (De khri btsan po)

### 6 གདགས་ཁྲི་བཙན་པོ།

Mugyal Daktri Tsenpo (gDags khri btsan po)

### 7 ཁྲི་སྤེ་བཙན་པོ།

Mugyal Thripé Tsenpo (Khri spe btsan po):  
reign ended –ca 102 BCE

## The Two Early Teng Emperors

ca 102–31 BCE

### 8 གྲི་གུམ་བཙན་པོ།

Mugyal Drigum Tsenpo (Gri gum btsan po):  
reigned from ca 102– BCE

### 9 སུ་དེ་གུང་རྒྱལ།

Pugyal Pudé Gungyal (sPu de gung rgyal) (Shakhyi):  
reign ended ca –31 BCE

## The Six Earth Lek Emperors

ca 31 BCE–142 CE

### 10 ཐོ་ལེགས་བཙན་པོ།

Pugyal Tholek Tsenpo (Tho legs btsan po):  
reigned from ca 31– BCE

### 11 ཤོ་ལེགས་བཙན་པོ།

Pugyal Sholek Tsenpo (Sho legs btsan po)

### 12 གོ་བུ་ལེགས་བཙན་པོ།

Pugyal Gorbulek Tsenpo (Gor bu legs btsan po)

### 13 འབྲོ་ཞི་ལེགས་བཙན་པོ།

Pugyal Drozhilek Tsenpo ('Bro zhi legs btsan po)

### 14 ཐི་ཤོ་ལེགས་བཙན་པོ།

Pugyal Thisholek Tsenpo (Thi sho legs btsan po)

### 15 ཡི་ཤོ་ལེགས་བཙན་པོ།

Pugyal Isholek Tsenpo (I sho legs btsan po):  
reign ended ca 142 CE

## The Eight Water Dé Emperors

ca 142–304 CE

### 16 ཟླ་གནམ་འཛིན་པོ།

Pugyal Zanam Zindé (Zwa gnam zin lde):  
reigned from ca 142– CE

### 17 ལྷ་འབྲུལ་པོ་གནམ་གཞུང་བཙན་པོ།

Pugyal Detrulpo Nam Zhungtsen  
(lDe 'phrul po gnam gzhung btsan)

### 18 བཙན་པོ་ལྷ་གོ།

Pugyal Degol (bTsan po lde gol)

### 19 བཙན་པོ་གནམ་ལྷ་རྒྱལ་པོ།

Pugyal Namdé Nolnam  
(bTsan po gnam lde rnol nam)



20 བཙན་པོ་བསལ་ནོལ་པོ།

Pugyal Sé Nolpo (bTsan po bse rnol po)

21 བཙན་པོ་ལྡན་ནོལ་པོ།

Pugyal Dé Nolpo (bTsan po lde rnol po)

22 བཙན་པོ་ལྡན་རྒྱལ་པོ།

Pugyal Dé Gyalpo (bTsan po lde rgyal po)

23 ལྡན་སྤྱིན་བཙན།

Pugyal Dé Trintsen (lDe sprin btsan)  
(gyalsintsen): reign ended ca 304 CE

**The Five Intermediate Tsen Emperors**

ca 304–452 CE

24 རྒྱལ་ཏོ་རེ་ལོང་བཙན།

Pugyal Gyaltoré Longtsen (rGyal to re long btsan):  
reigned from ca 304 CE

25 ཁྱི་བཙན་འཕྲུལ་པ།

Pugyal Tri Tsenam (Khri btsan nam)

26 ཁྱི་སྒྲ་དཔུང་བཙན།

Pugyal Thridra Pungtsen  
(Khri sgra spung btsan)

27 ཁྱི་ཐོག་བཙན།

Pugyal Thri Thoktsen (Khri thog btsan)

28 ལྷ་ཐོ་དོ་སྤྱན་བཙན།

Pugyal Lha-tho-do Nyatsen (Lha tho do snya btsan):  
ca 373–452 CE; reign ended ca 452 CE

**The Four Perfect Bön Emperors**

ca 452–629 CE

29 ཁྱི་སྤྱན་རྒྱུང་བཙན།

Pugyal Thrinya Zungtsen (Khri snya gzung btsan):  
reigned from ca 452 CE

30 འབྲོ་གཉིན་ལྡན་པ།

Pugyal Dronyen Deru ('Bro gnyen lde ru)

31 ལྷ་པ་བུ་སྤྱན་གཟིགས།

Pugyal Takbu Nyazik (sTag bu snya gzigs):  
reigned ended ca 580 CE

32 གཤམ་རི་སྤྱང་བཙན།

Pugyal Namri Songtsen (gNam ri strong btsan)  
(Löntsen Lungnam):  
lived 562–629 CE & reigned 580–629 CE

**The Five Pugyals of Waxing Merit**

ca 629–712 CE

33 སྤྱང་བཙན་གླམ་པོ།

Pugyal Songtsen Gampo (Srong btsan sgam po):  
lived 617–650 CE & reigned 629–650 CE

34 གུང་སྤྱང་གུང་བཙན།

Pugyal Gungsong Gungtsen  
(Gung strong gung btsan):  
lived 621–640 CE & reigned 636–640 CE

35 མང་སྤྱང་མང་བཙན།

Pugyal Mangsong Mangtsen  
(Mang strong mang btsan):  
lived ca 638–676 CE & reigned ca 650–676 CE

36 འབྲོ་བཟའ་ཁྱི་མ་ལོད།

Pugyal Empress Droza Thrimalö  
(‘bro bza’ khri ma lod):  
lived n.d.–712 CE & reigned 676–689 CE & 704–712 CE

37 འདུས་སྤྱང་མང་ཇེ།

Pugyal Emperor Düsong Mangjé  
(‘Dus strong mang rje):  
lived 676–704 CE & reigned 685–704 CE

38 ཁྱི་ལྡན་འཁྱོག་བཙན།

Pugyal Thridé Tsuktsen (Khri lde gtsug btsan)  
(Mé Aktsom):  
lived 704–755 CE & reigned 712–755 CE

## The Five Very Happy Generations ca 712–841 CE

### 39 ཁྱི་སྟོང་ལྡེ་བཙན།

Pugyal Thrisong Detsen  
(Khri srong lde btsan):  
lived 742–797 CE &  
reigned 757–797 CE

### 40 མུ་ནེ་བཙན་པོ།

Pugyal Muné Tsenpo  
(Mu ne btsan po):  
lived 761–798 CE &  
reigned 797–798 CE

### 41 ཁྱི་ལྡེ་སྟོང་བཙན། སང་ལྷ་ལེགས།

Pugyal Thridé Songtsen  
(Khri lde srong btsan  
Senalek Jingyön):  
lived 774–815 CE &  
reigned 798–815 CE

### 42 ཁྱི་གཏུག་ལྡེ་བཙན། རལ་པ་ཙན།

Pugyal Thritsuk Detsen  
(Khri gtsug lde btsan  
Ralpachen):  
lived 802–841 CE &  
reigned 815–841 CE

### 43 ལུ་དུམ་བཙན་པོ། སྤང་དར་ལ།

Pugyal Udum Tsenpo  
(‘U dum btsan po Lang Darma):  
lived 815–842 CE &  
reigned 841–842 CE



This list of the Pugyal Emperors of Tibet is based on *A History of the Tibetan Empire, Drawn from the Dunhuang Manuscripts* by H.H. Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang. Original title: Bod btsan po'i rgyal rabs: Tun hong bod kyi yig rnying las byung ba (Songtsen Library, Dehra Dun, India, 2010). English translation by Meghan Howard with Tsultrim Nakchu.





Map of Tibet published by the Royal Geographical Society of London, 1904



## HOW THE TREASURES WERE TRANSLATED

### *The Buddha's teachings arrived in Tibet in two great waves*

The eighteenth-century Derge Edition of the Kangyur lists the names of 123 Indian scholars and 142 Tibetans who carried out the translations of the texts. The lists are not definitive, however, for the names of many translators of the early period were redacted as the early texts were revised in later times.

The Buddha's teachings arrived in Tibet in two great waves: the transmissions of the Imperial Period, resulting in the translations of the Nyingma; and the transmissions of the later spread of Buddhism, which would nourish the growth of the schools of the Sarma, or New Translations.



During the first wave, at the monastery of Samye, an enormous, centrally-coordinated plan to translate the textual heritage of Buddhist India was initiated by Guru Padmasambhava, Abbot Śāntarakṣita, and Dharmarāja Thrisong Detsen. This effort, continued by Thrisong Detsen's son and grandson in their turn, resulted in the translation of more than a thousand texts into Tibetan. Guided by the paṇḍitas, Ti-

betan lotsawas translated the Āgamas, outlining the fundamental discipline for monks, followed by the sūtras and śāstras of the Mahāyāna tradition. The Abhidharma teachings of Asaṅga and Vasubandhu that would become cornerstones of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy and thought were also translated during this period. At the same time, Tibetans were introduced to the teachings of the Prajñāpāramitā, which by the eighth century had been brought to a height of refinement in India. The great philosophical texts of the Madhyamaka and Yogācāra also found Tibetan expression with the active guidance of Śāntarakṣita, himself a master of a synthesis of Svātantrika, Yogācāra and Mādhyamika positions.

The Sūtrayāna teachings formed only a part of the great inheritance of texts brought to Tibet during this period. Padmasambhava and the Indian tantric master Vimalamitra brought crucial esoteric teachings to Tibet, with the help of the sublime Tibetan translator known as Vairotsana. Through them, the Kama and Terma traditions were born: the long transmission from teacher to student, and the treasure-teachings concealed by the Lotus Guru and his chief disciple, the great female lineage-holder Yeshe Tsogyal.

The translators began their training as children. Promising scholars traveled to India to study with the masters of the mahāvihāras, the great monastic universities of the Gangetic Plain. To produce their translations, they worked closely with great paṇḍitas from India, Kashmir, Nepal, and China, including Danaśīla, Jinamitra, Surendrabodhi, and Śāntarakṣita's disciple Kamalaśīla. But to present the subtle esoteric teachings in Tibetan, exceptionally deep



and careful training was needed. Along with Vairotsana, scores of other master-translators, or lotsawas, received extensive tantric transmissions, including Nanam Zhang Yeshe De, who translated an astonishing 347 texts that would be compiled in the Tibetan Buddhist Canon.

Efforts to translate, edit, and categorize the texts continued during the reign of Thrisong Detsen's son, King Senalek (reigned ~800–815) and that of Senalek's own son, Ralpachen (reigned 815–841). Known as the Third Dharma King of Tibet, Ralpachen poured the Tibetan Empire's resources into support for the Dharma, sponsoring a great flowering of monasteries and translations, until his death in 841. His successor to the Tibetan throne was his brother Langdarma (reigned 841–842). According to traditional accounts, Langdarma broke up monasteries and destroyed translation halls; the paṇḍitas were sent back to their home countries, and the lotsawas were banished. As learned monks fled to remote areas of Tibet, the great text collections were hidden away.

All was not lost, however. As a handful of monks worked to keep Tibetan Vinaya alive in Eastern Tibet, lay Vajrayāna masters in Central Tibet maintained and transmitted esoteric Buddhist teachings they had received from Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra. Sūtra, śāstra, and tantra texts were protected by these dedicated lay masters, who ensured their survival during the period of fragmentation that followed the death of Langdarma and the collapse of the Tibetan Empire. Thanks to their efforts, the basis of Tibet's enormous textual heritage was preserved.



In the late tenth century, Tibetans once again gained access to a broad range of Buddhist texts from India and Kashmir, and began to translate them. The first of these superb new translators was the Western Tibetan master Rinchen Zangpo (958–1055). Credited with more than 178 translations, Rinchen Zangpo also personally trained numerous lotsawas, helping to foster a new wave of Tibetan translations. Other great translators of this era include Marpa Lotsawa Chökyi Lodrö (1012–1097), the root teacher of the famous yogi Milarepa; Bari Lotsawa Rinchen Drak (1040–1112), the Second Sakya Trizin; and the prolific Kadampa master Ngok Loden Sherab (1059–1109).

*To produce their translations, they worked closely with great paṇḍitas from India, Kashmir, Nepal, and China.*

## THE KANGYUR EMERGES

The first great masters to systematically translate Buddhist texts into Tibetan took great care to categorize their efforts. Three catalogs of the texts translated during the Imperial era are known to have existed. Of these three, two have survived to the present day. Precious records of the translation activity of the early period, these works would prove indispensable to

***By the 13th century, thousands of new translations had been produced.***

later editors of the sacred texts.

As translation activities resumed in earnest in the early eleventh century, collections of texts in similar genres were gathered and circulated, including volumes containing numerous shorter sūtras. By the thirteenth century, thousands of new translations had been produced. At the same time, the flow of new texts from India had begun to dwindle. Attention in Tibet now turned to consolidation of what had been received, as research was carried out and collections of many kinds were developed by masters of the Sarma schools.

Closely studying the earliest catalogs, Chomden Rigpe Raldri (1227–1305), a great master of the Kadampa school, sought to bring order to the enormous mass of Tibetan texts, overseeing a vast and deep survey of Tibetan translations. Carried out at the Kadampa stronghold of Narthang Monastery, his work culminated in a famous preliminary collection of Sūtra, śāstra and tantra texts known as the ‘Old Narthang’. In this process, Chomden Rigdrel developed a two-part structure for categorizing sacred texts that distinguished the direct teachings of the Buddha from the commentaries of the great Indian masters. This framework, and Chomden Rigdrel’s astonishing assembly of texts, together served as an important inspiration for the development of further collections that sought to comprehend the entire field of endeavor of the Tibetan translations. Some decades after the creation of the ‘Old Narthang’, the outstanding Sakya master Butön Rinchen Drub (1290–1364) expanded its scope, producing a new, edited manuscript edition of more than 4,000 texts. Butön’s adoption of Chomden Rigdrel’s framework helped to crystallize the vast dual canonical

collections of Tibetan Dharma. Through the scriptural practices he established at his home monastery of Zhalu, Butön’s structuring and formatting of canonical texts became the standard, influencing Tibetan Buddhist textual production for centuries to come.

## **A VITAL TRADITION**

Over time, inspired by the work of Chomden Rigdrel and Butön, two main traditions for the Kangyur arose in the monasteries of Tibet.

The ‘Tshalpa’ tradition is named for a collection prepared at the monastery of Tshal Gungthang; this Central Tibetan manuscript Kangyur from the mid-14th century is believed to contain material from the ‘Old Narthang’. The first-ever block print Kangyur, produced in 1410, is an expression of the Tshalpa line. The ‘Thempangma’ line stems from a manuscript produced in 1431; several manuscript Kangyurs are known in this line. As Kangyurs from the Tshalpa and Thempangma lines began to proliferate, Kangyurs bearing the influence of both traditions began to appear. At the same time, independent Kangyurs, showing relatively little influence from either of these traditions, continued to be produced.

The eighteenth century saw a flourishing of Kangyur production. The Thempangma manuscript had been copied frequently by this time; in 1729, a new edition in its tradition was produced. Based on a Bhutanese manuscript, this edition of the Kangyur was later stored in the Tog Palace, the 19th-century residence of the ruling family of Ladakh, and it became known





as the Ladakh Tog Kangyur. The Tshalpa line also continued, notably in the Choné Kangyur of 1721. Shortly afterward, between 1730 and 1732, a new edition of the Kangyur was developed at Narthang Monastery. Based on an eighteenth-century copy of the Thempangma manuscript of 1431, it also had characteristics found in the Tshalpa line.

In 1733, a comprehensive new woodblock edition of the Kangyur was published by Eastern Tibet's legendary monastic printing house, Derge Parkhang. The Derge Edition united the great streams of the Tshalpa and Thempangma manuscript traditions; it is widely regarded, even today, as one of the finest editions of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon ever produced. The Derge Kangyur was widely dissem-

inated, inspiring new collections in the 19th and 20th centuries. During this period, other expressions of the Kangyur continued to emerge that harkened back to the old manuscript traditions, including the Lhasa Kangyur, authorized by H.H. the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. This Kangyur, produced in 1934, was the last edition of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon to be produced in Tibet before the catastrophic invasion of 1959.

Production of Kangyur and Tengyur within Tibet came to an abrupt end. As the Tibetan monasteries were systematically destroyed during the Cultural Revolution, the vast majority of Tibet's books were lost, with only a handful of centers and masters maintaining their holdings intact.





***[The Lhasa] Kangyur, produced in 1934, was the last edition of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon to be produced in Tibet before the catastrophic Chinese invasion of 1959.***

Some of these personal collections, smuggled out of the country, were so cherished that they were carried on foot over the Himalayas in lieu of food supplies. These precious remaining books formed the basis of desperate efforts of cultural preservation among Tibetan refugees.

As Tibetans in exile re-established monasteries, nunneries, and Dharma centers in India, Nepal, and elsewhere, the fate of Tibet's textual heritage remained uncertain. Small presses in India continued to reproduce limited numbers of books, and Western universities held some important collections, thanks in large part to the American scholar E. Gene Smith, who made a remarkable contribution to the survival of the books by obtaining and preserving copies of thousands of Tibetan texts. Despite this work, however, by the late 1960s, most monasteries in exile still

had little access to the texts of their own spiritual traditions.

Although conditions have improved for Dharma centers in exile, modern life has placed unprecedented stress on the continued transmission of the Tibetan heritage. Meanwhile, Buddhist study and practice within Tibet have continued to deteriorate as Tibetan children are methodically educated in Chinese, sometimes even losing their native language in the process. Especially in Central Tibet, the outlook for the active study and transmission of classical Tibetan and its sacred texts has grown dim. Both inside and outside Tibet, lamas and scholars from all the schools of Tibetan Dharma nevertheless continue to make heroic efforts to preserve the sacred texts of Tibet and ensure that they remain available as vital documents for study and practice.



## THE CONTENTS OF THE KANGYUR

It is said that the Buddha taught on 84,000 topics relating to human experience and human potential. His teachings deeply consider what it means to be human, why suffering is universal, and how to find the path to liberation. They offer esoteric practices to help us understand the subtlest patterns of the mind's activity, but they also share simple, practical guidelines for ethical personal conduct. Situ Panchen (1700–1774), the celebrated Tibetan scholar who edited the eighteenth century Derge Edition of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon, grouped the more than 1,000 Kangyur texts into nine distinct categories that reflect this diversity of topics, arranging the teachings in the order in which he believed they had been taught by the Buddha.

## THE NINE CATEGORIES OF THE DERGE EDITION OF THE KANGYUR

### 1. *Vinaya ('Dul ba) – Guidelines for Ethical Discipline*

*Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur: 8 texts; 5 paṇḍitas; 4 lotsawas; 14 commentaries; 93 chapters, 344 bam-pos (divisions); 105,000 ślokas (stanzas)*

With ancient roots stretching back to the earliest teachings of Śākyamuni Buddha, the texts in this section provide the detailed rules and guidelines followed by Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns.

### 2. *Prajñāpāramitā (Sher phyin) – Perfection of Wisdom*

*Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur: 36 texts; 10 paṇḍitas; 16 lotsawas; 21 commentaries; 308 chapters; 510 bam-pos (divisions); 165,000 ślokas (stanzas)*







These precious teachings of śūnyatā, the open emptiness of all that appears, are seminal expressions of the Mahāyāna path to liberation.

### **3. Avataṃsaka (Phal chen) – the Flower Ornament Sūtra**

*Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur: 1 text; 2 paṇḍitas; 2 lotsawas; 3 commentaries; 45 chapters; 116 bam-pos (divisions); 39,000 ślokas (stanzas)*

In this extensive sūtra (Vaipulya), multitudes of Buddhas are shown to be inseparable from the cosmic Buddha Vairocana in a vast and complex teaching of the emptiness of phenomena and the interpenetration of all that arises.

### **4. Ratnakūṭa (dKon brtsegs) – the Jewel Heap Sūtras**

*Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur: 49 texts; 8 paṇḍitas; 6 lotsawas; 3 commentaries; 69 chapters; 132 bam-pos (divisions); 14,000 ślokas (stanzas)*

The Sūtras of this collection present some of the central points of Mahāyāna teachings, including the union of compassion and wisdom, the conduct of the bodhisattva, and the doctrine of tathāgatagarbha, the intrinsic potential of all beings to become Buddhas.

### **5. Sūtra (mDo sde) – Discourses of the Buddha**

*Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur: 274 texts; 38 paṇḍitas; 40 lotsawas; 26 commentaries;*



963 chapters; 713 bam-pos (divisions);  
190,000 ślokas (stanzas)

The hundreds of texts in this section, many structured as dialogues between the Buddha and his disciples, include important sūtras that have become famous in the West, such as the Lotus Sūtra (Dam pa'i chos pad ma dkar po) that presents key points of Mahāyāna doctrine, the Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra (dGongs pa nges 'grel) that introduces teachings on relative and ultimate truth, and the Lalitavistara (Rgya cher rol pa) that relates the Buddha's life and enlightenment at Bodh Gaya.

## **6. Tantra (rGyud) – Tantric texts of the Sarma Schools**

*Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur: 475 texts; 89 paṇḍitas; 111 lotsawas; 70 commentaries; 2,247 chapters; 153 bam-pos (divisions); 41,500 ślokas (stanzas)*

Tantric teachings offer powerful methods and ways of understanding that can liberate the mind in the course of a single lifetime. The texts in this section are those practiced by the Sarma schools, divided into four classes—the three outer classes of Kriya, Caryā, and Yoga Tantra, and the highest inner class of Anuttarayoga or Yoga-niruttara, which in turn is subdivided into the Father, Mother, and Nondual Tantras.

## **7. Pratantra (rNying rgyud) – Tantric texts of the Nyingma**

*Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur: 25 texts; 8 paṇḍitas; 4 lotsawas; 507 chapters; 10 bampos (divisions); 3,500 ślokas (stanzas)*

The tantric texts found in this section are part of the Nyingma transmission of esoteric teachings that were first brought from India to Tibet in the eighth century. They include important teachings of the Nyingma Inner Yogas—the Mahā, Anu, and Atiyoga texts originally translated in the time of the Dharma Kings.

## **8. Kālacakra (Dus 'khor) – Wheel of Time Tantra and its Commentary**

*Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur: 3 texts; 1 paṇḍita; 4 lotsawas; 5 chapters*

This highly influential text, a non-dual tantra of the Anuttarayoga (rnal 'byor bla na med pa), the highest tantric tradition of the Sarma, presents complex esoteric teachings on time, history, cosmology, and the inner nature of the human body, delineating special transformational practices known as the Six-Branched Yoga. The calendar in use by Tibetan Buddhists since 1027 is based on Kālacakra teachings.

## **9. Dhāraṇī (gZungs 'dus) – Ritual Formulae**

*Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur: 270 texts; 10 paṇḍitas; 16 lotsawas; 21 commentaries; 308 chapters; 510 bam-pos (divisions); 165,000 ślokas (stanzas)*

Teachings in this section are presented in ancient mnemonic formulae that help the practitioner foster beneficial mental states, overcome obstacles, and nurture bodhicitta, the mind of enlightenment.

## PRESERVING THE POSSIBILITY OF WISDOM

*“What we call ‘Dharma,’ then, stands for the union of study and realization that creates a great treasury of knowledge of the pathways to freedom.” –Tarthang Rinpoche*

For Vasubandhu, a great Indian Buddhist master of the fourth century, the Dharma had two indispensable parts. The oral teachings and written explanations that guide our understanding, known in Tibetan as *lung*, must unite with the deep understanding known as *togpa*. Realization depends on the practitioner’s inner conviction, willingness, and determination. But without the pathways

carefully marked out in the sacred texts, even the most dedicated of students may become lost.

Today, our world is rocked by interpersonal strife, political instability, disease, and unprecedented natural disasters. It seems our actions have unforeseen consequences whose complexity has affected not just our human welfare, but the continued survival of every living being on our planet. There may be important insights in these traditional teachings, whose exploration in study and practice could lead to the development of higher wisdom.

For this reason, the Yeshe De Project is committed to the support of Tibet’s matchless inheritance of texts—for the way forward for all of us may depend on the union of *lung* and *togpa*, of thoughtful study and deep, experiential realization.





# Yeshe De: Forty Years of Dedication to Tibetan Text Preservation

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The Yeshe De Text Preservation Project was created in 1983 by Tibetan lama Tarthang Rinpoche, founder of the Tibetan Nyingma Meditation Center. Born in Eastern Tibet in 1935, Rinpoche received a comprehensive traditional education from nearly forty celebrated masters. He first began preserving Tibetan texts as a young refugee in India in the 1960s. In 1968, convinced that a systematic approach to text preservation was needed, he came to the United States. The freedoms and resources he found in his adopted home have enabled him to act on a larger scale, undertaking the preservation of the large collections that anchor Tibetan Dharma. For sixty years he has done his best to help protect the sacred texts and symbols of the Tibetan Dharma tradition while sharing its fruits with the modern world.

Through his efforts, more than seven million books, containing tens of thousands of unique Tibetan texts, have been preserved. Over five million sacred books, four million precious art reproductions, and more than 215,000 hand-turned prayer wheels have been

delivered, free of charge, into the hands of the Tibetan Sangha in exile. This distribution takes place at the annual World Peace Ceremony he founded in 1989 at Bodh Gaya, India, the site of the Buddha's enlightenment.

*Yeshe De's activity has three facets today:*

## THE TIBETAN BUDDHIST CANON

Over the last four decades, Yeshe De has offered five unique editions of the Kangyur and three of the Tengyur, as well as a broad collection of Tengyur texts selected especially for students in monasteries, nunneries, and Dharma centers.

In all, 10,000 complete sets of Kangyur have been offered to the Tibetan Sangha. Sets of our 1981 Nyingma Edition of the Kangyur and Tengyur have been offered to high lamas of all the schools of Tibetan Buddhism; a set is also kept within the Mahābodhi Temple in Bodh Gaya. They are housed in nearly fifty university libraries worldwide, including seventeen universities in Japan, five in Germany, and seven in the United States, including the University of Wisconsin, Madison, the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, and the University of California, Santa Barbara. The eight-volume Research Catalogue and Bibliography of the Nyingma Edition was purchased by twenty-five institutions, including the British Library, Duke University, the New York Public Library, and the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Sarnath, India.

*The  
Nyingma  
Edition is  
housed in  
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libraries  
worldwide*







# Historic Offerings of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon 1981–2024

## 1981: Nyingma Edition of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon

This reproduction of the Derge Edition of the Canon in 120 hand-bound atlas-sized volumes includes supplemental texts not found in the Derge. The Nyingma Edition was accompanied by an eight-volume scholarly catalogue and bibliography, and a two-volume Guide. 108 sets were created.

## 2000–2010: Derge Kangyur and Selections from the Derge Tengyur

*sDe dge bKa' 'gyur and sDe dge bsTan 'gyur*

Yeshe De's first typeset edition of canon texts from the Derge Edition of the Kangyur and portions of the Tengyur was offered in a traditional pothi format. Kangyur: 120 pothi volumes; Tengyur: 107 pothi volumes.

## 2010: The Narthang Kangyur and Tengyur

*sNar thang bKa' 'gyur and bsTan 'gyur*

Created at Narthang Monastery between 1730 and 1732, this edition of the Canon is based on the 14th-century Tshalpa manuscript and the Thempangma manuscript created in 1431. 317,190 books were offered.

## 2012: The Tog Palace Kangyur

*La dwags sTog bKa' 'gyur*

Based on a Bhutanese manuscript, this edition of the Kangyur was produced in Leh, Ladakh during the eighteenth century. Reprinted by Yeshe De in traditional pothi format. 112 volumes. 112,000 books were offered.

## 2013–2014: The Yeshe De Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur and Yidzhin Nangwai Dzö Tengyur

*Ye shes sde Yid bzhin nor bu bKa' 'gyur*  
*Ye shes sde Yid bzhin snang ba'i mdzod bsTan 'gyur*

A typeset edition of the Derge Kangyur and Tengyur offered in durable Western format, supplemented by additional texts and sixteen historic Kangyur catalogues; 133 volumes + 275 volumes. 3,000 sets of Kangyur were offered, totaling 399,000 books; 1,500 sets of Tengyur were offered, totalling 412,500 books.

## 2023–2024: The Yeshe De Yidzhin Norbu Pothi Kangyur

*Ye shes sde Yid bzhin nor bu bKa' 'gyur*

Forthcoming: a Tibetan-style version of the well-loved Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur in 108 loose-leaf pothi volumes: 1,000 sets are planned.



## THE NYINGMA TEXT TRADITION

Yeshe De has also sought to preserve large historic collections of sacred texts of the Nyingma Tradition compiled by great masters including Terdak Lingpa, Jigme Lingpa, and Jamgon Kongtrul. During the 1980s and 1990s, more than 600 atlas-sized volumes of teachings were printed. In all, the work of more than 400 authors, comprising some 80,000 major and minor texts, has been collected for future generations of students, scholars, and practitioners. In 2018, a complete set of our 639-volume Great Treasures of Ancient Teachings was purchased by the U.S. Library of Congress. The fruit of decades of research, Great Treasures is estimated by Tarthang Rinpoche to contain about 75% of the textual heritage of the Nyingma.

## TREASURY OF YESHE DE OFFERINGS

After working to preserve major collections during the 1980s and 1990s, Yeshe De began to shift its emphasis to educating

the living Sangha. Distributed over the course of the last 34 years at the World Peace Ceremony in Bodh Gaya, the Treasury of Yeshe De Offerings spans more than 20,000 seminal works of the Tibetan tradition. It includes editions of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon, key texts of the Nyingma Inner Yogas, the collected works of great Nyingma and Sarma masters, and offerings of the cherished texts of the *Prajñāpāramitā*.

For decades, we have compiled and distributed important Tibetan texts by key authors like Lama Mipham, Getse Mahapandita, and the Great Fifth Dalai Lama. In all, more than 775 Tibetan authors are represented in the Yeshe De collections. We have sought to meet the needs of students and scholars, monks, nuns, and lay practitioners, providing the basis for a Nyingma education as well as offering foundational texts to all the major schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Today, our books fill the libraries of more than 3,300 Dharma centers in India, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh, Kinnaur, and regions of the Himalayas where Tibetan Buddhism is practiced.

## SUPPORTING TRADITIONAL TIBETAN STUDY AND PRACTICE

The Treasury of Yeshe De Offerings was designed to secure the basis of a good Dharma education and prepare the lamas, monks, and nuns of the next generation to help carry on the teachings they have received. In particular, the Kangyur is the backbone of the exile community's study and practice, and our edition has been widely distributed to all the schools of Tibetan Buddhism.





# Yeshe De Total Text Distribution

## UNIQUE TITLES: 1989–2022

*‘Texts’ refer to unique titles or works in the Tibetan canons.*

<b>Texts from the Derge Kangyur (<i>Yidzhin Norbu</i>)</b>	<b>1,141</b>
Complete Vinaya, Prajñāpāramitā, Avataṃsaka, Ratnakūṭa, Sūtra, Tantra, Pratantra, Kālacakra, and Dhāranī; includes karchags	
<b>Texts from the Derge Tengyur (<i>Yidzhin Nangwai Dzö</i>)</b>	<b>3,984</b>
Including Stotra, commentaries on Tantra, Prajñāpāramitā, Madhyamaka, Sūtra, Cittamātra, Abhidharma, Vinaya, Jātaka, and Pramāṇa	
<b>Texts of the Inner Yogas</b>	<b>617</b>
Including works by Indian and Tibetan Vidyādhara, and commentaries on Mahā, Anu, and Atiyoga teachings	
<b>Texts by Tibetan Masters</b>	<b>6,794</b>
Abidharma, Vinaya, Prajñāpāramitā, Mādhyamika, Maitreya Treatises, Pramāṇa, brGal len, Chos ’byung, sDom gsum, sPyod ’jug, sNgon ’gro, Blo sbyong, rNam thar, Rig gnas; collected works of major masters; Chos spyod, sMon lam, bKra shis	

## TOTAL BOOKS

*‘Books’ refer to material volumes printed and distributed to the Tibetan Sangha.*

<b>Books printed: 1969-2021</b>	<b>~7,000,000</b>
<b>Books distributed: 1989-2021</b>	<b>5,227,788</b>





In addition, we have printed books for all the Tibetan schools: not only Nyingma, but also Sakya, Kagyu, Gelug, and Jonang teachings are represented.

These remarkable works treat on a wide range of topics, from the intricacies of Indian Buddhist philosophy to sacred art, traditional Tibetan medicine, ethics, and poetry. The texts we have preserved do more than support the study of traditional Buddhist subjects; they are also the backbone of Tibet's ritual traditions, supporting the thousands of ceremonies that constitute the heart of Tibetan Dharma. Without the guidance of the texts, it becomes impossible to conduct the practices that keep our faith alive.

The gift of the Kangyurs and other dharma texts have helped stimulate the creation of hundreds of new shedras and centers of study and practice throughout India, Nepal, and Bhutan, often in very remote regions. The Kangyurs we have given away are essential to the

continuity of the living tradition of Tibetan Buddhism today, and is helping to preserve literacy in the endangered Tibetan language.

## A PRECIOUS LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE

Even as we continue our preservation efforts for the Tibetan sangha, it is our fervent hope that these treasures will in time be more widely studied and practiced, forming a part of the growing movement to translate the words of the Buddha into Western languages.

Guided by superb Tibetan teachers, new initiatives are now underway, like Ven. Dzongsar Khyentse's 84000 Project with its excellent standards, highly motivated translators, and accessible, informative website. Yeshe De is also looking ahead with the Kangyur Encyclopedia Project. Based at Sarnath International Nyingma

*We believe these efforts will help foster deeper engagement with the Kangyur by Tibetan and Western students alike.*

Institute, more than forty geshe and khenpos from the Geluk, Sakya, Kagyu and Nyingma schools of Tibetan Buddhism are currently researching, compiling and analyzing the colophons of the Kangyur. Composed by the Tibetan editors and translators of the Kangyur, these endnotes convey crucial details about the history and translation of the texts. As of 2023, eight volumes of work have been completed and offered to H.H. the Dalai Lama, who lauded this new all-schools effort. Progress continues, with more volumes being prepared and plans to translate the findings into English.

We believe these efforts will help foster deeper engagement with the Kangyur by Tibetan and Western students alike. To help broaden the world's access to the Kangyur, laying the foundation for further research, contemplative study, and translation, Tarthang Rinpoche has decided to make the Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur available in the West.

## *The Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur: A Wish-fulfilling Jewel*

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### **A DEFINITIVE EDITION OF THE BUDDHA'S WORDS**

In 2013–2014, the Yeshe De Project created an ambitious new printing of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon, including a new edition of the Kangyur. An augmented Kangyur of the Derge tradition containing 1,141 texts, this typeset edition was designed not only for reverent prayer and practice, but for active study.

### **SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE YIDZHIN NORBU KANGYUR**

#### ***A Widely Known and Studied Edition***

The Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur has been freely distributed throughout India, Nepal, Bhutan, lands of the Himalayas, and the border regions of Tibet. A new generation of Tibetan Buddhist lamas, monks, nuns, and dedicated lay practitioners is engaging in intensive study using this edition of Kangyur. Over time, more and more Dharma centers, including small rural centers from remote areas, are calling for their own set of the Yidzhin Norbu, and we are sure to see an increase







in its readership. This makes the Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur a valuable document not only for a wide range of traditional Buddhist Studies programs, but also for institutions with an interest in the modern culture of the Himalayan region and the Tibetan refugee community.

### Special Supplementary Texts

In compiling the Yidzhin Norbu, Tarthang Rinpoche has included texts not found in the Derge Edition. First collected for the 1981 Nyingma Edition of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon, these texts were drawn from the Narthang, Lhasa and Peking Editions as well as the Taishō Shinshu Daizōkyō, a modern edition of the Chinese Tripitaka. They include a Chinese translation of the Mahāvibhāṣa; a special edition of the Bhadrakalpika Sūtra illustrated with woodblock prints of the one thousand Buddhas of our era; and a Tibetan translation of the Dhammapada by the great twentieth-century Tibetan intellectual Gedun Chöphel (1903–1951).

### Checked Against the Pedurma Kangyur

The texts of the Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur have been carefully cross-checked with the texts in the 2008

Pedurma (dPe bsdur ma) Comparative Edition of the Kangyur, a well-researched recent Kangyur developed for use by Tibetan scholars and practitioners. Based on the Derge Edition, it tracks corresponding text variants in seven other different historic woodblock editions of the Kangyur.

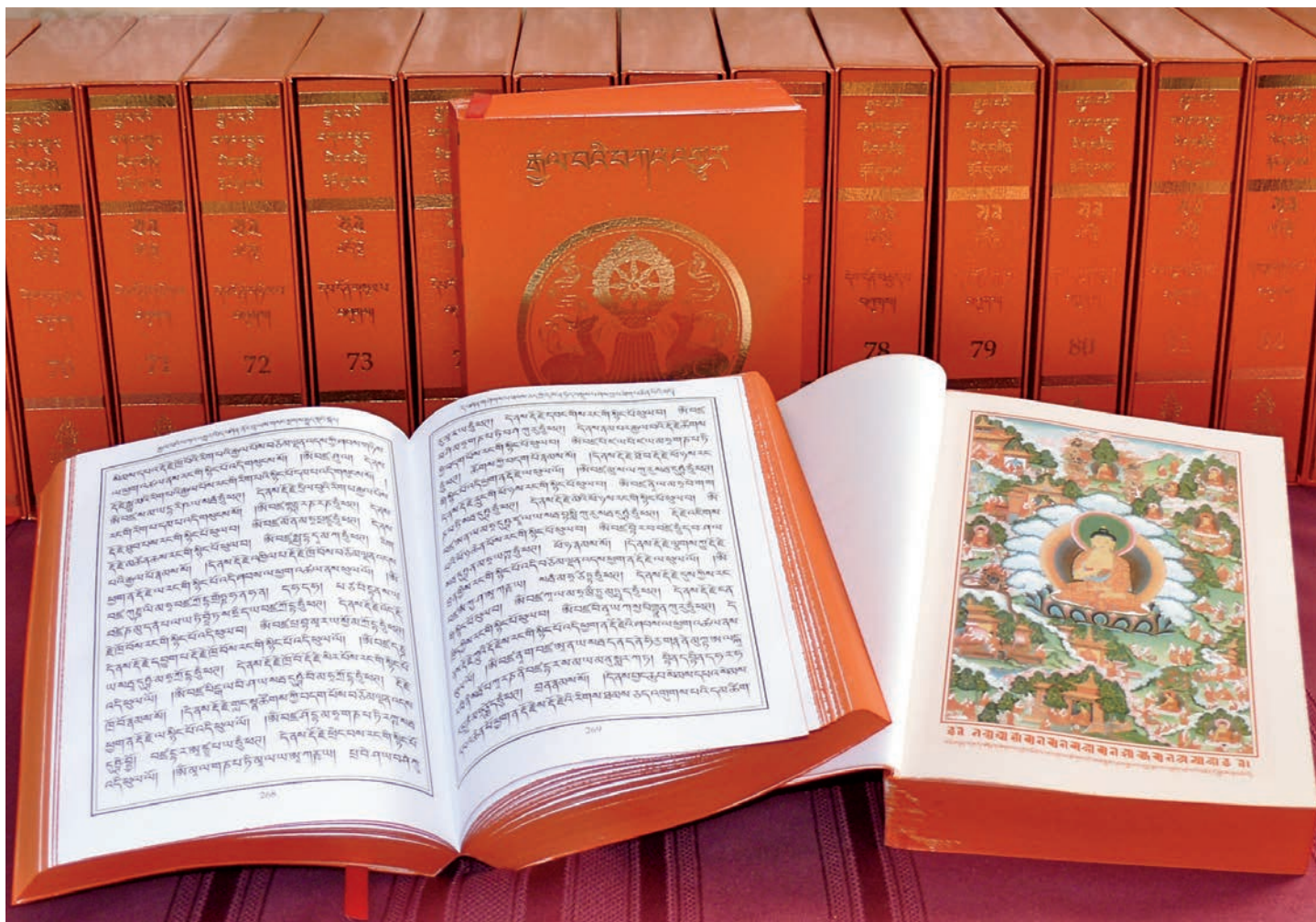
### Sixteen Historic Kangyur Catalogues

To facilitate study and research, volumes 130–133 of the Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur present sixteen unique historic catalogues (dkar chag) of the Kangyur spanning the ninth to the twentieth centuries.

### Unique Feature: Comparative Charts For Every Text (re'u mig)

A feature found only in the Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur, the reu mik (re'u mig) or collection of comparative charts functions like a detailed table of contents, presenting crucial information in a compact, easy-to-read format. Each text has its own reu mik chart comparing text numbers and titles across all sixteen of the historic karchags, cross-checked against numerous editions of Kangyur, including the Derge, Narthang,

*The gift of the Kangyurs and other dharma texts has helped stimulate the creation of hundreds of new shedras and centers of study and practice throughout India, Nepal, and Bhutan.*



Choné, Tog Palace, and others—allowing scholars and students to locate text equivalents across a wide range of other editions in a short time. Each entry includes titles in Devanagari, Chinese, and Tibetan; comparative locations for each text; the number of bampos (sections) and ślokas (stanzas) in each text, and its colophon as found in the Derge Edition, with notes that indicate when the colophons of other editions diverge from that of the Derge.

## An English-Language Overview

Every set of the Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur contains a 130-page essay in English by Tarthang Rinpoche, the Head Lama of

the Tibetan Nyingma Meditation Center and founder of the Yeshe De Project. This wide-ranging essay by one of the last surviving lamas to be fully educated in Old Tibet situates the Kangyur as the common foundation of all the schools of Tibetan Buddhism, and offers readers new to Tibetan Buddhism a panoramic view of its teachings as they are expressed in the Kangyur's texts.

## The Yeshe De Typeface

The Yeshe De typeface was one of the first Tibetan typefaces ever designed for Western-style typesetting. In the 1980s, Khenpo Thubten, a Tibetan calligrapher and student of the great twentieth-century master Bodpa Tulku, worked close-



ly with Tarthang Rinpoche to fashion a font based on calligraphy found in Kham, Eastern Tibet, for use in titles and other typeset elements for reproduced sacred texts. After years of further development, the result is a versatile yet classic Tibetan typeface appreciated by Tibetan students and scholars alike. We prize legibility overall, and so the volumes of the Kangyur are printed with large, clear, readable letters.

### ***Exquisite Sacred Art Reproductions***

The frontispiece of each volume of the Yidzhin Norbu presents a full-color reproduction of an authentic thangka appropriate to the volume's subject matter. Covers and title pages are consecrated with authentic, specially designed Lhantsa calligraphy. The volumes are all

ornamented throughout with original decorative line art by a fine artist with five decades of training by Tarthang Rinpoche in the principles of Tibetan sacred art.

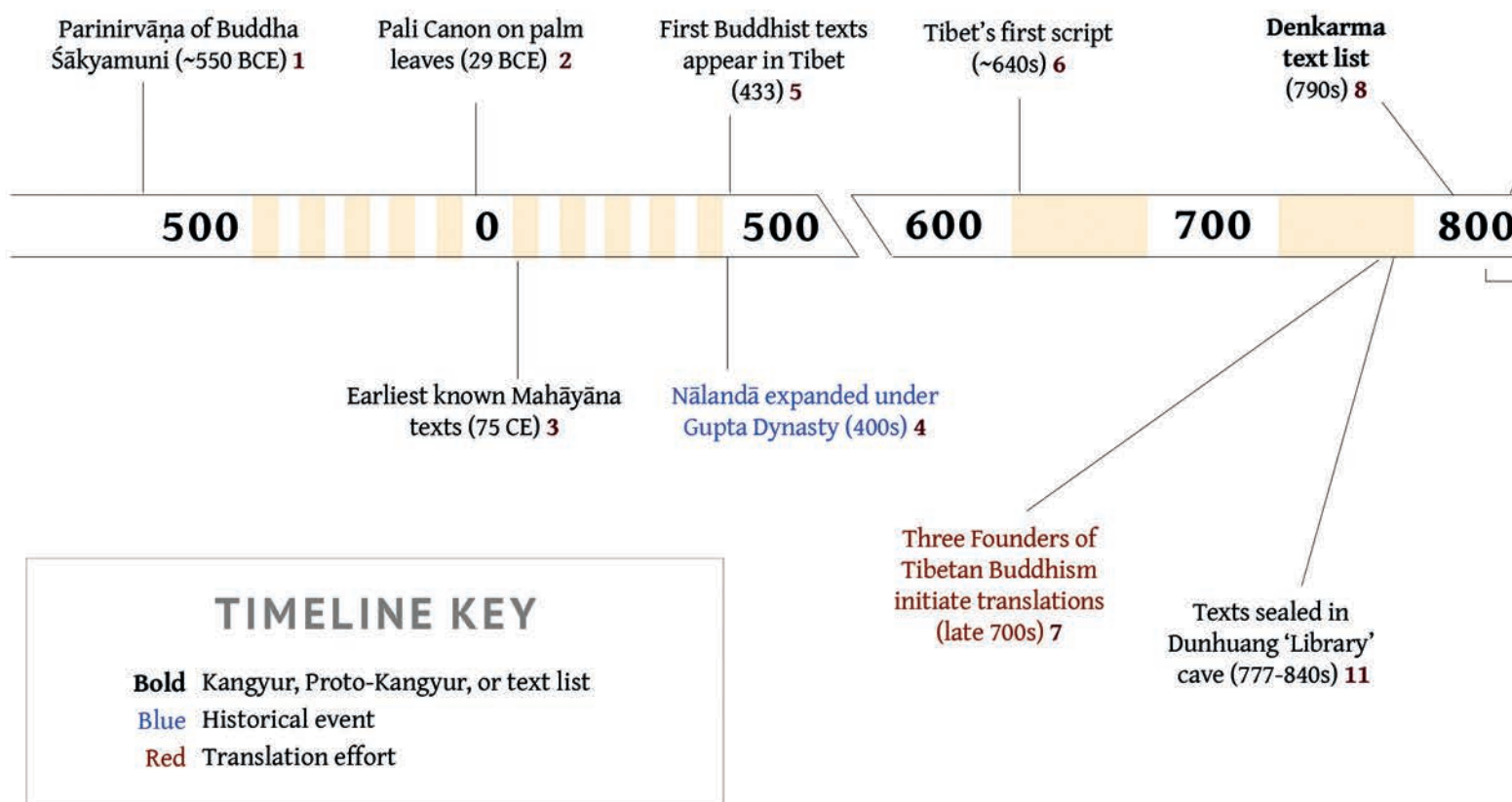
### ***Impeccable Materials and Design***

The Yidzhin Norbu Western Edition has been carefully designed not only to look beautiful on an altar or in a library, but also to gracefully withstand heavy use. Volumes are printed on high-quality acid-free paper with archival inks. The softcover volumes are compact and portable. Sturdy Lexotone covers are ornamented with hand-applied gold foil. Created with dedication by a staff with decades of book-binding experience, the volumes of the Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur are made to last.

***A feature found only in the Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur, the reu mik (re'u mig) or collection of comparative charts functions like a detailed table of contents.***

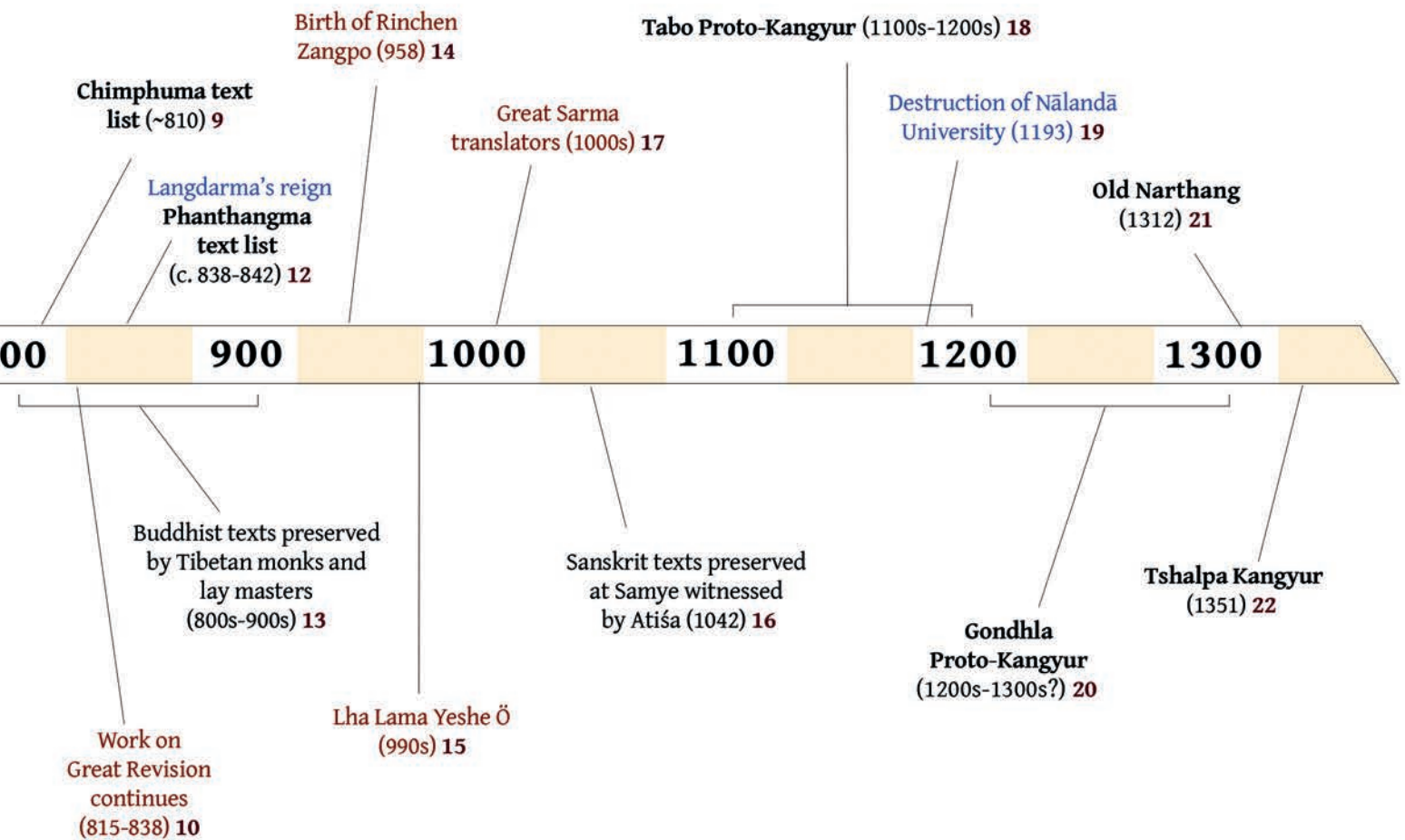
***Our books fill the libraries of more than 3,300 Dharma centers in India, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh, Kinnaur, and regions of the Himalayas where Tibetan Buddhism is practiced.***

# Timeline of the Tibetan Kangyur



- 1 The Parinirvāṇa of the Buddha Śākyamuni**, age 80. (~550 BCE) His followers transmit his teachings orally for centuries.
- The **Pali Canon** is inscribed on palm leaves in Sri Lanka. (29 BCE)
- Earliest known Mahāyāna texts** on birch bark. (75 CE)
- Nālandā** is expanded under the Gupta Dynasty, becoming a repository of more than 1,000 years of Buddhist teachings; its libraries hold millions of sacred texts. (400s)
- The first recorded **Buddhist texts appear in Tibet**. They are preserved by Lha tho tho ri Gyantsen, Tibet's 28th King. (433)
- At the direction of Songtsen Gampo, the 33rd King of Tibet, Thonmi Sambhoṭa develops **Tibet's first script**. (~640s)
- The Three Founders of Tibetan Buddhism** (*Khen Lop Chö Sum*) initiate the translation of more than 1,000 texts by scores of India-trained Tibetan lotsawas and Indian paṇḍitas. (late 700s)
- According to some records, the **Denkarma text list** (737 titles) is produced during the reign of King Trisong Detsen. (790s)
- A major revision of the existing translations takes place under Senalek, son of Trisong Detsen. The **Chimphuma text list** is believed to have been produced during this period. (~810)
- Work on the **Great Revision** continues under the reign of King Ralpachen, grandson of Trisong Detsen. (815–841).
- Tibetan translations of Indian Buddhist texts are sealed up in the **Dunhuang 'Library' cave**, including works that will later be collected in the Kangyur. (777–840s)
- Ralpachen is assassinated, and his brother, Langdarma, assumes control of the Tibetan Empire. During his reign, Buddhism is widely suppressed in Tibet. The **Phangthangma text list** (960 titles) may date to this period or somewhat later. (c. 838–842)





**13** Vinaya texts are preserved by monks fleeing Central Tibet; translated Sūtra and Tantra texts are preserved through the efforts of lay tantric masters and their followers, notably Nubchen Sangye Yeshe and his direct disciples. (800s-900s)

**14** Birth of **Rinchen Zangpo** (958-1055), first of the great Sarma translators. During his life he will train many translators, inaugurating a new wave of Dharma translations of Indian Buddhist texts. (958)

**15** **Lha Lama Yeshe Ö**, former king of Guge, spurs a new generation of Tibetans to become translators, sending two dozen young translators to Kashmir. (990s)

**16** The Bengali master **Atiśa Dipaṃkara** (982-1054), founder of the Kadampa School, praises the collection of Sūtra and Tantra texts preserved at Samye, including some no longer available in India. (1042)

**17** **Great Sarma translators** bring new tantras and revised translations of sūtras to Tibet, including Marpa Lotsawa (1012-1098), root guru of Milarepa, Bari Lotsawa (1040-1111), and Ngok Lotsawa (1059-1109). (1000s)

**18** **Tabo Proto-Kangyur**: A group of 'proto-Kangyur' manuscripts in Tabo, Western Tibet, contains texts similar to ones found at Dunhuang. (1100s-1200s)

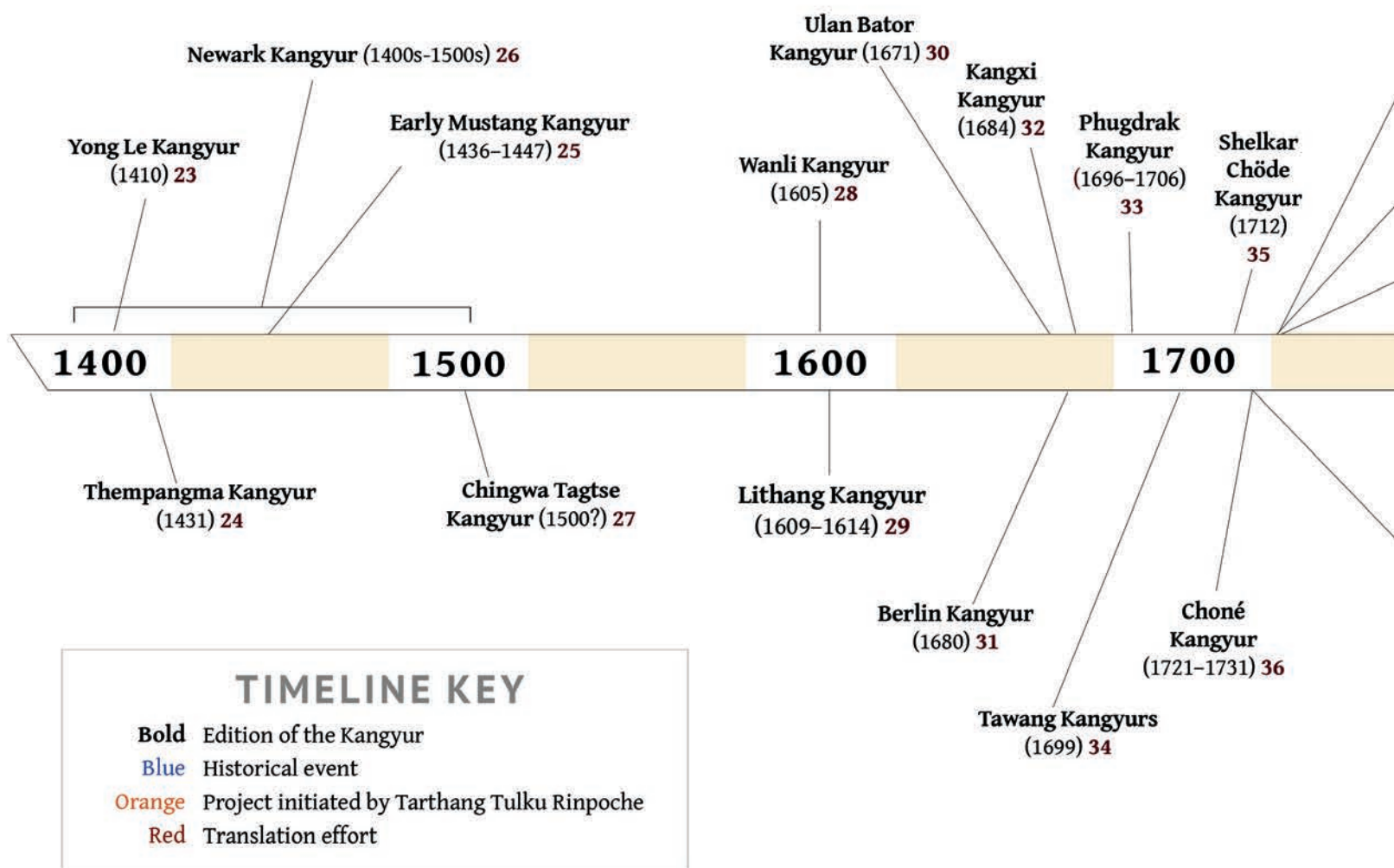
**19** **Destruction of Nālandā University** in India by Turkic Muslim invaders. Indian Buddhist libraries are incinerated. Tibet becomes the chief inheritor of the full scope of Indian Buddhism. (1193)

**20** **Gondhla Proto-Kangyur**: early collection includes Nyingma tantras not present in other collections. (1200s-1300s?)

**21** **Old Narthang** (1312-1320): Chomden Rigpai Reldri (1227-1305), working with his disciples at Narthang Monastery, oversees the creation of a massive collection of Tibetan translations.

**22** **Tshalpa Kangyur** (1351): based on the Old Narthang text collection, edited and reorganized at Tshal Gungtang (tshal gung thang), and consecrated by Butön Rinchen Drub (1290-1364).

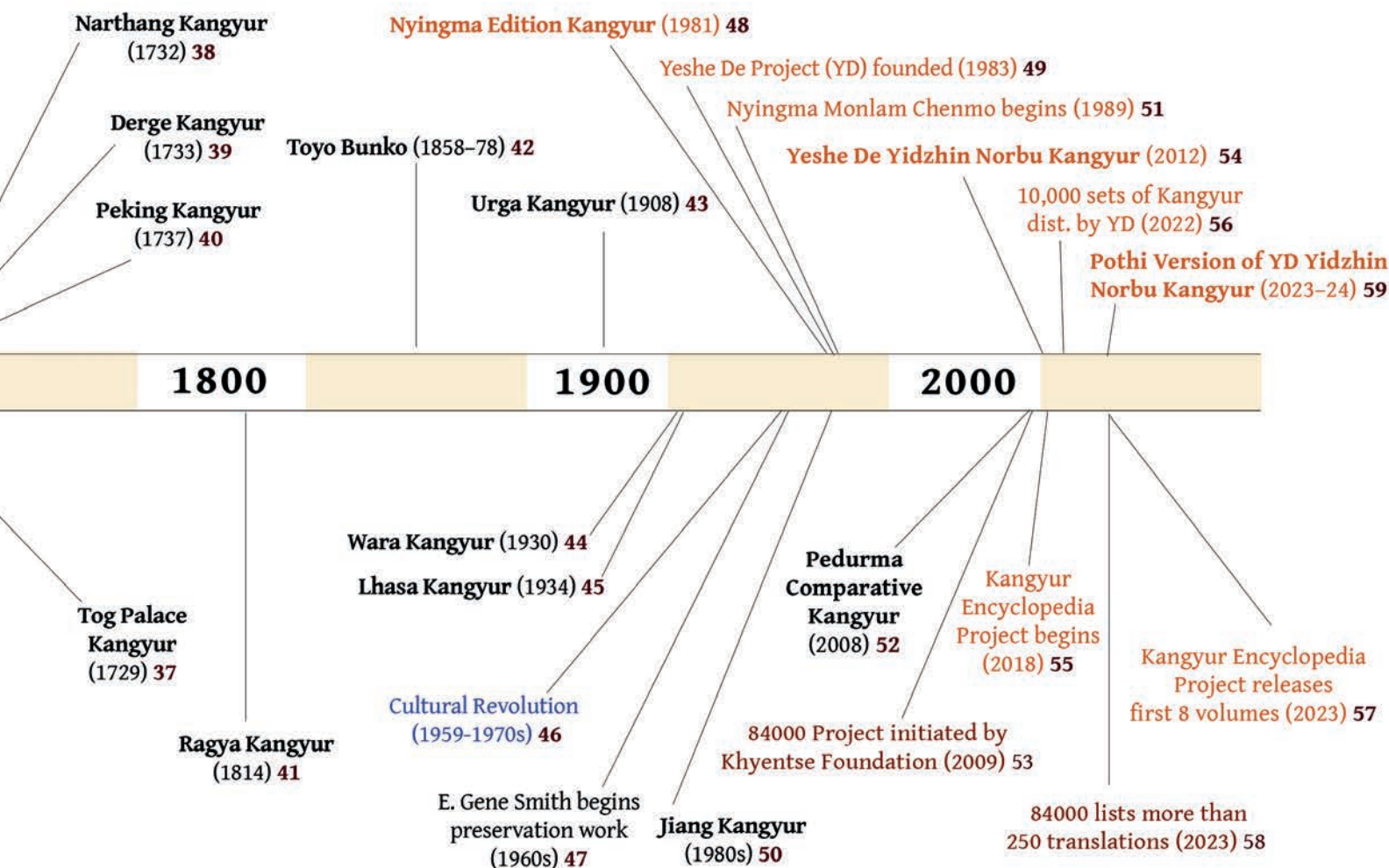




- 23 Yong Le Kangyur** (1410): the first block print edition of Kangyur, based on the Tshalpa manuscript line.
- 24 Thempangma Kangyur** (them spangs ma) (1431), a manuscript Kangyur created at Gyantse, reflects an earlier expression of the Old Narthang Kangyur.
- 25 The Early Mustang Kangyur** (1436-1447), connected with Ngorchon Kunga Zangpo (1382-1456), is produced in Mustang, Nepal.
- 26 The Newark Kangyur** (1400s-1500s): this manuscript Kangyur from Kham is independent of both Tshalpa and Thempangma lines.
- 27 The Chingwa Tagtse** (*phying ba stag rtse*) manuscript Kangyur (1500?), said to be a copy of the Tshalpa manuscript, is created at Tagtse Castle.
- 28 Wanli Kangyur** (1605): A block print Kangyur is created on the orders of the Wan Li Emperor, using the blocks of the Yong Le.
- 29 Lithang** (*li thang*) **Kangyur** (1609-1614): a block print Kangyur, also called the 'Jang sa tham, based on the Chingwa Tagtse (Tshalpa line).
- 30 Ulan Bator Kangyur** (1671): a copy of the Thempangma Kangyur manuscript made in Mongolia, now held in Ulanbataar.
- 31 Berlin Kangyur** (1680): copy of the Wan Li block print Kangyur.

- 32 Kangxi Kangyur** (1684): produced under the reign of the Kang Xi Emperor, using new blocks based on the Yong Le blocks.
- 33 The Phugdrak** (*phug brag*) (1696-1706) independent Kangyur is created in Western Tibet.
- 34 Tawang Kangyurs** (1699): two independent Kangyurs containing 60 Nyingma tantras are created at Tawang Orgyenling, located in Arunachal Pradesh, India.
- 35 Shelkar Chöde Kangyur** (1712): A manuscript Kangyur of the Thempangma line produced at Shelkar Chöde (*shel dkar chos sde*).
- 36 Choné** (*co ne*) **Kangyur** (1721-1731): a block print copy of the Lithang Kangyur.
- 37 Tog Palace Kangyur** (1729): a manuscript Kangyur based on a Bhutanese manuscript Kangyur in the Thempangma line.
- 38 Narthang Kangyur** (1732): a block print Kangyur based on the Shelkar Chöde (Thempangma) and Chingwa Tagtse (Tshalpa) manuscripts.
- 39 Derge Kangyur** (1733): a block print Kangyur based on Lhodzong (Thempangma) and Lithang (Tshalpa) Kangyurs. This important edition is widely distributed in Eastern Tibet.
- 40 Peking Kangyur** (1737): A reprint of the Kang Xi block print Kangyur, produced under the reign of the Qianlong Emperor.
- 41 Ragya** (*ra rgya*) **Kangyur** (1814): a block print Kangyur based on the Derge Edition created in Amdo, Eastern Tibet.





- 42 Toyo Bunko** (1858–78): a copy of the Thempangma Kangyur manuscript held at Gyantse, brought to Japan.
- 43 Urga Kangyur** (1908): a Mongolian block print Kangyur based on the Derge Edition.
- 44 Wara (wa ra) Kangyur** (1930): a block print Kangyur based on the Derge Edition, created in Eastern Tibet.
- 45 Lhasa Kangyur** (1934): a block print Kangyur based on the Narthang Edition and authorized by H.H. the 13th Dalai Lama.
- 46 1959–1970s**: In 1959, Tibet is annexed by Communist China. Monasteries and monastic libraries across Tibet are destroyed during the ensuing **Cultural Revolution**. Tibetan texts are hand-carried across the Himalayas instead of food.
- 47 1960s–70s**: Scholar **E. Gene Smith**, working for the Library of Congress, develops a process for purchasing and conserving endangered Tibetan sacred texts in American universities and libraries.
- 48 Nyingma Edition Kangyur** (1981): a photo reproduction of the Derge Edition with supplemental texts produced by Dharma Publishing, founded 1969 by Nyingma lama Tarthang Rinpoche.
- 49 The Yeshe De Project** is founded by Tarthang Rinpoche. (1983)
- 50 Jiang Kangyur** (1980s): a Tshalpa-line Kangyur by H.H. the 16th Karmapa, based on the Lithang block print Kangyur.

- 51 The Nyingma Monlam Chenmo** is founded at Bodh Gaya, India by Tarthang Rinpoche; held annually, it will become a key site for the free distribution of Kangyur to the Tibetan Sangha. (1989)
- 52 Pedurma (dpe bsdur ma) Comparative Kangyur** (2008): based on seven different block print Kangyurs in the Tshalpa line, printed in Chengdu, China.
- 53 2009**: With 95% of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon only available in Tibetan, the **84000 Project** Kangyur translation effort is initiated by the Khyentse Foundation.
- 54 Yeshe De Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur** (2012): a typeset, Western-format, augmented Derge Kangyur checked against the Pedurma.
- 55 Tarthang Rinpoche**, through the Khenlop Chosum Foundation, initiates the **Kangyur Encyclopedia Project** in 2018.
- 56 As of 2022**, more than ten thousand sets of Kangyur have been distributed free of charge to the Tibetan Sangha by the Yeshe De Project.
- 57 In 2023**, The Kangyur Encyclopedia Project releases the first eight volumes of its work.
- 58 As of July 2023**, 84000 lists more than 250 translations from the Tibetan Buddhist Canon.
- 59 Creation of the Pothi Version of the Yeshe De Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur**, edited and updated by the Yeshe De Project. (2023–24)







# *Help Support the Future of Tibetan Buddhism*

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Of all the historical canonical collections, the Tibetan canon contains the broadest range of the surviving teachings of the Buddha. Over the course of the last forty years, we have tried our best to preserve this precious Buddhavacana for future generations.

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When you purchase a set of the Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur for your institution, you support our ongoing preservation effort. 100% of your cost is put back into the production of Yeshe De books that are distributed freely to the Tibetan Buddhist community. We follow strict Buddhist guidelines regarding offerings we receive, and our operations are run on an entirely volunteer basis. Every penny of your investment goes to the preservation of Tibetan culture.

It is said that when the Buddha's teachings are preserved, reproduced, and shared, extraordinary merit is generated. In our challenging historical moment, these teachings of loving-kindness, revealing peaceful and creative approaches to conflict and a perspective that soars high above individual selfish aims, offer alternatives to suffering and strife; they can open pathways to a better world for us all.

Your generosity will help ensure that Tibet's thousand-year-old cultural heritage continues as a living tradition, and that its matchless treasures of knowledge remain available to coming generations.

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# *Purchase Inquiries*

We have only a few sets of the Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur available for purchase, as nearly all of them are reserved for free distribution to the Tibetan Sangha.

We hope to partner with well-established libraries, universities, schools, Dharma centers, and foundations that share our deep concern for the future of Tibetan Dharma and seek to foster greater understanding and appreciation of its unique spiritual and literary heritage.

Please send us the following information:

- 1) The name of your organization and a few lines about its history, its mission, and the community it serves
- 2) Your organization's interest in the Kangyur
- 3) Your plan for how it will be used, displayed, and/or stored
- 4) Your representative's contact information
- 5) (Optional) Suggested contacts for other individuals or institutions you know that might like to support our humanitarian efforts to preserve Tibetan culture

Along with the western-format Yidzhin Norbu Kangyur, we may also have small quantities of other historic Kangyurs available for purchase, including the pothi-format Narthang and Tog Palace Kangyurs; printed on acid-free paper with archival inks, these loose-leaf volumes present a traditional reading experience. For more information about these historic Kangyurs, please contact us.

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## Learn More

The Nyingma Institute in Berkeley, CA was founded by Tarthang Rinpoche in 1972. It was the first center for Nyingma teachings in the West, and remains one of the oldest continuously operating institutions for Buddhist study in the United States.

**[www.nyingmainstitute.com](http://www.nyingmainstitute.com)**

The Tibetan Aid Project, founded by Rinpoche in 1969, has offered decades of support to the Tibetan community in exile. Its annual fund-raising dinner, Taste and Tribute, offers the best in Bay Area vegetarian cuisine created by renowned master chefs; all proceeds support the text distribution in Bodh Gaya.

**[www.tibetanaidproject.org](http://www.tibetanaidproject.org)**

*The Great Transmission* (2016) presents the story of the Yeshe De Project and our historic text distribution at Bodh Gaya, placing it within the context of thousands of years of efforts to maintain the continuity of Buddhist knowledge.

Directed by Pema Gellek, this award-winning documentary film is available for viewing on demand on Vimeo.

**<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/thegreattransmission>**

Dharma Publishing was originally founded in India by Tarthang Rinpoche in the early 1960s. Re-established in the United States, it upholds a dual mission: to help preserve the endangered Tibetan text tradition, and to offer books that showcase teachings designed for Westerners to introduce the benefit and value of Dharma study and practice. It is the only authorized publisher of the teachings of Tarthang Rinpoche developed for Westerners. It has produced 288 unique titles in English, and more than 45 titles written by Tarthang Rinpoche.

**[www.dharmapublishing.com](http://www.dharmapublishing.com)**







*In the land called the Roof of the World, the enlightened teachings of Śākyamuni Buddha were faithfully preserved. Now, the Dharma has come to the West, and it is being translated and transmitted to all of humanity.*

*—Tarthang Rinpoche*