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Magnificent Accounts of Ārya Mañjuśrī

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KHYENTSE VISION
PROJECT

'phags pa 'jam dpal gyi rtogs pa brjod pa

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

In this short piece, Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo extols Mañjuśrī through accounts in the life story of the bodhisattva. Khyentse Wangpo presents a selection of pith quotes highlighting that this great bodhisattva, a central figure in Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna traditions, is none other than a perfectly accomplished buddha.

འཕགས་པ་འཇམ་དཔལ་གྱི་རྟགས་པ་བརྗོད་པ།

Magnificent Accounts of Ārya Mañjuśrī

As recounted about Ārya Mañjuśrī in chapter 15 of the *Heap of Jewels Sūtra*:

While he was the Universal Dharma King Ākāśa, he aroused enlightened intent for the first time in the presence of the Thus-Gone One King of Thunderous Voice and was prophesied to awaken, in the future, as the Thus-Gone One Samantadarśin, in a universe called Immaculate Accumulation. And even though he perfected the ten powers after accepting that phenomena are unborn, he manifests the conduct of a bodhisattva. It is taught that by merely hearing his name, barring only those with little faith, one will attain the state of unsurpassed perfect and complete awakening.

The Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī states:

In a distant past age, beyond countless and unfathomable eons, in a universe known as Equal, he awakened as the Thus-Gone One Nāgavaṃśāgra.

And so on. There are innumerable biographies revealing every magical illusion in the *Magical Net*.

In *True Expression of the Definitive Names of the Wisdom Being Mañjuśrī*:

Mañjuśrī, embodiment of primordial wisdom, whose name possesses great meaning, purifies and dispels unwholesomeness.¹

It has been said many times, as in the previous quote, that he is the embodied essence of the unveiled adamantine wisdom of all the sugatas of the four times and the ten directions. [108]

Not only does he perform inconceivable benefits for both pure and impure disciples through infinite manifold displays of body, speech, and mind, such as assuming the wrathful form of Mañjuśrī Yamāntaka in order to subdue those difficult to tame, but also, there is no scholar or siddha in India nor Tibet who is not protected by him. Likewise, there are none who do not hold him as the supreme deity.

Thus, merely recalling him will liberate from saṃsāra all those who supplicate him, pacify the accumulation of obscurations along with the causes, and open the treasury of unimpeded confidence to any knowable objects. These and more are the boundless blessings of Mañjuśrī.

One should know *The Array of Virtues of Mañjuśrī's Buddha Realm* contained in the *Heap of Jewels*, *The Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī*, and so forth for more extensive details.

NOTES

1. *Mañjuśrījñānasattvapyāparamārtanāmasaṃgīti*, verse 21.

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Kangyur Sources

The Array of Virtues of Mañjuśrī's Buddha Realm (*Mañjuśrībuddhakṣetraguṇavyūha; 'jam dpal gyi sangs rgyas kyi zhing gi yon tan bkod pa*). Toh. 59. Translated by Dharmachakra Translation Committee. 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha, 2021. <https://read.84000.co/translation/toh59.html>.

The Noble Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī (*Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa; 'phags pa 'jam dpal gyi rtsa ba'i rgyud*). Toh. 543. Translated by Dharmachakra Translation Committee. 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha, 2020. <https://read.84000.co/translation/toh543.html>.

Mañjuśrījñānasattvasyaparamārthanāmasaṃgīti (*'jam dpal ye shes sems dpa'i don dam pa'i mtshan yang dag par brjod pa*). Toh. 360.

GLOSSARY

acceptance that phenomena are unborn

མི་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཚེས་ལ་བཟོད་པ། • *mi skye ba'i chos la bzod pa* • anutpattikadharmakṣānti

An attainment of the bodhisattvas on the eighth bhūmi.

Ākāśa

ནམ་མཁའ། • *nam mkha'*

A cakravartin, a previous life of Mañjuśrī.

aroused enlightened intent

ཐུགས་བརྒྱུད། • *thugs bskyed* • cittotpāda

The resolve to attain the state of enlightenment for the benefit of sentient beings.

Array of Virtues of Mañjuśrī's Buddha Realm

འཇམ་དཔལ་གྱི་སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཞིང་གི་ཡོན་ཏན་བཀོད་པ། • *'jam dpal gyi sangs rgyas kyi zhing gi yon tan bkod pa* • *mañjuśrībuddhākṣetraguṇavyūha*

A sūtra compiled within the *Heap of Jewels* section of the Kangyur, known as the *Ratnakūṭasūtra*.

Ārya Mañjuśrī

འཕགས་པ་འཇམ་དཔལ། • *'phags pa 'jam dpal* • ārya mañjuśrī

The bodhisattva of superior wisdom and intellect, he plays a dominant role in the Mahāyāna sūtras and is known as one of the eight close sons of the Buddha.

biographies

རྣམ་པར་ཐར་པ། • *rnam par thar pa* • vimokṣa

Life-liberation story or hagiographical accounts in the life or successive lives of an accomplished being who shows the path to liberation.

confidence

སྟོབས་པ། • *spobs pa* • pratibhā

A type of fearless courage, born from inner strength often associated with eloquent speech.

eon

བསྐལ་པ། • *bskal pa* • kalpa

A measure of time corresponding to the duration of a cosmic world system.

Equal

མཉམ་པ། • *mnyam pa* • samā

The world where Mañjuśrī is said to reside as Buddha Nāgavaṃśāgra, identified as Samā, situated in the borders of the southern region of Śūraṃgamasamādhi.

Heap of Jewels Sūtra

དཀོན་མཆོག་བརྟེན་པ། • *dkon mchog brtsegs pa* • *ratnakūṭasūtra*

A collection of forty-nine Mahāyāna sūtras in the Kangyur and the Chinese Buddhist canon presented as independent works.

Immaculate Accumulation

རྩལ་མེད་པ་བསགས་པ། • *rdul med pa bsags pa*

The world where Mañjuśrī is said to reside as the future buddha Samantadarśin.

King of Thunderous Voice

འབྲུག་སྒྲའི་བྱེད་པ། • *'brug sgra'i rgyal po* • megharāja, meghasvara

A buddha of the past, also called Meghasvaraghoṣarāja.

magical illusion

མིག་འཕྲུལ། • *mig 'phrul* • indrajāla

The illusory characteristic of perceived reality.

Magical Net

སྒྱུ་འཕྲུལ་རྒྱ་བ། • *sgyu 'phrul drwa ba* • *māyājāla*

A cycle of tantric texts, sometimes translated as *Web of Magical Illusion*.

Nāgavaṃśāgra

ལྷུ་འི་རིགས་མཆོག། • *klu'i rigs mchog*

Mañjuśrī manifests also as Buddha Nāgavaṃśāgra.

prophesied

ལུང་བསྟན། • *lung bstan* • vyākaraṇa

Predicted to awaken in the future.

Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī

འཇམ་དཔལ་རྩ་བའི་རྒྱུད། • *'jam dpal rtsa ba'i rgyud* • *mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*

One of the foremost tantras of Mañjuśrī.

Samantadarśin

ཀུན་ཏུ་གཟིགས། • *kun tu gzigs*

The future buddha that Mañjuśrī is predicted to become.

supreme deity

ལྷག་པའི་ལྷ། • *lhag pa'i lha*

A tutelary deity.

ten powers

ཐོབས་བཅུ། • *stobs bcu* • daśabala

Ten qualities of a buddha relating to their unobstructed knowledge of all things. One of the twenty-one sets of immaculate qualities.

Thus-Gone One

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ། • *de bzhin gshegs pa* • tathāgata

Epithet for a buddha, literally, “one who is thus” or “one who was thus gone.”

True Expression of the Definitive Names of the Wisdom Being Mañjuśrī

འཇམ་དཔལ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སེམས་དཔའི་དོན་དམ་པའི་མཚན་ཡང་དག་པར་བརྗོད་པ། • *'jam dpal ye shes sems*

dpa'i don dam pa'i mtshan yang dag par brjod pa •

mañjuśrījñānasattvasyaparamārthanāmasaṃgīti

A chief text among those devoted to the Wisdom Being Mañjuśrī.

Universal Dharma King

འཁོར་ལོས་སྐྱུར་བའི་རྒྱལ་པོ། • *'khor los sgyur ba'i rgyal po* • cakravartin

The highest rebirth within the desire realm. Considered the most powerful benevolent monarch, the cakravartin rules in accord with the laws of Dharma.

universe

འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི་ཁམས། • *'jig rten gyi khams* • lokadhātu

A world system.

unsurpassed perfect and complete awakening

སྤྲོད་མེད་པ་ཡང་དག་པར་རྫོགས་པའི་བྱང་ཆུབ། • *bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang*

chub • anuttarāsaṃyaksambodhi

The ultimate state of complete awakening of a buddha.

Yamāntaka

འཇམ་དཔལ་གཤིན་རྗེ་གཤེད། • *'jam dpal gshin rje gshed*

Wrathful aspect of Mañjuśrī.