84000
SEMINARS

# Advice from the Tradition
October 22-24, 2013
Bodh Gaya

Day Two: Introduction to Reading Room by John Canti, 84000 Editorial Chair
(Speech in English, Translated into Tibetan)

I think it is important to say that as this is our primary means of storing and displaying the texts, we have some very important and solid backup systems so that if the internet gets destroyed by terrorists or some other disaster, we do actually have all the files backed up somewhere. We are also trying to keep a printed archive in case of the worst. But for the moment let us hope for the best.

At present what people see when they first contact the Reading Room site (read.84000.co) is the display page here.
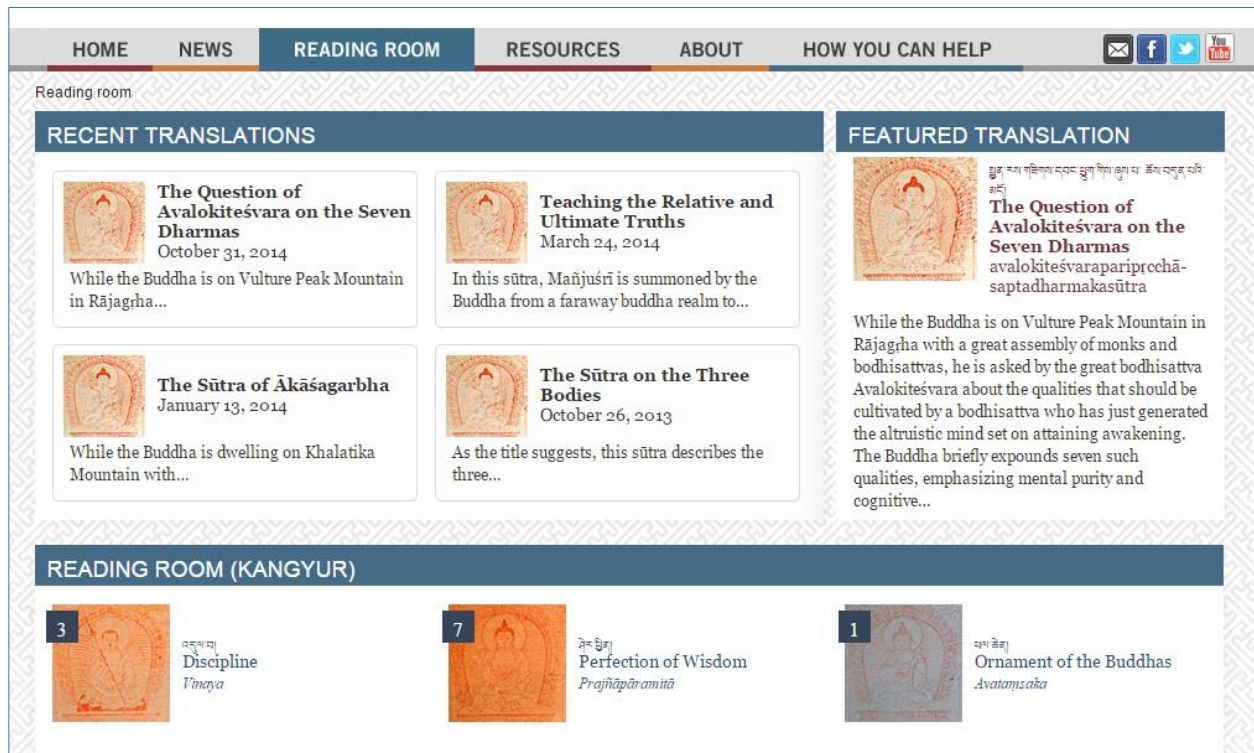

As you will see towards the top, we have some connections to whatever new translations have recently appeared.

As we scroll down, we come to the traditional sections of the Kangyur.

In other words, the *'dul ba* [Vinaya], *shes phyin* [Prajñāpāramitā], *phal chen* [Avataṃsaka], *dkon brtsegs* [Ratnakūṭa], *mdo sde* [General sūtra], *rgyud 'bum* [Tantra], *rnying rgyud* [Old Tantra], the *gzungs 'dus* [Dhāraṇī], and then this single text of the *dus skor 'grel bshad* [Kālacakra]; and lastly we have the *dkar chag* [Kangyur Catalogue] file.

For any of these sections, if we click on it we find a list of the titles. In fact our aim is to make this site a kind of *dkar chag* (catalogue) of the whole Kangyur. In each section we have a full list of all of the titles in that section. As far as I know, this is actually the only place you can see a list of more or less corrected titles along with the translation of each title. I am sure there is a lot to correct still with the English translations.
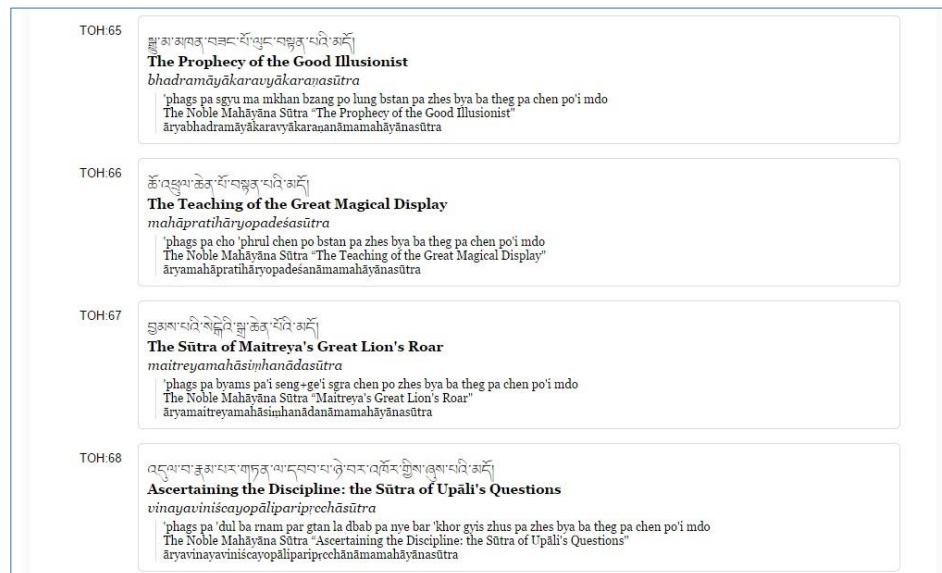
You can see that on the first three rows we have the Tibetan title, a translation of the title in English, and then an attempt at a correct Sanskrit title. Then, underneath, there are the honorific titles, in other words,

the title with the whole name that appears in the Tibetan with the *'phags pa* and the *theg pa chen po'i mdo*, and the *zhes bya ba* and all of that, so that it is all preserved.

All Section Texts

TOH:45

༄༅། །སྡོམ་པ་གསུམ་བསྟན་པའི་ལེའུ།

The Chapter Explaining the Three Vows

trisaṃvaranirdeśaparivartasūtra

'phags pa sdom pa gsum bstan pa'i le'u zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo
The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra "The Chapter Explaining the Three Vows"
āryatrisaṃvaranirdeśaparivartanāmamahāyānasūtra

TOH:46

སྒོ་མཐའ་ཡས་པ་རྣམ་པར་སྦྱོང་བ་བསྟན་པའི་མདོ།

The Teaching on Clearing the Boundless Gates

Anantamukhaviśodhananirdeśa

Translation in process

TOH:47

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་གསང་བ་བསམ་གྱིས་མི་ཁྱབ་པ་བསྟན་པའི་མདོ།

The Teaching on the Unfathomable Secrets of the Tathāgatas

tathāgatācintyaguhyanirdeśa

Translation in process

This is the list of the sūtras in the *Ratnakūṭa*, and where you see a picture like this, an icon, this means this is a text where we are currently translating and should appear soon. Later on, of course, when all the translations are complete, it will simply be a matter of clicking on one of these titles to show the translation.

I'll come back to the main page here, and click on a different section. This is the General Sūtra section. Here we start with the texts that are already translated.

GENERAL SŪTRA SECTION

Translated Texts

རྒྱ་ཆེར་རོལ་པ།
The Play in Full
Lalitavistara

The Play in Full tells the story of how the Buddha manifested in this world and attained awakening as perceived from the perspective of the Great Vehicle. The sūtra, which is structured in twenty-seven chapters, first presents the events surrounding the Buddha's birth, childhood, and adolescence in the royal palace of ...

TOH: 95

བདེ་བ་ཅན་གྱི་བཀོད་པ།
The Display of the Pure Land of Sukhāvatī
Sukhavativyūhasūtra

In the Jeta Grove of Śrāvastī, Buddha Śākyamuni, surrounded by a large audience, presents to his disciple Śāriputra a detailed description of the realm of Sukhāvatī, a delightful, enlightened abode, free of suffering. Its inhabitants are described as mature beings in an environment where everything enhances their spiritual inclinations. The principal buddha of Sukhāvatī is addressed as Amitāyus...

TOH: 115

ཟ་མ་ཏོག་བཀོད་པ།
The Basket's Display
Kāraṇḍavyūha

The Basket's Display (Kāraṇḍavyūha) is the source of the most prevalent mantra of Tibetan Buddhism: oṃ maṇipadme hūm. It marks a significant stage in the growing importance of Avalokiteśvara within Indian Buddhism in the early centuries of the first millennium. In a series of narratives within narratives, the sūtra describes Avalokiteśvara's activities in various realms...

TOH: 116

ཀླུའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་ཞུས་པ།
The Questions of the Nāga King Sāgara
Sāgaranāgarājaparipṛcchā

In this very short sūtra, the Buddha explains to a nāga king and an assembly of monks that reciting the four seals is equivalent to recitation of all of the 84,000 articles of the Dharma. He urges them to make diligent efforts to engage in understanding the four seals, which are the defining philosophical tenets of the Buddhist doctrine: all compounded phenomena are impermanent, all contaminated...

TOH: 155

Then below we have the texts that are currently in the process of being translated.

And then, when we come down far enough—here it is quite a long way, because there are a lot of texts in progress—we come to the full *dkar chag* (catalogue) of the whole section.

Now if one of these titles has been translated, we can simply click on the link. I was looking for one particular text here as an example; this is the sūtra we call the "Purification of Karmic Obscurations", the *las kyi sgrib pa rnam par dag pa*.
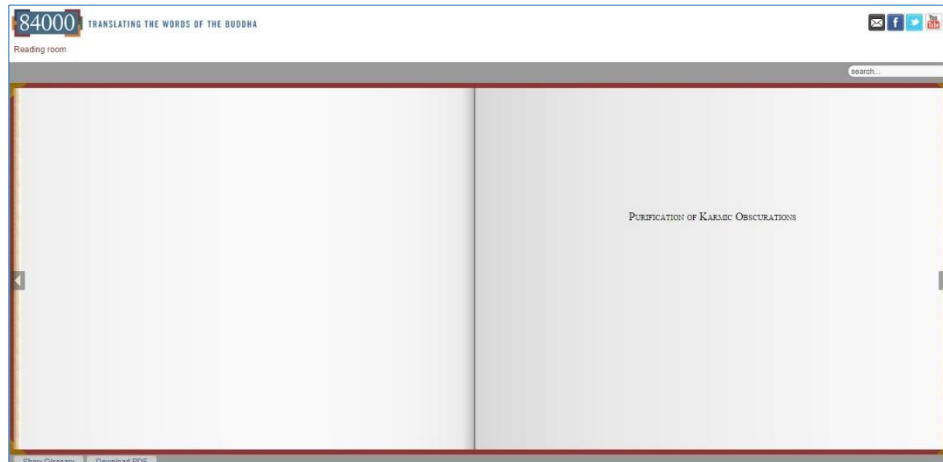
TOH:218

ལས་ཀྱི་སྒྲིབ་པ་རྣམ་པར་དག་པ།
Purification of Karmic Obscurations
Karmāvaraṇaviśuddhi

The Buddha is residing at Mango Grove in Vaiśālī, when Mañjuśrī brings before him the monk Stainless Light, who had been seduced by a prostitute and feels strong remorse for having violated his vows. After the monk confesses his wrongdoing, the Buddha explains the lack of inherent nature of all phenomena and the luminous nature of mind, and the monk Stainless Light gives rise to the mind of enlightenment. As requested by Mañjuśrī, the Buddha explains the manner in which bodhisattvas purify obscurations by generating an altruistic mind and realizing the empty nature of all phenomena. He asks Mañjuśrī about his own attainment of patient forbearance in seeing all phenomena as non-arising and recounts the tale of the monk Viradatta, who, many eons in the past, had engaged in a sexual affair with a girl and even killed a jealous rival before feeling strong remorse. Despite these negative actions, once the empty, non-existent nature of all phenomena had been explained to him by the bodhisattva Liberator from Fear, he was able to generate bodhicitta and attain patient forbearance in seeing all phenomena as non-arising. The Buddha explains that even a person who had enjoyed pleasures and murdered someone would be able to attain patient forbearance in seeing all phenomena as non-arising through practicing this sūtra, which he calls "the Dharma mirror of all phenomena."

View full translation

ལས་ཀྱི་སྒྲིབ་པ་རྣམ་པར་དག་པ།
Purification of Karmic Obscurations
karmāvaraṇaviśuddhi
'phags pa las kyi sgrib pa rnam par dag pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo
The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra 'Purification of Karmic Obscurations'
āryakarmāvaraṇaviśuddhināmamahāyānasūtra

And if we click here we now get the translation which looks something like a book.

84000 TRANSLATING THE WORDS OF THE BUDDHA
Reading room

search...

PURIFICATION OF KARMIC OBSCURATIONS

Show Glossary   Download PDF

Here we have the title page. Because everybody has a different screen size and different settings, the reader sometimes has to scroll up and down to see the whole page. Then we can turn the pages, we get a list of contents and then a summary and introduction by the translators.

And we come to the translation of the actual text, and it looks like this.
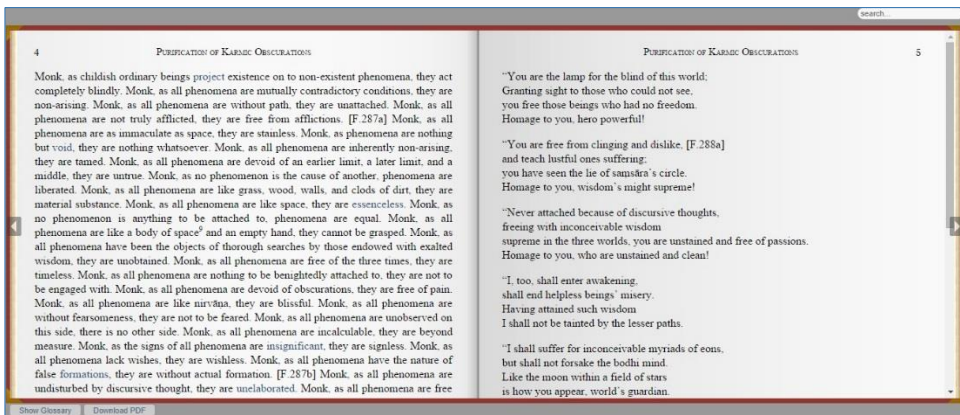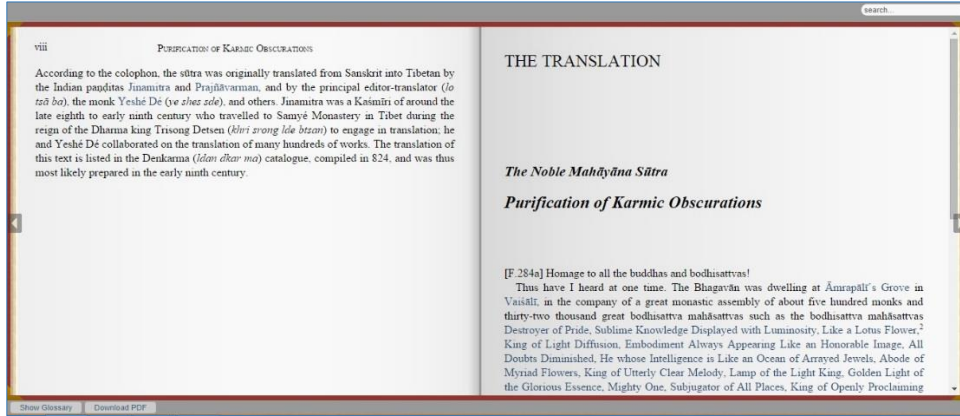
You will notice that there are some words which are in blue. Like "construct" here, "insignificant", "worthless". If we click on one of these words, we open a glossary, which shows us the word in Tibetan, Sanskrit, and its English translation.
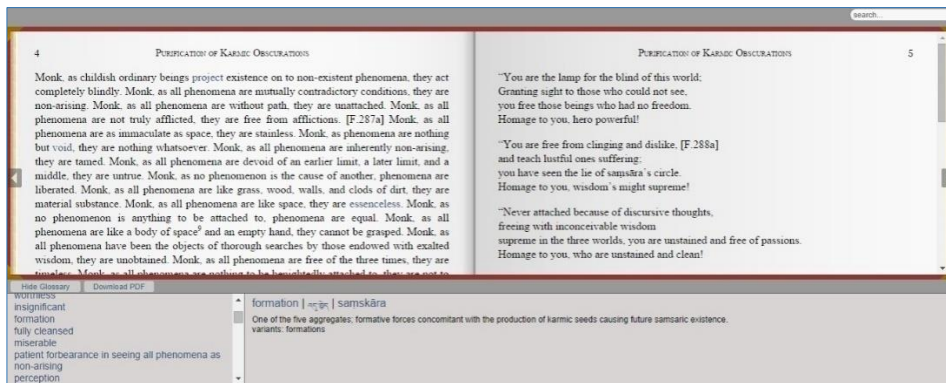
Of course, we don't put every word into the glossary. But we try to include the words that are more unusual, or the specific terminology used in any particular text. For each sūtra, you can find a list of the terms that are included in that text. You can scroll through them, check them and see what choices the translator has made in this particular case. There are three sections of the glossary. One is the main terms. The next section down is a list of all the personal names of people who appear in the sūtra. And the third section is the places that appear. I will explain the importance of that in a minute.

As you see here we have, in this text, a term that we were discussing yesterday – *mi skye ba'i chos bzod pa* with its Sanskrit equivalent and the translation chosen here, which was "patient forbearance in seeing all phenomena as non-arising".

Just before we leave this view, you can see that here we have a little button to hide or show the glossary. And there is another button here that, if you click it, downloads a PDF file of the text, which people can keep on their computers, or print or look at when they are offline.
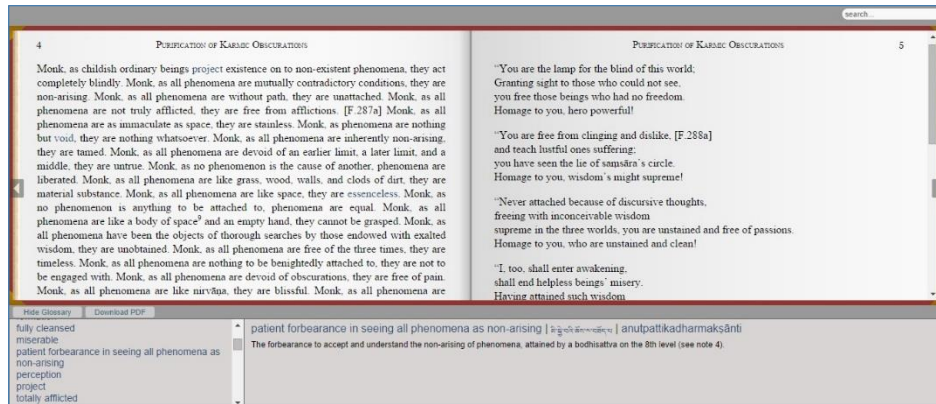
As we said yesterday, at this point in the evolution of the project, we are not trying to impose a fixed terminology on the translators. We are allowing them a more or less free choice, with some editorial interference from time to time. But our idea is to give the translators the possibility of innovating, of finding new terms, which we will publish if they work. They will all be collected in these glossaries.

Now the very important feature of these glossaries is that using the technology we can put all of the glossaries together. I will show you in a minute what it looks like.

Unfortunately. the technology is not yet fully completed. But we are now sending to the translators a file, which includes all of the terms that have been used till now. Our hope is that translators will use this file and they will look at the terms that have been used till now, and look at the other terms that other translators have used, and choose the ones that they think are most relevant and most correct. In this way a consensus will slowly build up between the translators.

Here you see what the cumulative glossary looks like when all of the glossaries from all of the translations so far are put together. So here we have the Tibetan term and the Sanskrit, the translation that is used in the actual file, and a little definition. We can also see which text it comes from.

As an example of how this cumulative glossary could be used by a translator: here we have the word *nyan thos* or *śrāvaka*. We can see that in four different works it has been translated as "hearer;" as "listener" in two other works; and in two translations it has been left as *śrāvaka*. From this glossary we can see which texts have which translation. And if we find something wrong or if we want to see the word used in context, we can go to that translation and consult it in more detail.

In the same way, we have another cumulative glossary for proper names. I think this is going to be a very interesting feature because there are some individuals in the texts—it might be a bodhisattva, it might be a deity, it might be a person who asks questions—who appear perhaps even as minor characters in different sūtras. Using this list, we can see if that person appears in another sūtra, and you can find out more about them. So this should be a very interesting research tool. So far we have only 14 or 15 finished translations. As you can see we already have over 700 names, which is quite interesting. In the "principal terms" list, we have about the same number: 600 to 700 different terms that are catalogued in this file. Of course the numbers will increase a lot in the coming months and years.

I'm going to conclude this quick, guided tour of the Reading Room now. Of course I'm sure you all will be exploring it, and we would very much welcome any comments or feedback that you have in the future as you take a look at what we are doing. This is where the results of our work are appearing, and they should be accessible to anybody, anywhere.