

## Tibetan Buddhist Book Collections

**Source:** Asian Classics Institute Input Project

The Tibetans collected Buddhist dharma material into three major collections, along with associated reference materials: Kangyur collection, Tengyur collection, and Sungbum collection.

### A. Kangyur Collection - Tibetan Translations of Early Sanskrit Classics

The Kangyur collection consists of approximately 81,600 pages of text in nearly 100 volumes.

1. Buddhist Discipline (འདུལ་བ། *dul wa*) - details on the eight sets of vowed morality that comprises the study of Buddhist ethics, or Vinaya (9000 pages in 13 volumes).
2. Perfection of Wisdom (འཇམ་ཐིམ་། *sher chin*) - 21 volumes of detailed philosophical inquiry (Prajna Paramita), traditionally subdivided into six groups:
  - a. Hundred thousand verses (འབུམ་། *bum*) - extensive presentations of the principles of the Perfection of Wisdom (11,000 pages in 12 volumes).
  - b. Twenty-five thousand verses (ཉི་མི། *nyi tri*) - similar in subject matter to the eight thousand verses (2500 pages in three volumes).
  - c. Eighteen thousand (མི་བརྒྱད། *tri gye*) - contains 1800 pages in two and one-half volume.
  - d. Ten thousand (མི་པ། *tri pa*) - 1200 pages in one and one-half volume.
  - e. Eight thousand verses (བརྒྱད་སྟོང་པ། *gya tong pa*) - principles on the perfection of wisdom presented in a seven-hundred-page narrative of an extraordinary spiritual adventure (700 pages in one volume).
  - f. Various works on the Perfection of Wisdom (འཇམ་ཐིམ་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་པ། *she chin na tsok*) - collection of shorter treatises on perceptual theory and epistemology (700 pages in one volume), includes the Diamond Cutter Sutra and the Heart of Wisdom Sutra.

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3. The Majority Sutras (ཕལ་ཚེན། *pel chen*) -this group is also known as the Buddha Avatamsaka Sutra (3600 pages in four volumes).
4. Anthology of Philosophy (དགོན་བརྗེགས། *kon tsek*) - wide range of shorter philosophical works (4100 pages in six volumes).
5. Manifold Sutra group (མདོ་མང། *mdo mang*) - records of oral teachings delivered by Gautama Buddha, these most often contain advanced philosophical topics such as the nature of human perception couched in historical narrative (23,000 pages in 32 volumes), includes the Lotus Sutra, the Teaching of Vimalakirti, the Lankavatara Sutra and the Sutra of Great Liberation.
6. Esoteric instruction (རྒྱན། *gyu*) -advanced philosophical and meditational techniques (24,000 pages in 20 volumes).

### **B. The Tengyur Collection - Tibetan Translations of the Classical Commentarial Literature**

The Tengyur collection consists of approximately 147,000 pages of text in over 200 volumes.

1. Classical Poetry and Eulogies (བསྐྱོད་ཚོགས། *to tsok*) - 650 pages in one volume.
2. Commentaries on Esoteric Texts (རྒྱན་འགྲེལ། *gyu drel*) - 65,000 pages in 78 volumes.
3. Treaties on the Perfection of Wisdom (ཤེར་ཕྱིན། *sher chin*) - includes texts by Maitreya, Vimalakirti, and Kamalashila (11,200 pages in 16 volumes).
4. Treaties on Middle Way Philosophy (དབུ་མ། *u ma*) - includes seminal works by Nagarjuna, Chandrakirti, and Shantideva (12,000 pages in 17 volumes).
5. Commentaries on Sutras (མདོ་འགྲེལ། *do drel*) - 6500 pages in 10 volumes.
6. Treaties on Mind-Only Philosophy (སེམས་ཅོམ། *sem tsam*) - includes important philosophical inquiries into the nature of reality by Asanga and Vasubandhu (10,500 pages in 16 volumes).

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7. Treaties on Higher Knowledge (མངོན་པ། *ngon pa*) - includes the famous Treasury of Higher Knowledge by Vasubandhu (6000 pages in 11 volumes).
8. Commentaries on Ethics and Buddhist Discipline (འདད་ལཱ་འགྲེལ། *du dre*) - 11,100 pages in 18 volumes.
9. Birth Stories (སྐྱེས་རབས། *kye rab*) - the previous lives of the Buddha and other important figures are used to illustrate the principles of actions and their consequences (2950 pages in four and one half volume).
10. Letters of Spiritual Advice (སྨྱིང་ཡིག། *drin yik*) - includes the famous Letter to a Friend, composed by Nagarjuna (600 pages in one and one-half volume).
11. Treatise on Logic and Valid Knowledge (ཚད་མ། *tse ma*) - includes important works by Dharmakirti and Dignaga (15,200 pages in 20 volumes).
12. Sanskrit Grammar and Linguistics (སྐྱེ་རིག་པ། *dra rik pa*) - 2850 pages in four volumes.
13. Medicine and Healing (གསོ་བ་རིག་པ། *so wa rik pa*) - 3800 pages in five volumes.
14. Fine Arts (བཟོ་རིག་པ། *zo rik pa*) - sculpture, painting, architecture, and other fine arts (220 pages in one-half volume).
15. Treatises on Government and Commerce (ལུགས་ཀྱི་བསྐྱོན་བཅོས། *luk kyi ten cho*) - 380 pages in one-half volume.
16. Miscellaneous Topics (སྣོ་ཚོགས། *na tsok*) - various grammatical treatises and liturgical works (7300 pages in nine volumes).
17. Catalogue of the Kangyur (བཀའ་འགྲུར་དཀར་ཚགས། *ka gyur kar chak*) - native catalog of the Kangyur text (390 pages in one volume).
18. Catalogue of the Tengyur (བསྐྱོན་འགྲུར་དཀར་ཚགས། *ten gyur kar chak*) - native catalog of the Tengyur text (1150 pages in one volume).

**C. Sungbum Collection - Commentarial Literature Composed in Tibetan**

This consists of roughly more than ten million pages from over 100,000 separate works.

1. Official Documents (བཅའ་ཡིག་ *ca yik*).
2. Liturgical Texts (ཚོ་ག་ *cho ga*).
3. Commentaries on Sutras (མདོ་འགྲེལ་ *do drel*).
4. Treatises on Classical Grammar (སྒྲི་ *dra*).
5. Art of Interpretation (སྒྲུང་རྒྱུ་ *drang nge*).
6. Survey of the Schools of Philosophy (གྲུབ་མཐུན་ *drub tha*).
7. Buddhist Discipline and Ethics (དུལ་ལ་བ་ *dul wa*).
8. Commentaries on Esoteric Texts (གྲུག་ *gyu*).
9. Treatises on Sacred Art (ལྷ་བཟོ་ *hla zo*).
10. Calendrical Materials (ཀར་རྩིས་ *kar tzi*).
11. Texts on Prominent Teachers (སླ་བརྒྱུད་ *la gyu*).
12. Steps of the Path Literature (ལམ་རིམ་ *lam rim*).
13. Bodhisattva Mind Training (ལྷོ་སྦྱོང་ *lo jong*).
14. Spiritual Biographies (སྐུ་ཐར་ *nam thar*).

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15. Higher Knowledge (མངོན་པ། *ngon pa*).
16. Instructions for Practice (ཉམས་ལེན། *nyam len*).
17. Poetics (སྒྲུབ་པ། *nyan ngak*).
18. Perfection of Wisdom (ཐར་ཅིན། *thar chin*).
19. Mind-only Philosophy (སེམས་ཙམ། *sem tsam*).
20. Spiritual Resumes (གསལ་ཡིག། *san yik*).
21. Works Relating to Tibetan Grammar (སུམ་རྟགས། *sum tak*).
22. Studies of Early Buddhist Saints (རྟོགས་བརྗོད། *tok jo*).
23. Miscellaneous (ཕྲན་ཚེགས། *thren tsek*).
24. Epistles and Letters (འཕྲིན་ཡིག། *thrin jik*).
25. Logic and Valid Knowledge (ཚད་མ། *tse ma*).
26. Lexical Materials (ཚིག། *tsik*).
27. Eulogies and Odes of Praise (བསྟོན་པ། *to pa*).
28. Middle-Way Philosophy (དབུ་མ། *u ma*).