

Kangyur

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"Kanjur" redirects here. For places in Iran, see [Kanjur, Iran](#).

Kangyur	
  Young monks printing scriptures in Sera Monastery, Tibet	
Tibetan name	
Tibetan	བཀའ་འགྱུར
showTranscriptions	
Chinese name	
Traditional Chinese	甘珠爾
Simplified Chinese	甘珠尔
showTranscriptions	

The [Tibetan Buddhist canon](#) is a loosely defined list of sacred texts recognized by various schools of [Tibetan Buddhism](#), comprising the **Kangyur** or **Kanjur** ('The Translation of the Word') and the **Tengyur** or **Tanjur** ([Tengyur](#)) ('Translation of Treatises').

Part of [a series](#) on

Tibetan Buddhism



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[Woodblock printing](#) of scriptures. [Sera Monastery](#). 1993.



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The Tibetan Buddhist Canon[[edit](#)]

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In addition to earlier foundational Buddhist texts from early Buddhist schools, mostly the [Sarvastivada](#), and [Mahayana](#) texts, the Tibetan canon includes [Tantric](#) texts. The last category is not always sharply distinguished from the others: the tantra division sometimes includes material usually not thought of as tantric in other traditions, such as the [Heart Sutra](#)^[1] and even versions of material found in the [Pali Canon](#).^[2]

The Tibetans did not have a formally arranged Mahayana canon and so devised their own scheme which divided texts into two broad categories, the "Words of the Buddha" and later the commentaries; respectively the Kangyur and [Tengyur](#).

The Tengyur underwent a final compilation in the 14th Century by [Bu-ston](#) (1290 – 1364). However, there is no proof that Bu-ston also took part in the collection and edition of the Tsal pa Kangyur, but he consecrated a copy of this Kangyur 1351 as he visited Tshal Gung-thang (Eimer 1992:178).^[3] It is known from *sakya mchog ldan* (1428–1507) that Bu-ston edited a Kanjur; however, it is not known which one. "The Kangyur usually takes up a hundred or a hundred and eight volumes, the Tengyur two hundred and twenty-five, and the two together contain 4,569 works."^{[4][5]}

Kangyur or "Translated Words" consists of works in about 108 volumes supposed to have been spoken by the Buddha himself. All texts presumably had a Sanskrit original, although in many cases the Tibetan text was translated from [Chinese](#) or other languages.

Tengyur or "Translated Treatises" is the section to which were assigned commentaries, treatises and [abhidharma](#) works (both Mahayana and non-Mahayana). The Tengyur contains around 3,626 texts in 224 Volumes.

The Kangyur is divided into sections on [Vinaya](#), [Perfection of Wisdom](#) Sutras, other [sutras](#) (75% Mahayana, 25% [Hinayana](#)), and [tantras](#). It includes texts on the [Vinaya](#), monastic discipline, metaphysics, the [Tantras](#), etc.^[6] Some describe the [prajñāpāramitā](#) philosophy, others extol the virtues of the various [Bodhisattvas](#), while others expound the [Trikāya](#) and the [Ālaya-Vijñāna](#) doctrines.^[7]

When exactly the term Kangyur was first used is not known. Collections of canonical Buddhist texts existed already in the time of [Trisong Detsen](#), the sixth king of [Tibet](#), in [Spiti](#), who ruled from 755 until 797 CE.

The exact number of texts in the Kangyur is not fixed, each editor takes responsibility for removing texts they consider spurious, and adding new translations. Currently there are about 12 available versions of the Kangyur. These include the [Derge](#), [Lhasa](#), [Narthang](#), [Cone](#), [Peking](#), [Urga](#), Phudrak, and Stog Palace versions, each named after the physical location of its printing. In addition some canonical texts have been found in [Tabo Monastery](#) and [Dunhuang](#) which provide earlier exemplars to texts found in the Kangyur. All extant Kangyur appear to stem from the Old [Narthang Monastery](#) Kangyur. The stemma of the Kangyur have been well researched in particular by Helmut Eimer.

The Bön Kangyur [[edit](#)]

The Tibetan [Bön](#) religion also has its canon literature divided into two sections called the Kangyur and Tengyur claimed to have been translated from foreign languages but the number and contents of the collection are not yet fully known.^{[by whom?][clarification needed]} Apparently, Bön began to take on a literary form about the time Buddhism began to enter Tibet. The Bön Kangyur contains the revelations of

[Shenrab](#) (Wylie: *gShen rab*), the traditional founder of Bön.^{[8][9]} A version was published in 1993–1997.^[10]

Footnotes[[edit](#)]

- [↑] Conze, *The Prajnaparamita Literature*
- [↑] Peter Skilling, *Mahasutras*, volume I, 1994, [Pali Text Society\[1\]](#), Lancaster, page xxiv
- [↑] Eimer, Helmut. Ein Jahrzehnt Studien Zur Überlieferung Des Tibetischen Kanjur. Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien, 1992.
- [↑] Stein, R. A. *Tibetan Civilization*. (1962). First English edition – translated by J. E. Stapleton Driver (1972). Reprint (1972): Stanford University Press, Stanford, California. [ISBN 0-8047-0806-1](#) (cloth); [ISBN 0-8047-0901-7](#) (paper)
- [↑] Stein, R. A. *Tibetan Civilization*. (1962). First English edition – translated by J. E. Stapleton Driver (1972). Reprint (1972): Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, p. 251. [ISBN 0-8047-0806-1](#) (cloth); [ISBN 0-8047-0901-7](#) (paper)
- [↑] Tucci, Giuseppe. *The Religions of Tibet*. (1970). First English edition, translated by Geoffrey Samuel (1980). Reprint: (1988), University of California Press, p. 259, n. 10. [ISBN 0-520-03856-8](#) (cloth); [ISBN 0-520-06348-1](#) (pbk).
- [↑] Humphries, Christmas. *A Popular Dictionary of Buddhism*, p. 104. (1962) Arco Publications, London.
- [↑] Tucci, Giuseppe. *The Religions of Tibet*. (1970). First English edition, translated by Geoffrey Samuel (1980). Reprint: (1988), University of California Press, p. 213. [ISBN 0-520-03856-8](#) (cloth); [ISBN 0-520-06348-1](#) (pbk).
- [↑] Stein, R. A. *Tibetan Civilization*. (1962). First English edition – translated by J. E. Stapleton Driver (1972). Reprint (1972): Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, pp. 241, 251. [ISBN 0-8047-0806-1](#) (cloth); [ISBN 0-8047-0901-7](#) (paper)
- [↑] [苯教《大藏经》的形成及其发展](#)

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Tibetan Canon

84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha

An Account of the Various Editions of Kangyur and the Results of Their Collation

[Csoma](#), *Analysis of the Dulva*, part of the Kangyur, Asiatic Researches, Calcutta, 1836, vol. 20-1, pp. 41-93 ([en ligne](#)).

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