

# Towards a Comprehensive Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon

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# SANSKRIT BUDDHIST TEXTS

- ❑ There are some 600 Mahayana Sutras that survived in Sanskrit or in Chinese and or in Tibetan translation.
- ❑ The only complete Mahayana Canon surviving is in Chinese translation, though it was originally in Sanskrit.
- ❑ It contains texts from many strands of earlier tradition. The earliest Mahayana texts were composed in a 'Middle Indo-Āryan' language which was Sanskritised during the Gupta era when Sanskrit became the official language of the Indian court.
- ❑ Most of the Mahayana sutra texts are composed in what is called Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit, a Middle Indo-Āryan Prakrit with ornaments and flourishes designed to imitate Sanskrit.
- ❑ Some later Buddhist texts, particularly those originating at the university at Nalanda, were composed in true Sanskrit

# A CLASSIFICATION SCHEME FOR THE DSBC

The first phase of the DSBC uses three broad categories:

1. sūtras (62 texts)
2. śāstras (85 texts)
3. stotras (108 texts)





# संगणिकृतं बौद्ध संस्कृत त्रिपिटकम् Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon



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## Introduction



University of The West and Nagarjuna Institute of Exact Methods (NIEM) have jointly launched the Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon Website for the benefit of the scholastic world. Our goal is to promote research into the vast corpus of Sanskrit Buddhist texts. The scriptures and treatises which make up this collection encompass tens of thousands of printed pages.

Electronic access to Sanskrit Buddhist texts, with its profound possibilities for enhancing the depth, scope and subtlety of research, has been a desideratum of the field for some time. Clearly, the conversion of canonical Buddhist texts into machine-readable format is an idea whose time has come.

In 2003, the University of the West, Los Angeles, under the generous sponsorship of Most Venerable Master Hsing Yun and guided by the initiative of Prof. Lewis Lancaster, began the Sanskrit Buddhist Canon Project (SBCP). The initial grant, covering the input of 50 Mahayana sutras, was completed in 2004.

Our second phase, covering the input of about 100 Shashtra titles comprising the works of Acarya Nagarjuna, Arya Deva, Asanga, and Vasubandhu has already commenced, and will be completed at the end of 2009. We are currently seeking donations for the final phase of the project, which will make over 150 additional sutras, shastras, and other Buddhist titles freely available to all.

# NEED FOR NEW CLASSIFICATION

- A new classification scheme is needed
- to make texts easier to find
- to convey a text's approximate historical origin
- to show a text's traditional doctrinal position(s)
- Modern classifications order texts by period and author as well as genre



# NEW CLASSIFICATION SCHEME

- Vinaya
- Sutra
- Abhidharma
- Dharani
- Avadana
- Jataka
- Stotra
- Shastra
- Tantra
- Miscellenous
- Secular

In this new Classification scheme, we have followed partly on the basis of Tibetan Kanjur and Tanjur classification.



# VINAYA

- An expression of the Buddha's perfect conduct, Vinaya supports the embodiment of enlightenment. Associated with training in moral discipline and concentration, the Vinaya teachings point out how to identify wrong action and the causes of wrong action, the way to correct action.
- Kanjur Catalogue lists following texts
  - Vinayavastu
  - Pratimoksa sutra
  - Vinayavibhasa
  - Vinayavibhanga
  - Bhiksuni pratimoksa sutra
  - Bhiksuni vinaya vibhanga
  - Vinayaksudrakavastu
  - Vinaya uttaragrantha
- But only some of them are extant in Sanskrit originals



# EXTANT VINAYA TEXTS

- Bodhisattva Pratimoksa Sutra
- Bhiksukarmavakya-
- Bhiksunivinaya
- Mulasarvastivadavinayavastu-
- Pratimoksa sutra of Mulasarvastivada
- Pratimoksa sutra of Mahasanghikas
- Pratimoksa sutra of Sarvastivada
- Vinayasutra of Gunaprabha
- Vinaya viniscaya Upaliparipreccha sutra



# SUTRA

- ❑ In Tibetan kanjur catalogue Dedge edition, there are more than 500 titles of Sanskrit sutras which includes the texts from both Hinayana and Mahayana tradition translated into Tibetan. Among them 20% of them seemed to have survived now. They are categorized in the following manner:
  - ❑ Prajnaparamita
  - ❑ Avatamsaka
  - ❑ Ratnakuta
  - ❑ Sutra-general



# PRAJNAPARAMITA

- ❑ The Prajnaparamita is the mother of all Buddhas, a perfect expression of omniscience and of the path to realization.
- ❑ Challenging all conventional views, it gives rise to great compassion, guiding the Bodhisattva to the realization of Buddha nature.
- ❑ The shorter Prajnaparamita sutras have traditionally been recited aloud, as a way of evoking the power of their blessing.
- ❑ Out of 25 texts of Prajnaparamita literature listed by Edward Conze, only following are said to be extant in Sanskrit.



# EXTANT PRAJNAPARAMITA SUTRAS

- Satasahasrika -100000 lines
- Pancavimsati Sahasrika-25000 lines
- Astadasa Sahasrika-18000 lines ( fragments)
- Dasa sahasrika-10,000 (fragments)
- Astasahasrika-8000 lines
- Adhyardha sahasrika 2500 lines
- Ratnagunasancayagatha
- Advayasatika Prajnaramita
- Suvikrantigami-pariprca Prajnaramita nirdesh sutra
- Pancasatika Prajnaramita sutra-500 lines
- Vajrachhedika Prajnaramita Sutra-300 lines
- Prajnaramita Hrdaya Sutra



# AVATAMSAKA SUTRA

- ❑ Among the Avatamsaka sutra class there are only two texts which are extant. They belong to the category of Nava vaipulya sutras of Newar or Nepalese Buddhism.
- ❑ The Avatamsaka Sutra is another example of a single Sutra made up of many other sutras, many of which,
- ❑ Particularly the Gandhavyuha Sutra
- ❑ Dasabhumika sutra still circulate as separate texts.



# RATNAKUTA

- ❑ The Ratnakuta is a collection of Sutras, each of which stands alone but all of which taken together form a complete expression of the all encompassing Dharma realm. In varying forms, they express the liberating qualities of the Three jewels and inconceivable expanse of the dharmadhatu.
- ❑ Out of 46 titles in Ratnakuta class only sutras in the next slide are extant in Sanskrit originals



# EXTANT RATNAKUTA COLLECTIONS

- Kashyapaparivarta nama Mahayana sutra
- Sukhavativyuha sutra (larger)
- Sukhavativyuha (smaller)
- Bhaisajyaguru vaiduryaprabharaja Sutra
- Nairatmyapariprccha sutra
- Aparimitayurjnana sutra
- Rastrapalapariprccha sutra
- Sagarnagarajapariprccha sutra
- Triskandhanama Mahayana sutra
- Vimalakirtinirdesh nama Mahayanasutra



# ABHIDHARMA

- ❑ Abhidharma reflects the Buddha's quality of speech, communicating the workings of samsara and nirvana and promoting a clear understanding of the nature of existence.
- ❑ Abhidharma is defined as the dharma that directs one toward nirvana.
- ❑ It clarifies the true nature of the dharma and provides a remedy for wrong views.



# SARVASTIVADA ABHIDHARMA

- ❑ Sarvastivadins appear to have considered their seven primary abhidharma texts to be extended versions of the various concise matrika, in full accord with the Buddha's teachings. They are:
  - ❑ Jnanaprasthana by Katyanaiputra
  - ❑ Dharmaskandha-Sariputra
  - ❑ Prajnaptipada-Maudgalyayana
  - ❑ Dhatukaya-Purna
  - ❑ Vijnanakaya-Devasarma
  - ❑ Prakaranapada-Vasumitra and
  - ❑ Sangitiparyaya-Mahakausthila



# EXTANT ABHIDHARMA LITERATURE

- There are several Sanskrit abhidharma literature extant composed by various Buddhist masters.
- Abhidharmakoshbhasya-Vasubandhu
- Abhidharmasamuccaya-Asanga
- Abhidharmasamuccayabhasya-
- Jnanaprasthan shastra-AryaKatyaniputra (fragments)
- Abhidharmamrita-Ghosaka
- Satyasiddhisastra –Haribhadra
- Prajnaptipada-Maudgalyayana/Maha Katyayana
- Sutarthabhidharmakosavyakhya-Yasomitra



# DHARANIS

- ❑ The Dharanis are the least explored branch of Buddhist Sanskrit literature .
- ❑ It is believed that Buddha had given these teachings on these Dharanis
- ❑ Aparimitayur Dharani is a good example for its efficacy in acquiring the longevity of life.
- ❑ In Nepal there are several Dharani collections in Manuscripts in Nepal Archives, Asha Archives, Keshar Library and so forth.
- ❑ We have established separate website for the collection of Dharanis:  
[www.dharanisangraha.com](http://www.dharanisangraha.com)



# AVADANA

❑ The avadanas are considered to be Buddhavacana (spoken by Buddha).

❑ Haribhadra's statement

*Sutram geyam vyakaranam gathodanavadanakam /*

*Itivrittakam nidanam vaipulyam ca sajatakam /*

*upadeshadbhutau dharmau dvadashanganidam vacah /*

❑ The avadana literature is twofold, with Shrivakayana and Mahayana divisions.

❑ The oldest of these collections is probably the Avadanasataka.



# EXTANT AVADANA LITERATURE

1. Avanasataka (100 stories)
2. Kalpadrumavadanamala (26 stories)
3. Asokavadanamala
4. Vicitrakarnika Avadanamala (32 stories)
5. Divyavadana (38 stories)
6. Vrata Avadana (3 stories)
7. Bhadrakalpa Avadana (34 stories)
8. Mahavastu Avadana
9. Dvavimsatya Avadana (22 stories)
10. Sugata Avadana
11. Ratnamala Avadana (12 stories)
12. Avadanakalpalata (108 stories)
13. Bodhisattvavadana
14. Uposadhavadana
15. Suchandravadana



# JATAKA

- ❑ The Jatakas are rightly acclaimed as the forerunners of the avadanas
- ❑ Examples of Sanskrit Jatakas are as follows:
- ❑ Jatakamala of Aryashura
- ❑ Jatakamala of Haribhatta



# STOTRA

- ❑ Stotras are also called stuti, or stava. It is directed towards the object of devotion. It is the expression of one's devotion towards this object.
- ❑ It also means the praises, confession, and self criticism.
- ❑ Most of Stotras composed by outstanding masters of Buddhism such as Ashvaghosh, Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, are found in Sanskrit from the early centuries of Christian era.
- ❑ DSBC has inputted 108 stotras and are available online. We are continue to input further stotras which amounts to 500 stotras primarily from Nepal Archives, Asha Archives and private collections.



# SHASTRA

In shastra section we have categorized as follows:

- Madhyamaka
- Yogacara
- Pramana
- Prajnāparamita
- Nirdeśh
- Misc.



# TANTRA

- ❑ Tantras encompass the teachings and qualities of all three collections, supporting the trainings of Suila , samadhi, and prajna simultaneously.
- ❑ The most extensive collection of Tantras is preserved in Tibetan translations, compiled into such major collections of sacred texts as the Kanjur, Nyingma rgyud-'bum and th bKa'-ma.
- ❑ Surprisingly enough, there are still vast collections of Tantra texts still preserved in Nepal archives, Asha Archives and Keshar Library.



# TANTRA CLASSIFICATION

- Kriya
- Carya
- Yoga
- Anuttara
- Sahajayana texts
- Ritual vrata texts
- Sadhana texts



# SECULAR SCIENCES

- It is assumed that “secular” works be input because they are closely tied to Buddhism. These works often reject non-buddhist systems of Knowledge (Vedic grammar), and this is seen by their incorporation in other Buddhist canons (Tibetan).
- Vyakarna
- Jyotisha
- Kosa
- Niti shastra
- Cikitsa vidya
- Silpavidya
- Kavya
- Nataka



# RESTORATION OF SANSKRIT BUDDHIST TEXTS

- ❑ It is believed that there had been a separate Sanskrit Buddhist canon in older period but it does not exist now.
- ❑ Most of the agama literature, Mahayana Sutras, and Shastras are not extant now and is available only in fragments.
- ❑ A bulk of śastra literature of the Buddhists has already been restored into Sanskrit and some of them are waiting for publication..
- ❑ In this act of restoration works, scholars from Vishva-bharati Shanti niketan, Adyar Library, Delhi University, K.P.Jayaswal Research Institute and others are worthy of mention.



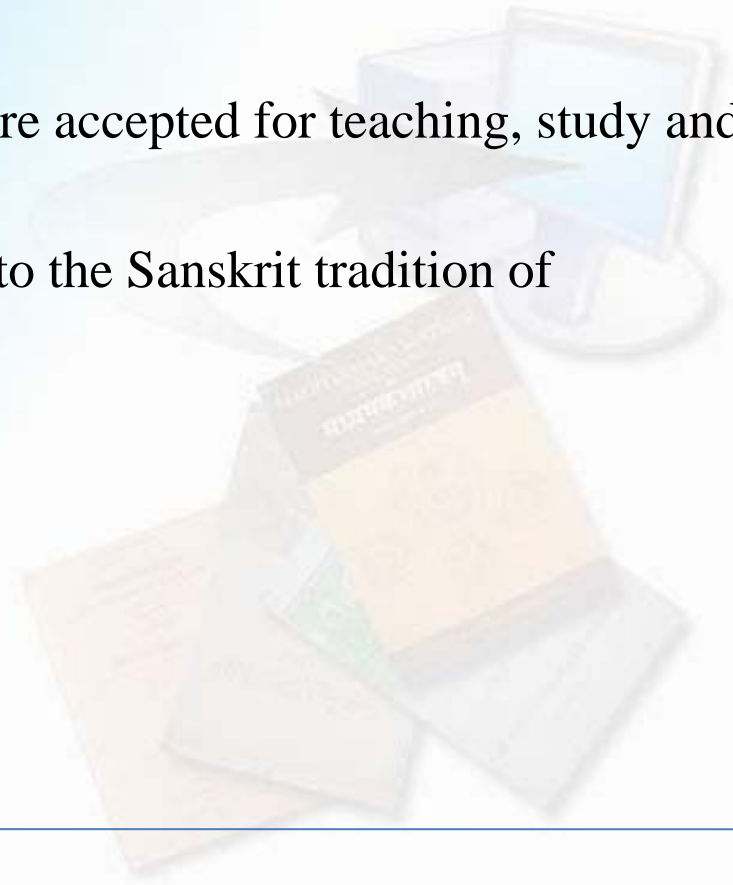
# EXAMPLES OF RESTORED TEXTS

- ❑ Jnanaprasthana shastra-
- ❑ Caturdharmanirdesh sutra-
- ❑ Suhridlekha of Nagarjuna
- ❑ Bhavasankranti sutra-Nagarjuna
- ❑ Bodhicittotpada sutra-Vasubandhu



# WHY A BUDDHIST CANON INSTEAD OF A COLLECTION?

- ❑ In India, collections definitely existed in various monasteries, even though the contents of these collections are not precisely known
- ❑ In Nepal, a core group of nine Mahāyāna texts (the navasūtra or navadharmā) is recognized. These texts were the among the first to be input for the DSBC
- ❑ Outside South Asia, in China and Tibet, canons of Buddhist texts were created for the convenience of Buddhist institutions
- ❑ A canon is useful for designating texts which are accepted for teaching, study and practice
- ❑ The DSBC aims to include all texts belonging to the Sanskrit tradition of Buddhism



# WHAT TEXTS ARE INCLUDED IN THE DSBC?

□ A Sanskrit work is included if:

1. It is spoken by a Buddha
2. Its author regards him/herself as Buddhist
3. It was used by Buddhists in preference to texts of other traditions eg. certain grammars and medical texts ('secular' Buddhist literature)



# WHO USES A BUDDHIST CANON IN SANSKRIT?

## 1. MAHAYANA

- ❑ All Mahāyāna schools derive their authority from Sanskrit texts, even though translations are used outside South Asia
- ❑ In translated scriptures, questions of meaning, interpretation and authenticity are sometimes only resolved by consulting the original Sanskrit

- ❑ Mahāyāna traditions deriving from Sanskrit texts are very widespread:

East Asian: China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Chinese overseas

Tibetan: Tibet ,Bhutan, India, Nepal, the West

Old Javanese: Indonesia

- ❑ Some Buddhist traditions still use Sanskrit texts directly:

Newar Buddhism: Nepal, Newar diaspora areas (India, etc.)

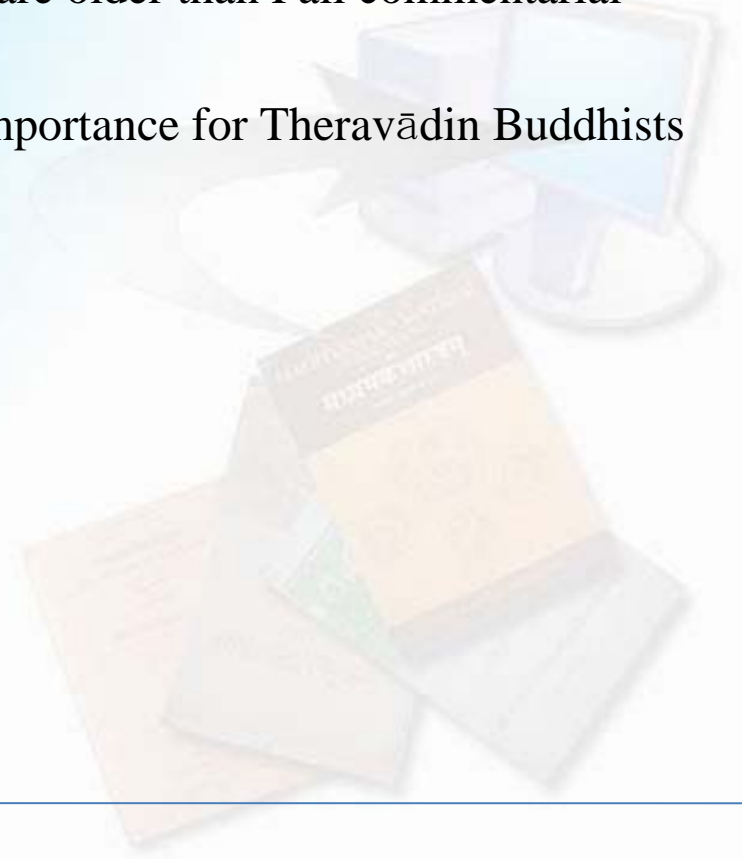
- ❑ Sanskrit is also extremely important for the tantric Buddhist traditions:

Mantranaya: Tibetan Buddhism, East Asia, Indonesia

# WHO USES A BUDDHIST CANON IN SANSKRIT?

## 2. SRAVAKAYANA

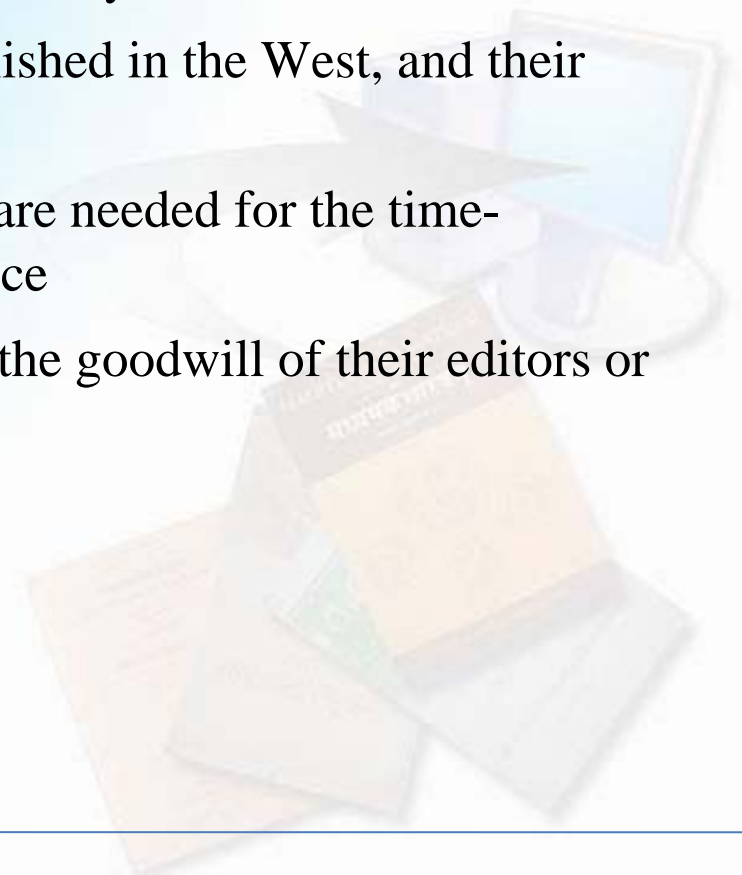
- ❑ Historically, some Śrāvakayāna schools used Sanskrit as well
- ❑ A handful of non-doctrinal Sanskrit texts are still transmitted in areas that have become totally Theravādin: Śrī Laṅka, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia
- ❑ Yet many Sanskrit texts of Indian Buddhism are older than Pali commentarial works
- ❑ Thus Sanskrit texts have at least exegetical importance for Theravādin Buddhists



# TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE SANSKRIT CANON

## 1. SEEKING PUBLISHED TEXTS

- ❑ There is still no up-to-date bibliography of all published Sanskrit texts
- ❑ Gaining access to published editions of Sanskrit texts remains difficult
- ❑ Even texts which appear in print are often very hard to find in libraries
- ❑ Most reliable editions published are published in the West, and their distribution is constrained by copyright
- ❑ To incorporate these editions, resources are needed for the time-consuming business of copyright clearance
- ❑ Some editions can only be used through the goodwill of their editors or publishers



# TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE SANSKRIT CANON

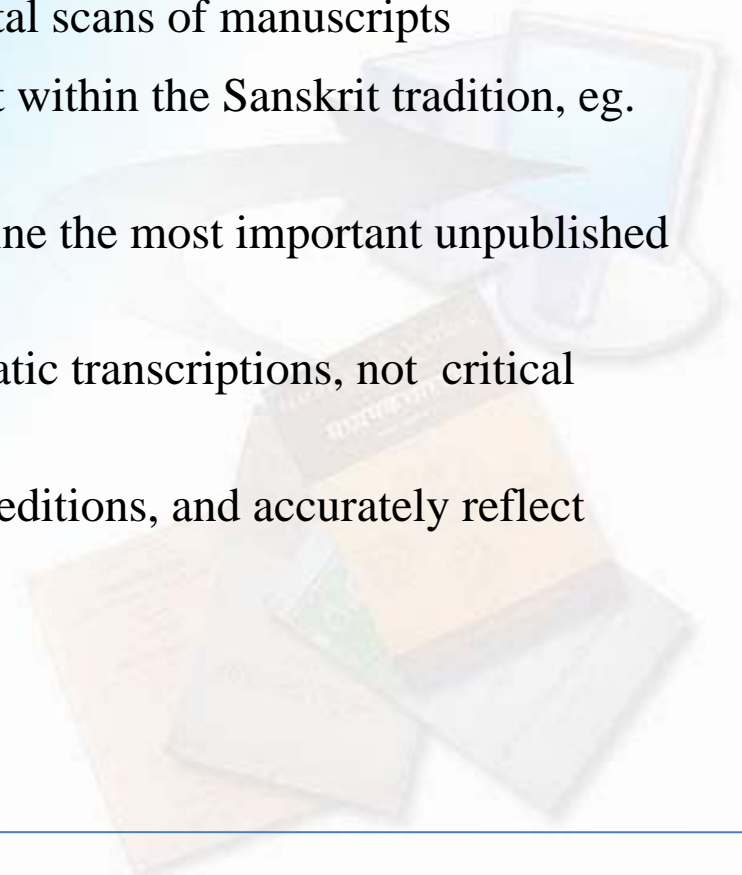
## 2. BUDDHIST 'SECULAR' LITERATURE

- Buddhists composed texts on subjects not directly concerned with Buddhism:
- Grammar (vyākaraṇa) and lexicography (koṣa)
- Poetry (kāvyā) and poetics (alaṅkāra)
- Medicine (ayurveda), etc.
- Yet texts on 'secular' subjects were written in line with Buddhist principles:
- Smaller and clearer grammars do without Vedic forms of Sanskrit
- Poetics is connected with theories of meaning
- Medicine is of practical benefit to living beings
- Historically, Buddhist institutions transmitted many 'secular' texts
- Manuscript collections in Nepal and Sri Lanka are evidence for this
- That these texts are sometimes used outside Buddhism does not diminish the Buddhist affiliation of their ideas or authors

# TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE SANSKRIT CANON

## 4. INPUTTING FROM MANUSCRIPTS

- ❑ A large number of texts have still not been published in any form
- ❑ Before modern communications and digital photography, access to manuscripts was limited
- ❑ It is now possible to input directly from digital scans of manuscripts
- ❑ Many unpublished texts are clearly important within the Sanskrit tradition, eg. Certain avadānas, stotras, and tantras
- ❑ A census of manuscripts is needed to determine the most important unpublished texts, and the most reliable manuscripts
- ❑ Texts input from manuscripts will be diplomatic transcriptions, not critical editions
- ❑ Transcriptions provide useful data for future editions, and accurately reflect manuscript traditions



# FUTURE GOALS OF DSBC

- The categorization of digital Sanskrit canon.
- Collaboration with ECAI Sanskrit web group
- Creation of comprehensive bibliography of Sanskrit Buddhist texts
- A formation of team of experts who will work for the publication of Digital Sanskrit Buddhist canon-DSBC in CDROM
- Publication of Diplomatic edition of unpublished Sanskrit texts from Manuscripts (DEST)
- Publication of Sanskrit Buddhist Tripitaka Series (SBTS) in the near future.

