

༄༅། །ཡེ་ཤེས་ཏ་ལ་ལའི་གཟུངས།

The Dhāraṇī of the Tathāgata Jñānolka

Jñānolkadhāraṇī

འཕགས་པ་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཏ་ལ་ལ་ཞེས་བྱའི་གཟུངས་འགྲོ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡོངས་སུ་སྦྱང་བ།

'phags pa ye shes ta la la zhes bya'i gzungs 'gro ba thams cad yongs su sbyong ba

The Noble Dhāraṇī of the Tathāgata Jñānolka that Purifies All Rebirths

Āryajñānolkanāmadhāraṇīsarvagatipariśodhanī



Toh 848
Degé Kangyur, vol. 100 (gzungs 'dus, e), folios 55.a–56.a

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co.

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SUMMARY

- s.1 *The Dhāraṇī of the Tathāgata Jñānolka* opens with a description of a group of four tathāgatas and four bodhisattvas, who are seated in the celestial palace of the Sun and the Moon. The deities of the Sun and Moon return to their celestial palace from elsewhere and, seeing these tathāgatas and bodhisattvas, both wonder whether they might obtain a dhāraṇī that would allow them to dispel the darkness and shine a light upon all beings. The tathāgatas, perceiving the thoughts of the Sun and Moon, provide them with the first dhāraṇī in the text. The bodhisattva Samantabhadra then provides a second dhāraṇī and instructs the deities of the Sun and Moon to use it to free beings who are bound for rebirth in the lower realms—even those who have been born in the darkest depths of the Avīci hell.

ac.

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i.

INTRODUCTION

i.1

The Dhāraṇī of the Noble Tathāgatha Jñānolka that Purifies All Rebirths centers on a pairing of four tathāgatas and four bodhisattvas, who offer dhāraṇīs to the deities of the Sun and the Moon after perceiving their wish to shine a light upon beings residing in the darkest depths of cyclic existence. The tathāgata Jñānolka is identified in the Indic title of the work in the Kangyur, and the Sanskrit names of the three tathāgatas accompanying him have been identified here thanks to an edition of the Khotanese manuscript of the *Jñānolkadhāraṇī* published, along with a brief study and German translation, by Ernst Leumann in 1920.¹ The set of four tathāgatas and four bodhisattvas at the center of the *Jñānolkadhāraṇī* cult, based on Leumann's Khotanese sources, are as follows:

i.2

· The four tathāgatas: Jñānolka, Suvarṇaprabhākūṭanirbhāsa, Satyavādin, and Bhīkṣmasvaragarjitarājā.

· The four bodhisattvas: Samantabhadra, Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta, Dhāraṇīs-vararāja, and Vajrapāṇi.

i.3

Leumann's edition also preserves Khotanese Sanskrit versions of the dhāraṇī mantras contained in the text that appear in this translation.

i.4

Mauro Maggi's summary of sources for the *Jñānolkadhāraṇī* notes that the majority of known extant versions of the text have survived in Khotanese witnesses, and that the earliest Chinese translations of the text derive from both a Khotanese original and a Tibetan translation. According to Leumann, the Tibetan translation of the text does not agree very closely with the Khotanese, and the Khotanese versions vary.² While the differences between the Tibetan translation and Khotanese manuscripts of the *Jñānolkadhāraṇī* raise the possibility that the version translated and preserved in the Kangyur derives from a separate source that has yet to be located, the Sanskrit manuscript witnesses that are currently available all indicate Khotan as the most likely location in which the cult of the four tathāgatas and bodhisattvas in this text and the dhāraṇī mantras it preserves flourished.

Aside from its obvious applications for purifying those still living of the possible fate after their death of lower rebirth, and its potential function as a ritual liturgy for the bodhisattva's practice of liberating beings, the narrative frame of the *Jñānolkadhāraṇī* indicates that its dhāraṇī mantras could have functioned as part of a funeral liturgy, designed rather to liberate from lower rebirth the recently deceased.

i.5 The *Jñānolkadhāraṇī* appears in the Denkarma³ and Phangthangma⁴ royal Tibetan catalogs of translated works, which indicates that the text was translated into Tibetan by at least the early ninth century. It is found in all Kangyurs, with one copy in Kangyurs of the Themphangma line and often two in Kangyurs of predominantly Tshalpa lineage; in the Degé Kangyur, there is one copy in the Action Tantra section (Toh 522) and one in the Compendium of Dhāraṇīs (Toh 848),⁵ while in some other Tshalpa Kangyurs (Choné, Lithang, Urga, Lhasa, and others) there are two copies in different volumes of the Tantra section. The text was translated into Chinese twice, first in the late seventh century by the translator Devaprajñā (T 1397)⁶ and then again in the tenth century by Dānapāla (T 1398).⁷

i.6 This translation is based on the two versions of the text preserved in the Degé Kangyur, in consultation with the versions in the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) of the Kangyur, and the text in the Stok Palace Kangyur.

**The Dhāraṇī of the Tathāgata Jñānolka that Purifies
All Rebirths**

1.

The Translation

[F.55.a]⁸

1.1

Homage to the Omniscient One.

Homage to all the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Homage to the blessed one, the tathāgata Jñānolka.

Homage to the tathāgata Suvarṇaprabhākūṭanirbhāsa.

Homage to the tathāgata Satyavādin.

Homage to the tathāgata Bhīkṣmasvaragarjitarājā.

1.2

The four bodhisattvas—Samantabhadra, the youthful Mañjuśrī, Dhāraṇīśvararāja, and Vajrapāṇi—were dwelling in the abode of the Sun and the Moon along with the tathāgatas. When the Sun and Moon reached the place where the tathāgatas and bodhisattvas were seated, they saw the tathāgatas upon lion thrones bedecked with jewels and the bodhisattvas seated within palaces arrayed with banners bearing the rose apple insignia.

1.3

The Sun and Moon each thought, “How can we obtain from these tathāgatas and bodhisattvas the dhāraṇī mantra called *the wise one pervading the ten directions*, which rises like the dawn to shine a light upon all beings and dispel their thick darkness? With its power we could shine a light upon all sentient beings.” [F.55.b]

1.4

The tathāgatas and bodhisattvas perceived the thoughts of the Sun and Moon and responded with the following dhāraṇī mantra:

1.5

*saryathīva cakṣurdada cakṣuprabha dhulamētha kalatha ithithaṃsa sūrata sūrata
suthāsa itithaṃsa vēlu vēlu vēlāpaṇi cārumūrtani āraṇi kālāpaṇi kālāpaṇi
tturudhusi turuturudhusi dhāsuti dhāsuti dharadhara dhiridhiri dhurudhuru
dhūradhūra kālakāla sathāsa sathāsa gīla gīla gīlāpaya gīlāpaya dhasu dhasu
sūṃddhu sūmbhu ēthasu ēthasu ēthasāpaṇi yijuru rede karakara kirikiri kurukuru*

*kurmakurma karmāpaṇi karmāpaṇi karmāpaṇi karmāpaṇi kēlukēlu kēlāpaṇi karkāri
karkāri lāru vuddhe dhurude mahādhurude karakara kirikiri piḍhusi piḍhusi dhasu
dhasu hasu hasu hasāpaṇi svāhā⁹*

1.6 Then the bodhisattva Samantabhadra addressed both the Sun and the Moon, saying, “Sons of the lineage, eighty-four million buddhas have taught this dhāraṇī mantra in order to help beings who are bound for lower rebirth. Sons of the lineage, it is much easier to find a rare udumbara flower than it is for these dhāraṇī mantra verses to appear in the world. Sons of the lineage, obtaining these dhāraṇī mantra verses is much easier than reading and retaining these verses in one’s mind. Sons of the lineage, it is far more likely for a buddha to appear in the world than it is for these dhāraṇī mantra verses to appear in the world. [F.56.a]

1.7 “Sons of the lineage, if one recites these dhāraṇī mantra verses three times a day and three times a night for twenty-one days on behalf of those beings trapped for eons in Avīci hell—namely, those who have committed the five inexpiable acts or who have forsaken the holy Dharma—the power of these verses will open the hundred doors of the great Avīci hell, and those beings will attain liberation. This being the case even for them, it goes without saying that for human beings in Jambudvīpa the same is true.

1.8 “Whoever hears these dhāraṇī mantra verses shall truly know that we, the four tathāgatas, the four bodhisattvas, and the Sun and Moon, support them.

1.9 “The dhāraṇī mantra verses are:

*dhunaṇi mahādhuṇati surusuru svāhā śuklaviśōdhani taratara svāhā | | jyōtipradīpe
turuturu svāhā | | padmamālani sattiyatarabudhe huruhuru svāhā satyabudde
saty’ālōkani kirikiri svāhā | | dhāraṇibuddhi apratihatabuddhi curucuru svāhā | |
lakṣaṇārcite dhūmaparihāre khurukhuru dhāra mahādhāra dharadhara yaṃ tīye
svāhā | | avrate sutape apratihatabuddhi dharadhara yaṃ tīye svāhā | |¹⁰*

1.10 “Homage to the blessed one, the tathāgata Jñānolka!
Homage to the tathāgata Suvarṇaprabhākūṭanirbhāsa!
Homage to the tathāgata Satyavādin!
Homage to the tathāgata Bhīkṣmasvaragarjitarājā!
Make these mantra verses effective! Svāhā!”¹¹

This concludes “The Noble Dhāraṇī of the Tathāgata Jñānolka that Purifies All Rebirths.”

NOTES

n.

n.1 Leumann (1920).

n.2 Maggi (2008).

n.3 Denkarma, F.303.a.4; see also Yoshimura (1950), p. 154.

n.4 *dkar chag 'phang thang ma*, p. 30.

n.5 This text, Toh 848, and all those contained in this same volume (*gzungs 'dus, e*), are listed as being located in volume 100 of the Degé Kangyur by the Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRC). However, several other Kangyur databases—including the eKangyur that supplies the digital input version displayed by the 84000 Reading Room—list this work as being located in volume 101. This discrepancy is partly due to the fact that the two volumes of the *gzungs 'dus* section are an added supplement not mentioned in the original catalog, and also hinges on the fact that the compilers of the Tōhoku catalog placed another text—which forms a whole, very large volume—the *Vimalaprabhānāmakālacakratantṛāṭīkā* (*dus 'khor 'grel bshad dri med 'od*, Toh 845), before the present volume, numbering it as vol. 100, although it is almost certainly intended to come right at the end of the Degé Kangyur texts as volume 102; indeed its final fifth chapter is often carried over and wrapped in the same volume as the Kangyur *dkar chags* (catalog). Please note this discrepancy when using the eKangyur viewer in this translation.

n.6 Lewis R. Lancaster, “K 476,” *The Korean Buddhist Canon*, accessed February 12, 2019, http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/files/k0476.html.

n.7 Lewis R. Lancaster, “K 476,” *The Korean Buddhist Canon*, accessed February 12, 2019, http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/files/k0476.html.

- n.8 In the Toh 522 version of this text there is discrepancy in the folio numbering between the 1737 *par phud* printings and the late (post *par phud*) printings of the Degé Kangyur. Although the discrepancy is irrelevant here, further details concerning this may be found in [note 8](https://read.84000.co/translation/toh522.html#end-note-UT22084-088-016-61) (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh522.html#end-note-UT22084-088-016-61>) of the Toh 522 version of this text.
- n.9 This is the Sanskrit for the first dhāraṇī mantra as it appears in Leumann's 1920 edition of the Khotanese version of the *Jñānolkadhāraṇī*. See Leumann (1920), p. 158.
- n.10 This is the Sanskrit for the second dhāraṇī mantra as it appears in Leumann's 1920 edition of the Khotanese version of the *Jñānolkadhāraṇī*.
- n.11 The Sanskrit names for the four tathāgatas in this translation have been derived from the concluding verse to the preceding dhāraṇī, which reads:
*namo jñānolkasya tathāgatasya namo suvarṇaprabhākūṭanirbhāsasya tathāgatasya
namo satyavādinē tathāgatasya namau bhikṣmasvaragarjitarājebhya tathātatēbhya
siddhyaṃtu maṇtrapadā svāhā* | | . See Leumann (1920), p. 158.

b.

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'phags pa ye shes ta la la zhes bya ba'i gzungs 'gro ba thams cad yongs su sbyong ba (*Āryajñānolkanāmadhāraṇīsarvagatipariśodhanī*). Toh 848, Degé Kangyur vol. 100 (gzungs 'dus, e), folios 55.a–56.a.

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GLOSSARY

· Types of attestation for Sanskrit names and terms ·

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in the Sanskrit manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other Sanskrit manuscripts of the Kangyur or Tengyur.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where Tibetan-Sanskrit relationship is attested in dictionaries or other manuscripts.
RP	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan phonetic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the Tibetan phonetic rendering of the term.
RS	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan semantic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the semantics of the Tibetan translation.
SU	<i>Source Unspecified</i> This term has been supplied from an unspecified source, which most often is a widely trusted dictionary.

g.1 Avīci hell

mnar med pa

མནལ་མེད་པ།

avīci

The lowest hell; the eighth of the eight hot hells.

g.2 Bhīkṣmasvaragarjitarājā

'jigs pa'i sgra sgrogs rgyal po

འཇིགས་པའི་སྐྱོགས་རྒྱལ་པོ།

bhīkṣmasvaragarjitarājā

A tathāgata associated with Jñānolka.

g.3 Dhāraṇīśvararāja

gzungs kyi dbang phyug rgyal po

གཟུངས་ཀྱི་དབང་ཕྱག་རྒྱལ་པོ།

dhāraṇīśvararāja

A bodhisattva.

g.4 Jñānolka

ye shes ta la la

ཡེ་ཤེས་ཏ་ལ་ལ།

jñānolka

A tathāgata.

g.5 Mañjuśrī, the youthful

'jam dpal gzhon nur gyur pa

འཇམ་དཔལ་གཞོན་ནུར་གྱུར་པ།

mañjuśrīkumārabhūta

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Mañjuśrī is one of the “eight close sons of the Buddha” and a bodhisattva who embodies wisdom. He is a major figure in the Mahāyāna sūtras, appearing often as an interlocutor of the Buddha. In his most well-known iconographic form, he is portrayed bearing the sword of wisdom in his right hand and a volume of the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* in his left. In addition to the epithet Kumārabhūta, which means “having a youthful form,” Mañjuśrī is also called Mañjughoṣa, Mañjusvara, and Pañcaśikha.

g.6 Samantabhadra

kun tu bzang po

ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ།

samantabhadraḥ

A bodhisattva.

g.7 Satyavādin

bden gsung

བདེན་གསུང་།

satyavādin

A tathāgata associated with Jñānolka.

g.8 Suvarṇaprabhākūṭanirbhāsa

'od brtsegs snang ba

འོད་བརྟེན་གས་སྣང་བ།

suvarṇaprabhākūṭanirbhāsa

A tathāgata associated with Jñānolka.

g.9 Vajrapāṇi

phyag na rdo rje

ཕྱག་ནེ་རྗེ།

vajrapāṇi

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Vajrapāṇi means “Wielder of the Vajra.” In the Pali canon, he appears as a yakṣa guardian in the retinue of the Buddha. In the Mahāyāna scriptures he is a bodhisattva and one of the “eight close sons of the Buddha.” In the tantras, he is also regarded as an important Buddhist deity and instrumental in the transmission of tantric scriptures.