

༄༅། །འཇམ་དཔལ་གྱི་སྤགས་ཡི་གེ་འབྲུ་གཅིག་པའི་ཚོགས།

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## **The Procedure for Mañjuśrī's Single-Syllable Mantra**

འཕགས་པ་འཇམ་དཔལ་གྱི་སྐྱབས་ཡི་གེ་འབྲུ་གཅིག་པའི་ཚོ་ག།

*'phags pa 'jam dpal gyi sngags yi ge 'bru gcig pa'i cho ga*

The Noble Procedure for Mañjuśrī's Single-Syllable Mantra



Toh 896  
Degé Kangyur vol. 100 (gzungs, e), folios 168.a.2–168.a.6

Translated by the Tibetan Classics Translators Guild of New York

First published 2023  
Current version v 1.0.7 (2023)  
Generated by 84000 Reading Room v2.19.5

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co.

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## SUMMARY

- s.1 *The Procedure for Mañjuśrī's Single-Syllable Mantra* is a pithy text extolling an exceedingly secret and potent single-syllable mantra. Following a note regarding its universal efficacy, the remaining portion of the text outlines ritual applications for the remediation of specific ailments through the consecration of common items as sacral implements in rites of healing.

ac.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- ac.1 Translated by David Mellins and Kaia Fischer, with Geshé Lobsang Dawa and Phakyab Rinpoche (Geshé Ngawang Sungrab), under the auspices of the Tibetan Classics Translators Guild of New York. Introduction by David Mellins and Kaia Fischer. Special thanks to Diwakar Acharya of All Souls College, Oxford for sharing his expertise on tantric syllabary, and to Paul Hackett for generously sharing his bibliographic expertise and resources. This translation would not have been possible without the kind and dedicated tutelage of Gen Lozang Jamspal, Executive Director, Tibetan Classics Translators Guild of New York.
- ac.2 The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

i.

## INTRODUCTION

i.1 *The Procedure for Mañjuśrī's Single-Syllable Mantra*<sup>1</sup> appears as the last of six dhāraṇī scriptures (Toh 545–550) gathered together within the Tantra section of the Degé Kangyur that provide instruction in incantatory practices that feature the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. Five of these scriptures (Toh 547 omitted) also appear in the Dhāraṇī section of the Degé Kangyur as Toh 892–896. This is the pithiest of the canonical Mañjuśrī dhāraṇīs and includes neither a Sanskrit title nor an opening salutation.

i.2 The scripture begins simply with a statement of the Tibetan title, followed by the prefatory expression *tadyathā*, the introductory mantra syllable *om*, and then the single syllable *ḥṣṇṇṃ*.<sup>2</sup> The dhāraṇī is then extolled as being both exceedingly secret and potent. After praising its universal efficacy, the remainder of the text outlines a series of ritual applications to remedy specific ailments, involving the consecration of common items as sacral implements in rites of healing.

i.3 A Sanskrit version of the text is to our knowledge no longer extant, and it appears that the text was never translated into Chinese. The Tibetan translation lacks a colophon that might have offered information about the history of its transmission or the identity of its translators. Its absence from the Denkarma and Phangthangma imperial catalogs suggests that it was translated into Tibetan later than the beginning of the ninth century CE<sup>3</sup> but before the flourishing of the scholar Butön Rinchen Drup (*bu ston rin chen grub*, 1290–1364), who listed its Tibetan title, along with those of the other texts in this collection (Toh 545–550), in his *History of Buddhism*.<sup>4</sup>

i.4 This English translation is based on the two versions in the Degé Kangyur, one in the Tantra section (Toh 550) and the other in the Dhāraṇī section (Toh 896), in consultation with the variant readings recorded in the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) and with the Stok Palace Kangyur.



The Noble

**Procedure for Mañjuśrī's Single-Syllable Mantra**

1.

## The Translation

[F.14.b]

1.1

*tadyathā | om kṣṇīm | |*<sup>5</sup>

1.2

This single-syllable mantra is exceedingly secret, for it accomplishes every aim and performs every action. As the essence of all the tathāgatas, it fulfills all hopes.

1.3

Holding a tooth stick incanted with the mantra will cure toothache. Sea salt incanted seven times with the mantra, when applied to the eyes, will cure eye disease.

1.4

If a person has a weapon fragment lodged inside of them, consecrate old and melted butter seven or one hundred and eight times with the mantra and give it to them to drink, or apply it to the wound, and the fragment will be expelled.

1.5

Indigestion, swelling, dysentery, and feverish diarrhea will be cured by eating *mu rang* salt,<sup>6</sup> sea salt, or any other suitable rock salt incanted seven times with the mantra, and recovery will be the very same day.

1.6

Sweeping motions made with a raven's feather incanted seven times with the mantra will heal illnesses of the brain.

1.7

*This concludes the noble "Procedure for Mañjuśrī's Single-Syllable Mantra."*

n.

## NOTES

- n.1 This is the title given at the beginning of the text in all versions of the Kangyur consulted. The colophon, however, titles it *The Dhāraṇī of Mañjuśrī's Single Syllable* ('jam dpal gyi yi ge 'bru gcig pa'i gzungs).
- n.2 Chapter 9 of *The Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī* (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh543.html#UT22084-088-038-chapter-9>) is dedicated to a similarly potent single-syllable mantra of Mañjuśrī. In that text, which is extant in Sanskrit, the single-syllable mantra is *ḥṛīṃ*.
- n.3 The Denkarma catalog is usually dated to ca. 812 CE
- n.4 Butön Rinchen Drup, *chos 'byung*, folio 172.a/p. 975.
- n.5 Provisional translation: "It is: *oṃ kṣṇīṃ*."
- n.6 "mu rang salt," for unfamiliar *mu rang tshwa*. This may be a transliteration of the Sanskrit *muraṅgī* and thus refer to the refined products of *Moringa oleifera*, which have both culinary and medicinal applications.

b.

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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 dhāraṇī

*gzungs*

གཟུངས།

*dhāraṇī**Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The term *dhāraṇī* has the sense of something that “holds” or “retains,” and so it can refer to the special capacity of practitioners to memorize and recall detailed teachings. It can also refer to a verbal expression of the teachings—an incantation, spell, or mnemonic formula that distills and “holds” essential points of the Dharma and is used by practitioners to attain mundane and supramundane goals. The same term is also used to denote texts that contain such formulas.

g.2 Mañjuśrī

'jam dpal

འཇམ་དཔལ།

*mañjuśrī*

*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.3 mantra

sngags

སྔགས།

*mantra*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

A formula of words or syllables that are recited aloud or mentally in order to bring about a magical or soteriological effect or result. The term has been etymologized to mean “that which protects (*trā*) the mind (*man*)”.

g.4 tathāgata

de bzhin gshegs pa

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ།

*tathāgata*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

A frequently used synonym for *buddha*. According to different explanations, it can be read as *tathā-gata*, literally meaning “one who has thus gone,” or as *tathā-āgata*, “one who has thus come.” *Gata*, though literally meaning “gone,” is a past passive participle used to describe a state or condition of existence.

*Tatha(tā)*, often rendered as “suchness” or “thusness,” is the quality or condition of things as they really are, which cannot be conveyed in conceptual, dualistic terms. Therefore, this epithet is interpreted in different ways, but in general it implies one who has departed in the wake of the buddhas of the past, or one who has manifested the supreme awakening dependent on the reality that does not abide in the two extremes of existence and quiescence. It also often used as a specific epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni.