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## The Threefold Ritual



Toh 846a  
Degé Kangyur, vol. 100 (gzungs 'dus, e), folio 3.b

Translated by the Dharmachakra Translation Committee  
under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha

First published 2020  
Current version v 1.1.15 (2023)  
Generated by 84000 Reading Room v2.19.5

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co.

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## SUMMARY

s.

- s.1 *The Threefold Ritual* contains a short liturgy for invoking the pantheon of worldly deities, inviting these beings to seize the rare opportunity to listen to the Dharma, and proclaiming the aspiration that all the worldly beings that have gathered to hear the Dharma receive their share of the merit one has generated.

ac.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ac.1 Translated by the Dharmachakra Translation Committee under the supervision of Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche. The translation was produced by Adam Krug and edited by Ryan Damron.

The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

i.

## INTRODUCTION

i.1

*The Threefold Ritual* contains a short liturgy for invoking the pantheon of worldly deities, inviting these beings to seize the rare opportunity to listen to the Dharma, and proclaiming the aspiration that all the worldly beings that have gathered to hear the Dharma receive their share of the merit one has generated.

i.2

This text does not appear in either the Denkarma or Phangthangma royal Tibetan catalogs of translated works, and it also does not appear to have been translated into Chinese at any point. Combined with the fact that the title information for the text lacks a Sanskrit or otherwise Indic title as well as a colophon listing any Indic or Tibetan translator, it is possible that this work may in fact be Tibetan in origin.

i.3

This translation is based on the version of *The Threefold Ritual* found at the opening of the Compendium of Dhāraṇīs (*gzungs 'dus*) section in the Degé Kangyur in consultation with the text as it appears in the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) of the Kangyur. This text does not appear as an independent work in the Tohoku catalog, where it is listed under the number Toh 846<sup>1</sup> and combined with the text *The Threefold Invocation Ritual* (*spyān 'dren rgyud gsum pa*) that immediately precedes it. It has been translated here as an independent work under the modified Tohoku number Toh 846a. The decision to present this text as an independent work is supported by the Degé Kangyur, where it appears with its own title and colophon, and by the Dunhuang manuscript witnesses to the text presented in Marcelle Lalou's 1938 study, edition, and French translation. Lalou's work shows that the Dunhuang witnesses to the two works cataloged under Toh 846 bear the individual titles *The Threefold Ritual* (*rgyud gsum pa*) and *An Invocation of the Great Deities and Nāgas* (*lha klu chen po rnam spyān dran pa*). In the Degé Kangyur, the latter of these two corresponds to the present work and bears the title *The Threefold Ritual* (*rgyud gsum pa*). Both works are found

in other Kangyurs of predominantly Tshalpa lineage, but in those without a separate section of dhāraṇī they are placed in the tantra sections. Kangyurs that reflect the Thempangma tradition do not include either work.

## **The Threefold Ritual**

1.

## The Translation

[F.3.b]

- 1.1 Brahṃā, great king Śakra, gods and nāgas,  
Yakṣas, gandharvas, uragas, asuras,  
Garuḍas, kumbhāṇḍas, kinnaras,  
All beings who are sons of the Sugata,  
Accept these seven wonderful and resplendent jewels and listen to me.
- 1.2 The qualities of the blessed Buddha are inconceivable.  
The qualities of the holy Dharma are inconceivable.  
The qualities of the noble Saṅgha are inconceivable.  
The unsurpassed fruition of true faith  
In the inconceivable Three Jewels is inconceivable.
- 1.3 It is rare to hear so much as the names of the Three Jewels,  
Even over the course of millions of eons.  
Now that you have taken such a rare embodiment endowed with the  
    freedoms,  
Use the energy of your magical abilities and faith to approach,  
And listen to the profound teaching of the Victor  
In this sanctuary bedecked with the jewels of liberation.
- 1.4 May those who gather here intent upon the holy Dharma,  
Such as powerful gods, nāgas, yakṣas, and the like,  
Accept this share of Dharma merit: we dedicate it  
So that you may increase in splendor and retinue and accomplish what you  
    desire.
- 1.5 May you obtain the nectar of the teachings,  
Bring prosperity to each and every class of beings wherever they are,  
And protect the teachings of the tathāgatas.

*This concludes "The Threefold Ritual."*

n.

## NOTES

- n.1 The present text, 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 *Vimalaprabhānāmakālacakratantṛāṭikā* (*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.

b.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### · Source Texts ·

*spyān 'dren rgyud gsum pa*. Toh 846, Degé Kangyur vol. 100 (gzungs 'dus, e), folios 1.a–3.b.

*spyān 'dren rgyud gsum pa. bka' 'gyur* (dpe bsdur ma) [Comparative Edition of the Kangyur], krung go'i bod rig pa zhib 'jug ste gnas kyi bka' bstan dpe sdur khang (The Tibetan Tripitaka Collation Bureau of the China Tibetology Research Center). 108 volumes. Beijing: krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang (China Tibetology Publishing House), 2006–2009, vol. 97, pp. 3–9.

### · Work Cited ·

Lalou, Marcelle. "Notes de mythologie bouddhique." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 3, no. 2 (July 1938): 128–36.

## 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

Brahmā

*tshangs pa*

མྱེས་པ།

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

A high-ranking deity presiding over a divine world where other beings consider him the creator; he is also considered to be the lord of the Sahā world (our universe). Though not considered a creator god in Buddhism, Brahmā occupies an important place as one of two gods (the other being Indra/Śakra) said to have first exhorted the Buddha Śākyamuni to teach the Dharma. The particular heavens found in the form realm over which Brahmā rules are often some of the most sought-after realms of higher rebirth in Buddhist literature. Since there are many universes or world systems, there are also multiple Brahmās presiding over them. His most frequent epithets are “Lord of Sahā World” (*Sahāṃpati*) and Great Brahmā (*Mahābrahmā*).

g.2 garuḍa

*gser 'dab*

གསེར་འདབ།

*garuḍa*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

In Indian mythology, the garuḍa is an eagle-like bird that is regarded as the king of all birds, normally depicted with a sharp, owl-like beak, often holding a snake, and with large and powerful wings. They are traditionally enemies of the nāgas. In the Vedas, they are said to have brought nectar from the heavens to earth. *Garuḍa* can also be used as a proper name for a king of such creatures.

g.3 Kinnara

*mi'am ci*

མིའམ་ཅི།

*kinnara*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

A class of nonhuman beings that resemble humans to the degree that their very name—which means “is that human?”—suggests some confusion as to their divine status. Kinnaras are mythological beings found in both Buddhist and Brahmanical literature, where they are portrayed as creatures half human, half animal. They are often depicted as highly skilled celestial musicians.

g.4 kumbhāṇḍa

*grul bum*

གུལ་བུམ།

*kumbhāṇḍa*

A class of semi-divine being inhabiting the southern slopes of Mount Meru and in service to King Virūdhaka; sometimes also classed among evil spirits.

g.5 Śakra

*brgya byin*

བརྒྱ་བྱིན།

*śakra*

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The lord of the gods. Alternatively known as Indra, the deity that is called “lord of the gods” dwells on the summit of Mount Sumeru and wields the thunderbolt. The Tibetan translation *brgya byin* (meaning “one hundred sacrifices”) is based on an etymology that *śakra* is an abbreviation of *śata-kratu*, one who has performed a hundred sacrifices. Each world with a central Sumeru has a Śakra. Also known by other names such as Kauśika, Devendra, and Śacipati.

g.6 uraga

*lto 'phye*

ལྷོ་འཕྱེ།

*uraga*

A serpent deity that inhabits specific localities. Also known as a kākorda.