

ཡེ་ཤེས་ཏ་ལ་ལའི་གཟུངས།

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**The Dhāraṇī of the Tathāgata Jñānolka**

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*Jñānolkadhāraṇī*

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

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

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The Noble Dhāraṇī of the Tathāgata Jñānolka that Purifies All Rebirths

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*Āryajñānolkanāmadhāraṇīsarvagatipariśodhanī*



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

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## SUMMARY

s.

- 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.

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- 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.

## INTRODUCTION

i.

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.<sup>1</sup> 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, Suvarṇaprabhākūṭānirbhāsa, Satyavādin, and Bhīkṣmasvaragarjitarājā.

· The four bodhisattvas: Samantabhadra, Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta, Dhāraṇīśvararāja, 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.<sup>2</sup> 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 *Jñānolka-dhāraṇī* 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 Denkarma<sup>3</sup> and Phangthangma<sup>4</sup> 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 Incantations (Toh 848),<sup>5</sup> 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)<sup>6</sup> and then again in the tenth century by Dānapāla (T 1398).<sup>7</sup>

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.



tr.

## THE TRANSLATION

# The Dhāraṇī of the Tathāgata Jñānolka that Purifies All Rebirths

- 1.1 [F.55.a] 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 Bhīkṣmasvaragarjitarāja.
- 1.2 The four bodhisattvas—Samantabhadra, the youthful Mañjuśrī, Dhāraṇīśvara-rāja, 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 ithithaṃsa vēlu vēlu vēlāpaṇi cārumūrtani āraṇi kālāpaṇi kālāpaṇi tturudhusi  
turuturudhusi dhāsuti dhāsuti dharadhara dhiridhiri dhurudhuru dhūradhūra kālākāla  
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 svāhā*<sup>8</sup>

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:

1.10 *dhunaṭi mahādhunaṭi surusuru svāhā śuklaviśōdhani taratara svāhā || jyōtipradīpe  
turuturu svāhā || padmamālani sattyatarabudhe huruhuru svāhā satyabuddhe  
saty’ālōkani kirikiri svāhā || dhāraṇībuddhi apratihatabuddhi curucuru svāhā ||  
lakṣaṇārcite dhūmaparihāre khurukhuru dhāra mahādhāra dharadhara yaṃ tīye  
svāhā || avrrate sutape apratihatabuddhi dharadhara yam tīye svāhā ||*<sup>9</sup>

1.11 “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!”<sup>10</sup>

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

## NOTES

n.

1 Leumann (1920).

2 Maggi (2008).

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

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

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 *Vimalaprabhānāmakālacakratāntraṭkā* (*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.

6 Lewis R. Lancaster, “K 476,” *The Korean Buddhist Canon*, accessed February 12, 2019, [http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive\\_catalogue/files/k0476.html](http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/files/k0476.html).

7 Lewis R. Lancaster, “K 476,” *The Korean Buddhist Canon*, accessed February 12, 2019, [http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive\\_catalogue/files/k0476.html](http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/files/k0476.html).

8 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.

9

This is the Sanskrit for the second dhāraṇī mantra as it appears in Leumann's 1920 edition of the Khotanese version of the *Jñānolkadhāraṇī*.

10

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 satyavādīnē tathāgatasya namau bhikṣmasvaragarjitarājebhya tathātatēbhya siddhyaṃtu maṃtrapadā svāhā* | |. See Leumann (1920), p. 158.

b.

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## GLOSSARY

g.

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་སྒྲུ་གྲོགས་རྒྱལ་པོ།

*Bhīkṣmasvaragarjitarājā*

A tathāgata associated with Jñānolka.

g.3 Dhāraṇīśvararāja

*gzungs kyi dbang phyug rgyal po*

གཟུངས་ཀྱི་དབང་ཕྱུག་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*

A bodhisattva.

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་སྒྲུང་བ།

*Suvarṇaprabhākūṭanirbhāsa*

A tathāgata associated with Jñānolka.

g.9 **Vajrapāṇi**

*phyag na rdo rje*

ཕྱག་ནོན་ལྗེ།

*Vajrapāṇi*

A bodhisattva.