

༄༅། །སེང་གེ་སྒྲུབ་ལཱུང་པ།

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## The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda

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*Siṃhanādadhāraṇī*

*seng ge sgra'i gzungs*

· Toh 3156 ·

Degé Tengyur, vol. 75 (rgyud 'grel, phu), folio 178.a

TRANSLATED INTO TIBETAN BY

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First published 2024

Current version v 1.0.3 (2025)

Generated by 84000 Reading Room v2.26.1

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co.

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## SUMMARY

s.1 *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda* is a short work that teaches an Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda dhāraṇī and gives a short instruction for using it to cure illness.

ac.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ac.1 This publication was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

ac.2 The text was translated, edited, and introduced by the 84000 translation team. Catherine Dalton produced the translation and wrote the introduction. Ryan Damron edited the translation and the introduction, and Dawn Collins copyedited the text. Martina Cotter was in charge of the digital publication process.

i.

## INTRODUCTION

i.1

*The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda* is a short dhāraṇī text that includes the dhāraṇī formula for the Siṃhanāda form of Avalokiteśvara and a brief instruction for a ritual that employs the dhāraṇī to cure illness. Its contents closely parallel a section from the longer *Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda* (Toh 703),<sup>1</sup> where the dhāraṇī and ritual content of *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda*—along with several other dhāraṇīs, mantras, and rituals—is incorporated into a narrative framework that describes how Siṃhanāda acquired his curative powers. The concise *Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda*, in contrast, opens directly with the dhāraṇī proper, followed by instructions for making eight maṇḍalas with cow dung, and how to incant and smear the dung on a sick person to cure their illness. In the end, Avalokiteśvara states that if a curative result were not achieved through the practice, it would be as if he, the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, had performed the five deeds of immediate retribution. This set of acts includes patricide, matricide, killing an arhat, causing a rift in the saṅgha, and drawing the blood of a tathāgata with malicious intent. This forceful statement implies that it is as impossible for the ritual not to take effect as it would be for Avalokiteśvara—the very embodiment of compassion—to perform any of these heinous acts. In the longer *Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda* from which the content of this shorter text appears to be extracted, this promise is made even more explicit, with Śākyamuni telling Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, this is the Great Compassionate One’s own promise.”<sup>2</sup> This sentence from the longer dhāraṇī text provides the context for the title of one recension of the shorter work: *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda’s Promise* (Toh 704/912).<sup>3</sup>

i.2

Siṃhanāda, “Lion’s Roar,” also sometimes called Lokeśvara Siṃhanāda, is a form of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. There are nine Siṃhanāda sādhanas and several other Siṃhanāda praises and ritual texts preserved in the Tibetan Kangyur, attesting to his importance in India. Images of Siṃhanāda have been found at the Mahābodhi temple in Bodh Gaya prior to

that temple's nineteenth-century renovation,<sup>4</sup> and in Sri Lanka, where it seems *Siṃhanāda* was especially popular.<sup>5</sup> The association of *Siṃhanāda* with curative properties that we find in the present text appears to be quite an old one, as a tenth-century Nepalese miniature painting kept at Cambridge depicts *Siṃhanāda* and includes a caption reading, "Lokeśvara of the hospital on the island of *Siṃhala*."<sup>6</sup> While Avalokiteśvara in general has a close iconographical association with the deity Śiva, this is even more clear in the case of *Siṃhanāda*. In the *Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda* (Toh 703), *Siṃhanāda*—just like Śiva—holds a brahmin's skull and a snake-wrapped trident, and wears a sacred thread made of a snake.

i.3 Although it is not described in this text, *Siṃhanāda*'s iconography is generally consistent across textual and artistic sources. In the descriptions found in his many *sādhanas* and praises, *Siṃhanāda* is white in color, has two legs and two arms, is dressed as an ascetic (*tapasvin*, *dka' thub ldan pa*), and sits on a lion. In most descriptions, a skull-adorned trident rests at his right side, but in some, he holds it in his right hand. This trident is also frequently depicted with a white snake coiled around the shaft. With his left hand, he holds the end of a lotus stalk that rises upwards, with a sword standing on the open lotus blossom. Nearby and to the left, sits what is variously described as a cup (*karṭaka*), pot (*bhājana*, *snod*), or skull cup (*kapāla*, *thod pa*) filled with fragrant flowers. This vessel often sits on a lotus or water lily.<sup>7</sup>

i.4 The *Siṃhanāda* form of Avalokiteśvara continues to be practiced in contemporary Tibetan Buddhist traditions. Two arrangements of practices centered on Lokeśvara *Siṃhanāda* are found in the Compendium of *Sādhanas* (*sgrub thabs kun btus*) compiled by Jamyang Loter Wangpo,<sup>8</sup> and the nineteenth-century scholar Mipham Gyatso wrote a short summary of the story of *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda*.<sup>9</sup>

i.5 *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda* is extant in Sanskrit, as text number twenty-one in the *Sādhanamālā*,<sup>10</sup> and as part of the *dhāraṇī* collection published by Gergely Hidas.<sup>11</sup> It does not appear to be extant in Chinese translation. Despite the fact that *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda* is preserved in the Tengyur, there is no attribution of authorship or other information to contextualize the transmission of the text in India. A different translation of *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda* is also found in the Kangyur, where it is included in both the Tantra section (Toh 704) and the Compendium of *Dhāraṇīs* section (Toh 912) of the Degé collection.<sup>12</sup> The Kangyur and Tengyur recensions of the work have several minor variants that suggest that, in addition to being translated by different translators, they were also based on different Sanskrit

recensions of the text. Although the differences are minor, the Tengyur recension stands closer to the extant Sanskrit text as preserved in the *Sādhanamālā* than the Kangyur recension.

i.6 The Tengyur version of *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda* translated here was produced in the eleventh or twelfth century by Patshab Lotsawa Tsultrim Gyaltzen, and is part of the collection called “The ‘Hundred’ Sādhana translated by Patshab” (*pa tshab kyi bsgyur ba’i sgrub thabs rgya rtsa*) in the Tantra section of the Tengyur. It is one of only two dhāraṇīs in that collection of one hundred and sixty-three texts, the majority of which are indeed sādhana. The version transmitted in the Kangyur was translated into Tibetan by the Indian master Vāgīśvara and the Tibetan translator Lokya Sherab Tsek, who were active in the eleventh century.

i.7 This English translation of *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda* was made on the basis of the Degé Tengyur recension of this work, with additional reference to the notes from the Comparative Edition (*dpe sdur ma*) of the Tengyur, both recensions of the text from the Degé Kangyur (Toh 704 and 912), the single Stok Palace Kangyur recension, the parallel passage in the longer *Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda* (Toh 703), as well as the Sanskrit versions of the *Siṃhanādadhāraṇī* from the *Sādhanamālā*, and Hidas 2021. *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda* is generally stable across all recensions consulted, including the Sanskrit, with only minor variants. We edited the dhāraṇī itself very slightly on the basis of the Sanskrit text from the *Sādhanamālā* and have noted those emendations.

## **The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda**

1.

## The Translation

[F.178.a]

1.1

*namo ratnatrayāya | nama āryāvalokiteśvarāya bodhisattvāya mahāsattvāya mahā-  
kāruṇikāya | tadyathā | om akaṭe vikaṭe nikaṭe kaṭamkaṭe karoṭe karoṭavīrye<sup>13</sup>  
svāhā | |*

1.2

In the early morning, in front of the blessed, noble Lokeśvara, make eight maṇḍalas out of cow dung that has not fallen to the ground. Recite this thirteen<sup>14</sup> times at each maṇḍala, then incant the resulting<sup>15</sup> dung with the mantra seven times. Smear it on the sick person and all of their illnesses will be cured.

1.3

If this is not successful after seven, thirteen, or twenty-one days, even if performed by someone who has carried out the five deeds of immediate retribution, then I<sup>16</sup> myself will have carried out the five deeds of immediate retribution, and I will have deceived the blessed buddhas.

1.4

*This completes "The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda."*

c.

## Colophon

c.1 This was translated by the monk Tsultrim Gyaltzen.

n.

## NOTES

- n.1 *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda*  
(<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh703.html>) (translated 2024).
- n.2 See *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda* (Toh 703, [1.20](#)).
- n.3 *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh704.html>), *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda's Promise* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh912.html>) (translated 2024).
- n.4 Losty 2021, p. 17.
- n.5 Holt 1991, p. 41.
- n.6 Holt 1991, p. 79.
- n.7 The iconographic details of Siṃhanāda are described with some variation and differing degrees of detail in Toh 2858, 2859, 3155, 3157, 3329, 3414, 3417, 3418, 3419, and 3650. Descriptions in Sanskrit can be found in sādhana nos. 17, 20, 22, and 25 in volume one of the *Sādhnamālā*. For a survey of Indo-Tibetan artistic depictions of Siṃhanāda, see the deity's main page at Himalayan Art Resources: <https://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setID=472&page=1> (<https://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setID=472&page=1>).
- n.8 See *sgrub thabs kun btus* vol. 6, folios 252.a–297.b.
- n.9 See *seng ge sgra'i gzungs kyi lo rgyus*.
- n.10 Bhattacharyya 1925 vol. 1, p. 52.
- n.11 Hidas 2021, p. 138.

- n.12 The two versions of this text preserved in the Kangyur are identical in content but have different titles. Toh 704 is titled *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh704.html>) (*seng ge sgra'i gzungs*), while Toh 912 is titled *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda's Promise* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh912.html>) (*seng ge sgras dam bcas pa'i gzungs*).
- n.13 Here we follow the Kangxi and Narthang versions by adding *karōṭa* (*ka ro Ta*), which is absent in the Degé but attested in the Sanskrit text from the *Sādhanamālā* and in Hidas 2021.
- n.14 Here we follow the Kangxi and Narthang Kangyurs, which read *bcu gsum*, “thirteen,” rather than the Degé, which reads *gsum*, “three,” as this is in accordance with the reading in the parallel text Toh 704/912, as well as in Toh 703, which seems to be the source text from which this work was extracted.
- n.15 *lhag ma*. The parallel passage from *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda* (Toh 703) includes an instruction to gather the incanted dung on which the maṇḍalas were previously inscribed and then to incant the “resulting dung” (Toh 703, 1.20). This also seems to be indicated in the version of the dhāraṇī published by Hidas (2021, p. 138); there this cow dung is described as *prati-maṇḍalalekhitaśeṣagomaya*, which could be interpreted to mean “the cow dung that remains after inscribing the individual maṇḍalas.” The implication of the Tibetan and Sanskrit seems to be that this “remaining” dung is the same dung that was first inscribed with maṇḍalas and incanted before being collected together, incanted a second time, and applied to the patient. This would make logical sense insofar as this process would infuse the dung with healing potency. This interpretation is nonetheless tentative.
- n.16 In the section of the *Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda* (Toh 703), which closely parallels this text, it is made clear that this is Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda's promise. However, in that text, it is Śākyamuni who articulates Siṃhanāda's promise to Mañjuśrī.

b.

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## GLOSSARY

· Types of attestation for names and terms of the corresponding ·  
source language

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in a manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other manuscripts with a parallel or similar context.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in dictionaries matching Tibetan to the corresponding language.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where the relationship between the Tibetan and source language 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 five deeds of immediate retribution

*mtshams med pa lnga*

མཚམས་མེད་པ་ལྔ།

*pañcānantarya*<sup>AD</sup>

Five acts said to lead to immediate and unavoidable birth in the hell realms: killing one's father, killing one's mother, killing an arhat, sowing discord within the saṅgha, and drawing the blood of a tathāgata with ill intent.

g.2 Jamyang Loter Wangpo

*'jam dbyangs blo gter dbang po*

འཇམ་དབྱངས་བློ་གཏིང་དབང་པོ།

—

1847-1914. A master of the Sakya tradition.

g.3 Lokya Sherab Tsek

*klog skya shes rab brtsegs*

ལྷོ་ག་སྐུ་ཤེས་རབ་བརྟེན།

—

An eleventh-century Tibetan master and translator who is specifically known for his Cakrasaṃvara lineage, which he received from teachers in the Kathmandu Valley.

g.4 Mañjuśrī

*'jam dpal*

འཇམ་དཔལ།

*mañjuśrī*<sup>AD</sup>

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. To his name, Mañjuśrī, meaning “Gentle and Glorious One,” is often added the epithet Kumārabhūta, “having a youthful form.” He is also called Mañjughoṣa, Mañjusvara, and Pañcaśikha.

g.5 Patshab Lotsawa Tsultrim Gyaltsen

*pa tshab lo tswa tshul khrims rgyal mtshan*

པ་ཚབ་ལོ་ལྷ་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་རྒྱལ་མཚན།

—

A Tibetan translator who lived in the eleventh to twelfth century. He translated the collection of sādhanas referred to as “The ‘Hundred’ Sādhanas translated by Patshab” (*pa tshab kyis bsgyur ba’i sgrub thabs rgya rtsa*),

a collection of one hundred and sixty-three sādhanas. He mostly translated these in the presence of the paṇḍita Abhayākaragupta, who was a Bengali scholar and the abbot of Vikramaśīla. Patshab's collection is included in the Tantra section of the Degé Tengyur.

g.6 Siṃhanāda

*seng ge'i sgra*

སེང་གེ་འི་སྒྲ།

*siṃhanāda*<sup>AD</sup>

Literally, "The Lion's Roar." The name of a form of Avalokiteśvara.

g.7 Vāgīśvara

*ngag gi dbang phyug*

ངག་གི་དབང་ཕྱུག

*vāgīśvara*<sup>AD</sup>

An Indian master active in the eleventh century. This may be a shortened name of Vāgīśvarakīrti, a renowned master of the Cakrasaṃvara who was a gate keeper at Vikramaśīla before spending the latter part of his life in the Kathmandu Valley.