གཙུག་ཏོར་འབར་བའི་གཟུངས།

The Blazing Topknot Dhāraṇī

Jvāloṣṇīṣadhāraṇī

གཙུག་ཏོར་འབར་བ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་གཟུངས།

gtsug tor ’bar ba zhes bya ba’i gzungs

The Dhāraṇī “The Blazing Topknot”

Jvāloṣṇīṣanāmadhāraṇī

· Toh 600 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 90 (rgyud ’bum, pha), folio 260.a
For referencing Tibetan sources, please see our Scholar’s Edition



First published 2026

Current version v 1.0.0

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Summary

s.1 *The Blazing Topknot Dhāraṇī* is a short incantation text that is in fact an extract from the long *Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī*. It is said to be incredibly powerful: if one merely recites it a single time, it achieves the same effect as a large number of rituals. It not only grants auspiciousness, fortune, and fame but also wards off bad dreams and inauspicious omens.

Acknowledgements

ac.1 The text was translated from Tibetan by the Buddhapīṭha Translation Group (Gergely Hidas and Péter-Dániel Szántó).

ac.2 The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha. Laura Goetz edited the translation and the introduction, and Dawn Collins copyedited the text. Sameer Dhingra was in charge of the digital publication process.

Introduction

i.1 *The Blazing Topknot Dhāraṇī* is a short incantation text consisting of a spell and a list of the promised results of its recitation. The spell is short but said to be incredibly powerful: if one merely recites it a single time, it achieves the same effect as thousands of rituals, confers upon its user auspiciousness, fortune, fame, and protects one from bad dreams and unfavorable omens.

i.2 The dhāraṇī and its benefits, which follow in verse form, are transmitted as a separate text in the canon, but this is in fact not an independent scripture but an extract from *The Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī* (*Mañjuśriyamūlakalpa*, Toh 543).[1] This was already pointed out by the great canonizer Butön Rinchen Drup (1290–1364 CE) in his long survey of tantric materials.[2] How and why the text nevertheless made it into the canon as a separate piece remains a puzzle,[3] though it is not the only case of an extract from a longer work used for recitation or other practical purpose being included separately in the canon. The Tibetan translation does not transmit a translators' colophon, and so the names of the translators—if there were indeed independent ones—are not preserved. The text does not figure in the Imperial Period catalogs of the early ninth century; therefore, we may suspect that the extraction happened at some point in the latter spread of Buddhism in Tibet. Since the text is an extract of the *Mañjuśriyamūlakalpa*, it can be said to survive in the original Sanskrit; thus, while the Tibetan witnesses do not provide a Sanskrit title, we could nevertheless reconstruct one with confidence based on its presence in the same passage in the *Mañjuśriyamūlakalpa*. We could not, however, find an independent Chinese translation.

i.3 As in *The Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī*, the opening homage in the Degé Kangyur identifies the name of the dhāraṇī as simultaneously that of a buddha, Jvāloṣṇīṣa (Tib. *gtsug tor 'bar ba*). Although this is not likely part of the main

text transmitted from Sanskrit,[4] it is nevertheless worth noting the shared identity of this dhāraṇī with a buddha.

i.4 This English translation was principally based on the Tibetan translation of the text found in the Tantra Collection (*rgyud 'bum*) and the Compendium of Dhāraṇīs (*gzungs 'dus*) in the Degé Kangyur,[5] in consultation with the Sanskrit text of the *Mañjuśriyamūlakalpa*.

The Translation

1. # The Dhāraṇī The Blazing Topknot

1.1 Homage to the blessed Jvāloṣṇīṣa.[6]

1.2 *namaḥ samantabuddhānām apratihataśāsanānāṃ oṁ kha kha khāhi khāhi hūṁ hūṁ jvala jvala prajvala prajvala tiṣṭha tiṣṭha*[7] *phaṭ phaṭ sarvadurnimittaduḥsvapnaśāntiṃ kuru svāhā.* [8]

1.3 This mantra of a thousand buddhas[9]
Is known as *the blazing topknot*.

1.4 It achieves various acts equivalent to eighty thousand,
Nine thousand, or five thousand rituals.
It grants every kind of auspiciousness, fortune, and fame.[10]

1.5 Bad dreams and unfavorable omens
Are destroyed by reciting it just once.

1.6 *Here ends the dhāraṇī "The Blazing Topknot."*

Notes

1. See *The Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī*, 17.30– 17.31, and the corresponding Sanskrit in the Appendix; for the editio princeps, see Sâstrî 1920, p. 172.

2. *gtsug tor ’bar ba’i gzungs ni ’jam dpal rtsa rgyud kyi le’u bcu bdun pa nas phyung ba yin pas logs su mi bgrang ngo* (“Since *The Blazing Topknot Dhāraṇī* is extracted from the seventeenth chapter of *The Root Tantra of Mañjuśrī*, it should not be counted separately”). *rgyud sde spyi’i rnam par gzhag pa rgyud sde rin po che’i mdzes rgyan*, in *The Collected Works of Bu-Ston* (Śata-piṭaka Series), vol. 15 (ba), folio 78.a (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1965–71), BDRC W22106.

3. Also note that the Thempangma line of transmission does not include it in the canonical collection.

4. This is suggested by the fact that some other Kangyurs, such as Narthang and Lhasa, have instead a full title followed by an homage to the Three Jewels. Phukdrak also omits the title but pays homage to the Three Jewels.

5. Note that there is a discrepancy among various databases for cataloging the Toh 962 version of this text within vol. 101 or 102 of the Degé Kangyur. See Toh 962, n.5, for details.

6. This is the translator’s (or translators’) obeisance (*’gyur phyag*) and probably not part of the main text.

7. The Sanskrit adds here a seed syllable, *ṣṇīḥ*.

8. A translation is as follows: “*Homage to all buddhas of unimpeded teaching, oṁ, e-e-eat eat, hūṁ hūṁ, burn, burn, blaze, blaze, abide, abide, phaṭ phaṭ, calm all bad omens and bad dreams, svāhā*.” The Sanskrit version does not have the phrase “calm all bad omens and bad dreams.”

9. The Sanskrit has *buddhādhyuṣito mantraḥ*, “a mantra inhabited (i.e., presided over) by buddhas.”

10. The Sanskrit has *sarvamaṅgalasaṃmataḥ*, “universally acknowledged to be auspicious all around.”

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Glossary

blessed

bcom ldan ’das

བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས།

bhagavat

In Buddhist literature, this is an epithet applied to buddhas, most often to Śākyamuni. The Sanskrit term generally means “possessing fortune,” but in specifically Buddhist contexts it implies that a buddha is in possession of six auspicious qualities (*bhaga*) associated with complete awakening. The Tibetan term—where *bcom* is said to refer to “subduing” the four māras, *ldan* to “possessing” the great qualities of buddhahood, and *’das* to “going beyond” saṃsāra and nirvāṇa—possibly reflects the commentarial tradition where the Sanskrit *bhagavat* is interpreted, in addition, as “one who destroys the four māras.” This is achieved either by reading *bhagavat* as *bhagnavat* (“one who broke”), or by tracing the word *bhaga* to the root √*bhañj* (“to break”).

buddha

sangs rgyas

སངས་རྒྱས།

buddha

A fully awakened being. Buddha is the past participle of the Sanskrit root budh, meaning “to awaken,” “to understand,” or “to become aware.”

Butön Rinchen Drup

bu ston rin chen grub

བུ་སྟོན་རིན་ཆེན་གྲུབ།

One of the greatest scholars of Tibetan Buddhism, Butön was an influential author and canonizer who lived between 1290 and 1364 ce. His main seat was at Shalu (zhwa lu) monastery.

dhāraṇī

gzungs

གཟུངས།

dhāraṇī

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.

Jvāloṣṇīṣa

gtsug tor ’bar ba

གཙུག་ཏོར་འབར་བ།

jvāloṣṇīṣa

“Blazing Topknot,” the name of a mantra/dhāraṇī and the buddha of the same name connected with it. This buddha is also mentioned in *The Root Manual of the Rites of Mañjuśrī* (*Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, Toh 543), 17.30–17.32.

Three Jewels

dkon mchog gsum

དཀོན་མཆོག་གསུམ།

triratna

The Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha—the three objects of Buddhist refuge. In the Tibetan rendering, “the three rare and supreme ones.”

topknot

gtsug tor

གཙུག་ཏོར།

uṣṇīṣa

Usually listed among the thirty-two marks of a great being, an uṣṇīṣa is, in its simplest form, a pointed shape of the head like a turban (the Sanskrit term, uṣṇīṣa, in fact can mean “turban”), or, more elaborately, it is a dome-shaped extension. It is described as having various extraordinary attributes, such as emitting and absorbing rays of light or reaching an immense height. This term may also refer to beings or deities who have this feature—or rather who are emanated from the uṣṇīṣa of a buddha—known as “uṣṇīṣa kings,” “uṣṇīṣa tathāgatas,” and so forth.