

སྐྱུན་རས་གཟིགས་དབང་ལྷུག་གི་གཟུངས་ཞེས་བྱ་བ།

The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara

Āvalokiteśvaranāmadhāraṇī

འཕགས་པ་སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས་དབང་སྤྱུག་གི་གཟུངས་ཞེས་བྱ་བ།

'phags pa spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug gi gzungs zhes bya ba

The Noble Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara

Āryāvalokiteśvaranāmadhāraṇī

Degé Kangyur, vol. 100 (gzungs 'dus, e), folios 242.a–242.b



First published 2026

Current version v 1.0

84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha is a global non-profit initiative to translate all the Buddha's words into modern languages, and to make them available to everyone.

This work is provided under the protection of a Creative Commons CC BY-NC-ND (Attribution - Non-commercial - No-derivatives) 4.0 copyright. It may be copied or printed for fair use, but only with full attribution, and not for commercial advantage or personal compensation. For full details, see the Creative Commons license.

This print version was generated at 8.31pm on thursday, 21 may 2026 from the online version of the text available on that date. If some time has elapsed since then, this version may have been superseded, as most of 84000's published translations undergo significant updates from time to time. For the latest online version, with bilingual display, interactive glossary entries and notes, and a variety of further download options, please see <https://84000.co/translation/toh910>.

Contents

Summary

Acknowledgements

Introduction

The Translation

Notes

Glossary

Bibliography

Summary

- s.1 *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara* is a short text that describes the visualization of Avalokiteśvara in his four-armed, white form seated on a lotus throne. It enumerates the benefits of reciting his mantra *oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ* and promises that reciting the mantra will purify negative karma, prevent lower rebirths, protect from dangers, cure illnesses, reveal Avalokiteśvara’s face, and ensure rebirth in Sukhāvātī after death.

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. Nathaniel Rich edited the translation and the introduction, and Dawn Collins copyedited the text. Martina Cotter was in charge of the digital publication process.

Introduction

- i.1 *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara* is a short text that first describes the visualization of a four-armed Avalokiteśvara. It begins in the style of a sādhana, a ritual liturgy in which a practitioner generates the form of a deity by means of meditative concentration. Avalokiteśvara then speaks to the practitioner, describing the benefits of reciting his mantra—freedom from the consequences of evil deeds, from rebirth in the lower realms, and from harm by malicious spirits. He utters his mantra and explains that reciting it will cause a practitioner to see Avalokiteśvara directly and to take rebirth in Sukhāvātī.

- i.2 Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva who embodies compassion, appears in this work in his common four-armed form. However, this work is different from many texts categorized as dhāraṇīs in that the text begins with a structure more akin to a sādhana. However, in this text, once the deity has been generated, unlike in sādhana, Avalokiteśvara immediately begins to speak and to describe the benefits of reciting his mantra, which he then proclaims. This latter part of the text is written in a style more typical of a dhāraṇī text.
- i.3 A Sanskrit witness of *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara* does not appear to be extant, nor does it appear to have been translated into Chinese. The text does not appear in the imperial catalogs or at Dunhuang, and it lacks a translator's colophon. In the absence of such a colophon, and the absence of the text's title in any of the imperial catalogs or at Dunhuang, we are unable to date the text or its Tibetan translation.
- i.4 Like many dhāraṇī texts, *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara* is found in the Tantra section of both the Tshalpa and Thempangma lineage Kangyurs, listed as a kriyā tantra. In the Degé Kangyur and other Tshalpa lineage Kangyurs that have a Dhāraṇī section, it is additionally found there. The text as found in the Tantra section of the Degé Kangyur (Toh 696) and the one found in the Dhāraṇī (Toh 910)^{1 2} section are identical except for occasional variances in their punctuation.
- i.5 This English translation was made based on the two recensions of the text found in the Degé Kangyur, with reference also to the Stok Palace Kangyur and the notes from the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) of the Kangyur. The mantra is rendered exactly as it appears in the Degé Kangyur recension from the Tantra section (Toh 696).

The Translation

1.

The Noble Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara

1.1

Homage to the great compassionate noble Avalokiteśvara.

1.2

Generate the mind of awakening with the strength of compassion from within the state of noble Avalokiteśvara's love. Then, upon a lotus, sun, and moon seat, the syllable *hṛīḥ* emanates light and gathers it back. Thereby, the syllable transforms into Avalokiteśvara, who has one face and four arms. His first two arms have the palms joined. His lower right hand holds a white pearl rosary. His lower left hand holds a white lotus. His body is white in color, and his legs are fully crossed. He is adorned by various jeweled ornaments and beautified by a jeweled crown. He is flanked by the mother Ṣaḍakṣarī as well as the father Maṇibhadra, and he is surrounded by many male and female bodhisattvas.

1.3

He says, “If a son or daughter of noble family recites this mantra just once, brings it to mind, keeps it in mind, writes it down and wears it on their body, or treats it with devotion and respect, it will completely purify the five actions of immediate consequence, or any of the evil deeds connected with them, and they will not take rebirth in the three lower realms, in the eight unfree states, or in any such painful birth. They will be completely freed from all dangers from humans, non-humans, or wild animals. They will be freed from all illnesses and malicious spirits.

1.4

“Anyone who says *oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ* will see the face of noble Avalokiteśvara. After death they will be reborn in Sukhāvātī. Have no doubt, uncertainty, or hesitation about this.”

1.5

This completes *The Noble Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara*.

Notes

1. This text, Toh 910, and all those contained in this same volume (*gzungs, 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 *Vimalaprabhānāmakālacakratantraṭikā* (*dus 'khor 'grel bshad dri med 'od*, Toh 845), before the volume 100 of the Degé Kangyur, 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.

2. [note fae276de...]

Glossary

Avalokiteśvara

spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug

avalokiteśvara

dhāraṇī

gzungs

dhāraṇī

eight unfree states

mi khom pa brgyad

aṣṭākṣaṇa

five actions of immediate consequence

mtshams med pa lnga

pañcānantarya

kriyā tantra

bya rgyud

kriyātantra

A class of tantric scripture that generally features elaborate rites directed toward both mundane goals—such as health, prosperity, and protection—and to the ultimate goal of liberation. In this class of tantra, the practitioners do not identify themselves with the deity as in other classes of tantra, but rather seek their power, assistance, and intervention in pursuit of their goals. The Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa and Amoghapāśakalparāja exemplify this class of tantra.

mantra

sngags

mantra

Maṇibhadra

nor bu rin po che

maṇibhadra

A god connected with Avalokiteśvara who appears as his companion.

mind of awakening

byang chub kyi sems

bodhicitta

Sukhāvati

bde ba can

sukhāvati

three lower realms

ngan song gsum

durgatitraya

tridurgati

Ṣaḍakṣarī

lha mo drug ma

ṣaḍakṣarī

A goddess connected with Avalokiteśvara who appears as his companion.

Bibliography

spyān ras gzigs dbang phyug gi gzungs (Avalokiteśvaranāmadhāraṇī). Toh 696, Degé Kangyur vol. 93 (rgyud, rtsa), folios 147.b–148.a.

spyān ras gzigs dbang phyug gi gzungs (Avalokiteśvaranāmadhāraṇī). Toh 910, Degé Kangyur vol. 100 (gzungs, e), folios 242.a–242.b.

spyān ras gzigs dbang phyug gi gzungs. 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), 2006–9, vol. 93, pp. 411–13.

spyān ras gzigs dbang phyug gi gzungs. Stok Palace Kangyur vol. 107 (rgyud, ma), folios 13.a–13.b.