སྟོང་འགྱུར་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་གཟུངས།

The Dhāraṇī “Thousandfold”

Sahasrāvartādhāraṇī

· Toh 930 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 100 (gzungs ’dus, e), folios 279.a–279.b

For referencing Tibetan sources, please see our Scholar’s Edition

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Summary

s.1 *The Dhāraṇī "Thousandfold"* is a short text consisting of a dhāraṇī and a passage about its application and benefits. Particular emphasis is placed on the time of death, the eradication of karmic obscurations, and obtaining rebirth in a pure land. In spite of its brevity, the text was popular in many parts of Buddhist Asia, especially from the seventh century onward.

Acknowledgments

ac.1 This text was translated and introduced by The Buddhapīṭha Translation Group (Gergely Hidas and Péter-Dániel Szántó) and edited by members of the 84000 editorial team.

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

Introduction

i.1 *The Dhāraṇī "Thousandfold"* is a short text consisting of a dhāraṇī and a passage about its application and benefits. The text lacks any introductory material that might establish its setting or context and instead begins with a series of obeisances followed by the revelation of the dhāraṇī. It concludes with a passage on its application and benefits, with a particular emphasis on the time of death, the eradication of karmic obscurations, and obtaining rebirth in a pure land.

i.2 In spite of its brevity, *The Dhāraṇī "Thousandfold"* was a popular text in large parts of Buddhist Asia. The earliest attestation for the text's existence are two Chinese renderings that contain the dhāraṇī itself, both dating to the middle of the seventh century CE. An amulet containing the dhāraṇī in *siddhamātṛkā* script, dating to approximately the mid-tenth century, has been recovered from Dunhuang.[1] The dhāraṇī is also extant in Sanskrit in numerous Nepalese *Compendium of Dhāraṇīs* manuscripts, most of which date to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,[2] thus attesting to its enduring popularity.

i.3 The Tibetan translation dates from the imperial period, as indicated by its inclusion in the imperial-period Denkarma (*ldan kar ma*) catalog of translations,[3] but because the translation lacks a translators' colophon, we cannot better establish the context of the text's translation. The dhāraṇī is included twice in the Degé Kangyur: Toh 710 is classified as Action tantra (*kriyātantra*) in the Tantra Collection (*rgyud 'bum*), while Toh 930 is included in the Compendium of Dhāraṇīs (*gzungs 'dus*).[4] While no fragments of the text have been identified among the Dunhuang manuscript hoard, the abovementioned amulet testifies to its circulation in the area around the tenth century.

i.4 Catalogs of the Chinese canon mention four items related to the text: Taishō 901(5),[5] 1034,[6] 1035,[7] and 1036.[8] Taishō 901(5), translated by Atikūṭa in 654 CE, is a comparatively long text and shares few resemblances with the versions

presented here. Taishō 1034 is a translation by the famous monk-pilgrim Xuanzang that dates to 664 CE and presents the dhāraṇī in *siddham* script. Taishō 1035 is a translation made by Zhitong that dates to 653 CE. Taishō 1035 presents the dhāraṇī and a passage on its ritual application, but the passage on the application (which, according to a note in the text, was provided by a different master) is quite different from what we have in the Sanskrit or the Tibetan. Taishō 1036 is a translation by Dānapāla dated to 988 CE that, apart from the title, bears very little resemblance to what we have attested in the Sanskrit and Tibetan.

i.5 Although some versions of the Tibetan translation connect this dhāraṇī with Mañjuśrī,[9] the majority of its witnesses demonstrate a clear association with the cults of Amitābha and Avalokiteśvara.[10] The title itself most likely refers to the fact that the dhāraṇī should be recited a thousand times (*sahasra* means "one thousand," and *āvarta* indicates repetition),[11] but only the Sanskrit recension instructs one to do so: "Reciting it one thousand times every day, one will be counted among bodhisattvas after twenty-one days."[12] This line is the likely source for the title, so it is somewhat puzzling that we do not consistently find it in the Tibetan or Chinese translations.

i.6 This English translation is based on the version of the Tibetan translation in the Degé Kangyur, in consultation with the version in the Stok Palace Kangyur. No significant differences were observed. The text of the dhāraṇī itself was compared with the extant Sanskrit witnesses, which allowed us to correct some obvious corruptions in the Tibetan textual transmission.

The Translation

1.

The Dhāraṇī

Thousandfold

1.1 Homage to the Three Jewels! Homage to Amitābha, the thus-gone, worthy, fully awakened, perfect buddha! Homage to the bodhisattva mahāsattva, the noble Avalokiteśvara, he of great compassion!

1.2 *tadyathā | oṁ jaye jaye mahājaye jayavāhini jayottari kala kala mala mala cala cala kṣiṇa kṣiṇa sarvakarmāvaraṇāni me sarvajñajñānādhiṣṭhite svāhā | namo bhagavati sahasrāvarte sarvabuddhāvalokite cakṣuḥśrotra-ghrāṇajihvākāyamanovijñānaviśodhani svāhā | phuru phuru suru suru phurā phurā praphurā praphurā sarvabuddhādhiṣṭhite svāhā | dharmadhātugarbhe svāhā | abhāvasvabhāvasarvadharmāvabodhani svāhā |*[13]

1.3 The ritual procedure for this dhāraṇī is as follows. By reciting it even once, all karmic obscurations accrued over a thousand eons will be depleted, and the roots of merit of a thousand buddhas will be gathered. For a thousand eons one will turn their back on saṃsāra. After rebirth, one will obtain the kingdom of a cakravartin. At the time of death, one will behold a thousand buddhas. One will be reborn in the buddhas' pure lands. If one recites it twenty-odd times three times during the day and three times at night, one will see whatever dream they desire. One will behold the golden body of a thus-gone one. One will have a faithful and undivided mind in the realms of buddhas and bodhisattvas. Such and more are the immeasurable benefits.[14]

1.4 *Here ends the dhāraṇī "Thousandfold."*

Appendix

Appendix

Sanskrit Text

ap1.1 namo ratnatrayāya | nama āryāvalokiteśvarāya bodhisattvāya mahāsattvāya mahākāruṇikāya || tadyathā | oṃ jaye jaye mahājaye jayavāhini jayottari kala kala mala mala cala cala hulu hulu chiṇi chiṇi sarvakarmāvaraṇāni mama bhagavati sahasrāvarte sarvabuddhāvalokite cakṣuḥśrotaghrāṇajihvā-kāyamanovijñānaviśodhani | tadyathā | oṃ suru suru prasuru prasuru bhara bhara saṃbhara saṃbhara hara hara smara smara oṃ sarvabuddhādhiṣṭhite svāhā | oṃ sarvabuddhāvalokite svāhā | oṃ dharmadhātugarbhe svāhā | oṃ abhāvasvabhāvadharmāvabodhani svāhā || asyā dhāraṇyā ayam upacāraḥ | kalpasahasrasaṃcitaṃ karmāvaraṇam ekavāroccāritena parikṣayaṃ gacchati | buddhasahasrāvaropitaṃ kuśalamūlaṃ bhavati | jātiparivartena cakravartirājyaiśvaryaṃ śatasahasraṃ pratilabhate | maraṇakāle ca buddhasahasraṃ paśyati | pratidinaṃ sahasrāvartaṃ kurvann ekaviṃśatidivasena bodhisattvasaṃkhyāṃ gacchati | pariśuddheṣu buddhakṣetreṣūpapadyate | triṣkṛtvā rātrau triṣkṛtvā divasasya japet | yathepsitāni svapnāni paśyati | suvarṇavarṇatathāgataṃ paśyati | aparimitānuśaṃsā bodhisattvasaṃgītīḥ śrūyante paśyante | satatasamitaṃ manasi kartavyā || āryasahasrāvartānāmadhāraṇī parisamāptaḥ || ||

Notes

1. Hidas 2014, pp. 105–9.

2. See Hidas 2021, pp. 309–89. A complete version of the Sanskrit text, based on its witness in Cambridge Ms. Add. 1326 (Hidas 2021, p. 140), is presented in the Appendix.

3. Denkarma, folio 303.b and Hermann-Pfandt 2008, p. 248, no. 434. Note that the other extant imperial-period catalog, the Phangthangma (*'phang thang ma*), does not list this text.

4. This text, Toh 930, 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 Vimalaprabhānāmakālacakra-tantraṭīkā (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.

5. For e-texts of this version, see *Qianzhuan guanshyin pusa xinyin zhoudi* 千轉觀世音菩薩心印呪第 (CBETA; SAT).

6. For e-texts of this version, see *Nengmie zhongzui qianzhuan tuoluoni zhou* 能滅眾罪千轉陀羅尼呪 (CBETA; SAT).

7. For e-texts of this version, see *Qianzhuan tuoluoni guanshiyin pusa zhou* 千轉陀羅尼觀世音菩薩呪 (CBETA; SAT).

8. For e-texts of this version, see *Qian zhuan da ming tuoluoni jing* 千轉大明陀羅尼經 (CBETA; SAT).

9. As in the Gondhla Collection, where it is titled *The Noble Dhāraṇī "Mañjuśrī's Thousandfold"* (*'phags pa 'jam dpal gyi stong sgyur ba zhes bya ba'i gzungs*).

10. The Sanskrit version recorded in Cambridge Ms. Add. 1326 and in the majority of recensions of the Tibetan translation evoke Amitābha and/or Avalokiteśvara in their opening homages. The titles of the Chinese translations Taishō 901(5) and 1035 likewise associate them with Avalokiteśvara (*guanshiyin*).

11. In the Drakmar and Nganjong collections the text is recorded with the titles *'phags pa stong 'khyil ba zhes bya ba'i gzungs* and *'phags pa stong 'khyil pa zhes bya ba'i gzungs*, respectively. The term *'khyil pa*/*ba* is used to translate *āvarta* in those versions.

12. *pratidinaṃ sahasrāvartaṃ kurvann ekaviṃśatidivasena bodhisattvasaṃkhyāṃ gacchati*.

13. The dhāraṇī differs somewhat in the Sanskrit; see the Appendix and the translation in Hidas 2014, p. 180. It can be tentatively translated with the following: *"It is: Oṃ O Victorious One, O Victorious One! O*

One Who Brings Victory! O Highest Victory! kala kala mala mala. Move! Move! Destroy, destroy all my karmic obscurations, O One Empowered by the Gnosis of the Omniscient One! Svāhā. Obeisance to the Blessed Lady! O Thousandfold! O One Beheld by All the Buddhas! O purifier of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind! phuru phuru suru suru phurā phurā praphurā praphurā. O One Empowered by All the Buddhas! svāhā. O Essence of the Dharma Sphere. svāhā. O Awakener to All Dharmas Having a Nonexistent Essential Nature. svāhā."

14. The practices and list of benefits differ in the Sanskrit quite significantly, although there are many parallel passages; see the Appendix.

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Glossary

Amitābha

’od dpag med

འོད་དཔག་མེད།

amitābha

Use standard

Atikūṭa

Atikūṭa

阿地瞿多

Translator during the Tang dynasty. He is best known for translating The Compendium of Dhāraṇīs (Taishō 901; *Tuoloni ji jing*).

Avalokiteśvara

spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug

སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས་དབང་ཕྱུག

avalokiteśvara

Use standard

bodhisattva mahāsattva

byang chub sems dpa’ sems dpa’ chen po

བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའ་སེམས་དཔའ་ཆེན་པོ།

bodhisattvo mahāsattvaḥ

Use standard

cakravartin

’khor los sgyur ba

འཁོར་ལོས་སྒྱུར་བ།

cakravartin

Use Standard

Dānapāla

Dānapāla

施護

Name of a famous (possibly Kashmiri) translator of the Song period, active before 1018 ce. One hundred eleven translations are attributed to him.

dhāraṇī

gzungs

གཟུངས།

dhāraṇī

Use Standard

eon

bskal pa

བསྐལ་པ།

kalpa

Use Standard

karmic obscuration

las kyi sgrib pa

ལས་ཀྱི་སྒྲིབ་པ།

karmāvaraṇa

Obscurations or obstructions caused by past deeds.

root of merit

dge ba'i rtsa ba

དགེ་བའི་རྩ་བ།

kuśalamūla

Use standard

three jewels

dkon mchog gsum

དཀོན་མཆོག་གསུམ།

ratnatraya

Use standard

thus-gone one

de bzhin gshegs pa

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ།

tathāgata

Use Standard

worthy

dgra bcom pa

དགྲ་བཅོམ་པ།

arhat

Use standard

Xuanzang

玄奘

Famous Chinese monk-pilgrim and translator of the Tang dynasty.

Zhitong

智通

Chinese translator during the Tang dynasty.