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The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”

Raśmivimalaviśuddhaprabhānāmadhāraṇī

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གཟུངས།

'phags pa 'od zer dri ma med pa rnam par dag pa'i 'od ces bya ba'i
gzungs

The Noble Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”

Āryaraśmivimalaviśuddhaprabhānāmadhāraṇī

· Toh 982 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 101 (gzungs 'dus, waM), folios 100.a–110.b



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Summary

- s.1 The opening narrative of *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* features a brahmin who is anxious about his impending death. He approaches the Buddha looking for help, and the Buddha confirms that not only will the brahmin soon die, but he will also suffer a series of unfortunate rebirths. The brahmin begs for help, and the Buddha instructs him to repair an old caitya, write out the syllables of a mantra, and place the mantra inside the caitya. By following these instructions, and by frequently reciting the mantra and making offerings at the caitya, the brahmin will forever be free from lower realms. In dialogue with Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin and Vajrapāṇi, the Buddha ultimately teaches a total of six specific mantras, and the teaching culminates in further promises of miraculous attainments and freedom from suffering. This dhāraṇī-sūtra is widely used in the construction and consecration of stūpas and other types of caityas.

Acknowledgments

- ac.1 This text was translated by William A. McGrath and Jialin Cao of the NYU Translation Team.
- ac.2 The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha. Rory Lindsay edited the translation and the introduction, and Linda Griffin copyedited the text. Martina Cotter was in charge of the digital publication process.
- ac.3 The generosity of the anonymous sponsor who helped make the work on this translation possible is gratefully acknowledged.

Introduction

- i.1 The opening narrative of *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* features a brahmin who is anxious about his impending death. He approaches the Buddha looking for help, and the Buddha confirms that not only will the brahmin soon die, but he will also suffer a series of unfortunate rebirths. After the brahmin begs for help, the Buddha instructs him to repair an old caitya, write out the syllables of a mantra, and place the written mantra inside the caitya. By following these instructions, and by frequently reciting the mantra and making offerings at the caitya, the brahmin will forever be free from the sufferings of the lower realms. In dialogue with Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin and Vajrapāṇi, a total of six specific mantras is revealed, and the teaching culminates in further promises of miraculous attainments and freedom from suffering.
- i.2 All Tibetan editions of *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* conclude with the same colophon. The colophon states that the translator Bandé Palgyi Lhünpö Dé worked with the preceptor Vidyākarasiṃha to translate the text. It also notes that Geshé Dromtönpa (1004–64 CE) worked with Jowo Atīśa (982–1054) to edit the mantras. Based on these colophons, it would seem that *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* was translated from an Indian language into Tibetan in the early ninth century, when Vidyākarasiṃha and Bandé Palgyi Lhünpo Dé were active, and then the text was edited by Atīśa and Dromtönpa over two hundred years later.

- i.3 However, we have found no additional evidence to support this early history of *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* in Tibet. The text is listed in neither the Denkarma nor Phangthangma imperial catalogs,¹ and we have found no other accounts of a Tibetan-language edition of the text during the imperial period (ca. 600–850). As far as we know, the Sanskrit text is no longer extant. We do know that *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* was first translated into Chinese around the turn of the eighth century, and it was later translated into Tangut.² It is possible that *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* was translated into Tibetan from Chinese or, based on the major discrepancies across the extant Tibetan and Chinese editions noted in our translation below, more likely from Tangut. The editing of the dhāraṇī by Atīśa and Dromtön further supports this hypothesis of an East or Central Asian transmission to Tibet.
- i.4 The Chinese translation of this dhāraṇī text (*Wu gou jing guang da tuo luo ni jing* 無垢淨光大陀羅尼經) was undertaken at the court of Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (or Wu Zhao 武曩, 624–705; r. 690–705) of Tang China (618–907 CE). According to catalog records, there was an edition translated at the turn of the eighth century by a Khotanese monk, Śikṣānanda (Shichanantuo 實叉難陀), which is no longer extant.³ The received edition was translated in 704 by a Tocharian monk, Mitraśānta (Mituoshan 彌陀山 or Mituoxian 彌陀仙), together with the Sino-Sogdian master Fazang 法藏 (643–712). This edition can currently be found in the Taishō canon (Taishō 1024)⁴ and in manuscripts recovered from Dunhuang.⁵

The Chinese translation is best known among historians of East Asian science and technology. This is the case because *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* is among the earliest datable specimens of printing in East Asia and in the world.⁶ Following the discovery of an early eighth-century example of this print in 1966 in Korea, inside the Śākyamuni Stūpa (Sōkkat’ap) at Pulguksa Temple in Kyōngju, the text has sparked a series of debates among Korean, Japanese, and Chinese scholars concerning the origins of printing technology.⁷ Between the years 764 and 770, there was also an imperial printing project in Japan based on *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”*. Six decades after Empress Wu’s death, Empress Kōken 孝謙 (or Shōtoku Tennō 称徳天皇, 718–70; r. 749–58) of Japan sponsored an unprecedented printing of *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”*, of which approximately 20,000 copies survive today.⁸ These are some of the oldest extant examples of printing in any language and perhaps also the earliest imperially patronized printing project in world history.⁹ Shortly before her demise, the empress purportedly distributed one million miniature *caityas* containing these printed *dhāraṇī* texts throughout Japan. Through these efforts, *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* came to be known as *The Dhāraṇī of One Million Caityas* (Jpn. *hyakumantō darani* 百萬塔陀羅尼). Thus *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* is among the earliest extant prints of any language or culture and is undoubtedly the most widely printed text of the eighth-century world.

For at least six hundred years, practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism have inserted *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* into caityas along with other blessed substances.¹⁰ It is sometimes included as one of the Five Great Dhāraṇīs, paired with *The Dhāraṇī of the Stainless Uṣṇīṣa* (*gtsug tor dri med kyi gzungs; Vimaloṣṇīṣadhāraṇī*) as the “two stainless ones” (*dri med rnam gnyis*).¹¹ Unlike *The Dhāraṇī of the Stainless Uṣṇīṣa*, which is mentioned in the *Tengyur*, however, the first Tibetan-language reference to *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* that we have found is in the writings of Butön Rinchen Drup (1290–1364).¹² Most notably, we find in his collected works a text entitled *The Noble Maṇḍala Ritual “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* (*‘phags pa ’od zer dri ma med pa rnam par dag pa’i ’od ces bya ba’i dkyil ’khor gyi cho ga*), which contains instructions for and elaborations on the creation of caityas that include *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”*.¹³ Similar instructions can also be found in the writings of Ngorchen Kunga Sangpo (1382–1456) and many other authors.¹⁴ In addition to these canonical editions and exegetical expansions, the text of *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* has also been printed and transmitted individually at least once, for the sake of Yargyap Pönchen Rinchen Sangpo (d. 1475).¹⁵ As this brief survey has shown, *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* gained popularity in Tibet by the fourteenth century at the latest, and then was paired with *The Dhāraṇī of the Stainless Uṣṇīṣa* to form the “two stainless ones.”

i.7

This translation of *The Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”* is based on the two versions of the text, Toh 510 and Toh 982,^{16 17} preserved in the Degé Kangyur, in consultation with the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) of the Kangyur, the aforementioned Yargyap Pönchen print, and the Stok Palace manuscript. All Tibetan editions that we have consulted are extremely similar and, beyond minor variations in spelling, there is only one line of difference between the Kangyur editions (noted below). We have also compared these Tibetan editions with the Chinese-language editions found in the Taishō canon (Taishō 1024) and one manuscript found at Dunhuang (PC 3916). Throughout our translation, we note variant readings across the two language traditions, particularly when the Chinese editions help clarify ambiguous sections of the Tibetan editions. We have not noted all discrepancies across Tibetan and Chinese editions, for there are too many. Finally, we have reproduced the Sanskrit dhāraṇī transliterations based on the work of Miyasaka Yūshō 宮坂宥勝 (1921–2011).¹⁸

The Translation

1.

The Noble Dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light”

1.1

Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.

1.2

Thus did I hear at one time. In a great courtyard in the palace of the great city of Kapilavastu, the Blessed One sat teaching the doctrine to an entire assembly of monks, as well as many great bodhisattvas. There were innumerable great bodhisattvas, including Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin, Vajrapāṇi, Āryāvalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī, Prajñāprabhā,¹⁹ Maitreya, and so forth. There also were innumerable gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, kinaras, mahoragas, humans, nonhumans, and so forth, who venerated, depicted, and praised the Blessed One.

- 1.3 At that time, there was a great brahmin named Kapilacandra who lived in Kapilavastu. He lacked faith in the teachings of the Blessed One and entertained perverse views. An interpreter of lifespans and dreams²⁰ said to him, “Great brahmin, the time of your death shall arrive in seven days.” Hearing this, the brahmin became extremely unhappy. Panicked and anxious, he thought, “Now I should search for someone to protect my life. It has been said that the mendicant Gautama possesses the magical power of omniscience. I should go to him. If it is true that he is omniscient, he will certainly teach a doctrine that will protect me from my fear and anxiety.”
- 1.4 He went to the Blessed One and from afar saw him sitting together with his many retinues. He did not dare speak to the Blessed One but merely sat and thought. The Blessed One, a complete and perfect buddha who knows the three times, sees all, and lacks obscurations, knew the brahmin’s thoughts, and he spoke with a heart of kindness and a loving intention.
- 1.5 “Great brahmin, your time of death will come in seven days, and you will be reborn as a being in the lower realm of Avīci Hell. Then you will be reborn in each of the sixteen hells in succession. Even once you have been liberated from those, you will be reborn with the low-caste body of a butcher. After death and transmigration, you will be reborn with the body of a pig. You will always eat vile and impure things and will even live in a cesspool. You will continuously experience suffering. Even if you do attain a human body, you will be extremely poor and unclean, endowed with a foul odor and a dark, unattractive countenance. Your body will be emaciated, weak, and afflicted by skin disease. You will be a completely wretched being, always hungry and desperate. You will be a completely inferior being, always beaten and bruised, experiencing extreme suffering.”

- 1.6 Extremely frightened and saddened, the brahmin prostrated with his head at the feet of the Blessed One. “Blessed One, the completely perfect buddhas are the protectors of all beings. If you give me refuge, I will confess all my evil deeds. Henceforth, if I act in accordance with the teachings of the Blessed One, please protect me from the sufferings of being reborn as a lower being and in the hell realms.”
- 1.7 The Blessed One said, “Great brahmin, go to an intersection in the road in Kapilavastu, where there is a derelict caitya that contains old relics. Repair it and install a pillar at the peak of the caitya. Write out the syllables of a mantra,²¹ place them inside the caitya, make offerings, recite the mantra seven times, and your lifespan will lengthen. Even when your time of death does come, you will be reborn in the pleasant higher realms of great enjoyment. For hundreds of thousands of eons, your enjoyment and pleasure will only continue to increase. Then you will be reborn in the completely pure land of the Thus-Gone One, Akṣobhya Buddha.²² You will experience great bliss for many hundreds and thousands of eons. Then, after you transmigrate again, you will be reborn in the heavenly abode of the Four Great Kings.²³ There too you will experience endless enjoyment and pleasure for hundreds of thousands of great eons. Regardless of which life or abode, in each rebirth you will be endowed with mental acuity and your lifespan will be free of obstructions. All your karmic pollution will dissipate, and you will never fall into the hell realms. You will continually encounter the manifestations of completely pure and perfect buddhas, and they will remember you.

- 1.8 “Moreover, great brahmin, monks or nuns, laymen or laywomen, sons or daughters of good families—whoever has a short lifespan or many diseases—should repair an old caitya or create a new one. Even if one has the characteristics of an exhausted lifespan, if one writes a mantra and places it inside, sweeps the maṇḍala,²⁴ and makes offerings, one’s life will still become longer. Even if one is afflicted by disease and sufferings, one will be liberated from disease. One will never be reborn in the lower realms of the hells, in the womb of an animal, or in Lord Yama’s world of destruction. One will no longer hear of such places,²⁵ let alone be reborn in them.”
- 1.9 The brahmin rejoiced when he heard this. With thoughts of repairing the caitya, he rose from the retinue and left.²⁶
- 1.10 At that time, from within that very assembly, the great bodhisattva Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin rose from his seat, joined his palms together, and asked the Blessed One, “How should one perform this mantra ritual of the Blessed One, such that it will generate good qualities, goodness, and the roots of virtue?”
- 1.11 The Blessed One replied, “One should practice this grand supreme master of all great mantras, *stainless and pure light*, according to the great maṇḍala ritual. The blessings of all thus-gone ones will bring benefits and pleasure for all beings. If some beings hear this mantra, they will even completely purify the pollution of committing the five inexpressible sins. They will also purify stinginess, miserliness, jealousy, and all the other roots of nonvirtue. It will even extend a lifespan that has been exhausted, and allow beings to attain all the auspicious, good, and sublime contexts.”
- 1.12 The great bodhisattva Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin asked the Blessed One, “Please, Blessed One, teach the complete cycle of this mantra ritual of the Blessed One to protect the lives of all beings and dispel all karmic pollution.”

- 1.13 The Blessed One responded to the request, and a great ray of light appeared from above the crown of the Blessed One. Light pervaded all billion worlds of the trichiliocosm and alerted all thus-gone ones. The light rays then gathered once again and disappeared into the crown of the Blessed One. Pleased, the Blessed One then recited a mantra in the voice of a kalaviṅka bird:
- 1.14 *namaḥ saptasaptatībhyaḥ samyaksambuḍdhakoṭīnām pariśuddhamanasavācittapraṭiṣṭhitānām namo bhagavate amitāyusasya tathāgatasya | oṃ tathāgataśuddhe āyurviśuddhani saṃhara saṃhara sarvatathāgatavīryabalena pratisaṃhara āyuh sāra sāra sarvatathāgatasamayam bodhi bodhi bodhya vibodhya bodhgaya bodhgaya sarvapāpāvaraṇaviśuddhe vigatamarabhayaṃ subuddhabuddhe huru huru svāhā ||*²⁷
- 1.15 “This is the root mantra. Whoever wishes to perform this ritual should circumambulate a caitya that contains relics seventy-seven times and recite this mantra seventy-seven times on either the eighth, thirteenth, fourteenth, or fifteenth day.
- 1.16 “One should wash and create a maṇḍala and then write the syllables of the mantra seventy-seven times. When one recites the mantra, one should also wash oneself, wear clean clothes, anoint one’s body with perfumes, eat pure foods, and offer flowers and incense. One should also imagine offering the seven kinds of precious substances or whatever one has and rejoice.
- 1.17 “For the sake of venerating the doctrine,²⁸ one should respect and compose great illustrations. One should perceive each of the syllables of the mantra as rare and precious. One should construct seventy-seven caityas—big or small, whatever one can manage—and place a mantra inside each of them. If one creates a caitya with one-pointed concentration, one will strengthen an exhausted lifespan and transform it into a long life.

- 1.18 “After purifying the moral obscurations and all the sins of innumerable lives, one will never be born in any of the realms of hell, animals, or pretas. One will also remember wherever one has been born in one’s previous lifetimes. Similarly, one will also come to achieve all that one wishes. One will generate the roots of virtue equivalent to seven million seven hundred thousand thus-gone ones.²⁹ One will be freed from all disease and suffering.
- 1.19 “When a severe disease afflicts someone and they have arrived at the time of death, construct a square maṇḍala. One should use five different colors to create a diagram, and draw a wheel, a vajra, a conch shell, a trident, a swastika,³⁰ and a lotus flower in the central area. One should also draw a lotus flower at each of the four corners and place a vase filled with perfumed water on top of each corner.
- 1.20 “One should also place a censer full of incense with various types of smoke wafting above. In a five-colored vessel, one should place various foods, including a mixture of the three white foods and cooked rice. Into five small bowls one should pour from a vessel filled with scented water, flowers, and fruits or grains. One should then create an offering cake from a mixture of various foods and a vase full of scented water and place it on top of the maṇḍala. Next to the offering cake and a heap of rice, one should draw an image of Gaṇapati and place a butter lamp upon the crown of his head.
- 1.21 “Position the sick person to the west of the maṇḍala. Place a food offering facing the interior of the maṇḍala and in front of the sick person and have them make an offering. Then the mantra reciter should perform the great purification and recite the mantra for the patient seventy-seven times. Performing the ritual like this will restore and lengthen even the lifespan of a sick person with a depleted lifespan who is approaching the time of death, whose consciousness has waned and become faulty for seven days. They will also no longer experience the sufferings of dreams.³¹

- 1.22 “If one performs the great purification and recites the mantra for each day of one’s life,³² one will find enjoyment when approaching the time of death. One will be born in a realm of unending bliss.³³ If one continually repeats this, one will be born into a buddha field, and one will remember one’s previous lifetimes. It will purify untimely death and all obscurations.
- 1.23 “Further, if one recites the mantra seventy-seven times for the sake of a dead person and with a continuous thought of helping them, even if they have died and fallen to the lower realms, their karmic pollutions will instantaneously be exhausted, and they will experience the pleasure of being born in the higher divine realms.
- 1.24 “Further, if one writes the syllables of the mantra, calls the name of another person, inserts the mantra into a caitya, and earnestly makes an offering, that person will be freed from the lower realms when they die, and they will be born in the higher realms. Otherwise, one will be born in the divine realm of Tuṣita and, with the blessings of the buddhas,³⁴ one will not fall to the lower realms.
- 1.25 “If a son or daughter of a good family circumambulates the caitya, prostrates, or makes offerings to it, with the blessings of the thus-gone ones, they will not reverse from the path of unsurpassed awakening. The obscurations of their past actions will also be purified without exception. Even for birds, animals, and the like that have been covered by the shadow of the caitya, they will never be born in the lower realms of animals and so forth.³⁵

- 1.26 “Even those who are stained by the great pollution of the five inexpiable sins, if they touch the caitya or even if they are covered by its shadow, all such obscurations will be purified and exhausted. Within the realm of the caitya, one will be unaffected by bodily possession and attacks by bhūtas, yakṣas, rākṣasas, pretas, and piśācas. Fierce carnivores, lightning strikes,³⁶ venomous scorpions and snakes, compounded poisons, and so forth will also have no effect and will disappear.³⁷
- 1.27 “Further, opposing military forces, weapons, fire, floods, hail, famines, untimely death, nightmares, ill omens, and all sufferings and harms will disappear. Even if ill omens were to arise in that land, the great rays of light that shine from the caitya and the blessings of the buddhas will dispel all of them.
- 1.28 “Even if those who have evil thoughts do appear—including soldiers, thieves who intend to do harm, or enemy disputants—the great rays that shine from the caitya and the miraculous fire of the thus-gone ones will blaze everywhere. Within their circle, military forces and weapons will simultaneously manifest, pacifying and repulsing all opposing military forces. The gods will also provide protection and defense. Uprisings, contagious disease, and animal diseases will not arise within a hundred-mile radius of the protection that extends in all four directions. Fights and disputes will not arise, and improper behaviors will disappear. Because other mantras will be unable to prevent or suppress these events, this is the root of all mantras.”
- 1.29 “Now I shall explain *the mantra of the caitya’s central pillar*.
- 1.30 *oṃ sarvatathāgatavipulayaṣṭi maṇikanakarājatavibhūṣṭi dhuru dhuru samantavilokite sara sara bhavaviśodhani bodhani saṃbodhani pravarayaṣṭi varimaṇiduṣṭa huru cīramalaviśuddhe hūṃ hūṃ svāhā |*

- 1.31 “A son of a good family should earnestly write the syllables of this mantra ninety-nine times and add them to the four faces of the central pillar of the caitya. Then one should also write out the text of these very ritual instructions and place them inside the central pillar. If one performs the ritual this way, it is like constructing the central pillars of ninety-nine thousand caityas. On top of that, it is like erecting ninety-nine thousand caityas that contain relics. On top of that, it will create ninety-nine thousand caityas made from the seven precious substances.³⁸ On top of that, it is like building ninety-nine thousand caityas in monasteries, which are like the divine meeting place for the good doctrine,³⁹ for the sake of making offerings to the thus-gone ones.
- 1.32 “Further, if one makes a small caitya from clay and puts these mantras inside, this is also like building ninety-nine thousand caityas from the seven precious substances.
- 1.33 “Further, if one circumambulates this caitya, prostrates to it, joins one’s palms together, offers flowers to it, anoints it with ointments, offers incense to it, or offers some bells, banners, and parasols to it, one will gain the merit of offering to a caitya of the ninety-nine thousand thus-gone ones. One will attain the great glory, power, and vastness of complete and perfect roots of virtue. Even if a bird, a bee, or another animal is covered by the shadow of the caitya, the thus-gone ones will know and later think of them. They will also attain unsurpassable, complete, and perfect awakening, and abide on an irreversible ground.
- 1.34 “Further, if someone dreams of a caitya like this, sees it from afar, hears the sound of its bells, or even just hears in one’s ears talk of building such a caitya,⁴⁰ this will purify the five inexpressible sins and all obscurations. The thus-gone ones will always protect them and think of them, and they will attain the completely pure path of unsurpassable, complete, and perfect awakening. This is called *the mantra of the caitya’s central pillar*.

1.35 “Further, son of a good family, this is *the essence of the mantras for building caityas of the thus-gone ones*.⁴¹

1.36 *oṃ sarvatathāgatamalaviśodhani ruddhabale padavare pratisaṃskāra
tathāgatadhātudhare dhara dhara sandhara sandhara sarvatathāgata
adhiṣṭhite svāhā |*

1.37 “A monk, a nun, a layman, a laywoman, or some other individual should personally create a caitya, enlist someone else to create one, or even repair an old caitya. Alternatively, they should create a small caitya from earth, clay, brick, or even stone. First, one should recite *the essence of the mantras* one thousand and eight times. After that one should create a caitya that is the height of approximately one fingernail, one cubit, or even one mile. With the power of the mantra and the strength of one-pointed concentration, the caitya will emit a perfumed aroma. One will smell the scent of sandalwood, camphor, musk, saffron, and so forth,⁴² or it will emit the sweet aroma of divine incense.

1.38 “After oneself and others have completed the recitations, all one’s wishes will come true. One will accumulate the vast roots of virtue and attain good characteristics, boons, and the sublime contexts. Even if one has the karma of a short life, one’s lifespan will lengthen and expand. And even when one approaches the time of death, one will see the faces of ninety-nine trillion buddhas and thus-gone ones who will later think of them. They will manifest to prophesy that, in a future life, one will be born in the completely pure realm of a buddha.

- 1.39 “Further, one will attain a lifespan of one hundred trillion years, one will remember past abodes, and one will attain the pure divine eye and divine ear.⁴³ One will also attain knowledge of others’ thoughts, transmigration at death, and knowledge of rebirth. The aroma of sandalwood will arise from one’s body, and the sweet smell of an utpala flower will emit from one’s mouth. One will also attain the path of unsurpassed, completely perfect awakening, as well as the ground of no reversal.
- 1.40 “Further, even if one uses a drop of ointment as small as a sesame seed, after one recites the mantra, if one applies a scented unguent to the *caitya*, one will also attain the qualities and boons as explained before.
- 1.41 “Further, a monk, a nun, a layman, a laywoman, or some other individual should purify him- or herself. By holding the letters of the mantra as rare and precious, one should trust that they are like the *thus-gone ones*. After one has generated respect for the mantras, one should write out their syllables. After one has written out the mantra and seal ritual as explained before, one should place the *essence mantra* in the foundation of the central pillar of the *caitya*. If one creates a *caitya*, one will accumulate vast roots of virtue and attain all the qualities and boons.”
- 1.42 After the Blessed One explained the seal rituals of the mantras, all the *thus-gone ones* who live in the ten directions rejoiced and spoke, “Completely Perfect Buddha Śākyamuni, who thinks of beings equally and who arranges the sphere of all reality, these instructions for attaining the blessings of the seal rituals of the great mantras have been wonderful. Wonderful! Extremely wonderful! With these roots of virtue, one will attain unsurpassed, irreversible, and completely perfect awakening.”

- 1.43 Then the entire retinue, including the groups of gods, nāgas, yakṣas, rākṣasas, gandharvas, asuras, kinṇaras, and mahoragas; as well as the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi; the Four Great Kings; the progenitor Brahmā, Guardian of the World; Viṣṇu; Maheśvara; Śakra; Yama; Varuṇa; Kubera; and other extremely powerful gods heard the speech of the Blessed One.⁴⁴ They each grew remorseful and distraught about their own behavior and, because they wished to eventually obtain the great qualities, one by one they began to call out and speak. “Alas! To meet with the appearance of a completely perfect buddha is extremely rare. To hear the teaching of the holy doctrine is also extremely rare. To hear the teaching of a completely perfect buddha who has assembled the mantras and seals is rarer still. This is all extremely wonderful!”
- 1.44 Then, at that moment, the brahmin named Kapilacandra heard the Blessed One’s instructions for the mantra rituals and attained great qualities. This purified the dirty particles of his mental obscurations. It also completely purified fear of death, his sins, and all his moral obscurations. His lifespan expanded and lengthened. He rejoiced and attained great bliss in his mind. All groups of bhūtas also developed sentience and empathy.⁴⁵
- 1.45 Then the great bodhisattva Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin, for the sake of making offerings to the thus-gone ones, manifestly emanated a mansion of precious substances around the assembly and adorned it with various jewels. Delighting in the doctrine, he offered it to the Blessed One. After circumambulating him three times, Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin bowed his head to the feet of the Blessed One.

- 1.46 He then spoke to the Blessed One. “The Blessed One’s mantras, seals, and maṇḍala rituals⁴⁶ are extremely rare to find. They bring supreme benefit and pleasure to all beings. Teaching beings in Jambudvīpa who have great obscurations, they generate the roots of virtue, lengthen lifespans, and free beings from all sufferings of the aggregates. Thus, we bodhisattvas entreat the Blessed Buddha, in the presence of the thus-gone ones, we seek the words of the mantras and seals that perfect completely pure primordial gnosis.⁴⁷
- 1.47 *namo bhagavata navanavatīnāṃ samyaksaṃbuddhakoṭīnayutaśatasahasrānāṃ
namaḥ sarvanirvaraṇaviskamvini bodhisatvāya | om̐ turu turu sarvāvaraṇa-
viśodhani sarvatathāgatāyurbalāni vipulanirmale sarvasiddhanamaskṛitvā vara
vara sarvasatvāvalokini | om̐ sarvanivāraṇaviskamvinisarvapāpaviśodhani
svāhā |*
- 1.48 “This mantra of mine, Blessed One, is the teaching of nine hundred ninety-nine million buddhas. If one performs it without distraction and with one-pointed concentration, even one moment of recitation will purify all sins.
- 1.49 “Furthermore, if a son of a good family writes the syllables of this mantra together with the ritual ninety-nine times and places it inside a caitya, pays homage, praises it with pleasant words, or offers incense, flowers, ointments, and butter lamps, it will purify all sins and will clarify all moral obscurations of this very life. All wishes will come true. It will be like making offerings and paying homage to the countless hundreds of thousands of buddhas and blessed ones, as numerous as the grains of sand of the Ganges. Similarly, it will be like making offerings to hundreds of thousands and tens of millions of caityas with relics at their core, also as numerous as the grains of sand of the Ganges. It will form vast roots of virtue and so forth.

- 1.50 “Furthermore, on the eighth, fourteenth, fifteenth, or whenever is appropriate, when a mendicant washes and purifies, wears clean clothing, and fasts for a day—eating the three white foods, circumambulating caityas, and reciting the mantra one hundred and eight times—it will completely purify all moral obscurations and even the five inexpressible sins accumulated over one hundred thousand eons.
- 1.51 “Furthermore, after purifying all obscurations of actions and afflictions, I, Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin, will manifest in my body. I will grant all wishes, and one will see the faces of all complete and perfect buddhas.
- 1.52 “Similarly, if one recites the mantra two hundred and eight times, one will attain a state of concentration. Reciting it three hundred and eight times will purify all obscurations, and one will abide in an irreversible state. Furthermore, if one recites it four hundred and eight times, one of the Four Great Kings will come near in a manifested body, providing protection, refuge, and even the power of insight. All merit will also come near.⁴⁸
- 1.53 “If one recites the mantra five hundred and eight times, one will attain abiding on the uncompounded path with one’s roots of virtue. Further, if one recites it six hundred and eight times, one will become a bearer of vidyāmantras and will proceed to the abode of vidyādharas in the sky. Further, if one recites it seven hundred and eight times, one will become endowed with all good qualities. Further, if one recites it eight hundred and eight times, one will attain a self-mastery that cannot be sullied by others and purify the mind. Further, if one recites it nine hundred and eight times, it will purify the five aggregates.

- 1.54 “Further, if one recites the mantra one thousand and eight times, one will attain the fruit of stream entry. If one recites it completely two thousand times, one will attain the fruit of once returning. If one recites it completely three thousand times, one will attain the fruit of never returning. If one recites it completely four thousand times, one will attain the fruit of arhathood. If one recites it completely five thousand times, one will attain the ground of solitary awakening. If one recites it completely six thousand times, one will attain the miraculous abode of bodhisattvas. Further, if one recites it completely seven thousand times, one will attain the first bodhisattva ground. Further, if one recites it completely eight thousand times, one will reach the fifth bodhisattva ground. Further, if one recites it completely nine thousand times, one will attain the body of a guhyaka, lord of vidyāmantras and mantras. Further, if one recites it completely ten thousand times, one will reach the unwavering eighth bodhisattva ground. Further, if one recites it completely twenty thousand times, one will attain the body of an unsurpassed, completely perfect buddha. One will come to produce the great roar of a lion.
- 1.55 “Further, if one wishes to accumulate merit for the sake of one’s parents,⁴⁹ one should repair and renovate an old, ruined caitya that contains relics. If one circumambulates it with their right side and recites the complete mantra one hundred and eight times while circumambulating, all one’s wishes will come true.”
- 1.56 Then the Blessed One said to the bodhisattva Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin, “Good, good, very good. Son of a good family, you have served me well. Your explanation of the mantra rituals of the thus-gone ones is proper and true.”

- 1.57 Then the king of all yakṣas, the Lord of the Guhyakas Vajrapāṇi,⁵⁰ spoke to the Blessed One. “The Blessed One’s *king of mantras* rituals are like the thus-gone ones. Because they arise from the reality body of the thus-gone ones,⁵¹ these excellent essences of the Blessed One will dispel all moral obscurations and sins of beings who abide in Jambudvīpa. Therefore, henceforth we shall follow the teachings of the Blessed One.”
- 1.58 Then the Blessed One spoke to the Lord of the Guhyakas. “These mantra rituals of the Lord of the Guhyakas will be like the thus-gone ones abiding in the world during a future time. If one performs this ritual just as I have taught it, even those who make minor efforts will attain great fruits and keep great benefits. I need not even mention that those who make great efforts will accumulate all roots of virtue. Therefore, their qualities cannot be fully explained even by the hundreds of thousands and millions of thus-gone ones, as numerous as the grains of sand of the Ganges. But the thus-gone ones still know and see their full extent.”
- 1.59 The Lord of the Guhyakas said, “Blessed One, how should one make minor efforts, such that one achieves the great fruits of merit and attains great merits?”
- 1.60 The Blessed One said, “Listen well and I shall explain. If a monk, a nun, a layman, or a laywoman wishes to attain the great fruits of merit and good qualities, they should perform the *king of mantras* ritual that I have taught previously.⁵² One should write the syllables ninety-nine times and, before a Buddhist caitya, create a square maṇḍala covered with cow dung. At each of the four corners, one should place a bowl that is full of scented water, and one should also place a wafting incense censer.

- 1.61 “One should insert flowers, scented water, and dried fruits into a great vessel, and place it on top of the maṇḍala. One should also insert into a pot the three white foods and a mixture of black sesame seeds, lentils, peas, and fruits that has been cooked into a porridge called *kṛsara*.⁵³ One should also scatter over the maṇḍala ninety-nine various fruits, stating the names of the foods, along with incense and flowers. One should place the syllables of the mantra in the central pillar of the caitya and visualize all thus-gone ones of the ten directions as manifest on each side of the caitya. One should then pay homage and recite this mantra with one-pointed concentration.
- 1.62 *namaḥ navanavatīnāṃ tathāgatakoṭīnāṃ gaṅgānadīvālukasamānām*⁵⁴ | *oṃ vipulavimale pravare jinavare sara sara sarvatathāgatadhātugarbhe sate dhiṣṭhite svāhā āyatatopaṇi svāhā sarvadevānā vahāyāmi buddha adhiṣṭhāna samaya svāhā* |
- 1.63 “Keeping the incense wafting continuously and uninterruptedly, one should recite the mantra twenty-eight times. At the caitya one should immediately perform rituals, stabilize the central pillar, and make offerings to the eight great bodhisattvas, the eight great leaders of the yakṣas, the Lord of the Guhyakas, the Four Great Kings, Brahmā, Maheśvara, and Nārāyaṇa.
- 1.64 “In addition to the above, ninety-nine trillion buddhas, as numerous as the grains of sand of the Ganges, will also come to that place, make offerings at the caitya, and grant blessings together with the relics of their reality bodies.
- 1.65 “Therefore, if one performs this ritual with continuity of mind and according to the instructions, one will attain those qualities as well as the merit produced from creating a caitya with precious wish-granting jewels. It is like making a caitya from many hundreds of thousands and tens of millions of jewels. One will become endowed with the great and vast roots of virtue and a body that is completely pure, with long life, lacking disease, and invulnerable to all obstacles.

- 1.66 “When one sees this caitya, or even just hears the sound of the caitya’s bells, all moral obscurations and sins will be purified. Even if one has committed the five inexpressible sins, they will be totally purified. When one approaches the time of death, one will be reborn in the land of Sukhāvātī.
- 1.67 “Even if one merely hears the name of the caitya, when one approaches the time of death, one will attain the path of unsurpassed awakening. Even if a being such as a bird or a wild animal sees it, they will avoid the animal realm following death and attain a meritorious body.
- 1.68 “If one wishes to practice the six perfections completely and perfectly, one should create a square maṇḍala as instructed before. One should cover it with earth and dung and, on top of that, perfumed plaster. At each of the four corners of the maṇḍala, one should place a vessel full of perfumed water. One should then write ninety-nine copies of even just one of the four mantras previously taught.⁵⁵ One should then cast ninety-nine small caityas by hand and insert one of the mantras into each.
- 1.69 “Then, one should write ninety-nine syllables of this mantra and insert it into the interior of the rings of a caitya. One should then place the caitya on top of the maṇḍala and scatter offerings of flowers. One should circumambulate the caitya seven times, reciting the following mantra:
- 1.70 *namaḥ navanavatīnāṃ tathāgatagaṅgānadīvāluka koṭīnayautaśatasahasrānām | om popori cariṇi cariṇi cari mori kori calavāri svāhā |*
- 1.71 “If one performs the ritual like this, one will not only completely and perfectly practice the six perfections, one will also create hundreds of thousands and tens of millions of precious caityas, as numerous as the grains of sand of the Ganges. One will also revere and make offerings to ninety-nine hundred thousand and tens of millions of complete and perfect buddhas.

- 1.72 “On top of that, all the gods will assemble clouds of offerings and provide various ritual objects for the caitya. They will offer a palace for the thus-gone ones and provide various ritual objects, and the complete and perfect buddhas will acknowledge and see this, granting blessings. They will allow sons and daughters of good families to attain the merits of the great and vast roots of virtue and all good qualities.
- 1.73 “If one unerringly writes the syllables of *the essence of this king of mantras*, continues to recite it, makes offerings, and wears it on the body, one will be provided with protection and refuge.⁵⁶ All aggressive enemies, antagonists, yakṣas, rākṣasas, pretas, and so forth will become harmless. They will each flee in fear and terror.
- 1.74 “If one even just talks with a knower and reciter of the mantra, it will completely purify even the obscurations of the five inexpressible sins. If one merely hears the voice of this mantra reciter, is covered by their shadow, or even just touches them, one’s moral obscurations from previous lifetimes and all sins will be completely purified. The body of a knower and reciter of the mantra will become invulnerable to poison, burns, drowning, and all spirits. Lightning will not strike them, and all buddhas will grant protection, refuge, and healing with their vision. All gods and even all holders of commitments will become one’s companions, and one will become invulnerable to all vidyāmantras, curses, and compounds of others.

- 1.75 “Therefore, one should seek out the ritual instructions for this mantra from a knower and reciter, regardless of where they live. One should write out the syllables for the mantra and create a caitya in a place where many people go back and forth, like the intersection of three or four paths. With the mantra placed in its interior, if any beings, birds, bees, or even worms see the caitya, hear the mantra, touch the caitya, or are struck by the soil, dust, wind, or dirt,⁵⁷ they will be freed from all the sins that cause one to fall into the lower realms and be reborn as an animal, ghost, or hell being. When the time of death approaches, they will be reborn in the pleasant higher realms of the gods. And, after the obscurations of their previous actions have been completely purified, they will attain memories of their previous lives and the teachings for irreversibility.”
- 1.76 Then the Blessed One spoke to the great bodhisattva Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin, the Lord of the Guhyakas Vajrapāṇi, the Four Great Kings, Brahmā Lord of the Sahā World, gods of the Brahmā abodes, Maheśvara, and other various gods. “Excellent beings, I now transmit to you this *essence of the king of mantras*. You should continually perform them and keep them complete. Put them into a treasure chest and recite them throughout all the lands. Teach them to beings at all times and without interruption. Even just seeing or hearing them will purify the five inexpressible sins.”
- 1.77 Then the great bodhisattva Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin, the Lord of the Guhyakas Vajrapāṇi, the Four Great Kings, Brahmā, Maheśvara, Nārāyaṇa, gods, nāgas, yakṣas, rākṣasas, asuras, mahoragas, and so forth, each prostrated at the feet of the Blessed One and spoke in unison. “Blessed One, the Blessed One has considered us with kindness. For the benefit of all beings, we will preserve and practice the mantra rituals and caitya creation rituals just as you have taught them.

- 1.78 “We will always hold them as dhāraṇīs and will not forget them. We will write their syllables, read them aloud, and make offerings with them. In a future time, when beings hear and internalize this doctrine, as taught by the Blessed One, they will be liberated from all sins, lower evil births in hells, and so forth.
- 1.79 “For the sake of lifting to our crowns the kindness of the Blessed One, we will perform these mantra rituals, revere them, respect them, establish them as precious, spread them far and wide, and see them as like the face of the Blessed One. We will ardently strive so that they will never disappear and that they will spread no matter what.”
- 1.80 Then the Blessed One spoke. “Excellent beings, keeping your commitments, your promise to protect these secret mantra rituals, perform them, and completely retain them is good, good, very good.” After speaking, the Blessed One rejoiced together with the entire retinue, and they lauded the teachings of the Blessed One.
- 1.81 This completes the noble dhāraṇī “Stainless Rays of Pure Light.”

Colophon

- c.1 This was translated and redacted by the Indian preceptor Vidyākarasiṃha and the main editor and translator Bandé Palgyi Lhünpo Dé. Jowo Atīśa and Geshé Dromtönpa corrected the mantras.⁵⁸

Notes

1. Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, p. 456; Phangthangma 2003, pp. 23–31.
2. Nishida 1975–77, no. 305.
3. Chen 2007, p. 205; Chen 2012, p. 277.
4. *Wu gou jing guang da tuo luo ni jing* 無垢淨光大陀羅尼經 (*Raśmivimalādhāraṇī*), Taishō 1024 (CBETA; SAT).
5. Pelliot chinois 3916. Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris. Accessed through *The International Dunhuang Programme*.
6. Barrett 2008, pp. 134–35.
7. Chen 2007, pp. 203–5; Kornicki 2012, pp. 47–50.
8. Barrett 2001, p. 4; Kornicki 2012, p. 45.
9. Keyes 2006, p. 40; Kornicki 1998.
10. For an overview of texts related to stūpas and caityas in the Kangyur, see: Knowledge Base Article on Stūpas.
11. Bendor 1995, p. 253; Bendor 1996, p. 113, n. 114.
12. Lama 2010, p. 21.
13. Butön Rinchen Drup 2000.
14. See the works listed in the bibliography from the *rnying ma bka' ma rgyas pa*, edited by Dudjom Rinpoche (bdud 'joms rin po che).
15. 'od zer dri med kyi gzungs. A digitized version of this unpublished xylographic print can be accessed at BDRC W1CZ1244.
16. Note that there is a discrepancy among various databases for cataloging the Toh 982 version of this text within vol. 101 or 102 of the Degé Kangyur. See Toh 982, , for details.
17. [note 4901a825...]
18. Miyasaka 1983–84.
19. The Chinese editions omit *Prajñāprabhā* but include *Samantabhadra* (*Puxian pu sa* 普賢菩薩) and *Akṣayamati* (*Wujinyi pu sa* 無盡意菩薩) in this list.
20. Although this term is ambiguous in the Tibetan editions (*gzhan zhig gi tshe gzhan zhig gi rmi ltas su rmis te bstan pa*), the Chinese makes it clear that a “fortune teller” (*shan xiang shi* 善相師) speaks to the brahmin here.

21. The Tibetan “secret mantra” (*gsang sngags*; Skt. *guhyamantra*) and the Chinese *dhāraṇī* (*tuó luó ní* 陀羅尼) and “divine spell” (*shén zhōu* 神呪) are rendered as “mantra” in this translation.
22. The Tibetan version only states that the brahmin will be reborn in the pure land of the Buddha Akṣobhya, whereas the Chinese version gives the name of the pure land, Abhirati (*Miaoxi shì jiè* 妙喜世界).
23. The Chinese here reads “the palace of Tuṣita Heaven” (*Doushuai tiān gōng* 兜率天宮).
24. The Tibetan term used here and below is maṇḍala (*dkyil 'khor*), whereas the Chinese term could also refer to an open altar (*tan* 壇).
25. The Tibetan version is ambiguous about what sounds are not being heard here (*de dag gi sgra*), whereas the Chinese version is more specific: “sounds of hell” (*diyu zhī shēng* 地獄之聲).
26. Although the Tibetan editions state that the brahmin leaves the assembly here (*'khor de nas lang te song ngo*), Kāpilacandra appears again at the end of the third mantra. The Chinese editions state that he “developed thoughts in his mind to go to the place of the old, collapsing caitya to repair it in accordance with the teachings” (*yu wáng bǐ gù huái tā suǒ yì jiāo xiū yíng* 欲往彼故壞塔所依教修營) but did not yet leave the assembly.
27. Lacking a Sanskrit version of this text, we have recreated this and the other mantras based on Miyasaka (1983–84, pp. 76–77).
28. The Chinese edition states that here one should “venerate the caitya” (*gōng yáng cǐ tā* 供養此塔); the point about venerating the doctrine is mentioned earlier in the instructions.
29. Here and in some subsequent cases, listed numbers are both unimaginably large and surprisingly precise. Whereas the Tibetan should be rendered as 7,700,000 (*'bum phrag bdun cu rtsa bdun*), the Chinese could be 7,700,000 or 7,700,000,000 (*qī shí qī yì* 七十七億).
30. Whereas the Tibetan clearly refers to an image of a swastika (*gyung drung ris*), the Chinese describes the “shape of the character for moon” (*yue zì xíng* 月字形) and should probably instead read the “shape of a swastika” (*wan zì xíng* 卍字型).
31. Rather than “no longer experience the sufferings of dreams” (*rmi lam gyi sdug bsngal yang myong bar mi 'gyur ro*), the Chinese editions connect this passage with the previous sentence: “like waking from a dream” (*ru cóng mèng jué* 如從夢覺).
32. The Tibetan editions refer to “perform[ing] the great purification” (*gtsang sbra cher byas*), whereas the Chinese refer to specific days of purification (*hu jìng rì* 護淨日), perhaps referring to *poṣadha* meetings.
33. The “realm of unending bliss” (*bde ba mi zad pa'i gnas*) is rendered as Sukhāvatī (*Jīlè Jiè* 極樂界) in the Chinese editions.
34. Here and below, when the Tibetan editions refer to different kinds of “blessings” (*byin gyi rlabs*), the Chinese editions refer to different kinds of “awakening” (*pǔ tí* 菩提).

35. The Chinese editions state that the sons and daughters of good families will never be reborn as birds and animals, and the shadow of the caitya will “liberate them from animal rebirths and other unfortunate transmigrations” (*zhi ci ta ying dang de yong li chu sheng e qu* 至此塔影當得永離畜生惡趣).
36. Instead of “lightning strikes” (*thog ’bab pa*), the Chinese editions have “evil dragons” (*e long* 惡龍).
37. The Chinese editions add that “there will be no shadowy phantoms, ghosts, or spirits who steal vital essence” (*yi wu wang liang zhu e gui shen duo jing qi zhe* 亦無魍魎諸惡鬼神奪精氣者). Compare this and the following paragraphs with McBride 2011, p. 42.
38. The Tibetan editions refer to the “seven precious substances” (*rin po che sna bdun*), whereas the Chinese editions refer to the “eight great treasures” (*ba da bao* 八大寶). This entire sentence is missing from the Stok Palace manuscript, but it is present in all other editions.
39. The “divine meeting place for the good doctrine” (*chos bzang lha’i ’dun sa*) refers to a palace on Mount Meru. The Chinese editions refer to the “site of awakening” (*pu ti chang* 菩提場) instead.
40. Whereas the Tibetan editions refer to one “hear[ing] in one’s ears talk of building such a caitya” (*mchod rten bzhegs pa rna bar gtam thos pa*), the Chinese editions state that one merely needs to “hear its name” (*wen qi ming* 聞其名).
41. The Tibetan title for this third mantra is *the essence of the mantras for building caityas of the thus-gone ones* (*de bzhin gshegs pa’i mchod rten bya ba’i gsang sngags de dag gi snying po*), and the Chinese title is *the dhāraṇī for repairing and building Buddhist caityas* (*xiu zao fo ta tuo luo ni fa* 修造佛塔陀羅尼法).
42. The Tibetan editions refer to the “scent of sandalwood, camphor, musk, saffron, and so forth” (*tsandan dang/ ga bur dang/ gla rtsi dang/ gur gum la sogs pa’i dri*), while the Chinese editions refer to other ingredients, including “ox-head sandalwood, red sandalwood, white sandalwood, ‘dragon musk’ (ambergris), saffron, and so forth” (*suo wei niu tou zhan tan chi bai zhan tan long she xiang yu jin xiang deng* 所謂牛頭栴檀 赤白栴檀龍麝香鬱金香等).
43. The Chinese editions add “divine body and divine nose” to this list (*tian yan tian shen tian er tian bi* 天眼天身天耳天鼻).
44. In addition to this divine assembly, the Chinese editions add other specific deities. See McBride 2011, p. 45.
45. The Tibetan editions conclude this section with a remark that “all groups of bhūtas also developed sentience and empathy” (*’byung po’i tshogs thams cad kyang sems dang zhing rjes su yi rang bar gyur to*), whereas the Chinese editions state that “all beings also attained purity of mind” (*yi qie zhong sheng yi jie dang de xin yi qing jing* 一切眾生亦皆當得心意清淨).
46. While the Tibetan editions include a list here (*gsang sngags dang/ phyag rgya dang/ dkyil ’khor gyi cho ga*), the Chinese editions describe these three elements as part of a single seal ritual: the “seal of the great dhāraṇī maṇḍala ritual” (*da tuo luo ni tan chang fa yin* 大陀羅尼壇場法印).
47. This is the only reference to primordial gnosis (*yang dag pa’i ye shes chub par bgyid pa’i phyag rgya dang/ gsang sngags*) in the text. The Chinese editions render this line as the “self-mind seal dhāraṇī” (*zi xin yin tuo luo ni* 自心印陀羅尼; see Chen 2002, p. 113).

48. This puzzling line refers to “nearly attaining all merit” (*bsod nams thams cad nye bar bsgrub bo*), but the grammar is parallel to the previous line about the Four Great Kings coming near (*rgyal chen ris bzhi'i rgyal po chen po dag kyang nye bar 'ongs*). The Chinese editions refer to “great virtue” (*da wei de* 大威德), which is usually an epithet for Yamāntaka, but in this context it probably just refers to virtue.
49. Rather than accumulating merit for the sake of one's parents (*pha ma'i don gyi phyir bsod nams kyi las*), the Chinese editions refer to “accomplishing great merits in the present life” (*ruo fu you ren yu yu xian sheng cheng jiu gong de da li yi zhe* 若復有人欲於現生。成就功德大利益者).
50. The term “Lord of the Guhyakaṣ” (*gsang ba pa'i bdag po*) later explicitly refers to Vajrapāṇi (*gsang ba pa'i bdag po lag na rdo rje*). The Chinese editions also refer to Vajrapāṇi (*zhi jin gang* 執金剛).
51. Whereas Tibetan editions refer to the “reality body of the thus-gone ones” (*de bzhin gshegs pa'i chos kyi sku*), the Chinese editions refer to the “matrix of the thus-gone ones” (*ru lai zang* 如來藏; Skt. *tathāgatagarbha*), or buddha nature, as the source of this teaching.
52. Although the Tibetan editions make it seem that the Buddha has taught this *king of mantras* ritual previously (*gsang sngags kyi rgyal po* [Degé:'i] *cho ga sngar bstan pa bzhin du byas te*), the Chinese editions state that this ritual is the “king of the four great dhāraṇī rituals” (*si da tuo luo ni zhou fa zhi wang* 四大陀羅尼呪法之王). Thus, this line indicates that this fifth mantra is the king of the four previous mantras.
53. The Tibetan editions transliterate the name of this porridge as *kṛsara* (*'bras thug kri sar zhes bya ba*), while the Chinese editions refer to it as a “meal of three flavors” (*san wei shi* 三味食).
54. This line of the mantra is only included in the Chinese editions.
55. The Tibetan editions instruct one to write *just one* of the previous four mantras ninety-nine times (*sngar bstan pa'i gsang sngags bzhi po dag las rnam pa gcig kyang dgu bcu rtsa dgu bris*), whereas the Chinese editions state that one should write *each* of the four previous dhāraṇīs ninety-nine times (*xie qian si zhong tuo luo ni zhou ge jiu shi jiu ben* 寫前四種陀羅尼呪各九十九本).
56. The Tibetan editions read, “within the context of the body, knowledge itself will protect and provide refuge” (*lus la thogs na rig pa de nyid kyi srung ba dang skyabs mdzad do*), while the Chinese editions read, “if one...wears it on the body, the might of the mantra will firmly protect the individual” (*pei yu shen shang yi zhou wei li yong hu shi ren* 佩於身上以呪威力擁護是人). Although the Tibetan rendering of “knowledge” (*rig pa*) may be a corruption of “to touch” (*reg pa*) or, in this context, “to wear on the body” (*lus la thogs na reg pa*; *pei yu shen shang* 佩於身上), subsequent instances of “one who knows and recites” (*rig pa 'don pa*) the mantra have been interpreted to emphasize the “knowledge” (*rig pa*) of the Tibetan editions rather than the “wearing” (*reg pa*) of the Chinese editions.
57. This detail of soil, dust, wind, and dirt (*sa dang/ rdul dang/ rlung dang/ grib ma*) is absent from the Chinese editions but also features in other mantras (see Copp 2014).
58. The Chinese editions do not include this colophon, of course. Instead they state, “Translated by the Indian master Mitrāsānta by Tang imperial decree” (*Tang Tianzhu san zang Mituoshan feng zhao yi* 唐天竺三藏彌陀山奉詔譯).

Glossary

Abhirati, the Pure Land of Akṣobhya Buddha

mi 'khrugs pa'i sangs rgyas kyi zhing yongs su dag pa

མི་འཁྲུགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་ཞིང་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པ།

Akṣobhya

mi 'khrugs pa

མི་འཁྲུགས་པ།

Avīci Hell

mnar med pa

མནར་མེད་པ།

Bandé Palgyi Lhünpö Dé

ban+de dpal gyi lhun po'i sde

བནེ་དཔལ་གྱི་ལྷན་པོའི་སྡེ།

bhūta

'byung po

འབྱུང་པོ།

bhūta

blessed one

bcom ldan 'das

བཙེམ་ལྷན་འདས།

Brahmā Lord of the Sahā World

tshangs pa mi mjed kyi bdag po

ཆངས་པ་མི་མཛེད་ཀྱི་བདག་པོ།

Buddha Śākyamuni

shAkya thub pa

ཤཱཀ་སུབ་པ།

butcher

shan pa

ཤན་པ།

Butön Rinchen Drup

bu ston rin chen grub

བུ་སྟོན་རིན་ཆེན་གྲུབ།

caitya

mchod rten

མཆོད་རྟེན།

caitya

crown protrusion

gtsug tor

གཙུག་རྟོར།

Dromtönpa

'brom ston pa

འབྲོམ་སྟོན་པ།

Four Great Kings

rgyal po chen po bzhi

རྒྱལ་པོ་ཆེན་པོ་བཞི།

Ganges

gang gA

གང་གླ།

Gaṇapati

tshogs kyi bdag po

ཚོགས་ཀྱི་བདག་པོ།

interpreter of lifespans and dreams

gzhan zhig gi tshe gzhan zhig gi rmi ltas su rmis te bstan pa

གཞན་ཞིག་གི་ཆེ་གཞན་ཞིག་གི་མི་ལྷས་སུ་མིས་ཏེ་བསྟན་པ།

Jambudvīpa

'dzam bu gling

འཛམ་བུ་གླིང་།

Jowo Atiśa

jo bo a ti sha

རྫོ་བོ་ཨ་ཏི་ཤ།

kinnara

mi 'am ci

མི་འམ་ཅི།

kiṃnara

Kubera

ku be ra

ཀུ་བེ་ར།

Lord of the Guhyakas Vajrapāṇi

gsang ba pa'i bdag po lag na rdo rje

གསང་བ་སའི་བདག་པོ་ལག་ན་རྡོ་རྗེ།

Maheśvara

dbang phyug chen po

དབང་ཕྱག་ཆེན་པོ།

mahoraga

lto 'phye chen po

ལྷོ་འཕྲེ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahoraga

Maitreya

byams pa

བྱམས་པ།

Mañjuśrī

'jam dpal

འཇམ་དཔལ།

mendicant Gautama

dge sbyong gau ta ma

དགེ་སྦྱང་གོ་ཏ་མ།

Ngorchen Künga Sangpo

ngor chen kun dga' bzang po

ངོར་ཆེན་ཀུན་དགའ་བཟང་པོ།

null

lha ma yin

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།

null

tshangs pa

ཚངས་པ།

null

de bzhin gshegs pa

དེ་བཞིན་གཤམ་གསུམ་པ།

null

'dri za

འདྲི་བ།

null

nam mkha' lding

ནམ་མཁའ་ལྗིང་།

null

gnod sbyin

གནོད་སྦྱིན།

null

ser skya'i grong khyer

མེར་སྐྱེའི་གྲོང་ཁྱེད།

null

klu

ལྷ།

Nārāyaṇa

sred med kyi bu

སྡེད་མེད་ཀྱི་བུ།

Prajñāprabhā

shes rab 'od

ཤེས་རབ་འོད།

progenitor Brahmā, Guardian of the World

'jig rten skyong ba'i mes po tshangs pa

འཇིག་རྟེན་སྐྱོང་བའི་མེས་པོ་ཆངས་པ།

rākṣasa

srin po

སྲིན་པོ།

rākṣasa

Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin

sgrib pa thams cad rnam par sel ba

སྒྲིབ་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་རྣམ་པར་སེལ་བ།

Sukhāvātī*bde ba can*

བདེ་བ་ཅན།

Tuṣita*dga' ldan*

དགའ་ལྡན།

Vajrapāṇi*lag na rdo rje*

ལག་ན་རྡོ་རྗེ།

Varuṇa*chu lha*

ཚུ་ལྷ།

Vidyākaraśiṃha*bid+yA ka ra sid+ha*

བིདྲ་ཀ་ར་སིཿ།

Viṣṇu*khyab 'jug*

ཁྱབ་འཇུག།

Yama*gshin rje*

གཤིན་རྗེ།

Yargyap Pönchen Rinchen Sangpo

yar rgyab dpon chen rin chen bzang po

ཡར་རྒྱལ་དཔོན་ཆེན་རིན་ཆེན་བཟང་པོ།

Āryāvalokiteśvara

spyan ras gzigs kyi dbang phyug

སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས་ཀྱི་དབང་ཕྱུག

Śakra

brgya byin

བརྒྱ་མིན།

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