

བཟླགས་བས་གྲུབ་པ་བཙེམ་ལྡན་འདས་མ་འཕགས་མ་སོང་མོ་ཅན་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་རིག་བའི་རྒྱལ་མོ།

The Blessed Noble Aṅgulī, the Queen of Vidyās Accomplished Through Recitation

Siddhipaṭhitabhagavatyāryāṅgulīnāmavidyārājñī

· Toh 993 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 101 (gzungs 'dus, waM), folios 147.a–148.a



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Summary

- s.1 *The Blessed Noble Aṅgulī, the Queen of Vidyās Accomplished Through Recitation* sets out a series of *vidyās*, or “spells,” used to expel and neutralize all venomous snakes, animals, and supernatural beings.

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- ac.2 The text was translated, edited, and introduced by the 84000 translation team. Adam C. Krug produced the translation and wrote the introduction. John Canti edited the translation and the introduction, and Iby Caputo copyedited the text. Martina Cotter was in charge of the digital publication process.

Introduction

- i.1 In *The Blessed Noble Aṅgulī, the Queen of Vidyās Accomplished Through Recitation*, the narrator recalls the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara’s teaching of several *vidyās*, or “spells,” that invoke the *vidyā* goddess Aṅgulī. The text centers on the protection from venomous beings—whether animals or spirits—and the neutralizing of poisons that the recitation of Aṅgulī’s *vidyās* can confer. Like the text that precedes it in the Tantra section of the Kangyur,¹ this text is part of the extensive Indian literature concerned with poisons and, in particular, snakebites.²

- i.2 The opening lines of the text do not contain and of the phrases customarily used in the introductory section of Buddhist scriptures. Instead, the text starts simply with the phrase “thus, monks,” suggesting that it might actually be an excerpt from a longer work. This feature of the *dhāraṇī* makes it difficult to identify the narrator. If the Buddha is indeed the narrator, as seems most likely, then the fact that Avalokiteśvara addresses the Buddha as “son” need cause no surprise, since it suggests that the Buddha is recalling one of his several previous lives as a seeker of Avalokiteśvara’s teachings, as recounted in the *Karaṇḍavyūha*.³
- i.3 In *Aṅgulī, Queen of Vidyās*, the narrator recalls that Avalokiteśvara’s teaching of these *dhāraṇīs* took place on Mount King of Fragrances. The identity of this location is not entirely clear, but given the possible associations between this *vidyā* goddess and the goddess Jāṅgulī, whose *dhāraṇīs* also protect against snakebite and poison, it is quite possible that the name of the mountain is synonymous with the more well-known Mount Gandhamādana, where the Buddha Śākyamuni first learned Jāṅgulī’s *dhāraṇīs* in a past life when he was a bodhisattva.⁴
- i.4 There is no known Sanskrit text of *Aṅgulī, Queen of Vidyās*. The Tibetan translation does not appear in any of the imperial Tibetan catalogs of translated works and does not contain a translators’ colophon, so it is not clear precisely when it was translated into Tibetan or who produced the Tibetan translation. The text does not appear to have been translated into Chinese.
- i.5 The Tibetan translation is classified in the Degé Kangyur among the Action (*kriyā*) tantras belonging to the “mothers” of the Tathāgata family (Toh 572), and is duplicated in the Compendium of *Dhāraṇīs* (Toh 993).

i.6 This English translation was produced based on the Tibetan translations of *Aṅgulī, Queen of Vidyās* in the Tantra (*rgyud 'bum*) and Compendium of Dhāraṇīs (*gzungs 'dus*)^{5 6} sections of the Degé Kangyur, in consultation with the Tibetan witnesses in the Stok Palace Kangyur and the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) of the Kangyur. The dhāraṇī formulas are a mixture of Sanskrit and Tibetan phrases, and in this translation the Sanskrit is simply transliterated while the Tibetan phrases are translated, sometimes tentatively, into English.

The Translation

1. The Blessed Noble Aṅgulī, the Queen of Vidyās Accomplished Through Recitation

1.1 Homage to the Buddha, Homage to the Dharma, Homage to the Saṅgha.

1.2 “Thus, monks, when I was on Mount King of Fragrances,⁷ Noble Avalokiteśvara was also present, and said to me, ‘My son, listen to this mantra verse. It neutralizes the venom of the nāga lords. It neutralizes snake venom. When dāsas, rākṣasas, bhūtas, piśācas, mahābalas, kumbhāṇḍas, small biting flies, ḍākas, ḍākinīs, makaras, tigers, kumbhāṇḍas, horned beings, and fanged beings hear the great fierce mantra word *aṅgulī*, this main mantra extinguishes those venomous beings. A mantrin who knows it can completely annihilate venomous spirits:

- 1.3 *om namo bhagavati āryāṅguli tadyathā* | *om*, whether one has already been seized or has not yet been seized by poisonous beings such as *nāgas*, *nāginīs*, male serpents, female serpents, *yakṣas*, *yakṣinīs*, male *bhūtas*, female *bhūtas*, *ḍākas*, or *ḍākinīs*, *pha pha pha hare hare hare rejare veśave nāgare sarvarere hara hara mara mara dhara dhara vidhara vidhara mara mara mārāya mārāya maṭa maṭa motaya motaya śighraṃ śighraṃ laghu laghu ānaya ānaya dhara dhara bandha bandha bandha ghurṇa ghurṇa ghurṇaya ghurṇaya* neutralize the poison of all *nāgas* living within eighty thousand leagues; bind, kill, and liberate all *nāgas*.
- 1.4 *om hulu hulu hala hala halaviśaṃ*, the blessed accomplished queen *Āṅgulī*⁸ commands you, *takke ṭakke takkeni ṭakkeni śira śira candrakesārohini*, expeller of all *vighnas*, possessor of a thousand rites, blessed *siddhā Āṅgulī tathā vigata*, the thirty hosts of *nāginīs* make offerings to you, *jaya jaya siddha*, victorious one, you who wear a garland of human skulls *hūṃ kṣa* and every second, minute, and hour of every day neutralize poison, you who defeat the *asuras* and *devas*⁹ and the forces of the wicked, you who destroy *vighnas*—homage and praise to you, *mother of devas*, *svāhā*.
- 1.5 “One should not read these fierce mantra words in the presence of serpents, because they will die and their brains will explode and shatter into a hundred pieces. When serpents hear these great fierce mantra words, they will be completely incinerated.
- 1.6 *om kili kili mahākili kālarūpini*, repel all *vighnas*, cast them down far, and cast them down beyond and far away, *svāhā*.
- 1.7 “One should perform the recitation practice with the *Āṅgulī* essence mantra:
- 1.8 *tadyathā* | *om dhune dhune dhuni dhuni satyatāttahāsini dhu dhuni bandha bandha*, the command of many *vajradhāraṇīs*,¹⁰ *Takṣaka*’s venom is expelled, *jaya jaya muja muja muñja muñja*, release!

- 1.9 “Known as *Lightning and Wind*, this is the fast-acting, great blessed lady Mahāvetālī that was originally spoken by Śākyamuni himself.
- 1.10 *muya muñja muñja svāhā.*
- 1.11 This concludes “*The Blessed Noble Aṅgulī, the Queen of Vidyās Accomplished Through Recitation.*”

Notes

1. See *The Jāṅgulī Vidyā* (Toh 571/990).
2. For a thorough treatment of this topic, see *Snakebite, Mantras, and Healing in the Gāruḍa Tantras* (Slouber, 2017).
3. See *The Basket's Display* (Toh 116).
4. See *The Jāṅgulī Vidyā* (Toh 571/990). Aside from the similarity between the names Aṅgulī and Jāṅgulī, and the fact that both these goddesses are associated with protection from snakebites, venomous beings, and poison, there are no further similarities between the texts of these goddesses.
5. Note that there is a discrepancy among various databases for cataloging the Toh 993 version of this text within vol. 101 or 102 of the Degé Kangyur. See Toh 993, n.5, for details.
6. [note 9aeac78d...]
7. *ri dri rgyal*. A tentative reconstruction of this name in Sanskrit might be **gandharājaparvata* (“Mount Gandharāja”). Given the similarities between Aṅgulī and Jāṅgulī, both of whom are vidyā goddesses that protect against venomous beings and snakebites, it is possible (but by no means certain) that the name of this mountain might be a shortened form of Mount Gandhamādana, which is where the goddess Jāṅgulī taught her vidyā against snakebites to Śākyamuni in one of his past lifetimes as a bodhisattva.
8. In the Tibetan *bcom ldan 'das ma grub pa'i rgyal mo aM gu lis bka' stsal pa*, the phrase *grub pa'i rgyal mo* might also be read as describing Aṅgulī as a “queen of the siddhas,” where the term “siddha” refers to a class of celestial beings.
9. *a su ra de bi ta dang / ngan pa'i stobs 'joms par byed pa can*. This translation assumes that the reading *de bi ta* should be amended to reflect the Sanskrit spelling *devatā*.
10. *rdo rje'i gzungs mang pos bka' stsal pa*. The Tibetan translation would support the Sanskrit back-translation *vajradhāraṇī*, but it is also possible that this term could be a rendering of the Sanskrit **vajradhārinī*, or “female vajra-bearer.”

Glossary

asura

a su ra

ཨ་སུ་ར།

null

A type of nonhuman being whose precise status is subject to different views, but is included as one of the six classes of beings in the sixfold classification of realms of rebirth. In the Buddhist context, asuras are powerful beings said to be dominated by envy, ambition, and hostility. They are also known in the pre-Buddhist and pre-Vedic mythologies of India and Iran, and feature prominently in Vedic and post-Vedic Brahmanical mythology, as well as in the Buddhist tradition. In these traditions, asuras are often described as being engaged in interminable conflict with the devas (gods).

Aṅgulī

sor mo can

aṅgulī

The name of a vidyā goddess who protects against venomous beings.

bhūtā

'byung mo

འབྲུང་མོ།

bhūtā

A female bhūta.

deva

de bi ta

དེ་བོ་ཉ།

In the most general sense the devas—the term is cognate with the English *divine*—are a class of celestial beings who frequently appear in Buddhist texts, often at the head of the assemblies of nonhuman beings who attend and celebrate the teachings of the Buddha Śākyamuni and other buddhas and bodhisattvas. In Buddhist cosmology the devas occupy the highest of the five or six “destinies” (gati) of saṃsāra among which beings take rebirth. The devas reside in the devalokas, “heavens” that traditionally number between twenty-six and twenty-eight and are divided between the desire realm (kāmadhātu), form realm (rūpadhātu), and formless realm (ārūpyadhātu). A being attains rebirth among the devas either through meritorious deeds (in the desire realm) or the attainment of subtle meditative states (in the form and formless realms). While rebirth among the devas is considered favorable, it is ultimately a transitory state from which beings will fall when the conditions that lead to rebirth there are exhausted. Thus, rebirth in the god realms is regarded as a diversion from the spiritual path.

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.

dāsa*g.yog**dāsa*

A class of supernatural being.

kumbhāṇḍa*grul bum*

ཀུམ་བུ་མུ་མུ་།

kumbhāṇḍa

A class of dwarf beings subordinate to Virūḍhaka, one of the Four Great Kings, associated with the southern direction. The name uses a play on the word *aṇḍa*, which means “egg” but is also a euphemism for a testicle. Thus, they are often depicted as having testicles as big as pots (from *kumbha*, or “pot”).

mahābala*sems can stobs po che**mahābala*

A class of supernatural being.

Mahāvetālī*ro langs chen mo**mahāvetālī*

The name of a goddess associated or perhaps synonymous with one of the *vidyās* that is taught in Aṅgulī, Queen of Vidyās.

makara*chu srin**makara*

A type of sea creature.

mantrin*sngags can**mantrin*

A term for someone who has mastered or is otherwise proficient in the use of mantras.

Mother of Devas*lha'i yum*

An epithet for the vidyā goddess Aṅgulī.

Mount King of Fragrances*ri dri rgyal***gandharājaparvata*

The name of a mountain on which Avalokiteśvara revealed the Aṅgulī vidyā. The potential affiliation between the vidyā goddesses Aṅgulī and Jāṅgulī suggest that this mountain might be synonymous with Mount Gandhamādana.

Noble Avalokiteśvara*'phags pa spyan ras gzigs**འཕགས་པ་སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས།**āryāvalokiteśvara*

One of the “eight close sons of the Buddha,” he is also known as the bodhisattva who embodies compassion. In certain tantras, he is also the lord of the three families, where he embodies the compassion of the buddhas. In Tibet, he attained great significance as a special protector of Tibet, and in China, in female form, as Guanyin, the most important bodhisattva in all of East Asia.

null*bgegs**བགེགས།**null*

A class of supernatural being.

null*'byung po*

འབྲུང་པོ།

null

This term in its broadest sense can refer to any being, whether human, animal, or nonhuman. However, it is often used to refer to a specific class of nonhuman beings, especially when bhūtas are mentioned alongside rākṣasas, piśācas, or pretas. In common with these other kinds of nonhumans, bhūtas are usually depicted with unattractive and misshapen bodies. Like several other classes of nonhuman beings, bhūtas take spontaneous birth. As their leader is traditionally regarded to be Rudra-Śiva (also known by the name Bhūta), with whom they haunt dangerous and wild places, bhūtas are especially prominent in Śaivism, where large sections of certain tantras concentrate on them.

null*gnod sbyin*

གནོད་སྦྱིན།

A class of nonhuman beings who inhabit forests, mountainous areas, and other natural spaces, or serve as guardians of villages and towns, and may be propitiated for health, wealth, protection, and other boons, or controlled through magic. According to tradition, their homeland is in the north, where they live under the rule of the Great King Vaiśravaṇa.

Several members of this class have been deified as gods of wealth (these include the just-mentioned Vaiśravaṇa) or as bodhisattva generals of yakṣa armies, and have entered the Buddhist pantheon in a variety of forms, including, in tantric Buddhism, those of wrathful deities.

null

srin po

སྲིན་པོ།

null

A class of nonhuman beings that are often, but certainly not always, considered demonic in the Buddhist tradition. They are often depicted as flesh-eating monsters who haunt frightening places and are ugly and evil-natured with a yearning for human flesh, and who additionally have miraculous powers, such as being able to change their appearance.

nāga lord

klu'i dbang po

A class of supernatural being.

nāginī

klu mo

སྲུ་མོ།

nāginī

A female nāga

piśāca*sha za*

ཤ་ཟ།

piśāca

A class of nonhuman beings that, like several other classes of nonhuman beings, take spontaneous birth. Ranking below rākṣasas, they are less powerful and more akin to pretas. They are said to dwell in impure and perilous places, where they feed on impure things, including flesh. This could account for the name piśāca, which possibly derives from √piś, to carve or chop meat, as reflected also in the Tibetan sha za, “meat eater.” They are often described as having an unpleasant appearance, and at times they appear with animal bodies. Some possess the ability to enter the dead bodies of humans, thereby becoming so-called vetāla, to touch whom is fatal.

small biting fly*phra mo**kṣudrā*

A type of fly.

Takṣaka*’jog po*

འཇོག་པོ།

null

The name of a nāga king and the class of serpents and nāgas associated with him.

vajradhāraṇī*rdo rje’i gsungs*

A term referring either to a type of dhāraṇī or a female “vajra-holder” being.

yakṣiṇī

gnd sbyin mo

གནད་སྐྱོན་མོ།

yakṣiṇī

A female yakṣa.

Śākyamuni

shAkya thub pa

ཤཱ་ཀྱ་ཐུབ་པ།

śākyamuni

An epithet for the historical Buddha, Siddhārtha Gautama: he was a muni (“sage”) from the Śākya clan. He is counted as the fourth of the first four buddhas of the present Good Eon, the other three being Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, and Kāśyapa. He will be followed by Maitreya, the next buddha in this eon.

ḍāka

phra men pha

ཤ་མེན་པ།

ḍāka

A class of supernatural being.

ḍākinī

phra men ma

ཤ་མེན་མ།

ḍākinī

A class of supernatural being.

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