

༄༅། །ཚིག་ས་སུ་བཅད་པ་གཅིག་པ།

The Single Stanza

Ekagāthā

tshigs su bcad pa gcig pa

· Toh 323 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 72 (mdo sde, sa), folio 204.a



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co.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ti. Title
- im. Imprint
- co. Contents
- s. Summary
- ac. Acknowledgements
- i. Introduction
- tr. The Translation
 - 1. The Single Stanza
- n. Notes
- b. Bibliography
 - Source Texts
 - Related Texts
 - Other References and Translations
- g. Glossary

s.

SUMMARY

s.1 *The Single Stanza* is a praise to the Buddha in one verse. It states that there is no ascetic equal to the Buddha, neither among the gods nor in the ordinary world.

ac.

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ac.1 This text was translated by the Pema Yeshé Dé Translation Team. Giuliano Proença translated the text from Tibetan into English and prepared the introduction, the glossary, and the notes.

ac.2 The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha. Andreas Doctor edited the translation and the introduction, and Dawn Collins copyedited the text. Martina Cotter was in charge of the digital publication process.

INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 *The Single Stanza* is a praise to the Buddha in one verse. It states that there is no ascetic equal to the Buddha, neither among the gods nor in the ordinary world.

i.2 *The Single Stanza* is quoted in the *Mahāvibhāṣā*, so it must have been composed by the third century.¹ It is cited in Vasubandhu's *Gāthāsaṃgrahaśāstra* (Toh 4102), the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (Toh 4090), and several other Abhidharma works,² and it also appears in the *Avadānaśataka* (Toh 343). Moreover, there are two Indian commentaries on *The Single Stanza* in the Tengyur, one attributed to Vasubandhu³ and the other to Dignāga,⁴ which further attests to its importance.

i.3 Kano concludes that *The Single Stanza* was part of a set of five texts used for recitation in India.⁵ Others in the set were *The Dhāraṇī of the Six Gates* (Toh 141, 526, 916),⁶ *The Two Stanza Dhāraṇī* (Toh 143, 611, 918),⁷ *The Four Stanzas* (Toh 324),⁸ and *The Prayer of Good Conduct* (Toh 1095, 4377).⁹ Initially, these five texts circulated individually. However, they had become popular in India as a set by the time of Advayavajra or Ratnākaraśānti (eleventh century) and were later incorporated into the dhāraṇī collections of Nepal.

i.4 The Sanskrit text of *The Single Stanza* is extant in several manuscripts from Nepal. Gergely Hidas edited one of these manuscripts as part of his edition of two dhāraṇī collections.¹⁰ Kazuo Kano has also published a critical edition of the Sanskrit text of *The Single Stanza*,¹¹ together with a Japanese translation. The Sanskrit text aligns closely with the Tibetan translation of *The Single Stanza*.

i.5 The canonical version of *The Single Stanza* closely matches the version found in the Tibetan translation of Vasubandhu's commentary, which is listed in both the Denkarma and Phangthangma catalogs.¹² Therefore, it is likely that the Tibetan translation of *The Single Stanza* was also completed by the early ninth century. *The Single Stanza* is found in the Sūtra section of the Kangyurs of the Tshalpa, Thempangma, and mixed lines, and in that of the

Phukdrak Kangyur. Some Western Tibetan collections also include *The Single Stanza*.¹³ It is not known who translated *The Single Stanza* into Tibetan, for neither the colophons nor Tibetan historical works mention the translators.¹⁴

i.6 The Tibetan scholar Tāranātha (1575–1634) composed a commentary on *The Single Stanza* as well as sequential commentaries on three of the other five texts in the above-mentioned set,¹⁵ corroborating Kano's view that these texts were seen as related.¹⁶ The importance of *The Single Stanza* and the other texts in the set for recitation is evident. In Tibet, they are included in extracts from sūtra and tantra (*gces btus*), collected liturgical texts (*chos spyod*), collections of mantras and dhāraṇīs for recitation, and collections of sādhanas. They are also sometimes mentioned as texts for recitation in preliminary practices.

i.7 This English translation is based on the Degé print and Kano's Sanskrit edition, in consultation with the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*), the Phukdrak and the Stok Palace manuscripts, as well as Vasubandhu's commentary on *The Single Stanza*.

The Single Stanza

1.

The Translation

[F.204.a]

1.1

Homage to the Three Jewels!¹⁷

1.2

Foremost among humans, there is no other great ascetic like you,
Neither in the heavenly lands, in this world, in Vaiśravaṇa's abode,
In the excellent abodes of the gods' palaces, nor in the cardinal and
intermediate directions.

How could there be another one like you on this vast earth with its
mountains and forests?

1.3

Thus ends "The Single Stanza."

n.

NOTES

- n.1 Compiled probably during the second or third century CE and extant in Chinese: *Mahāvibhāṣā* (*Apidamo da piposha lun* 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論), Taishō 1545, 27.890b25–26.
- n.2 Saṅghabhadra's *Abhidharmakośasāstrakārikābhāṣya* (Toh 4091), Yaśomitra's *Abhidharmakośaṭīkā* (Toh 4092), Pūrṇavardhana's *Abhidharmakośaṭīkā-lakṣaṇānusāriṇīnāma* (Toh 4093), and Sthiramati's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyaṭīkā-tattvārthanāma* (Toh 4421). For parallels in the Chinese canon see Kano 2011, p. 85, n. 52.
- n.3 The *Ekaḡāthābhāṣya* (Toh 3988) is also included in Vasubandhu's *Gāthasaṃgrahaśāstrārthanāma* (Toh 4103).
- n.4 *Ekaḡāthāṭīkā* (Peking Kangyur 2063, missing in Degé).
- n.5 Kano concludes this by studying the sūtras listed in Ratnākaraśānti's *Muktāvalī* (Toh 1189), Kāṇha's *Yogaratnamālā* (Toh 1183), and Advayavajra's *Kudṛṣṭinirghātana*, as well as by analyzing the structure of the Tibetan canonical collections, the Nepali collections of dhāraṇīs, and several Tibetan commentaries.
- n.6 *Ṣaṇmukhīdhāraṇī* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh141.html>), Toh 141, 526, 916.
- n.7 *Gāthāvayadhāraṇī* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh143.html>), Toh 143, 611, 918.
- n.8 *Caturgāthā* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh324.html>), Toh 324.
- n.9 *Bhadracaryāpranīdhāna* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh1095.html>), Toh 1095, 4377.

- n.10 Cambridge manuscript Add.1680.8 (fragmentary, in palm leaf, ca. twelfth/thirteenth century). See Hidas 2021, p. 32.
- n.11 His sources are four manuscripts from Nepal, three on paper (one from 1792), and one palm leaf manuscript: Matsunami no. 419 (A.D.1792 = samvat 912), no. 202 (date unknown), NGMPP A131/9, and Asiatic Society of Bengal no. 9987. See Kano 2011, pp. 61–65.
- n.12 Denkarma, folio 309.a. See also Herrmann-Pfandt, pp. 370–71; Yoshimura 1950, p. 67, no. 659; and Phangthangma 2003, p. 45.
- n.13 The Egoo, Stagrimo, Stongde, Bardan, and Reruk collections.
- n.14 *The Single Stanza* is not listed in the imperial catalogs as an independent text, but it is included in Butön’s *History of Buddhism*. See Butön Rinchen Drup (bu ston rin chen grub), folio 161.b.
- n.15 *The Dhāraṇī of the Six Gates* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh141.html>) (Toh 141, 526, 916), *The Two Stanza Dhāraṇī* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh143.html>) (Toh 143, 611, 918), and *The Four Stanzas* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh324.html>) (Toh 324). See Jonang Jetsün Tāranātha (jo nang rje btsun tA ra nA tha), pp. 709–54.
- n.16 In the Phukdrak Kangyur and the Bardan, Stagrimo, and Stongde collections, *The Single Stanza*, *The Four Stanzas*, and *The Two Stanza Dhāraṇī* also appear in sequence. In the Bardan collection, *The Prayer for Good Action* comes before *The Single Stanza*, so that the four texts are grouped together.
- n.17 Kano’s Sanskrit edition (2011): *oṃ namo buddhāya*. “Om! Homage to the Buddha!”

b.

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GLOSSARY

· Types of attestation for names and terms of the corresponding ·
source language

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in a manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other manuscripts with a parallel or similar context.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in dictionaries matching Tibetan to the corresponding language.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where the relationship between the Tibetan and source language is attested in dictionaries or other manuscripts.
RP	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan phonetic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the Tibetan phonetic rendering of the term.
RS	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan semantic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the semantics of the Tibetan translation.
SU	<i>Source unspecified</i> This term has been supplied from an unspecified source, which most often is a widely trusted dictionary.

g.1 god

lha

མཎུལ།

marut^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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.

g.2 great ascetic
dge sbyong chen po

དགེ་སྦྱང་ཆེན་པོ།

mahāśramaṇa^{AS}

An epithet of the Buddha.

g.3 Three Jewels
dkon mchog gsum

དཀོན་མཆོག་གསུམ།

triratna^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

g.4 Vaiśravaṇa
rnam thos bu

རྣམ་ཐོས་བུ།

vaiśravaṇa^{AS}

One of the Four Great Kings, he presides over the northern direction and rules over the yakṣas.

