

༄༅། །བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་སྒྲིབ་པོའི་རྒྱན་འབྲུམ་གྱི་གསུངས།

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**The Dhāraṇī “One Hundred Thousand  
Ornaments of the Essence of Awakening”**

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*Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣadhāraṇī*

*byang chub kyi snying po'i rgyan 'bum gyi gzungs*

· Toh 509 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 88 (rgyud 'bum, na), folios 24.b–25.b (in *par phud* printings), 41.b–42.b (in later printings)



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co.

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## SUMMARY

- s.1 This short text presents a set of mantras that, when placed inside a stūpa, multiply the merit of having built one stūpa by one hundred thousand. These dhāraṇīs are specifically said to be of benefit to future generations whose merit will be weak.

ac.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ac.1 This publication was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

ac.2 The text was translated, edited, and introduced by the 84000 translation team. Bruno Galasek-Hul produced the translation and wrote the introduction. Ryan Damron edited the translation and the introduction, and Ven. Konchog Norbu copyedited the text. Martina Cotter was in charge of the digital publication process.

i.

## INTRODUCTION

i.1

*The Dhāraṇī “One Hundred Thousand Ornaments of the Essence of Awakening”* presents a series of mantras and an explanation of their benefits, presumably taught by the Buddha Śākyamuni, though he is never explicitly named.<sup>1</sup> Instead, the text begins abruptly with a presentation of the mantras, including a long root mantra (*rtsa ba’i sngags; mūlamantra*),<sup>2</sup> a shorter essence mantra (*snying po; hṛdaya*), an ancillary essence mantra (*nye ba’i snying po; upahṛdaya*), and an additional undesignated mantra. A short prose section follows that explains the special function of these: anyone who writes them down and puts them inside a stūpa will see the effects of that deed multiply so that it will be as if they built one hundred thousand stūpas instead of just one. Making extensive offerings to that stūpa is likewise said to be tantamount to making offerings to the Three Jewels. The Buddha next addresses Nanda to explain that this teaching will be of specific benefit to beings in the future who will have little merit, weak faith, and bad karma because they have failed to read the sūtra and make extensive offerings. However, by simply relying on this dhāraṇī, the Buddha assures Nanda, “one will have made eighty-four thousand offerings adorned with the Dharma” and their merit will become inexhaustible. At the end it is stated that this dhāraṇī has the same effect as reading and reciting *The Stem Array* (*Gaṇḍavyūha*, Toh 44-45),<sup>3</sup> the final chapter of the monumental *Avatamsaka Sūtra*.

i.2

The text’s colophon identifies it as an extraction (*btus pa*) of a longer dhāraṇī text with the identical title: *The Dhāraṇī “One Hundred Thousand Ornaments of the Essence of Awakening”* (*byang chub snying po’i rgyan ’bum zhes bya ba’i gzungs*.) This refers to the text that immediately precedes this one in most prints of the Degé Kangyur (Toh 508). For a long time this longer version was considered lost, as stated by Butön Rinchen Drup in the early fourteenth century.<sup>4</sup> As such, the longer version is not found in any Kangyurs of the Tshalpa recensional lineage that were produced before the



Degé, which include only the short version translated here. Nor was the longer version included in the first printing of the Degé Kangyur itself, the so-called *par phud* (first printed in 1737), or in the Choné Kangyur which was based on the Degé. Rather, as stated in its lengthy colophon, Toh 508 was only translated into Tibetan as late as 1743, when a translation from Chinese was made by the great Qing dynasty Mongolian scholar and translator Gönpo Kyab (*mgon po skyabs*).<sup>5</sup> This was then included in later prints of the Degé Kangyur from the 1762 print onwards and in this way is also found in more recent Kangyurs such as the Lhasa (H478). It was included in order to replace the text that Butön had considered to be lost, which was listed in the Denkarma imperial-period catalog from the early ninth century.<sup>6</sup> Some scholars believe, however, that the version contained in the Phukdrak Kangyur (F 550) and other regional Kangyurs may preserve that earlier translation, for which there is also a Dunhuang manuscript witness.<sup>7</sup>

i.3 The colophon of the shorter version translated below does not include any information about its translation or compilation, making it challenging to determine precisely when and under what circumstances it was produced.

i.4 A complete Sanskrit witness of the short version of the *One Hundred Thousand Ornaments of the Essence of Awakening* is not presently available. A Sanskrit inscription of a text that corresponds to this text was identified on a stone slab held by the Provincial Museum of Orissa, Cuttack. The inscription, published by A. Ghosh (1941), can be dated to approximately the tenth century.<sup>8</sup> Other witnesses of the root mantra, essence mantra, and ancillary essence mantra have been found among terracotta tablets dating from the sixth to the ninth century that were discovered at the site of Nālanda in northern India. The contemporary Tibetan tradition counts the *One Hundred Thousand Ornaments of the Essence of Awakening* among the “the five great dhāraṇīs” (*gzungs chen sde lnga*) that are placed inside newly consecrated stūpas.<sup>9</sup>

i.5 Gregory Schopen has published the most detailed study to date of the Tibetan and Sanskrit witnesses of the *One Hundred Thousand Ornaments of the Essence of Awakening*. Part III of his study contains a critical edition and an English translation of the Tibetan text, with references to the fragmentary Sanskrit texts on the Cuttack slab and the Nālanda tablets.<sup>10</sup>

i.6 This English translation was prepared based on the two Degé witnesses of the text (Toh 509 and Toh 920),<sup>11</sup> in comparison with the Stok Palace Manuscript Kangyur. The dhāraṇīs and mantras are given as they appear in Toh 509, with minor emendations made to clarify the Sanskrit readings. No attempt was made to edit them based on other Tibetan witnesses.

**The Dhāraṇī “One Hundred Thousand Ornaments of  
the Essence of Awakening”**

1.

## The Translation

[F.24.b] [F.41.b] <sup>12</sup>

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.

1.2 The root mantra:<sup>13</sup>

*om namo bhagavate vipulavadanakāñcanotkṣiptaprabhāsaketumūrdhane tathāgatāya  
arhate samyaksambuddhāya | namo bhagavate śākyamunaye tathāgatāya  
samyaksambuddhāya |*

1.3 *tadyathā | bodhi bodhi | bodhani bodhani | [F.25.a] [F.42.a] sarvatathāgata sarva-  
tathāgatagocari | dhara dhara | hara hara | prahara prahara | mahābodhi-  
cittadhāre | culu culu | śataraśmisañcodite | sarvatathāgatābhiṣikte | guṇi-  
guṇapate | sarvabuddhaguṇāvabhāse | mili mili | gaganatale | sarvatathāgatādhi-  
ṣṭhite | nabhasthale | śame śame | praśame praśame | sarvapāpam praśame |  
sarvapāpaṃ viśodhane | hulu hulu | mahābodhimārgasampratiṣṭhite | sarva-  
tathāgatasupratiṣṭhite śuddhe svāhā | |*

1.4 The essence mantra:<sup>14</sup>

*om sarvatathāgatavyavalokite | jaya jaya svāhā | | <sup>15</sup>*

1.5 The ancillary essence mantra:<sup>16</sup>

*om hulu hulu jayamukhe svāhā | | <sup>17</sup>*

1.6 And:

*om vajrāyuṣe svāhā | | <sup>18</sup>*

1.7 “When a bhikṣu, bhikṣuṇī, upāsaka, or upāsikā, or any other son of good family or daughter of good family, writes this dhāraṇī down, builds a stūpa, and places it in that stūpa, the building of that single stūpa will equal the

building of one hundred thousand stūpas. When offering exquisite flowers, fragrance, garlands, ointments, powders, garments, parasols, banners, pennants, and so forth, one will not just have made offerings to the stūpa alone, but will have offered these articles to the jewel of the Buddha, the jewel of the Dharma, and the jewel of the Saṅgha.

1.8 “Nanda,<sup>19</sup> I have taught this sūtra, this dhāraṇī, to benefit beings such as those whose merit is weak, who have no faith, who harbor wrong views, who are consumed with doubt, who have committed actions that bring immediate retribution, whose lifespan is short, and who are to be immediately reborn in the hell realms, in animal realms, or in Yama’s realm.

1.9 “Nanda, it is said that in the future, at a later time, the majority of householders and monks will neither read this dhāraṇī nor make offerings, and renunciants and householders alike will suffer. This being the case, when one builds a stūpa after making offerings to the Buddha and hearing this dhāraṇī,<sup>20</sup> one will have made eighty-four thousand offerings adorned with the Dharma. Moreover, one’s accumulation of merit will be inexhaustible, and it will be as if one had read and recited *The Stem Array*. One will enter the mundane and transcendent maṇḍalas. [F.25.b] [F.42.b]

1.10 *The Dhāraṇī “One Hundred Thousand,” an extract from the One Hundred Thousand Ornaments of the Essence of Awakening, is complete.*

n.

## NOTES

- n.1 We can be reasonably confident that Śākyamuni is the primary speaker because, as detailed below, he is explicitly identified in the longer text of the same title from which this dhāraṇī text was extracted.
- n.2 Toh 508 identifies this dhāraṇī or root mantra as “the dhāraṇī called *one hundred thousand ornaments of the essence of awakening*, the king of ritual manuals” (*rtog pa’i rgyal po byang chub snying po’i rgyan ’bum zhes bya ba’i gzungs*).
- n.3 *The Stem Array* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh44-45.html>) (translated 2021).
- n.4 Butön, *rgyud ’bum gyi dkar chag*, 382. Khedrub Jé also makes reference to an earlier translation that was no longer extant in Tibet in the fifteenth century (Schopen 2005, pp. 318–19).
- n.5 Toh 508, folio 28.b. On Gönpo Kyab, see his entry (under the name Gonbujab) at [The Treasury of Lives](https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/mgon-po-skyabs/7473) (<https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/mgon-po-skyabs/7473>), published July 2020. The Chinese version used by Gönpo Kyab for his Tibetan translation has the title *puti chang zhuangyan tuoluoni jing* (菩提場莊嚴陀羅尼經, Taishō 1008) and was translated by Amoghavajra in the third quarter of the eighth century.
- n.6 See Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, p. 190. The Denkarma lists a text called *’phags pa byang chub snying po rgyan ’bum gyi gzungs*, as being 250 ślokas in length. The other extant imperial-era catalog, the Phangthangma, also lists a text with a similar title: *byang chub kyi snying po ’bum gyi rgyan cho ga dang bcas pa* as being 200 ślokas in length.
- n.7 Pelliot tibétain 555. Neither the Phukdrak nor the Dunhuang version were consulted for this translation.

- n.8 See Ghosh 1941, pp. 170–74, and Schopen 2005, p. 315. As Ghosh notes, the original location of the inscription is unknown.
- n.9 The other four dhāraṇīs in the set are *The Uṣṇīṣavijāyā Dhāraṇī* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh597.html>), *The Dhāraṇī of Vimaloṣṇīṣa*, *The Dhāraṇī for Secret Relics* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh507.html>), and the “essence of dependent arising” (*rten 'brel snying po*) the frequently cited formula that begins *om ye dharma...*
- n.10 Schopen 2005, pp. 322–26.
- n.11 Note that there is a discrepancy among various databases for cataloging the Toh 920 version of this text within vol. 100 or 101 of the Degé Kangyur. See Toh 920, [n.11 \(toh920.html#UT22084-088-003-146\)](#), for details.
- n.12 Two sets of folio references have been included in this translation due to a discrepancy in volume 88 (*rgyud 'bum, na*) of the Degé Kangyur between the 1737 *par phud* printings and the late (post *par phud*) printings. In the latter case, an extra work, *Bodhimaṇḍasyālaṅkāralakṣadhāraṇī* (*byang chub snying po'i rgyan 'bum gyi gzungs*, Toh 508), was added as the second text in the volume, thereby displacing the pagination of all the following texts in the same volume by 17 folios. Since the eKangyur follows the later printing, both references have been provided, with the highlighted one linking to the eKangyur viewer.
- n.13 Toh 509 *rtsa ba'i sngags*; Toh 920 *mU la ma+ntraM*.
- n.14 Toh 509 *snying po*; Toh 920 *hri da yaM*.
- n.15 This could be translated as “*om*, beheld by all tathāgatas, victory, victory, *svāhā*.”
- n.16 Toh 509 *nye ba'i snying*; Toh 920 *u pa hri da yaM*.
- n.17 This could be translated as, “*om, hulu hulu*, Face of Victory, *svāhā*.”
- n.18 This could be translated as “*om*, adamant life, *svāhā*.”
- n.19 The remainder of this text is found verbatim in Toh 508.
- n.20 This translation follows the Lhasa, Narthang, and Stok Kangyurs in reading *'di la nyan*. The Degé reads *'di las nyan*.

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 actions that bring immediate retribution

*mtshams med pa byed pa*

མཚམས་མེད་པ་བྱེད་པ།

*ānantarya*<sup>AD</sup>

Parricide, killing an arhat, causing a schism in the monastic order, and drawing a buddha's blood with malicious intention. These actions are said to result in immediate birth in the hells.

g.2 ancillary essence mantra

*nye ba'i snying po*

ཉེབའི་སྡིང་པོ།

*upahṛdaya*<sup>AS</sup>

g.3 animal realm

*byol song*

བྱོལ་སྡོང།

*tiryāṅc*<sup>AD</sup>

One of the five or six possible destinations for the rebirth of sentient beings, who suffer from gross ignorance or bewilderment (*gti mug, moha*). They inhabit the realm of desire along with human beings.

g.4 bhikṣu

*dge slong*

དགེ་སློང།

*bhikṣu*<sup>AD</sup>

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The term *bhikṣu*, often translated as “monk,” refers to the highest among the eight types of prātimokṣa vows that make one part of the Buddhist assembly. The Sanskrit term literally means “beggar” or “mendicant,” referring to the fact that Buddhist monks and nuns—like other ascetics of the time—subsisted on alms (*bhikṣā*) begged from the laity.

In the Tibetan tradition, which follows the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, a monk follows 253 rules as part of his moral discipline. A nun (*bhikṣuṇī; dge slong ma*) follows 364 rules. A novice monk (*śrāmaṇera; dge tshul*) or nun (*śrāmaṇerikā; dge tshul ma*) follows thirty-six rules of moral discipline (although in other vinaya traditions novices typically follow only ten).

g.5 bhikṣuṇī

*dge slong ma*

དགེ་སློང་མ།

*bhikṣuṇī*<sup>AD</sup>

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The term *bhikṣuṇī*, often translated as “nun,” refers to the highest among the eight types of *prātimokṣa* vows that make one part of the Buddhist assembly. The Sanskrit term *bhikṣu* (to which the female grammatical ending *nī* is added) literally means “beggar” or “mendicant,” referring to the fact that Buddhist nuns and monks—like other ascetics of the time—subsisted on alms (*bhikṣā*) begged from the laity. In the Tibetan tradition, which follows the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, a *bhikṣuṇī* follows 364 rules and a *bhikṣu* follows 253 rules as part of their moral discipline.

For the first few years of the Buddha’s teachings in India, there was no ordination for women. It started at the persistent request and display of determination of Mahāprajāpatī, the Buddha’s stepmother and aunt, together with five hundred former wives of men of Kapilavastu, who had themselves become monks. Mahāprajāpatī is thus considered to be the founder of the nun’s order.

g.6 Butön Rinchen Drup

*bu ston rin chen grub*

བུ་སྟོན་རིན་ཆེན་གྲུབ།

—

A famous compiler of the Kangyur (1290–1364).

g.7 daughter of good family

*rigs kyi bu mo*

རིགས་ཀྱི་བུ་མོ།

*kuladuhitṛ*<sup>AD</sup>

While this is usually a characteristic pertaining to brahmins (i.e., born in the brahmin caste to seven-generation brahmin parents), the Buddha redefined noble birth as determined by an individual’s ethical conduct and integrity. Thus, someone who enters the Buddha’s saṅgha is called a “son or daughter of noble family” and is in this sense “good” or “noble” and considered born again (*dvija*, or “twice born”).

g.8 dhāraṇī

*gzungs*

གཟུངས།

*dhāraṇī*<sup>AD</sup>

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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.

g.9 essence mantra

*hri da ya · snying po*

ཨི་དལ། ་ སྙིང་པོ།

*hṛdaya*<sup>AS</sup>

Literally “heart,” this term means the heart essence or the essence of the deity and can refer to its mantra, mudrā, or maṇḍala. Here, it refers to the mantra.

g.10 hell realm

*sems can dmyal ba*

སེམས་ཅན་དམྱལ་བ།

*nāraka*<sup>AD</sup>

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

One of the five or six classes of sentient beings. Birth in hell is considered to be the karmic fruition of past anger and harmful actions. According to Buddhist tradition there are eighteen different hells, namely eight hot hells and eight cold hells, as well as neighboring and ephemeral hells, all of them tormented by increasing levels of unimaginable suffering.

g.11 Khedrub Jé

*mkhas grub rje*

མཁས་གུབ་རྗེ།

—

1385–1438. A famous Tibetan scholar trained in the Sakya school and the Kadampa lineage. He later became one of the foremost disciples of Tsongkhapa (*tsong kha pa*; 1357–1419). He became the third throne holder of Ganden monastery after Tsongkhapa, and posthumously was declared the first Pañchen Lama (*paN chen bla ma*).

g.12 Nanda

*dga' bo*

དགའ་བོ།

*nanda*<sup>AD</sup>

Identification uncertain. One figure named Nanda was the younger half-brother of Prince Siddhārtha (the Buddha Śākyamuni); his mother was Mahāprajāpatī Gotamī, Siddhārtha Gautama’s maternal aunt. He became an important monastic disciple of the Buddha. However, several other individuals of that name are known, including a prominent king of the nāgas.

g.13 renunciant

*rab tu byung ba*

རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་བ།

*pravrajita*<sup>AD</sup>

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The Sanskrit *pravrajyā* literally means “going forth,” with the sense of leaving the life of a householder and embracing the life of a renunciant. When the term is applied more technically, it refers to the act of becoming a novice monk (*śrāmaṇera*; *dge tshul*) or nun (*śrāmaṇerikā*; *dge tshul ma*), this being a first stage leading to full ordination.

g.14 root mantra

*rtsa ba’i sngags*

རྩ་བའི་སྒྲགས།

*mūlamantra*

A term for the most important and often the most simplified spell associated with a particular buddha, bodhisattva, or other being.

g.15 son of good family

*rigs kyi bu*

རིགས་ཀྱི་བུ།

*kulaputra*<sup>AD</sup>

While this is usually a characteristic pertaining to brahmins (i.e., born in the brahmin caste to seven-generation brahmin parents), the Buddha redefined noble birth as determined by an individual’s ethical conduct and integrity. Thus, someone who enters the Buddha’s saṅgha is called a “son or daughter of noble family” and is in this sense “good” or “noble” and considered born again (*dvija*, or “twice born”).

g.16 stūpa

*mchod rten*

མཚོད་རྟེན།

*stūpa*<sup>AD</sup> · *caitya*<sup>AD</sup>

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The Tibetan translates both *stūpa* and *caitya* with the same word, *mchod rten*, meaning “basis” or “recipient” of “offerings” or “veneration.” Pali: *cetiya*.

A *caitya*, although often synonymous with *stūpa*, can also refer to any site, sanctuary or shrine that is made for veneration, and may or may not contain relics.

A *stūpa*, literally “heap” or “mound,” is a mounded or circular structure usually containing relics of the Buddha or the masters of the past. It is considered to be a sacred object representing the awakened mind of a buddha, but the symbolism of the *stūpa* is complex, and its design varies throughout the Buddhist world. *Stūpas* continue to be erected today as objects of veneration and merit making.

g.17 *upāsaka*

*dge bsnyen*

དགེ་བསྟེན།

*upāsaka*<sup>AD</sup>

A male lay practitioner who observes the five vows not to kill, lie, steal, be intoxicated, or commit sexual misconduct.

g.18 *upāsikā*

*dge bsnyen ma*

དགེ་བསྟེན་མ།

*upāsikā*<sup>AD</sup>

A female lay practitioner who observes the five vows not to kill, lie, steal, be intoxicated, or commit sexual misconduct.

g.19 *Yama’s realm*

*gshin rje’i ’jig rten pa*

གཤིན་རྗེའི་འཇིག་རྟེན་པ།

*yamaloka*<sup>AD</sup>

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The land of the dead ruled over by the Lord of Death. In Buddhism it refers to the *preta* realm, where beings generally suffer from hunger and thirst, which in traditional Brahmanism is the fate of those departed without descendants

to make ancestral offerings.