

༄༅། །འཇམ་དཔལ་གྱིས་དམ་བཅས་པ།

Mañjuśrī's Promise

འཇམ་དཔལ་གྱིས་དམ་བཅས་པའི་གཟུངས།

'jam dpal gyis dam bcas pa'i gzungs

The Dhāraṇī “Mañjuśrī’s Promise”



Toh 547

Degé Kangyur vol. 89 (rgyud 'bum, pa), folios 14.a.6–14.b.1

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co.

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SUMMARY

- s.1 *Mañjuśrī's Promise* begins without preamble with a Sanskrit praise text in the form of a dhāraṇī that resembles other traditional encomiums that exult in the purity, grace, and triumph of bodhisattvas. The scripture then enumerates the benefits accrued by a single recitation of this dhāraṇī, which include the purification of evil deeds accumulated over eons, and the many rewards for its extensive recitation, namely erudition, exceptional powers of memorization, and finally the sight of the body of Mañjuśrī himself.

ac.

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ac.1 Translated by David Mellins and Kaia Fischer, with Geshé Lobsang Dawa and Phakyab Rinpoche (Geshé Ngawang Sungrab), under the auspices of the Tibetan Classics Translators Guild of New York. Introduction by David Mellins and Kaia Fischer. Special thanks to Paul Hackett for generously sharing his bibliographic expertise and resources. This translation would not have been possible without the kind and dedicated tutelage of Gen Lozang Jamspal, Executive Director, Tibetan Classics Translators Guild of New York.

ac.2 The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

i.

INTRODUCTION

i.1

Mañjuśrī's Promise is a short dhāraṇī text that exults in the purity, grace, and triumph of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. The Tibetan translation lacks Sanskrit and Tibetan titles, and the text opens simply with a salutation to Mañjuśrī in Sanskrit. This suggests that the Tibetan translators considered the salutation to be part of the dhāraṇī proper and thus did not translate it into Tibetan. Following the dhāraṇī proper, the scripture describes the benefits associated with its recitation a single time, which include the purification of evil deeds accumulated over eons, and then the rewards reaped by its extensive recitation, namely erudition, exceptional powers of memorization, and eventually the sight of the body of Mañjuśrī himself.

i.2

A Sanskrit version of the text is to our knowledge no longer extant, and it appears that the text was never translated into Chinese. The Tibetan translation lacks a colophon, so we have no information about the history of its transmission or the identity of its translators. Its absence from the Denkarma and Phangthangma catalogs suggests that it was translated into Tibetan later than the beginning of the ninth century CE,¹ but earlier than the flourishing of the scholar Butön Rinchen Drup (*bu ston rin chen grub*, 1290–1364), who listed it, along with the other texts of this collection, in his *History of Buddhism*.²

i.3

Mañjuśrī's Promise appears as the third text in a collection of six Mañjuśrī dhāraṇī scriptures (Toh 545–550) in the Tantra section of the Degé Kangyur. Interestingly, only this text among the six does not also appear in the Dhāraṇī section or in the corresponding sections of any of the other Kangyurs of the Tshalpa line. It is possible that the compilers considered the text primarily as a praise rather than a dhāraṇī per se, and this may explain the exclusion.

i.4

This English translation is based on the Degé Kangyur version (Toh 547), in consultation with the variant readings recorded in the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) and with the Stok Palace version.

The Dhāraṇī
Mañjuśrī's Promise

1.

The Translation

[F.14.a]

- 1.1 *namo mañjuśriye kumārabhūtāya bodhisattvāya mahāsattvāya mahākaruṇikāya | |
tadyathā | oṃ araje vinaje | śuddhe viśuddhe | śodhani viśodhani | amale vimale |
jaye vahini ru ru cale | hūṃ hūṃ hūṃ | phaṭ phaṭ phaṭ svāhā | |³*
- 1.2 Those who uphold, read aloud, or teach this dhāraṇī will obtain a keen intellect. If they chant it a single time, they will memorize a hundred dhāraṇīs, and every single one of the evil deeds they have accumulated over a thousand eons will be purified. If they recite it a hundred thousand times, they will become erudite in the five sciences. If they recite it two hundred thousand times, [F.14.b] they will retain in memory all the teachings they have heard. If they recite it three hundred thousand times, they will behold the body of Mañjuśrī.
- 1.3 *This concludes the dhāraṇī “Mañjuśrī’s Promise.”*

n.

NOTES

- n.1 The Denkarma catalog is usually dated to ca. 812 CE.
- n.2 Butön Rinchen Drup, *chos 'byung*, folio 172.a/p. 975.
- n.3 Provisional translation: “Homage to Mañjuśrī, the ever-youthful bodhisattva great being, one of great compassion! It is: *Om*, immaculate, untainted, pure, utterly pure, purifying one, making perfectly pure, stainless, utterly stainless, and triumphant! You who convey and move with the roaring sounds *ru ru, hūm hūm hūm phaṭ phaṭ phaṭ, svāhā!*” Our translation of the Skt. *ru ru cale* is tentative. It could alternatively be interpreted as one word (*rurucāle*), meaning “you with the movements of an antelope” and implying grace and gentleness.

b.

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GLOSSARY

· Types of attestation for Sanskrit names and terms ·

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in the Sanskrit manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other Sanskrit manuscripts of the Kangyur or Tengyur.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where Tibetan-Sanskrit relationship 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 dhāraṇī

gzungs

གཟུངས།

*dhāraṇī**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.2 eon

bskal pa

བསྐལ་པ།

kalpa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A cosmic period of time, sometimes equivalent to the time when a world system appears, exists, and disappears. According to the traditional Abhidharma understanding of cyclical time, a great eon (*mahākalpa*) is divided into eighty lesser eons. In the course of one great eon, the universe takes form and later disappears. During the first twenty of the lesser eons, the universe is in the process of creation and expansion; during the next twenty it remains; during the third twenty, it is in the process of destruction; and during the last quarter of the cycle, it remains in a state of empty stasis. A fortunate, or good, eon (*bhadrakalpa*) refers to any eon in which more than one buddha appears.

g.3 Mañjuśrī

'jam dpal

འཇམ་དཔལ།

mañjuśrī

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Mañjuśrī is one of the “eight close sons of the Buddha” and a bodhisattva who embodies wisdom. He is a major figure in the Mahāyāna sūtras, appearing often as an interlocutor of the Buddha. In his most well-known iconographic form, he is portrayed bearing the sword of wisdom in his right hand and a volume of the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* in his left. In addition to the epithet Kumārabhūta, which means “having a youthful form,” Mañjuśrī is also called Mañjughoṣa, Mañjusvara, and Pañcaśikha.

