

༄༅། །འཕགས་པ་ལང་ཀར་གཤེགས་པའི་མདོ་ཐམས་ཅད་བསྐྱབས་པར་འགྱུར་བའི་
གཟུངས་སྲགས།

**The Dhāraṇī-Mantra to Have the Entire Noble
“Sūtra of Descent into Laṅkā” Read**

'phags pa lang kar gshegs pa'i mdo thams cad bklags par 'gyur ba'i gzungs sngags

· Toh 589 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 90 (rgyud, pha), folio 204.b



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SUMMARY

- s.1 This text consists of a short dhāraṇī, the recitation of which is said to be equivalent to reciting one of the most famous sūtras in the Kangyur, *The Descent into Laṅkā* (Toh 107), from which it is an extract.

ac.

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ac.1 The text was translated from Tibetan by the Buddhapīṭha Translation Group (Gergely Hidas and Péter-Dániel Szántó). We thank Dr. Shanshan Jia (Hamburg) for her kind help with bibliographic matters.

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 Laura Goetz copyedited the text. Martina Cotter was in charge of the digital publication process.

INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 This text consists of a short dhāraṇī, the recitation of which is said to be equivalent to reciting one of the most famous sūtras in the Kangyur, *The Descent into Laṅkā*.¹ In fact, it is not an independent text but an extract from Chapter 9 of the sūtra.²

i.2 Such short texts served a variety of purposes, the primary being that by reciting them one could acquire the positive karmic benefits of reciting an entire, sometimes extremely long, text. On a practical level, the recitation of these short texts also served as equivalent to the recitation of the parent text, should a prescribed ritual so require.

i.3 The text lacks both a Sanskrit title and a translator's colophon. In South Asia, in addition to being copied within the sūtra itself, the text was transmitted within the *Compendium of Dhāraṇīs (Dhāraṇīsaṅgraha)* collection.³

i.4 This translation was made principally on the basis of the Tibetan translations of the text found in the Tantra Collection (*rgyud 'bum*) and the Compendium of Dhāraṇīs (*gzungs 'dus*)⁴ in the Degé Kangyur in consultation with the various Sanskrit sources mentioned above.

**The Dhāraṇī-Mantra to Have the Entire Noble “Sūtra
of Descent into Laṅkā” Read**

1.

The Translation

[F.204.b]

1.1

Homage to the noble *Descent into Laṅkā*.

1.2

“Mahāmati, I shall speak these mantra-words:

1.3

*tadyathā—padme padmadeve⁵ hine hine hine culu culu culu hule hule hule yule
yule yule pale pale pale muñce chinde⁶ bhinde bhañje⁷ marde pramarde⁸ dinakare
svāhā!⁹*

1.4

“Mahāmati! If any son of good family or daughter of good family upholds¹⁰ these mantra-words, retains them, recites them, and masters them, then no one will be able to find a weak point in them, be that a god or a goddess, a nāga or a nāgī, a yakṣa or a yakṣī, an asura or an asurī, a garuḍa or a garuḍī, a kinnara or a kinnarī, a mahoraga or a mahoragī, a gandharva or a gandharvī, a bhūta or a bhūtī, a kumbhāṇḍa or a kumbhāṇḍī, a piśāca or a piśācī, an ostārako or an ostārakī, an apasmāra or an apasmārī, a rākṣasa or a rākṣasī, a ḍāka or a ḍākī, an ojuhāra or an ojuhārī, a kaṭapūtana or a kaṭapūtānī, or a human man or a woman.¹² One who recites these mantra-words will have recited the entire *Sūtra of Descent into Laṅkā*. The Blessed One taught these mantra-words so that rākṣasas and others¹³ will be kept at bay.”

1.5

Here ends “The Dhāraṇī-Mantra to Have the Entire Noble ‘Sūtra of Descent into Laṅkā’ Read.”

n.

NOTES

- n.1 *Laṅkāvatāra* (*lang kar gshegs pa*, Toh 107).
- n.2 Ed. Nanjio 1923, pp. 261–63; for a translation, see Suzuki 1932, pp. 223–25. For the most up-to-date assessment of this sūtra, see Jia 2015. We are aware of a thesis dedicated to the study of dhāraṇīs in the *Laṅkāvatāra*, but we could not gain access to it: Lee-li Tay (鄭麗莉), “A Study of Dhāraṇī based on the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*” (master’s thesis, Fo Guang University [佛光大學], Taiwan, 2011).
- n.3 Hidas 2021, p. 82, the second dhāraṇī in item no. 12 in Cambridge University Library Ms. Add. 1326.
- n.4 Note that there is a discrepancy among various databases for cataloging the Toh 945 version of this text within vol. 100 or 101 of the Degé Kangyur. See Toh 945, n.4 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh945.html#UT22084-090-033-119>), for details.
- n.5 The Tibetan reads *padme devai*.
- n.6 The Tibetan reads *muṃcche danade*.
- n.7 The Tibetan reads *bhanajva*.
- n.8 The Tibetan reads *mande pramade*.
- n.9 A highly tentative translation might run as follows: “It is thus— O Lotus, O Lotus Goddess, *hine hine hine culu culu culu hule hule hule yule yule yule pale pale pale* O One Who Releases, O One Who Chops, O One Who Splits, O One Who Breaks, O One Who Crushes, O One Who Smashes, O Sun *svāhā*.” Whether *padmadeve* is a vocative of a female noun is highly questionable. From “O One Who Chops” up to “O One Who Smashes,” the words might

equally be quasi-imperatives. “Sun” is expressed with the common epithet “Day Maker.”

n.10 Instead of what we translate here as “to uphold” in order to capture the ambiguity of the original, Tatakara Gupta, when discussing a similar dhāraṇī said to encapsulate *The Perfection of Wisdom in One Hundred Thousand Lines* (see *The Dhāraṇī of “The Perfection of Wisdom in One Hundred Thousand Lines,”* Toh 576/932),¹¹ is more explicit when he replaces the verb with *kaṇṭhasthīkr* (“to place it in one’s throat”), which is the Sanskrit idiom for “to learn by heart.” He also spells out the benefit as the “meritorious karmic fruit” (*puṇyaphala*) of memorizing the parent text. This sentence is then followed by a fascinating short discussion, which merits to be quoted in full: “Surely, this is an exaggeration! No, one should not say this. For countless thus-gone ones have empowered this dhāraṇī to serve as a method for gaining the equipment of merit for women, immature people, and simpletons, as well as for learned people whose minds are confused, just like the pole of a snake-charmer[, which is preprepared by the expert snake charmer to be effective even when he is no longer present,] for removing poison; however, it is not a method for gaining the knowledge conveyed by *The [Perfection of Wisdom in] One Hundred Thousand Lines*. This should be understood to apply in other cases [i.e., where the text is abbreviated into a dhāraṇī] as well” (*nanv atyuktir eveti. na caitad vaktavyam. yataḥ strībālamūrkhān paryākulitamātīn paṇḍitān praty api puṇyasaṃbhārasādhanatvenāsaṃkhyeyatathāgatāir adhiṣṭhiteyaṃ dhāraṇī, yathā viśaharatvena gāruḍīkaṃ stambhaḥ; na tu lakṣāpratipāditajñānasādhanatvena. evam anyatrāpi boddhavyaḥ*). In his note to this dhāraṇī, he reiterates the point about “to uphold” meaning “to memorize” and promises as the reward the fruit of reciting the text (*pāṭhaphala*).

n.11 [Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitādharmaṇī](http://read.84000.co/translation/toh576.html) (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh576.html>) (Toh 576/932).

n.12 The Tibetan has “human or nonhuman,” but all Sanskrit sources indicate that this is a scribal error.

n.13 The word for “and others” is not transmitted in the Sanskrit, but it has an apposite meaning.

b.

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· Other Sources ·

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Routledge, 1932.

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 apasmāra

brjed byed

བརྗེད་བྱེད།

apasmāra^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings believed to cause epilepsy, fits, and loss of memory. As their name suggests—the Skt. *apasmāra* literally means “without memory” and the Tib. *brjed byed* means “causing forgetfulness”—they are defined by the condition they cause in affected humans, and the term can refer to any nonhuman being that causes such conditions, whether a bhūta, a piśāca, or other.

g.2 **apasmārī**

brjed byed mo

བརྗེད་བྱེད་མོ།

apasmārī^{AS}

A female apasmāra.

g.3 **asura**

lha ma yin

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།

asura^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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).

g.4 **asurī**

lha ma yin mo

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན་མོ།

asurī^{AS}

A female asura.

g.5 **bhūta**

'byung po

འབྱུང་པོ།

bhūta^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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.

g.6 bhūtī

'byung mo

འབྱུང་མོ།

bhūtī^{AS}

A female bhūta.

g.7 Blessed One

bcom ldan 'das

བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས།

bhagavat^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In Buddhist literature, this is an epithet applied to buddhas, most often to Śākyamuni. The Sanskrit term generally means “possessing fortune,” but in specifically Buddhist contexts it implies that a buddha is in possession of six auspicious qualities (*bhaga*) associated with complete awakening. The Tibetan term—where *bcom* is said to refer to “subduing” the four māras, *ldan* to “possessing” the great qualities of buddhahood, and *'das* to “going beyond” saṃsāra and nirvāṇa—possibly reflects the commentarial tradition where the Sanskrit *bhagavat* is interpreted, in addition, as “one who destroys the four māras.” This is achieved either by reading *bhagavat* as *bhagnavat* (“one who broke”), or by tracing the word *bhaga* to the root √*bhañj* (“to break”).

g.8 ḍāka

phra men pho · phra man pho

ཕ་མེན་ཕོ། · ཕ་མན་ཕོ།

ḍāka^{AS}

The male equivalent to a ḍākinī. The term can refer to a mundane class of supernatural beings and to a class of Buddhist deities.

g.9 ḍākinī

phra men mo · phra man mo

ཕ་མེན་མོ། · ཕ་མན་མོ།

ḍākinī^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of powerful nonhuman female beings who play a variety of roles in Indic literature in general and Buddhist literature specifically. Essentially synonymous with yoginīs, ḍākinīs are liminal and often dangerous beings who can be propitiated to acquire both mundane and transcendent spiritual accomplishments. In the higher Buddhist tantras, ḍākinīs are often considered embodiments of awakening and feature prominently in tantric maṇḍalas.

g.10 daughter of good family

rigs kyi bu mo

རིགས་ཀྱི་བུ་མོ།

kuladuhitṛ^{AS}

Indian term of address used by a teacher regarding a student. While originally related to family lineage, in Mahāyāna sūtras the term is also sometimes interpreted as implying that the person so addressed has entered the lineage of the buddhas, i.e., is a follower of the bodhisattva path.

g.11 dhāraṇī

gzungs

གཟུངས།

dhāraṇī^{AS}

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.12 equipment of merit

bsod nams kyi tshogs

བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱི་ཚོགས།

punyasambhāra^{AO}

The progressive increase of virtuous karma. One of the two factors that come together in creating momentum toward a practitioner's spiritual awakening, the other being the accumulation or equipment of wisdom.

g.13 **gandharva**

dri za

དྷི་ཟ།

gandharva^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of generally benevolent nonhuman beings who inhabit the skies, sometimes said to inhabit fantastic cities in the clouds, and more specifically to dwell on the eastern slopes of Mount Meru, where they are ruled by the Great King Dhṛtarāṣṭra. They are most renowned as celestial musicians who serve the gods. In the Abhidharma, the term is also used to refer to the mental body assumed by sentient beings during the intermediate state between death and rebirth. Gandharvas are said to live on fragrances (*gandha*) in the desire realm, hence the Tibetan translation *dri za*, meaning “scent eater.”

g.14 **gandharvī**

dri za mo

དྷི་ཟ་མོ།

gandharvī^{AS}

A female gandharva.

g.15 **garuḍa**

nam mkha' lding

ནམ་མཁའ་ལྗེ་དྷ།

garuḍa^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In Indian mythology, the garuḍa is an eagle-like bird that is regarded as the king of all birds, normally depicted with a sharp, owl-like beak, often holding a snake, and with large and powerful wings. They are traditionally enemies

of the nāgas. In the Vedas, they are said to have brought nectar from the heavens to earth. *Garuḍa* can also be used as a proper name for a king of such creatures.

g.16 garuḍī

nam mkha' lding mo

ནམ་མཁའ་ལྗིང་མོ།

garuḍī^{AS}

A female garuḍa.

g.17 god

lha

ལྷ།

deva^{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.18 goddess

lha mo

ལྷ་མོ།

devī^{AS}

See “god.”

g.19 kaṭapūtana

lus srul po

ལུས་སྐྱུལ་པོ།

kaṭapūtana ^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A subgroup of pūtanās, a class of disease-causing spirits associated with cemeteries and dead bodies. The name probably derives from the Skt. *pūta*, “foul-smelling,” as reflected also in the Tib. *srul po*. The smell of a pūтана is variously described in the texts as resembling that of a billy goat or a crow, and the smell of a kaṭapūtana, as its name suggests, could resemble a corpse, *kaṭa* being one of the names for “corpse.” The morbid condition caused by pūtanās comes in various forms, with symptoms such as fever, vomiting, diarrhea, skin eruptions, and festering wounds, the latter possibly explaining the association with bad smells.

g.20 kaṭapūtani

lus srul mo

ལུས་སྐྱུལ་མོ།

kaṭapūtani ^{AS}

A female kaṭapūtana.

g.21 kinnara

mi'am ci

མིའམ་ཅི།

kinnara ^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings that resemble humans to the degree that their very name—which means “is that human?”—suggests some confusion as to their divine status. Kinnaras are mythological beings found in both Buddhist and Brahmanical literature, where they are portrayed as creatures half human, half animal. They are often depicted as highly skilled celestial musicians.

g.22 kinnarī

mi'am ci mo

མིའམ་ཅི་མོ།

kinnarī ^{AS}

A female kinnara.

g.23 kumbhāṇḍa

grul bum

གུལ་བུམ།

kumbhāṇḍa^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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”).

g.24 kumbhāṇḍī

grul bum mo

གུལ་བུམ་མོ།

kumbhāṇḍī^{AS}

A female kumbhāṇḍa.

g.25 Mahāmati

blo gros chen po

ལྷོ་གྲོས་ཆེན་པོ།

mahāmati

A bodhisattva, the protagonist of *The Descent into Laṅkā*.

g.26 mahoraga

lto 'phye chen po

ལྷོ་འཕྲེ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahoraga^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Literally “great serpents,” mahoragas are supernatural beings depicted as large, subterranean beings with human torsos and heads and the lower bodies of serpents. Their movements are said to cause earthquakes, and they make up a class of subterranean geomantic spirits whose movement through the seasons and months of the year is deemed significant for construction projects.

g.27 mahoragī

lto 'phye chen mo

ལྷོ་འཕྲེ་ཆེན་མོ།

mahoragī^{AS}

A female mahoraga.

g.28 mantra-word

sngags kyi tshig

སྐྱུག་སྐྱེ་ཚིག་

mantrapada^{AS}

g.29 nāga

klu

ལྷ།

nāga^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings who live in subterranean aquatic environments, where they guard wealth and sometimes also teachings. Nāgas are associated with serpents and have a snakelike appearance. In Buddhist art and in written accounts, they are regularly portrayed as half human and half snake, and they are also said to have the ability to change into human form. Some nāgas are Dharma protectors, but they can also bring retribution if they are disturbed. They may likewise fight one another, wage war, and destroy the lands of others by causing lightning, hail, and flooding.

g.30 nāgī

klu mo

ལྷ་མོ།

nāgī^{AS}

A female nāga.

g.31 ojohara

mdangs 'phrog pho

མདངས་འཕྲོག་ཕོ།

ojohara^{AS}

A class of supernatural beings who rob the strength of other beings.

g.32 ojohāra

mdangs 'phrog mo

མདངས་འཕྲོག་མོ།

ojohāra^{AS}

A female ojohara.

g.33 ostāraka

gnon po

གནོན་པོ།

ostāraka ^{AS}

A class of supernatural beings believed to possess humans and cause physical and mental illness.

g.34 ostārakī

gnon mo

གནོན་མོ།

ostārakī ^{AS}

A female ostāraka.

g.35 piśāca

sha za

ཤ་ཟ།

piśāca ^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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.

g.36 piśācī

sha za mo

ཤ་ཟ་མོ།

piśācī ^{AS}

A female piśāca.

g.37 rākṣasa

srin po

སྲིན་པོ།

rākṣasa ^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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.

g.38 rākṣasī

srin mo

སྲིན་མོ།

rākṣasī^{AS}

g.39 son of good family

rigs kyi bu

རིགས་ཀྱི་བུ།

kulaputra^{AS}

Indian term of address used by a teacher regarding a student. While originally related to family lineage, in Mahāyāna sūtras the term is also sometimes interpreted as implying that the person so addressed has entered the lineage of the buddhas, i.e., is a follower of the bodhisattva path.

g.40 thus-gone one

de bzhin gshegs pa

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ།

tathāgata^{AO}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A frequently used synonym for *buddha*. According to different explanations, it can be read as *tathā-gata*, literally meaning “one who has thus gone,” or as *tathā-āgata*, “one who has thus come.” *Gata*, though literally meaning “gone,” is a past passive participle used to describe a state or condition of existence. *Tatha(tā)*, often rendered as “suchness” or “thusness,” is the quality or condition of things as they really are, which cannot be conveyed in conceptual, dualistic terms. Therefore, this epithet is interpreted in different ways, but in general it implies one who has departed in the wake of the buddhas of the past, or one who has manifested the supreme awakening dependent on the reality that does not abide in the two extremes of existence and quiescence. It is also often used as a specific epithet of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

g.41 yakṣa

gnod sbyin

གནོད་སྦྱིན།

yakṣa^{AS}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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.

g.42 yakṣī

gnod sbyin mo

གནོད་སྦྱིན་མོ།

yakṣī^{AS}

A female yakṣa.