

༄༅། །ཀྱུལ་མཚན་ཅེ་མོའི་དབྱེ་ཀྱན་གྱི་གཟུངས།

The Dhāraṇī of Dhvajāgrakeyūrā

Dhvajāgrakeyūrādhāraṇī

འཕགས་པ་རྒྱལ་མཚན་གྱི་ཕྱི་མོའི་དཔུང་རྒྱན་ཅེས་བྱ་བའི་གཟུངས།

'phags pa rgyal mtshan gyi rtse mo'i dpung rgyan ces bya ba'i gzungs

The Noble Dhāraṇī of Dhvajāgrakeyūrā

Āryadhvajāgrakeyūrānāmadhāraṇī

· Toh 612 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 91 (rgyud, ba), folios 45.a–46.b

TRANSLATED INTO TIBETAN BY

· Jinamitra · Dānaśīla · Bandé Yeshé Dé ·



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co.

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SUMMARY

- s.1 *The Dhāraṇī of Dhvajāgrakeyūrā* takes place in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. The gods have just been defeated by the asuras, and Śakra, lord of the gods, rushes to the Buddha for help. The Buddha instructs Śakra to retain the dhāraṇī known as *The Dhāraṇī of Dhvajāgrakeyūrā*. After transmitting the dhāraṇī, the Buddha explains that people who recite and retain it become victorious in conflicts. He also states that people who attach it atop standards or tie it around the neck will be protected and that the dhāraṇī will manifest in the form of the female deity Dhvajāgrakeyūrā, who will always be with them, eliminating fear, affording protection, and granting all good things such as good reputation and abundance.

ac.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- ac.1 This dhāraṇī was translated by Gyurme Avertin. Kedar and Rubi Prado compared the translation with the available Sanskrit manuscript and edited the dhāraṇī based on the Tibetan version. Dza Tsetra compared the translation with the Chinese version.
- ac.2 The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha. Rory Lindsay edited the translation and the introduction, and Dawn Collins copyedited the text. Martina Cotter was in charge of the digital publication process.

i.

INTRODUCTION

i.1

The Dhāraṇī of Dhvajāgrakeyūrā takes place in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, where Śakra requests help from the Buddha after the gods have been defeated by the asura king Vemacitri. The Buddha tells Śakra to retain the dhāraṇī known as *The Dhāraṇī of Dhvajāgrakeyūrā*, which he received from the Tathāgata Unsurpassed Standard in a previous life. The Buddha transmits the dhāraṇī and explains that those who recite it and retain it become victorious in battles and conflicts, and that those who attach it to the top of standards or tie it around their neck will be protected by the buddhas. He explains that the dhāraṇī will also manifest in the form of a female deity who will always be in front of them eliminating fear, affording protection, and granting all positive things such as good reputation and abundance.

i.2

The goddess Dhvajāgrakeyūrā has several different forms with varying colors, numbers of heads and arms, hand implements, and so on.¹ However, traditionally she is portrayed as predominantly yellow, with four heads and holding the hand implements mentioned here. Dhvajāgrakeyūrā's appearance is also mentioned in two sādhanas devoted to her in the Tengyur (Toh 3592 and 3600), with some differences between them. The term *dhvajāgra* or "crest insignia" refers to a symbol or insignia that was mounted at the end of a long pole, which was employed as a martial ensign on the battlefield in ancient India. In two early *Dhvajāgra* Mahāsūtras (Toh 292 and Toh 293), the dhvajāgra itself, as an object, is a metaphor for refuge. At that early stage in the history of Buddhist literature, the dhvajāgra does not seem to have been associated with a goddess, as protection came from the revival of courage expressed in the analogy (parallel to this work) of the devas being on the point of defeat by the asuras. However, protective texts and dhāraṇīs became, over time, embodied in goddesses who gained iconically detailed forms, as we find with Dhvajāgrakeyūrā featured here. There are numerous Dhvajāgrakeyūrā sādhanas in the Tibetan tradition, and this deity and her dhāraṇī have also become associated with the Tibetan windhorse

(Tib. *rlung rta*), as their functions are similar: to eliminate obstacles and adversity and to bring victory and good circumstances. Tibetan writers such as Mipham Gyatso (1846–1912) composed prayers to Dhvajāgrakeyūrā, asking her to remove obstacles.

i.3 In the Degé Kangyur, *The Dhāraṇī of Dhvajāgrakeyūrā* is included among the tantras belonging to the *kriyā* class and is also reproduced in the Dhāraṇī (*gzungs 'dus*) section. The two versions are identical apart from a few minor spelling differences. The attribution in the colophon to the paṇḍitas Jinamitra and Dānaśīla and the translator Yeshé Dé suggests that the translation was completed during the late eighth or early ninth century, which is supported by this text's inclusion in the Phangthangma² and Denkarma³ imperial catalogs, both of which date to the early ninth century. The text is also extant in Sanskrit in at least two versions in GRETEL's Sanskrit corpus.⁴ The famous pilgrim and translator Xuanzang (602–64) also translated it into Chinese⁵ in the year 654.

i.4 This English translation was produced based on both Toh 612⁶ and Toh 923 in the Degé Kangyur in consultation with the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*), the two Sanskrit versions available to us, and Xuanzang's Chinese translation. Following 84000's convention, the dhāraṇī has been transliterated as it appears in the Degé version of the text. There is often wide variation in the Tibetan transcription of dhāraṇīs across recensions of the Kangyur, and only minor changes have been made to reconcile them or to emend the dhāraṇī based on Sanskrit conventions.

**The Noble Dhāraṇī of
Dhvajāgrakeyūrā**

1.

The Translation

[F.45.b]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.⁷

1.2 Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, sitting on the Pāṇḍukambala rock, when Śakra, lord of the gods, who had just lost in war against the asuras and had been completely defeated, rushed in distress to the Blessed One. He bowed his head down at the feet of the Blessed One and said, “Blessed One, we fought with the asuras, and I have been vanquished by their king, Vemacitri, completely defeated, and all the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three were also routed. Blessed One, what should we do?”

1.3 The Blessed One replied, “Listen, lord of the gods, retain the unsurpassed⁸ *Dhāraṇī* of *Dhvajāgrakeyūrā*. I received it from the Tathāgata Unsurpassed Standard when I was a bodhisattva, and then I explained it extensively to others. Recalling it, I have not experienced fear, anxiety, gooseflesh, or physical harm, even for an instant.”

“Blessed One, what is the unsurpassed *Dhāraṇī* of *Dhvajāgrakeyūrā*?”

1.4 The Blessed One replied:

1.5 *tadyathā* | *om jaya jaya* | *vijaya vijaya* | *jayavāhini* | *śaṃkari śaṃkari* | *prabhaṃkari* | I and all sentient beings⁹ *sarvaśatrūṅ* | *jambhaya jambhaya* | *stambhaya stambhaya* | *mohaya mohaya* | *bhagavati* | *jayavāhini* | *matha matha* | *pramatha pramatha* | *grasa grasa* | *hasa hasa* | *hūm hūm* | *la hūm la hūm*¹⁰ | *lambodari* [F.46.a] | *trinetre* | *caturvaktre* | *caturdaṃṣṭre*¹¹ | *asi-musala-cakra-trisula-vajra-kavaca-dhāraṇi* | Protect us from all harm. Protect us. | *om bhagavati* | *hana hana* | *daha daha* | *paca paca* | *matha matha* | *pramatha pramatha* | *dhuna dhuna* | *vidhuna vidhuna* | *hūm hūm* | *phaṭ phaṭ* | *bhañja bhañja* | *parasainyaṃ vidhvaṃsaya* | *sarvaśatrūṅ nāśaya* | *dhvajāgrakeyure* | *tiṣṭha tiṣṭha tiṣṭha*¹² | *bhriṭa bhriṭa* | *ulkāmukhi* | *ulkādhāraṇi* | *trailokyamathani*

vidhvaṃsaya parasainyām | Protect us from all harm. Protect us. | *cala cala* | *cili cili* | *culu culu* | *kampa kampa* | *kala kala* | *kili kili* | *kulu kulu* | *muñca muñca* | *aṭṭahāsam* | *vidhvaṃsaya parasainyam* | Protect us from all harm. Protect us. | *trāsaya trāsaya* | *bhrāmaya bhrāmaya* | *buddhasatyena* | *dharmasatyena* | *satyavādināṃ satyena* | *satyavādināṃ* | *satyena* | *buddhasatyenātikrama* | *dharmasatyenātikrama* | *saṃghasatyenātikrama* | *satyavādināṃ satyam atikrama* | *lambodari lambodari* | *kuṭṭa kuṭṭa kuttā* | *kuṭṭāpaya kuṭṭāpaya* | *rudram ānaya* | *viṣṇum ānaya* | *candrasūryabrahmam ānaya* | *trailokyādhipatim ānaya* | *sarvadevādhipatim ānaya* | *sarvayakṣa-rākṣasa-gandharva-kumbhāṇḍa-mahoragādhipatim ānaya* | *vidhvaṃsaya parasainyam* | *raṅgha raṅgha* | *raṅghāpaya raṅghāpaya* | *jvala jvala* | *puṣpamālini* | *rundha rundha* | *riti riti* | *citi citi* | *dhriti dhriti* | *bhṛīkuṭimukhapare* | *senākulotsādanakari* | *hala hala* | *hili hili* | *hulu hulu* | *he ha* | *riṇi riṇi* | *riṇāmate* | *jambhadhvoje* | *sarvabuddha-avalokite* | Protect us from all fear. Protect us. | *sarvatathāgatāvalokite svāhā* | *guṇarājaprabhāsottame svāhā* | *suryārkavimale svāhā* | *candrārkavimale svāhā* | *sarvagrahanakṣatradhyāmīkaraṇe*¹³ *svāhā* | Protect us from all fear, harm, illness, and conflict. Protect us. | *svāhā!*

1.6 King of the gods, [F.46.b] with the unsurpassed *Dhāraṇī* of *Dhvajāgrakeyūrā*, whether in war, in fights, in quarrels, in disagreements, or wherever you go, you will never be afraid and will always be victorious. If it is tied atop a standard or worn around the neck, kings of humans and courageous ones will be protected. The *dhāraṇī* will take the appearance of a woman who will stand in front of them. She will eliminate their fears and protect them; she will produce excellent circumstances, make opposing armies retreat; and she will constantly bring about auspiciousness, purity, good reputation, prosperity, and abundance.”

1.7 After the Blessed One had spoken, Śakra, lord of the gods, and the bhikṣus and bodhisattvas¹⁴ rejoiced and praised the words of the Blessed One.

1.8 *The Noble Dhāraṇī of Dhvajāgrakeyūrā is complete.*

c.

Colophon

c.1 This translation was produced by the Indian preceptors Jinamitra and Dānaśīla and the translator-editor Bandé Yeshé Dé. It was revised according to the new lexicon and finalized.

NOTES

n.

- n.1 See, for example, <https://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setID=731> (<https://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setID=731>) (last accessed 4 March 4, 2024).
- n.2 Phangthangma, p. 27.
- n.3 Denkarma, 302.b. See also Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, p. 215, no. 376.
- n.4 Paolo Giunta, “The Āryadhvajāgrakeyūrā nāma dhāriṇī,” https://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/corpustei/transformations/html/sa_dhvajAgrakeyUrAdhAriNI-alt.htm (https://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/corpustei/transformations/html/sa_dhvajAgrakeyUrAdhAriNI-alt.htm). See also the version published on Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages (GRETIL) by the Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon Input Project based on a text of unknown origin provided by the Nagarjuna Institute of Exact Methods, Kathmandu, Nepal, http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/corpustei/transformations/html/sa_dhvajAgrakeyUrAdhAriNI.htm (http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/corpustei/transformations/html/sa_dhvajAgrakeyUrAdhAriNI.htm).
- n.5 *Sheng chuang bi yin tuoluoni jing* 勝幢臂印陀羅尼經 (*Dhvajāgrakeyūrādharmaṇī*), Taishō 1363 (CBETA (<https://cbetaonline.dila.edu.tw/en/T1363>); SAT (<https://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT2018/T1363.html>)).
- n.6 This text, Toh 612, and all those contained in this same volume (*rgyud, ba*), are listed as being located in volume 100 of the Degé Kangyur by the Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRC). However, several other Kangyur databases—including the eKangyur that supplies the digital input version

displayed by the 84000 Reading Room—list this work as being located in volume 101. This discrepancy is partly due to the fact that the two volumes of the *gzungs 'dus* section are an added supplement not mentioned in the original catalog, and also hinges on the fact that the compilers of the Tōhoku catalog placed another text—which forms a whole, very large volume—the *Vimalaprabhānāmakālacakratantṛāṭīkā* (*dus 'khor 'grel bshad dri med 'od*, Toh 845), before the volume 100 of the Degé Kangyur, numbering it as vol. 100, although it is almost certainly intended to come right at the end of the Degé Kangyur texts as volume 102; indeed its final fifth chapter is often carried over and wrapped in the same volume as the Kangyur *dkar chags* (catalog). Please note this discrepancy when using the eKangyur viewer in this translation.

- n.7 The longer Sanskrit version translates as “I prostrate to the Bhagavatī Āryadhvajāgrakeyūrā.” See Giunta, “The Āryadhvajāgrakeyūrā nāma dhāriṇī.”
- n.8 Here following the longer Sanskrit version, which has *aparājita*. See Giunta, “The Āryadhvajāgrakeyūrā nāma dhāriṇī.”
- n.9 The italicized phrases in English are translations of Tibetan words that either were added to the dhāraṇī or replaced some Sanskrit words. Giunta’s edition is based on a Tucci manuscript that probably belonged originally to an individual named Āvadhūta Śrī Ālakhavajra, as it asks the reader to pray for this individual, his family, and all beings. See Giunta, “The Āryadhvajāgrakeyūrā nāma dhāriṇī.” In India, it is not unusual to insert one’s name or someone else’s name in a mantra. We can assume that the Tibetan translators have instead inserted “I and all sentient beings,” “protect us from all harm...,” and so on, which are the non-italicized phrases in our translation.
- n.10 The longer Sanskrit version here reads *lambha lambha*. See Giunta, “The Āryadhvajāgrakeyūrā nāma dhāriṇī.”
- n.11 The Tibetan appears to read *catudadamthte*, which is an error. *caturdaṃṣṭre* means “four fangs.”
- n.12 The Tibetan has *trita trita trita* (“third, third, third”). The longer Sanskrit version duplicates *tiṣṭha* (“stay”), which makes better sense in this context. We have opted to replace *trita* with *tiṣṭha*.
- n.13 While the Tibetan has *d+he mI ka ra Ne*, we have followed the longer Sanskrit version, which reads *dhyāmīkaraṇe* (“to burn,” “to consume”), which refers to the negative influence of the planets and lunar mansions.

n.14 Here we have followed the longer Sanskrit version. See Giunta, "The Āryadhvajāgrakeyūrā nāma dhāriṇī." The Tibetan, in place of "the bhikṣus and bodhisattvas," has "gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas," which begs the question as to why the asuras would rejoice at instructions on how to defeat themselves.

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 Asura

lha ma yin

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།

asura^{AD}

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.2 Bandé Yeshé Dé

ban+de ye shes sde

བན་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྡེ།

—

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Yeshé Dé (late eighth to early ninth century) was the most prolific translator of sūtras into Tibetan. Altogether he is credited with the translation of more than one hundred sixty sūtra translations and more than one hundred additional translations, mostly on tantric topics. In spite of Yeshé Dé's great importance for the propagation of Buddhism in Tibet during the imperial era, only a few biographical details about this figure are known. Later sources describe him as a student of the Indian teacher Padmasambhava, and he is also credited with teaching both sūtra and tantra widely to students of his own. He was also known as Nanam Yeshé Dé, from the Nanam (*sna nam*) clan.

g.3 Dānaśīla

dA na shI la

དཱ་ན་ཤི་ལ།

**dānaśīla^{RP}*

An Indian preceptor *upādhyāya* from Kashmir who was resident in Tibet during the late eighth and early ninth centuries. He was a frequent collaborator of Yeshé Dé.

g.4 dhāraṇī

gzungs

གཟུངས།

dhāraṇī^{AS}

From the Sanskrit verb *dhṛ* (“to hold”), the term refers to the ability to hold or retain the Buddha’s teachings in the memory, and the specific mnemonic formulas or aids to doing so, which also distill the teachings into shorter utterances. From there the term also carries a strong sense that such formulas or devices, when spoken or rehearsed in the mind, have extraordinary power to effect change in the world and in oneself.

g.5 gandharva

dri za

དྲི་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.6 Heaven of the Thirty-Three

sum cu rtsa gsum pa

སུམ་རུ་རྩ་གསུམ་པ།

trāyastriṃśa^{AD}

Second god realm of desire, abode of the thirty-three gods.

g.7 Jinamitra

dzi na mi tra

ཇོ་ན་མི་ཏྲ།

jinamitra

An Indian preceptor (*upādhyāya*) from Kashmir who was resident in Tibet during the late eighth and early ninth centuries. He was a frequent collaborator of Yeshé Dé.

g.8 Lord of the gods

lha'i dbang po

ལྷ་འི་དབང་པོ།

devendra^{AD}

Another name for Śakra.

g.9 Pāṇḍukambala rock

lwa ba dkar po lta bu'i rdo leb

ལྷ་བ་དཀར་པོ་ལྷ་སུའི་རྩོལ་བ།

pāṇḍukambalaśilā^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Indra's colossal throne underneath the Pāriyātraka tree in Heaven of the Thirty-Three (Trāyastrimśa), which is made of a whitish stone and therefore resembles a "whitish woolen blanket" (*pāṇḍukambala*).

g.10 Śakra

brgya byin

བརྒྱ་བྱིན།

śakra^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The lord of the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three (*trāyastrimśa*). Alternatively known as Indra, the deity that is called "lord of the gods" dwells on the summit of Mount Sumeru and wields the thunderbolt. The Tibetan translation *brgya byin* (meaning "one hundred sacrifices") is based on an etymology that *śakra* is an abbreviation of *śata-kratu*, one who has performed a hundred sacrifices. Each world with a central Sumeru has a Śakra. Also known by other names such as Kauśika, Devendra, and Śacipati.

g.11 Unsurpassed Standard

gzhan gyis mi thub pa'i rgyal mtshan

གཞན་གྱིས་མི་སྦྱབ་པའི་རྒྱལ་མཚན།

**aparājitadhvajā*^{RP}

Name of the tathāgata from whom the Buddha received *The Dhāraṇī of Dhvajāgrakeyūrā* in a past life as a bodhisattva.

g.12 Vemacitri

thags zangs ris

ཐགས་ཟངས་རིས།

vemacitri^{AD}

One of the kings of the asuras.

