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The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda

Āvalokiteśvarasiṃhanādadhāraṇī

འཕགས་པ་སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས་དབང་ཕྱག་སེང་གེ་སྐྱའི་གཟུངས།

'phags pa spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug seng ge sgra'i gzungs

The Dhāraṇī of Noble Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda

Āryāvalokiteśvarasiṃhanādadhāraṇī

· Toh 703 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 93 (rgyud, rtsa), folios 165.b–171.a

TRANSLATED INTO TIBETAN BY

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First published 2024

Current version v 1.0.1 (2024)

Generated by 84000 Reading Room v2.26.1

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SUMMARY

- s.1 *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda* recounts the story of how Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda tamed the nāgas and gained curative powers. The text teaches his dhāraṇī, along with several others, and gives ritual instructions for how to use these for healing and protection.

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. Catherine Dalton produced the translation and wrote the introduction. Ryan Damron 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 Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda recounts the story of how Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda gained the power to tame nāgas and heal affliction, and how he came to take his present form. The text opens in Avalokiteśvara's palace on Mount Potala where the Buddha Śākyamuni is surrounded by a retinue of bodhisattvas and śrāvakas. Mañjuśrī requests the Buddha to give a remedy for the many diseases that afflict a king named Lord of Light. The Buddha responds to this request with a story about the previous lives of Mañjuśrī and Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda, in which we learn how Siṃhanāda came to obtain his power to tame the nāgas and his curative powers. Śākyamuni then teaches Siṃhanāda's dhāraṇī, along with the ritual instructions for using it to heal illness, stating that it can be used to heal King Lord of Light and bring him rebirth in Sukhāvati. The Buddha goes on to teach a vidyāmantra for Siṃhanāda and several other mantras and dhāraṇīs for other forms of Avalokiteśvara, along with ritual instructions for using these to heal illnesses, especially those caused by nāgas and other malevolent beings. There are also remedies for other types of afflictions, including difficulties with rain, hail, and the like. Śākyamuni then teaches a praise to Avalokiteśvara, followed by short verses of praise to Tārā, Pāṇḍaravāsīnī, Hayagrīva, and the bodhisattva nāga king Varuṇa. He explains that the praises and the mantras connected with them will heal and protect anyone who recites them from malevolent influence.

i.2

Siṃhanāda, "Lion's Roar," also sometimes called Lokeśvara Siṃhanāda, is a form of the bodhisattva of compassion, Avalokiteśvara. There are nine Siṃhanāda sādhanas and several other Siṃhanāda praises and ritual texts preserved in the Tibetan Tengyur, attesting to his importance in India. Images of Siṃhanāda have been found at the Mahābodhi temple in Bodhi Gaya prior to the temple's nineteenth-century renovation,¹ and in Sri Lanka where it seems Siṃhanāda was especially popular.² The association of Siṃhanāda with curative properties that we find in the present text appears

to be quite an old one. A tenth-century Nepalese miniature painting depicting Siṃhanāda, which is kept at Cambridge, includes a caption reading, “Lokeśvara of the hospital on the island of Siṃhala.”³ While Avalokiteśvara in general has a close iconographical association with the deity Śiva, this is even more clear in the case of Siṃhanāda. In *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda*, Siṃhanāda—just like Śiva—holds a brahmin’s skull and a snake-wrapped trident, and wears a sacred thread made of a snake.

i.3 Siṃhanāda’s iconography is generally consistent across textual and artistic sources, though many of the details are not clearly elaborated in this text. In the descriptions found in his many sādhanas and praises, Siṃhanāda is white in color, has two legs and two arms, is dressed as an ascetic (*tapasvin*, *dka’ thub ldan pa*), and sits on a lion. In most descriptions, a skull-adorned trident rests at his right side, but in some, he holds it in his right hand. This trident is also frequently depicted with a white snake coiled around the shaft. With his left hand, he holds the end of a lotus stalk that rises upwards and has a sword standing upon the open lotus blossom. Nearby and to the left sits what is variously described as a cup (*karotaka*), pot (*bhājana*, *snod*), or skull cup (*kapāla*, *thod pa*) filled with fragrant flowers. This vessel often sits on a lotus or water lily.⁴

i.4 The Siṃhanāda form of Avalokiteśvara continues to be practiced in contemporary Tibetan Buddhist traditions. Two arrangements of practices centered on Lokeśvara Siṃhanāda are found in the Compendium of Sādhanas (*sgrub thabs kun btus*) compiled by Jamyang Loter Wangpo,⁵ and the nineteenth-century scholar Mipham Gyatso wrote a short summary of the story of *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda*.⁶

i.5 *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda* does not appear to be extant in Sanskrit or Chinese translation and is not found at Dunhuang or listed in any of the imperial-period catalogs. However, the very concise *Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda*, (Toh 704/912/3156),⁷ which parallels a short section of *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda*, is extant in Sanskrit in the *Sādhanamālā*⁸ and as part of the dhāraṇī collection published by Gergely Hidas.⁹

i.6 The colophon of the present text states that the Tibetan translation of this work was produced by “the noble Lady Vajrasattvī, who had attained accomplishment, and the translator Gar Sherab Jungne.” While we are unable to identify either of these figures, the translation of the shorter *Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda*, which parallels a portion of this text, was translated into Tibetan twice, both times by eleventh-century translators. This fact, along with the contents of the present text and its absence in imperial period catalogs or at Dunhuang, suggests that it was also very likely translated in the later translation period (*phyi dar*), after the tenth century. It is specifically notable that one of the translators of *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda* is

a woman. While many accomplished female practitioners from both India and Tibet are mentioned in histories of Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, and a smaller number of women have authored Buddhist texts, reference to women as translators of canonical texts is extremely uncommon. We are, at present, unaware of any other such reference. The name listed here, “the noble Lady Vajrasattvī,” is unambiguously feminine in all recensions of the text consulted, as it includes two feminine particles (*rje btsun ma rdo rje sems ma*).¹⁰ This Vajrasattvī, whose position in the colophon is where we would typically find the name of the male Indian scholar who supervised the translation, is usually referred to as a preceptor (*mkhan po*). Vajrasattvī is instead here described as someone “who had attained accomplishment” (*dngos grub brnyed pa*). This unique colophon also mentions that the translation, editing, and finalizing of the text took place at a *caitya* at a charnel ground in Kashmir.

i.7 This English translation of *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda* was made on the basis of the Degé Kangyur recension of this work, with additional reference to the notes from the Comparative Edition (*dpe sdur ma*) of the Kangyur, and the Stok Palace (*stog pho brag*) Kangyur and Phugdrak (*phug brag*) Kangyur recensions of the text. We also consulted the Sanskrit *Siṃhanādadhāraṇī* from the *Sādhanamālā*. *The Dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda* is stable across all recensions consulted, with only minor variants. We edited the *dhāraṇī* itself very slightly on the basis of the Sanskrit text from the *Sādhanamālā* and have noted all instances where this varies from the *dhāraṇī* as presented in the Degé recension.

The Dhāraṇī of Noble Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda

1.

The Translation

[F.165.b]

1.1 Homage to blessed Vajradhara.

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was residing at the noble Lord Avalokiteśvara’s palace at the summit of Mount Potala. That bejeweled palace was ornamented with countless jewels, pearls, and gems, the light of which filled the trichiliocosm. In that region filled with the delightful scent of all kinds of flowers, the Blessed One was seated on a lion throne that had been arranged for him, surrounded by countless bodhisattvas led by Maitreya, [F.166.a] as well as many monks led by the great śrāvaka Śāradvatīputra. In that assembly was the bodhisattva great being Mañjuśrī, who rose from his seat, draped his upper robe over one shoulder, knelt on his right knee, and prostrated his head at the Blessed One’s feet.

1.2 He said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, in the land of Magadha there is a king named Lord of Light who has an excellent retinue, queens, and abundant wealth. But beyond this, the king is afflicted with leprosy, boils, difficulty breathing, and heart disease. How can he be healed?”

1.3 The Blessed One replied, “Bodhisattva great being Mañjuśrī, long ago in this very world you, Mañjuśrī, were a bodhisattva called Great Wisdom, and noble Avalokiteśvara Simhanāda was a bodhisattva called Supreme Compassion. Those two bodhisattvas tamed a white lion, mounted it, and rode out to help beings of the trichiliocosm. They set out adorned with precious adornments and holding a trident, sword, lotus, and an utpala flower. But when the time came to cross the great ocean, they left the lion behind, shared the load, and continued onward. You, the bodhisattva Great Wisdom, thinking to benefit your friend, took your own life with your sword. But the bodhisattva Supreme Compassion thought that you had been killed by the nāgas, gods, and the like, who dwell in the heavens, below the earth,

and in the sky. He then took up a brahmin's skull as a drinking vessel, took his trident in his hand, and mounted the white lion. In sorrow, he bound his locks upon his crown.

1.4 "He threatened the gods above while brandishing his trident at them, and said, [F.166.b]

1.5 "Moved by compassion we set out to help beings,
But I was abandoned by my friend and left behind alone.
If this is the fault of all the gods, I will punish them.
I will destroy their towns and kill the gods!

1.6 "The Four Great Kings, Śakra, lord of the gods, Brahmā, lord of the Sahā world, and the gods of the three worlds beamed with joy. They offered divine lotuses, kumuda flowers, white lotuses, campaka flowers, and the like, filling his skull cup.

1.7 "He next threatened the gods of the sky, nāgas, gandharvas, yakṣas, asuras, kumbhāṇḍa, garuḍas, and kinnaras, brandished his trident, and said,

1.8 "Moved by compassion we set out to help beings,
But I was abandoned by my friend and left behind alone.
If this is the fault of the eight classes, I will punish them
By destroying their towns and killing the eight classes!

1.9 "He then brandished his trident at the eight classes. The nāga king Jeweled Crown, the gandharva king Pañcaśikha, the yakṣa king Vaiśravaṇa, the asura king Vemacitrin, the horse-headed kinnara king Druma, the kumbhāṇḍa king Nine-Headed Snake, the garuḍa king Golden Eyes, and the rest, together with their large retinues, beamed with joy and offered jeweled ornaments to the lion.

1.10 "He next threatened the nāgas who live below the earth, saying,

1.11 "Moved by compassion we set out to help beings,
But I was abandoned by my friend and left behind alone.
If this is the fault of the nāgas, I will punish them
By destroying their towns and killing the nāgas!

1.12 "He then stirred the great ocean with his trident. The nāga king Anavatapta, the nāga king Varuṇa, the nāga king Takṣaka, and the other six hundred thousand nāga kings, and their servants and retinues, who have miraculous powers, are radiant, and who cause the gods and asuras to battle all gathered together, beamed with joy. [F.167.a] The nāga king Varuṇa became a single white snake, bowed down, circumambulated the bodhisattva three times, and said,

- 1.13 “Compassionate bodhisattva,
I take refuge in you.
Be the protector of all nāgas!
You may kill us if we commit an offense.’
- 1.14 “Saying this he wrapped himself around the trident three times, turned to face the bodhisattva, said, ‘phuḥ phuḥ!’ respectfully bled from his mouth, and remained there.
- 1.15 “The other nāga kings likewise joined their palms, circumambulated him three times, and said,
- 1.16 “Compassionate bodhisattva,
We take refuge in you.
Accept all nāgas under your protection!
You may kill us if we commit an offense.’
- 1.17 “Saying this, the eight great nāgas became a single white snake and bound themselves around him as a sacred thread. Those nāga kings then said, ‘We are your servants. We will listen to whatever you command.’ Then all the nāgas returned to their own places.
- 1.18 “Mañjuśrī, that bodhisattva then became known as Compassionate Nāga Tamer, and as Heart Disease Healer. Mañjuśrī, indeed that bodhisattva Great Wisdom of former times is none other than you, Mañjuśrī Vādisiṃha. And the one who at that time was the bodhisattva Supreme Compassion is now Noble Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda, the great leader of the nāgas, himself. Mañjuśrī, for the sake of the king I will pronounce the mantra of the Great Compassionate One—memorize it!
- 1.19 *namo ratnatrayāya | nama āryāvalokiteśvarāya bodhisattvāya mahāsattvāya mahā-kāruṇikāya | tadyathā | om akaṭe vikaṭe nikaṭe kaṭamkaṭe karote citijvala-karota¹¹vīrye¹²svāhā | |*
- 1.20 “This dhāraṇī has been taught by eight hundred million buddhas, and I myself pronounce it now. Its rite accomplishes all of the activities without need of great difficulty.¹³ Before a statue or a painting of blessed Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda, make eight distinct maṇḍalas with cow dung that has not fallen to the ground. Scatter each maṇḍala with five bunches of flowers and make offerings of flowers, [F.167.b] incense, perfumes, garlands, and scented powders. Then recite the dhāraṇī thirteen times at each maṇḍala and gather the dung. Incant¹⁴ that resulting¹⁵ dung and anoint the sick person with it. All of their illnesses will be healed. All illnesses caused by the poison of gods, nāgas, and others will be healed. If it does not succeed within twenty-one days, then, Mañjuśrī, the Great Compassionate One

- himself, will have committed the five deeds with immediate retribution.¹⁶
 Mañjuśrī, this is the Great Compassionate One's own promise. Mañjuśrī, this
 dhāraṇī will free the great king from his ill health, the heart disease that
 afflicts him, and in his next life he will be reborn in the realm of Sukhāvātī.
- 1.21 “Listen, Mañjuśrī! The Buddha Amitābha and the rest of the nine-hundred
 ninety million buddhas have taught this essence mantra, and now I teach it:
- 1.22 *om aḥ hrīḥ śiṃhanāda hūm phaṭ | |*
- 1.23 “Reciting this essence vidyāmantra just once frees the reciter from all evil
 deeds.
- 1.24 “They will not take dreadful rebirths,
 Nor will their body be pierced by weapons.
 They will not be harmed by enemies or robbers,
 By nāgas, or by other such beings.
 They will always have fortune,
 And will not be born into a female body.
 They will always remember their previous lives
 And at death will be reborn in Sukhāvātī.
- 1.25 “Mañjuśrī, the tathāgatas Vipaśyin, Śikhin, Viśvabhū, Krakucchanda,
 Kanakamuni, and Kāśyapa have all taught this mantra, and now I,
 Śākyamuni, teach it as well.
- 1.26 *namo ratna trayāya | namo hayagrīvāya | namo lokeśvarāya |*
- 1.27 *tadyathā | om hrīḥ kulu yulu nīlakaṇṭha hulu hulu tiṣṭha tiṣṭha bandha bandha
 mārāya mārāya hā hā hā hā vajrakrodha hayagrīva hrīḥ hūm phaṭ | |*
- 1.28 “Mañjuśrī, this dhāraṇī is the mantra of Padma Hayagrīva, who is
 Avalokiteśvara himself.
- 1.29 “A person who recites this just once
 Will be freed from all evil deeds.
 The doors to the lower realms will be cut off [F.168.a]
 And they will be unharmed by grahas such as nāgas and the like.
 They will be freed from kākordas and poisoning—
 All the buddhas have taught this.
- 1.30 “Arisen through the power of countless billions,¹⁷
 Its qualities are immeasurable.
 Speaking it once clears away evil deeds,
 Speaking it twice brings fortune,
 And three times brings long life.

After a million recitations, one will see his face
And travel to the Lotus Realm.

1.31 “Mañjuśrī, other people are afflicted by illnesses of blood or bile, sicknesses of wind or cold, or are afflicted¹⁸ by kṣatriya nāgas, brahmin nāgas, and outcaste or śūdra nāgas. Therefore, they have joyless, ill hearts; they have difficulty breathing, their stomachs and backs ache, their heads ache, they have headaches on one side, indigestion, swelling, crippled limbs, pregnancy-related illnesses, animal-related illnesses, fractures of their joints and skin, urinary diseases, phlegmy coughs, and fractured bones. They stoop, are crippled, have a weak appetite, have skin pustules, tumors, edema, blisters, rashes, abscesses, swollen and blocked throats, gout, persisting sensations of cold, heat, and so on. They are as if afflicted by different kinds of leprosy and boils;¹⁹ they are afflicted by gods, māras, brahmas, yamas, rock spirits, graha that disturb their mental state, angered hearth spirits, lake goddesses, nāgas or the like; they have been made ill by yakṣas, bhūtas, vināyakas, or flesh-eating graha; and they become ill in one of the myriad ways. All of this is suffering born from nonvirtue.”

1.32 The Blessed One said, “O bodhisattva great being Mañjuśrī, listen!

1.33 “This is the rite for this essence dhāraṇī:
First arouse respect and faith
For the Great Compassionate One
And make a maṇḍala on fertile earth,
Spread fragrant cow dung, [F.168.b]
And draw a lotus maṇḍala
Using five colors of paint.

1.34 “Place five full vases
In the four directions and in the center,
And arrange five abundant oblations.
Set²⁰ five rosewood daggers,
As well as four arrows tied with silk,
And tie a lattice made of five-colored threads.

1.35 “Homage to noble Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda.
Homage to the wrathful King Hayagrīva.
Homage to the blessed Pāṇḍaravāsini.
Homage to the blessed Tārā.
Homage to the bodhisattva nāga king Varuṇa.

1.36 *ā hrīḥ hri paṃ taṃ naṃ | |*

1.37 “Through the recitation of this six-syllabled mantra

May all evil deeds be cleared away *svāhā*!

1.38 “One should exert oneself in worshiping the buddhas using offerings of flowers, incense, perfumes, flower garlands, scented unguents, parasols, banners, pendants, scented powders, and all sorts of ornaments.

1.39 “Then make a fire with rosewood and jujube,
Hold the colored threads and burn grains.
Using a peacock feather and a spiraea²¹ sprig,
Clear away the nāga poison.

1.40 *hrīḥ nāga lele nāga dumva lele nāga phut phut hale hale hāla hāla sphuṭa sphuṭa*
nāga bright flickering²² *svāhā* | |

1.41 “May the poison from the minds of all nāgas and vināyakas, the poison from seeing them, the poison from binding them, the poison from their breath, the poison from touching them, and all poison be expelled *svāhā*!

1.42 “May the poison not remain here!
May it be drawn into this gift!
May it be drawn into what is held!
May it depart into the fire!
May it depart into the water!
May it be pacified *svāhā*!

1.43 “Mañjuśrī, here are the initiations bestowed by the tathāgatas from their crown:

1.44 *hrīḥ brum om hūm kham* | |

1.45 “The five families confer empowerment.

1.46 “One who has the supreme vajra protection,
The favor of the auspicious goddess,
And maintains a fast,
Recalls the Three Jewels, arouses bodhicitta,

1.47 Clears their karmic obscurations with the vase’s pure water,
And obtains purity of body, speech, and mind.
They are suffused with the six perfections,
Come to know buddhas and beings,
And all samādhis become manifest.

1.48 “Weave together three white threads
Spun by a young maiden

- And incant it twenty-eight times. [F.169.a]
When it is worn around the neck, one will be free of illness.
- 1.49 “If this dhāraṇīmantra is used to incant
Medicines used to heal illness,
The medicine heals all illnesses when given.
- 1.50 “When recited many times over water
The dhāraṇīmantra heals nāga illnesses from within.
- 1.51 “If something is devouring the harvest,
This can be remedied with powders, earth, and ashes.
- 1.52 “If there is too much rain,
Burn freshly picked flowers
Inside a new vessel
At an ancient shrine,
And the rain will stop.
- 1.53 “If a strong hailstorm comes,
Fasten incanted human ash and mustard seeds
Into a bundle²³ with hail, mother of pearl, and tree shoots,
And plant this in the earth;
The hail will stop.
- 1.54 “If there is a harmful graha
Such as a god, nāga, gandharva, or the like,
Place five clean vases on a square maṇḍala
That is one arm span in size.
Fill them with medicinal water,
And incant them one hundred and eight times.
- 1.55 “A disciple should combine white cloth and food,
Place it in the maṇḍala,
And cleanse it with water from the vases.
One will be freed from all illness and harm.
Even the countless grahas, nāgas, and the like,
Will be unable to cause harm.
- 1.56 “If one fears a child-snatching graha,
Draw a protection circle with hardened bile,
Combine this with mustard seeds, and fasten it on;
The child will be safe from grahas and illness.
- 1.57 “When a person sets out to travel,

- If they incant the bottom right corner of their garment
Seven times, while tying it in a knot,
Their travel will be pleasant and successful.
- 1.58 “If one incants water and mustard seeds
And sprinkles it on horses and other livestock, they will be healthy.
All illnesses in both humans and livestock will be healed and pacified
By washing with and applying mustard seeds and water from the vase.
- 1.59 “Just as the *asmrari*²⁴ dhāraṇī heals,²⁵
So will all activities be successful?”
- 1.60 Then the Blessed One said, “Bodhisattva great being Mañjuśrī, this king is
filled with nāga poison. Since the nāga king Varuṇa rules over all nāgas, he
should expel it. [F.169.b]
- 1.61 “Homage to the blessed Lokeśvara Siṃhanāda.
Homage to the nāga king Varuṇa.
Homage to the nāga king Takṣaka.
Homage to the nāga king Ananta.
Homage to the nāga king Padma.
Homage to the nāga king Mahāpadma.
Homage to the nāga king Śaṅkhapāla.
Homage to the nāga king Kulika.
Homage to the nāga king Nanda.
Homage to the nāga king Vāsuki.
- 1.62 *om varuṇāya svāhā | om anantāya svāhā | om vāsūkāya svāhā | om takṣakāya
svāhā | om karkoṭāya svāhā | om padmāya svāhā | om mahāpadmāya svāhā | om
śaṅkhapālāya svāhā | om kulikāya svāhā | |*²⁶
- 1.63 “Although nāgas appear in many different forms,
Prepare a rice porridge of the three white foods and the three sweets,
Cooking it well until its color changes.²⁷
Delight them with flowers and incense,
With unguents, lamps, food, music,
Parasols, banners, flower garlands,
And sacred threads.
Offer roots, leaves, stalks,
Flowers, fruits, and medicines.
With a peacock, a porcupine, and a mirror,
Extract the poison inside the king.
- 1.64 “Hold the offering support, precious spiraea,

As the irreversible substance,
And offer an attractive vase filled with treasure
In a form that delights beings.
There is no doubt that this will bring healing.
Even if he has been afflicted by the nāga king Takṣaka,
He will be released in an instant.

1.65 “Mañjuśrī, this power does not come from somewhere else—it is the power of the Noble Avalokiteśvara. It is his strength. It is his blessing. The Compassionate One’s excellent qualities are inexpressible, but I will try to express some of them here.

1.66 “*Om*
Blessed One,
You have performed activities and done all that must be done,
Laid down your burden,²⁸ achieved your own aims,
And your fetters of existence are completely gone.
Relying on genuine teachings, you have been freed.
You have attained the supreme perfection
Of all the mental powers,²⁹
Crossed over existence, and perfected the two accumulations. [F.170.a]

1.67 “*Āḥ*
Compassionate One who strives to help others
You have perfect love for all beings.
Sole friend to all in the three realms
You are skilled in freeing countless beings.

1.68 “*Hrīḥ*
You constantly protect unfortunate beings.
You have removed the three stains and reached perfection.
You have obtained the six clairvoyances, child of the banyan tree.³⁰
You possess the marks of a great being,
Thirty-two in number,
And are resplendent with the eighty minor marks.

1.69 “Your body is the color of crystal,
Massive and brilliant
Like a snowy mountain peak at dawn.
You emanate from³¹ the bodies of the buddhas of the five families,
Your locks are piled in a high topknot,
And Amitābha sits upon your crown.

- 1.70 “Tamer of all nāgas
A snake coils around your trident.
You hold the blessings of the lords of the three families,
And are praised for fully severing the three poisons.
Unstained by flaws, you hold a lotus.
In perfect wisdom, you hold a blazing sword.
Having purified the afflictions,
You hold a brahmin’s skull filled with fragrant flowers.
Because you have brought all the nāgas under your control
You are praised as the one beautified by a sacred thread made from a snake.
- 1.71 “*Siṃha*
You sit upon a pure lotus seat.
As the subjugator of the four māras
You are seated upon a white lion.
Since you have accomplished all desired aims
You are adorned with various precious jewel ornaments.
Even each hair on your body
Is superior to all beings—
Homage and praise to the Compassionate One!
- 1.72 “*Tārā*³²
Anointed regent of the sacred dharma,
The goddess Tārā stands by you.
Green-bodied, she protects from the eight fears,
Removes harm, and grants fearlessness.
Holding an *utpala* flower, she embodies compassion—
I bow before she who sends forth many emanations.
- 1.73 “*Hūṃ*
Pāṇḍaravāsīnī, fulfiller of commands,
Blissfully turns a wish-granting wheel,
Fulfilling wishes and pacifying suffering—
I praise she who dispels the eight fears!
- 1.74 “*Phaṭ*
Hayagrīva, wrathful in form,
Noble horse-necked one, conquering the four māras,
Wrathful blue-necked one, tamer of evil,
Tamer of nāgas and demons, I praise you with *hūṃ*!
- 1.75 “*Nā*
Nāga king of space, Varuṇa,

God of water³³ who saw the teacher's face, [F.170.b]
Took delight in the teachings, tamed the nāgas,
And saw the truth of the first bhūmi,
Keeper of the tathāgatas' relics,
I offer praise to this bodhisattva nāga king!

1.76 *om tāre tuttāre ture svāhā | om kaṭe vikaṭe nikaṭe katanṅkara svāhā | |*

1.77 “Whoever makes this praise and recites it will purify even the karmic stains from committing the five deeds of immediate retribution. They will enter into all maṇḍalas and recite all mantras. For a thousand eons, they will never take birth in the lower realms and will never be born in a female body.

1.78 “Anyone who rises early in the morning, bathes with fragrant water, observes cleanliness, and recites this dhāraṇī, writes it down, upholds it, or has others recite or chant it, or who recites the essence and dhāraṇīmantra in front of the deeply compassionate Siṃhanāda, that person will be freed from illnesses such as leprosy, ringworm, boils, swelling, skin disorders, rashes, itching, abscesses, a swollen and blocked throat, edema, consumption, ruptured kidneys, organ diseases, the various illness related to khākorḍa maṇḍalas, lung disease, difficulty breathing, and disorders caused by wind, bile, phlegm, or their combination.

1.79 “Mañjuśrī, this dhāraṇī has been blessed by all the tathāgatas. Anyone, including that great king, who writes this dhāraṇī down in a book, keeps it, recites it, masters it, worships it, puts it into writing, and keeps that book in their home, village, town, region, or kingdom, or in a temple, will be attended by the glorious Mahākāla, the Four Great Kings, the nāga king Varuṇa, and the eight great nāgas. They will conquer any hostile forces, gods, nāgas, yakṣas, malevolent grahas, [F.171.a] vināyakas, or opponents within a thousand leagues.

1.80 “If one has committed any mistakes in meditation or writing, or has erred in mantra, mudrā, explanation, or listening, reciting this dhāraṇī will purify them. Whoever is protected by this dhāraṇī, rescued by it, nurtured by it, pacified by it, or made happy by it will not be harmed by weapons, poison, poisonous brews, khākorḍas and kṛtyās, fevers, or any other harm, nor will they meet with untimely death. Anyone who harms them will be annihilated.”

1.81 When the Blessed One finished speaking, the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, the great śrāvaka Śāradvatīputra, and the whole world with its gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas, rejoiced and praised what the Blessed One had said.

1.82 *This completes “The Dhāraṇī of Noble Avalokiteśvara Siṃhanāda.”*

c.

Colophon

c.1 It was translated, edited, and finalized at the self-arisen caitya at the Drika charnel ground in Kashmir by the Noble Lady Vajrasattvī, who had attained accomplishment, and the translator Gar Sherab Jungne.

n.

NOTES

n.1 Losty 2021, p. 17.

n.2 Holt 1991, p. 41.

n.3 Holt 1991, p. 79.

n.4 The iconographic details of Siṃhanāda are described with some variation and differing degrees of detail in Toh 2858, 2859, 3155, 3157, 3329, 3414, 3417, 3418, 3419, and 3650. Descriptions in Sanskrit can be found in sādhanas nos. 17, 20, 22, and 25 in volume one of the *Sādhanamālā*. For a survey of Indo-Tibetan artistic depictions of Siṃhanāda, see the deity's main page at Himalayan Art Resources: <https://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setID=472&page=1> (<https://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setID=472&page=1>).

n.5 See *sgrub thabs kun btus* vol. 6, folios 252.a–297.b.

n.6 See *seng ge sgra'i gzungs kyi lo rgyus*.

n.7 The two versions of this text preserved in the Degé Kangyur have identical textual content but different titles. Toh 704 is *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh704.html>) (*seng ge sgra'i gzungs*), while Toh 912 is *The Dhāraṇī of the Promise Made by Siṃhanāda* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh704.html>) (*seng ge sgras dam bcas pa'i gzungs*). The Kangyur and Tengyur recensions of the work were translated by different translators and transmitted separately. They also differ with respect to several minor variants that suggest that in addition to being translated by different translators, they were also derived from different Sanskrit recensions of the text. Although the differences are minor, the Tengyur recension stands closer to the extant Sanskrit text as preserved in the *Sādhanamālā* than the Kangyur recensions do. A different translation of The

Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda is also found in the Tengyur, *The Dhāraṇī of Siṃhanāda* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh3156.html>) (Toh 3156). The Kangyur and Tengyur versions differ with respect to several minor variants, suggesting that they were derived from different Sanskrit recensions of the text. Although the differences are minor, the Tengyur recension stands closer to the extant Sanskrit text as preserved in the Sādhanamālā than the Kangyur recensions do.

- n.8 Bhattacharyya 1925 vol. 1, p. 52.
- n.9 Hidas 2021, p. 138.
- n.10 The title *jetsunma*, translated here as “noble lady,” can sometimes refer to a nun, but does not necessarily do so.
- n.11 This transliteration follows C, L, and K, as well as the Sanskrit reported in the *Siṃhanādadhāraṇī* from the *Sādhanamālā* in reading *karoṭa*. D reads *karoti*.
- n.12 The term *citijvala*^o appears to be unique to this text. The Sanskrit and Tibetan version of the shorter *Siṃhanādadhāraṇī* omit it to read only *karoṭavīrye* here.
- n.13 This translation follows F in reading *tshegs chen po mi dgos pa* (em., F: *tshegs cho no mi dgos pa*). D reads *mi dgos pa* “without need,” which does not make sense in this context. Though the reading in F requires minor emendation, it conveys an overall meaning that makes clear contextual sense.
- n.14 Here we prefer the Choné and Stok Palace Kangyurs in reading *sngags*, “incant,” rather than the Degé which reads *bsngags*, “praise.” The reading we have chosen is also corroborated in Toh 912 where the parallel passage reads, even more clearly, *sngag bzlas*, “incant.”
- n.15 *lhag ma*. While *lhag ma* in and of itself might be more literally translated as “remaining” rather than “resulting,” in the parallel passage in the version of the dhāraṇī published by Hidas (2021, p. 138) this cow dung is described as *pratimaṇḍalalekhitaśeṣagomaya*, which could be interpreted to mean “the cow dung that remains after inscribing the individual maṇḍalas.” The implication seems to be that this “remaining” dung is the same dung that was first inscribed with maṇḍalas and incanted before being collected together, incanted a second time, and applied to the patient. This would make logical sense insofar as this process would infuse the dung with healing potency, and in order to convey this in the translation, we have translated *lhag ma* here as “resulting.” This interpretation is nonetheless tentative.

- n.16 The preceding passage, beginning with *nama āryāvālokiteśvarāya*, corresponds (with some significant variation) to the *Siṃhanādhāraṇī* recorded in the *Sādhanamālā* and Hidas 2021.
- n.17 Tib. *bye ba grangs med mthu las 'byung*. It is unclear what is being quantified.
- n.18 *zin*. This literally translates as “grasped” or “possessed” and refers to affliction—usually in the form of an illness—that is understood to be caused by entities that “grasp” or “possess” an individual. We have translated it here as “afflicted by” since the range of affliction and illness caused by this type of possession includes, in addition to mental instability, things like skin rashes, which do not fit into the typical way in which “possession” by an outside entity is understood in English. We refer the interested reader to Smith 2006 for a study of possession in South Asia, including the type of disease-causing possession referenced here (see especially his chapter on “The Medicalization of Possession in Āyurveda and Tantra”), as well as Tidwell et al. 2022 for a study of possession-related illness in modern Tibetan medicine.
- n.19 We have done our best to translate the list of illnesses here as accurately as possible, and have relied on Jan Meulenbeld’s *A History of Indian Medical Literature* for more precise terminology when reasonably certain of a Tibetan term’s Sanskrit equivalent. Some of the terms given in this text could not be confidently correlated with either Sanskrit or Tibetan medical terminology, in which case more descriptive, and tentative, translations are proposed. The medical terminology used here seems intended to primarily communicate the ritual’s efficacy in eradicating nearly any kind of illness that might afflict a person.
- n.20 Reading *dgod*, “laugh” as *bkod*, “set.”
- n.21 Reading *rmag shad* as *smag shad*, as in F.
- n.22 Unlike the rest of the mantra, this phrase is in Tibetan rather than transliterated Sanskrit.
- n.23 This translation follows F in reading *lcug ma la / thum po btag*. D reads *lcug ma dang/lcum po btags*.
- n.24 Here we follow C, F, J, K, N, S, and Y which read *asmrari*. D reads *a mra ri*. The meaning of this term is uncertain.
- n.25 No sense can be made of the text as given in the Degé and most other Kangyurs consulted. Thus we have adopted the reading from F, *a sma ra*,

which we understand as equivalent to the Sanskrit term *asmaraṇa*. However, the Phugdrak reading, while much better than that in other Kangyurs, is unmetrical as well as ungrammatical, so we have made a small emendation, changing the genitive particle 'i after *a sma ra* into *ni*, the topical particle, to create a metrical and grammatical phrase that also conveys meaning: the word *dhāraṇī* means “retention,” or “memory” and indeed is often understood as a remedy to “not remembering.”

- n.26 All of the names from the homage above match the names in these mantras except for Nanda. Karkoṭaka, another well-known nāga king not in the homage above, appears in the mantra.
- n.27 Translation tentative.
- n.28 This refers to a being who has laid down the burden of the aggregates, signifying that they are no longer karmically compelled to take bodily rebirth.
- n.29 Here we have followed Y in omitting *dpa'* so that this line reads *sems [kyi] dbang bsgyur tams cad kyi*. Though this results in an unmetrical line, this brings the reading in this text in line with what is a stock formula for describing highly advanced beings in Buddhist literature. See, for example, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Twenty-Five Thousand Lines* (Toh 9, translated by the Padmakara Translation Group, 2023), 1.2.
- n.30 This reading follows D and S in reading *nya gro bu*. C, J, K, and Y read *nya grol bu* and F reads *bya grol mtshungs*. We suspect the text may be corrupt here.
- n.31 We have emended to *las*. D reads *la*.
- n.32 The mantric syllable *tā* is omitted in F, N, and S. One might expect the Sanskrit syllable *da* here, as this is the only syllable from *Siṃhanāda*'s essence mantra not otherwise represented in this passage. The full essence mantra, as given above, is *om āḥ hrīḥ siṃhanāda hūm phaṭ*. If we read *tā* as *da*, then this passage includes the same set of syllables, albeit in a different order: *om āḥ hrīḥ siṃha da hūm phaṭ nā*.
- n.33 Tib. *chu lha*. This is a frequent Tibetan translation of the name Varuṇa.

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 Ananta

mtha' yas

མཐའ་ཡས།

ananta^{AD}

A nāga king.

g.2 Anavatapta

ma dros pa

མ་རྩོལ་པ།

anavatapta ^{AD}

A nāga king.

g.3 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.4 Avalokiteśvara

spyan ras gzigs

སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས།

avalokiteśvara ^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the “eight close sons of the Buddha,” he is also known as the bodhisattva who embodies compassion. In certain tantras, he is also the lord of the three families, where he embodies the compassion of the buddhas. In Tibet, he attained great significance as a special protector of Tibet, and in China, in female form, as Guanyin, the most important bodhisattva in all of East Asia.

g.5 bhūta

'byung po

འབྱུང་པོ།

bhūta ^{AD}

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 Blessed One

bcom ldan 'das

བཙོམ་ལྷན་འདས།

bhagavat ^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In Buddhist literature, 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.7 bodhisattva

byang chub sems dpa'

བྱང་ལྷན་སེམས་དཔལ།

bodhisattva ^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A being who is dedicated to the cultivation and fulfilment of the altruistic intention to attain perfect buddhahood, traversing the ten bodhisattva levels (*daśabhūmi*, *sa bcu*). Bodhisattvas purposely opt to remain within cyclic existence in order to liberate all sentient beings, instead of simply seeking personal freedom from suffering. In terms of the view, they realize both the selflessness of persons and the selflessness of phenomena.

g.8 Brahmā

tshangs pa

ཚངས་པ།

brahmā^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A high-ranking deity presiding over a divine world; he is also considered to be the lord of the Sahā world (our universe). Though not considered a creator god in Buddhism, Brahmā occupies an important place as one of two gods (the other being Indra/Śakra) said to have first exhorted the Buddha Śākyamuni to teach the Dharma. The particular heavens found in the form realm over which Brahmā rules are often some of the most sought-after realms of higher rebirth in Buddhist literature. Since there are many universes or world systems, there are also multiple Brahmās presiding over them. His most frequent epithets are “Lord of the Sahā World” (*sahāṃpati*) and Great Brahmā (*mahābrahman*).

g.9 dhāraṇī

gzungs

གཟུངས།

dhāraṇī^{AD}

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.10 Drika

'bris ka

འབྲིས་ཀ།

—

A charnel ground in Kashmir.

g.11 Druma

ljon pa

ལྷོན་པ།

druma ^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The kinnara king Druma is a well-known figure in canonical Buddhist literature, where he frequently appears, mostly in minor roles. For example, King Druma appears in *The White Lotus of the Good Dharma* (Toh 113), where he is one of the four kinnara kings attending the Buddha's teaching. He is also included in *The King of Samādhis Sūtra* (Toh 127), where he arrives with his queens to make an offering of his music to the Buddha. He is also a bodhisattva who teaches and displays a profound understanding of the doctrine of emptiness in *The Questions of the Kinnara King Druma* (Toh 157), where his future awakening is also prophesied by the Buddha.

(His name has been translated into Tibetan both as “*sdong po*” and “*ljon pa*.”)

g.12 eight classes

sde brgyad

ལྔ་བརྒྱད།

—

A set of eight types of supernatural beings. The list varies from text to text, but almost always includes devas, yakṣas, nāgas, gandharvas, and asuras among the eight. This text lists them as devas, nāgas, gandharvas, yakṣas, asuras, kumbhāṇḍas, garuḍas, and kinnaras.

g.13 eighty minor marks

dpe byad bzang po brgyad bcu

དཔེ་བྱད་བཟང་པོ་བརྒྱད་བརྒྱ།

aśītyanuṣyañjana ^{AD}

A set of eighty bodily characteristics borne by buddhas and universal emperors. They are considered “minor” in terms of being secondary to the thirty-two major marks of a great being.

g.14 Five deeds of immediate retribution.

mtshams med pa lnga

མཚམས་མེད་པ་ལྔ།

pañcānantarya ^{AD}

Five acts said to lead to immediate and unavoidable birth in the hell realms: killing one's father, killing one's mother, killing an arhat, sowing discord within the saṅgha, and drawing the blood of a tathāgata with ill intent.

g.15 Four Great Kings

rgyal po chen po bzhi

རྒྱལ་པོ་ཚེན་པོ་བཞི།

caturmahārāja ^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Four gods who live on the lower slopes (fourth level) of Mount Meru in the eponymous Heaven of the Four Great Kings (*Cāturmahārājika*, *rgyal chen bzhi'i ris*) and guard the four cardinal directions. Each is the leader of a nonhuman class of beings living in his realm. They are Dhṛtarāṣṭra, ruling the gandharvas in the east; Virūḍhaka, ruling over the kumbhāṇḍas in the south; Virūpākṣa, ruling the nāgas in the west; and Vaiśravaṇa (also known as Kubera) ruling the yakṣas in the north. Also referred to as Guardians of the World or World Protectors (*lokapāla*, 'jig rten skyong ba).

g.16 **gandharva**

dri za

དྷི་ཟ།

gandharva ^{AD}

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.17 **Gar Sherab Jungne**

'gar shes rab 'byung gnas

འག་ཤེས་རབ་འབྱུང་གནས།

—

The Tibetan translator credited with translating this Dhāraṇī along with the female Indian master Vajrasattvī.

g.18 **garuḍa**

nam mkha' lding

ནམ་མཁའ་ལྗོངས།

garuḍa ^{AD}

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.19 god

lha

ལྷ།

deva ^{AD}

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.20 Golden Eyes

gser mig

གསེར་མིག་

—

A *garuḍa* king.

g.21 graha

gdon

གདོན།

graha^{AD}

A class of nonhuman being known to exert a harmful influence on the human body and mind, they are thought to be responsible for epilepsy and seizures.

g.22 Great Compassionate One

thugs rje chen po

ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོ།

mahākaruṇika^{AD}

An epithet of Avalokiteśvara.

g.23 Great Wisdom

shes rab chen po

ཤེས་རབ་ཆེན་པོ།

—

The name of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī in a former life.

g.24 Hayagrīva

rta mgrin · ha ya grI ba

རྟ་མགྲིན། · ཧ་ཡ་གྲི་བ།

hayagrīva^{AD}

An important wrathful deity of the lotus (*padma*) family and thus closely associated with Avalokiteśvara. Hayagrīva is also a deity in the Brahmanical pantheon.

g.25 Jamyang Loter Wangpo

'jam dbyangs blo gter dbang po

འཇམ་དབྱངས་བློ་གཏིང་དབང་པོ།

—

1847-1914. A master of the Sakya tradition.

g.26 Jeweled Crown

gtsug na rin chen

གཙུག་ན་རིན་ཆེན།

—

A nāga king.

g.27 kākhorta

byad

ཅན།

kākhorda ^{AD}

A term used in hostile magical rites that can alternatively refer a class of nonhuman being or type of magical device employed against the target of the rite. They are often mentioned together with *kṛtyās*, who serve a similar function.

g.28 **Kanakamuni**

gser thub

གསེར་ཐུབ།

kanakamuni ^{AD}

One of the seven buddhas of the Fortunate Eon.

g.29 **Kāśyapa**

'od srung

འོད་སྤྱང་།

kāśyapa ^{AD}

One of the seven buddhas of the Fortunate Eon.

g.30 **kinnara**

mi'am ci

མི་འམ་ཅི།

kinnara ^{AD}

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.31 **Krakucchanda**

log par dad sel

ལོག་པར་དད་སེལ།

krakucchanda ^{AD}

One of the seven buddhas of the Fortunate Eon.

- g.32 *kr̥tyā*
gshed ma
 གཤེད་མ།
kr̥tyā^{AD}
 A class of nonhuman being, often female, who are ritually summoned to perform injurious acts against the target of the rite. They are often mentioned together with *khākorḍas*, who serve a similar function.
- g.33 *Kulika*
rigs ldan
 རིགས་ལྷན།
kulika^{AD}
 A *nāga* king.
- g.34 *kumbhāṇḍa*
grul bum
 གུལ་བུ།
kumbhāṇḍa^{AD}
 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.35 *Lokeśvara*
'jig rten dbang phyug
 འཇིག་རྟེན་དབང་ཕྱུག།
lokeśvara^{AD}
 A name of *Avalokiteśvara*.
- g.36 Lord of Light
dbang phyug 'od
 དབང་ཕྱུག་འོད།
 —
 The name of a king.
- g.37 *Magadha*

ma ga dha

མ་ག་དྭ་

**magadha* ^{RP}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

An ancient Indian kingdom that lay to the south of the Ganges River in what today is the state of Bihar. Magadha was the largest of the sixteen “great states” (*mahājanapada*) that flourished between the sixth and third centuries BCE in northern India. During the life of the Buddha Śākyamuni, it was ruled by King Bimbisāra and later by Bimbisāra's son, Ajātaśatru. Its capital was initially Rājagṛha (modern-day Rajgir) but was later moved to Pāṭaliputra (modern-day Patna). Over the centuries, with the expansion of the Magadha's might, it became the capital of the vast Mauryan empire and seat of the great King Aśoka.

This region is home to many of the most important Buddhist sites, including Bodh Gayā, where the Buddha attained awakening; Vulture Peak (*Gṛdhra-kūṭa*), where the Buddha bestowed many well-known Mahāyāna sūtras; and the Buddhist university of Nālandā that flourished between the fifth and twelfth centuries CE, among many others.

g.38 Mahāpadma

ma hA pad+ma

མ་ཧྲ་པད་མ་

**mahāpadma* ^{RP}

A nāga king.

g.39 Maitreya

byams pa

བྱམས་པ།

maitreya ^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The bodhisattva Maitreya is an important figure in many Buddhist traditions, where he is unanimously regarded as the buddha of the future era. He is said to currently reside in the heaven of Tuṣita, as Śākyamuni's regent, where he awaits the proper time to take his final rebirth and become the fifth buddha in the Fortunate Eon, reestablishing the Dharma in this world after the teachings of the current buddha have disappeared. Within the Mahāyāna sūtras, Maitreya is elevated to the same status as other central bodhisattvas such as Mañjuśrī and Avalokiteśvara, and his name appears frequently in

sūtras, either as the Buddha’s interlocutor or as a teacher of the Dharma. *Maitreya* literally means “Loving One.” He is also known as Ajita, meaning “Invincible.”

For more information on Maitreya, see, for example, the introduction to *Maitreya’s Setting Out* (Toh 198).

g.40 Mañjuśrī

'jam dpal · 'jam dpal dbyangs

འཇམ་དཔལ། · འཇམ་དཔལ་དབྱངས།

mañjuśrī ^{AD}

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. To his name, Mañjuśrī, meaning “Gentle and Glorious One,” is often added the epithet Kumārabhūta, “having a youthful form.” He is also called Mañjughoṣa, Mañjusvara, and Pañcaśikha.

g.41 marks of a great being

skyes bu chen po'i mtshan

སྐྱེས་བུ་ཚེན་པོའི་མཚན།

mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa ^{AD}

The thirty-two physical characteristics that identify both buddhas and universal monarchs. This set is often combined with the eighty excellent signs.

g.42 Mipham Gyatso

mi pham rgya mtsho

མི་པམ་རྒྱ་མཚོ།

—

1846–1912. A well-known polymath of the Nyingma (*rnying ma*) tradition.

g.43 Mount Potala

ri po Ta la

རི་པོ་ཏ་ལ།

**potala* ^{RP}

The mountain in Avalokiteśvara's pure realm.

g.44 nāga

klu

ལྷ།

nāga ^{AD}

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.45 Nanda

dga' bo

དགའ་བོ།

—

A nāga king.

g.46 Nine-Headed Snake

sbrul mgo dgu pa

སྐྱུལ་མགོ་དགུ་པ།

—

A kumbhāṇḍa king.

g.47 Padma

pad+ma

པུདྱ།

**padma* ^{RP}

A nāga king.

g.48 Pañcaśikha

zur phud lnga pa

ཟུར་ཕུད་ལྷ་པ།

pañcaśikha ^{AD}

A gandharva king.

g.49 Pāṇḍaravāsini

gos dkar mo

གོས་དཀར་མོ།

pāṇḍaravāsini ^{AD}

The name of a female Buddhist deity of the lotus family that means “White-Clothed One.”

g.50 sacred thread

tshangs pa'i skud pa

ཚངས་པའི་སྐུད་པ།

brahmasūtra ^{AD}

The sacred thread worn by a member of the so-called “twice-born” higher castes in India.

g.51 Sahā

mi mjed

མི་མཛེད།

sahā ^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The name for our particular world system, the universe of a thousand million worlds, or trichiliocosm, in which our four-continent world is located.

Although it is sometimes said that it can refer only to our own four-continent world around Mount Meru, the sūtras largely seem to equate it with this trichiliocosm, and this is confirmed by scholars like Jamgön Kongtrul (see *The Treasury of Knowledge, Book One*). Each trichiliocosm is ruled by a god Brahmā; thus, in this context, he bears the title of Sahāmpati, Lord of Sahā. Our world system of Sahā, or Sahālokadhātu, is also described as being the buddhfield of the Buddha Śākyamuni. He teaches the Dharma here to beings who adhere to inferior ways and perceive this universe as an impure buddhfield contaminated with the five degenerations (*pañcakaṣāya*, *snyigs ma lnga*): the degeneration of time, sentient beings, place, lifespan, and mental afflictions (see *The Teaching of Vimalakīrti*, Toh 176). It is also mentioned as the field of activity of all the thousand buddhas of this Fortunate Eon (see *The White Lotus of Compassion*, Toh 112).

The name Sahā possibly derives from the Sanskrit $\sqrt{\text{sah}}$, “to bear, endure, or withstand.” It is often interpreted as alluding to the inhabitants of this world having to endure suffering. The Tibetan translation, *mi mjed*, follows along

the same lines. It literally means “not unbearable,” in the sense that beings here are able to bear the suffering they experience.

g.52 Śakra

brgya byin

བརྒྱའི་ལྷ།

śakra ^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The lord of the gods in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three (*trāyastriṃśā*).

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.53 Śaṅkhapāla

shar+kha pA lA

ཤར་ཁ་པ་ལ།

**śaṅkhapāla* ^{RP}

A nāga king.

g.54 Śāradvatīputra

sha ra dwa ti'i bu · sha ri bu

ཤ་ར་དྭ་ཉི་འི་བུ། · ཤ་རི་བུ།

**śāradvatīputra* ^{RP}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the principal śrāvaka disciples of the Buddha, he was renowned for his discipline and for having been praised by the Buddha as foremost of the wise (often paired with Maudgalyāyana, who was praised as foremost in the capacity for miraculous powers). His father, Tiṣya, to honor Śāriputra’s mother, Śārikā, named him Śāradvatīputra, or, in its contracted form, Śāriputra, meaning “Śārikā’s Son.”

g.55 Śikhin

gtsug tor can

གཏུག་ཏོར་ཅན།

śikhin ^{AD}

One of the seven buddhas of the Fortunate Eon.

g.56 **Siṃhanāda**

seng ge sgra

སང་གེ་སྒྲ།

siṃhanāda ^{AD}

“The Lion’s Roar;” The name of a form of Avalokiteśvara.

g.57 **śrāvaka**

nyan thos

ཉན་ཐོས།

śrāvaka ^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The Sanskrit term *śrāvaka*, and the Tibetan *nyan thos*, both derived from the verb “to hear,” are usually defined as “those who *hear* the teaching from the Buddha and *make it heard* to others.” Primarily this refers to those disciples of the Buddha who aspire to attain the state of an arhat seeking their own liberation and nirvāṇa. They are the practitioners of the first turning of the wheel of the Dharma on the four noble truths, who realize the suffering inherent in saṃsāra and focus on understanding that there is no independent self. By conquering afflicted mental states (*kleśa*), they liberate themselves, attaining first the stage of stream enterers at the path of seeing, followed by the stage of once-returners who will be reborn only one more time, and then the stage of non-returners who will no longer be reborn into the desire realm. The final goal is to become an arhat. These four stages are also known as the “four results of spiritual practice.”

g.58 **Sukhāvātī**

bde ba can

བདེ་བ་ཅན།

sukhāvātī ^{AD}

The buddha realm in which the Buddha Amitābha lives.

g.59 **Supreme Compassion**

snying rje mchog

སྙིང་རྗེ་མཚོག།

—

The name of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara in a former life.

- g.60 Takṣaka
'jog po
 འཇོག་པོ།
takṣaka ^{AD}
 A nāga king.
- g.61 Tārā
sgrol ma
 སྒྲོལ་མ།
tārā ^{AD}
 A female deity (lit. “Deliverer”) known for giving protection. She is variously presented in Buddhist literature as a great bodhisattva or a fully awakened buddha.
- g.62 three families
rigs gsum
 རིགས་གསུམ།
trikula ^{AD}
 Three families—tathāgata, vajra, and lotus—into which esoteric Buddhist deities are classified.
- g.63 three poisons
dug gsum
 དུག་གསུམ།
triviṣa ^{AD}
 The three main affective behavior patterns, namely ignorance, desire, and anger.
- g.64 three worlds
khams gsum
 ཁམས་གསུམ།
tridhātu ^{AD}
 Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:
 The three realms that contain all the various kinds of existence in saṃsāra: the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm.
- g.65 Vādisiṃha
smra ba'i seng ge

སྐྱ་བའི་སེང་གེ།

vādisiṃha^{AD}

“Lion of Speech;” a common epithet of Mañjuśrī.

g.66 Vaiśravaṇa

rnam thos kyi bu

རྣམ་ཐོས་ཀྱི་བྱ།

vaiśravaṇa^{AD}

A yakṣa king who is also counted among the Four Great Kings. As such he presides over the northern quarter and rules over the yakṣas. He is also known as Kubera.

g.67 Vajradhara

rdo rje 'chang

རྡོ་རྗེ་འཚང།

vajradhara^{AD}

Either the name of a primordial buddha or an epithet of Vajrapāṇi.

g.68 Vajrasattvī

rdo rje sems ma

རྡོ་རྗེ་སེམས་མ།

—

The Indian female master credited with translating this Dhāraṇī along with the Tibetan translator Gar Sherap Jungne.

g.69 Varuṇa

ba ru Na

བ་རུ་ཤ།

**varuṇa*^{RP}

A nāga king. Varuṇa is also the name of one of the oldest of the Vedic gods and is associated with the water and the ocean.

g.70 Vāsuki

nor rgyas

ནོར་རྒྱལ།

vāsuki^{AD}

A nāga king.

- g.71 Vemacitrin
thags bzangs ris
 ཐགས་བཟང་ས་རིས།
vemacitrin ^{AD}
 An asura king.
- g.72 vidyāmantra
rig sngags
 རིག་སྒྲགས།
vidyāmantra ^{AD}
 A type of incantation or spell used to accomplish a ritual goal. This can be associated with either ordinary attainments or those whose goal is awakening.
- g.73 vināyaka
log 'dren
 ལོག་འདྲིན།
vināyaka ^{AD}
 A class of obstacle-making spirits.
- g.74 Vipāśyin
rnam par gzig
 རྣམ་པར་གཟིགས།
vipaśyin ^{AD}
 One of the seven buddhas of the Fortunate Eon.
- g.75 Viśvabhū
thams cad skyob
 ཐམས་ཅད་སྐྱོབ།
viśvabhū ^{AD}
 One of the seven buddhas of the Fortunate Eon.
- g.76 yakṣa
gnod sbyin
 གནོད་སྐྱིན།
yakṣa ^{AD}

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.