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**The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess
Uṣṇīṣā**

**Devi uṣṇīṣālīlātantra*

དཔལ་ལྷོ་མོ་གཙུག་རྟོ་རོལ་པའི་ཏྲུ།

dpal lha mo gtsug tor rol pa'i tan+tra

The Glorious Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā

**Śrīdevi uṣṇīṣālīlātantra*

· Toh 987 ·

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SUMMARY

s.1 *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā* is a short tantra concerning a series of disease-causing spirits and the incantations that avert them.

ac.

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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 Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā is a short text concerning a series of disease-causing spirits and the incantations that avert them. Though titled a “tantra,” the text internally refers to itself as a “demon-averting dhāraṇī-sūtra” (*gdon zlog pa'i mdo'i gzungs*). The text lacks the introductory narrative framework (*nidāna*) typical of sūtras and tantras and, indeed, has no narrative elements at all. Rather, the tantra begins with a list of names of these spirits, all female, who are organized into two main groups: *grahīs* (*gdon*) and a set comprised of “rulers” (*dbang byed*) of thirteen tents (*gur*). Despite being divided into these groups, both sets of female deities are identified as emanations of the goddess Ekajaṭī. The tantra proceeds to describe different illnesses and conditions associated with the specific *grahīs* and “tent rulers,” and to teach incantations for the particular deities that serve as remedies for these afflictions. In the instructions for each incantation, the practitioner is directed to employ a specific type of ritual dagger (*kīla*), and the text provides an extensive list of the different daggers suitable for each purpose. The final incantations in the tantra are distinct for being written in a mixture of Tibetan and Sanskrit. Following the list of incantations and remedies, the tantra concludes with a statement of the benefits of reciting the text and following the proper ritual procedures (which are not taught in the tantra). The tantra proclaims that someone who does so will accomplish all of their wishes, be victorious on the battlefield, and defeat their enemies.

i.2

The *grahīs* that form the core subject of *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā* are a class of disease-causing spirits that appear in Buddhist and non-Buddhist Indic texts alike.¹ These spirits, who can be either male (*graha*) or female (*grahī*),² are understood to cause physical and mental illnesses by means of possessing the person.³ Indeed, the very name of this class of spirits comes from the Sanskrit verbal root $\sqrt{\text{grah}}$, which signifies grasping or seizing. While it seems that the lists of such *grahas* remained fluid in Indic

literature,⁴ the members of the list found in *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā* do not map onto any known set of grahīs in either the Indian or the Tibetan tradition.

i.3 The Tibetan term for such disease-causing spirits, *dön* (*gdon*), is also an important term in Tibetan medicine, where it is used not just to refer to the spirits themselves, but also as a technical term for certain types of diseases associated with *dön*, including types of mental illness, stroke, paralysis, and skin disorders.⁵ Similar to its Indic counterpart, the Tibetan medical tradition describes *dön* as “grasping” or “taking hold of” those afflicted by their influence.⁶ In both traditions, the causes for such spirit-induced illnesses are associated with ethical transgressions, as well as offenses committed against the specific afflicting spirit, and the symptoms of illness often share similar characteristics with the afflicting spirit.⁷ While both traditions typically prescribe medical and ritual means in the treatment for such afflictions,⁸ *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā* focuses solely on ritual means: the use of incantations and the wielding of ritual daggers. The tantra does not reference the cause of being afflicted by such spirits, but it does establish a relationship between the offending spirits and the deity whose mantra is indicated as their remedy. For example, the afflictions caused by the grahī Black Yamā are overcome by the incantation of Mañjuśrī Yamāntaka, and the afflictions caused by the grahī Black Indrāṇī are overcome by the incantation of Indra.

i.4 The other type of disease-causing spirits described in *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā* are the Tent-Ruling Ladies (*gur la dbang byed ma*). They do not appear elsewhere in the Kangyur or Tengyur and comprise one of several features of this text that suggest it may have been compiled in Tibet, on the basis of both Indic and Tibetan elements, rather than translated from an Indic source. There is no single aspect of the text that would definitively indicate a Tibetan rather than an Indic provenance for this work. However, there are a number of such features which, when taken in aggregate, do rather strongly suggest this to be the case. This includes the unusual title of the work, which appears to be a back-translation from Tibetan into Sanskrit; the absence of a translator’s colophon; unusual mantras that include many seemingly non-Indic words and rough approximations of Sanskrit terms; the inclusion of several spirit types like the *terang* (*te rang; te’u rang*), *tsen* (*btsan*), and *gongpo* (*’gong po*) that are indigenous to Tibet and lack Indic equivalents; the reference to the *terang* spirits of the sky, the “middling” area, and the earth (*gnam, bar, and sa*); the “tent-ruling ladies,” whose tents are made of turquoise, coral, crystal, ox-wool, silk, or leather, all of which convey a Tibetan, rather than Indic, feel; the reference to a mountain-top yak spirit;

and the inclusion of a spirit named the Lord of Order who Carries a White Staff (*skos rje drang dkar*), one of the nine male ancestors (*srid pa 'pho dgu*) from the indigenous Tibetan Bonpo mythology.⁹

i.5 *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā* is only included in the Kangyurs from the Tshalpa line. It is found in the Compendium of Dhāraṇīs (*gzungs 'dus*) section of the Kangyurs that have one, as the Degé does, and in the Tantra section of those Tshalpa Kangyurs that do not. It is not found in any of the Kangyurs of the Thempangma line. The canonical recension of this tantra, moreover, appears to be the only form in which it is extant—we find neither a Sanskrit text nor a Chinese translation, no record of this work in Dunhuang or in the imperial Phangthangma (*'phang thang ma*) or Denkarma (*ldan kar ma*) catalogs, and the tantra does not appear in any extracanonical collections.

i.6 The Dunhuang manuscript archive may, nonetheless, provide some clues that help us understand the context of this tantra. There are several collections of dhāraṇīs (*dhāraṇīsaṃgraha*, *gzungs 'dus*) found at Dunhuang in which the compiled dhāraṇīs are preceded by a short version of *The Threefold Invocation Ritual* (*spyān 'dren rgyud gsum pa*, or just *rgyud gsum pa*)¹⁰ that includes the invocation of a number of worldly deities and spirits to witness the ritual recitation of dhāraṇīs. This is followed by the main collection of texts, which then concludes with a series of closing prayers and dedications.¹¹ This same tripartite structure maps on to the Compendium of Dhāraṇīs sections found in the Kangyurs; in fact, the versions of *The Threefold Invocation Ritual* in these canonical dhāraṇī collections are precisely the same as those found at the head of such collections from the Dunhuang archive.¹² It is in these shared structural features of Tibetan dhāraṇī collections that we find interesting parallels with *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā*.

i.7 First, both *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā* and *The Threefold Invocation Ritual* are among just a dozen works in the Compendium of Dhāraṇīs section of the Degé Kangyur that are not additionally found elsewhere in that Kangyur. The remaining 237 texts in the Compendium of Dhāraṇīs section are also found in either the Sūtra or Tantra sections of the Degé Kangyur.¹³ Moreover, the translators of *The Threefold Invocation Ritual* suggest that this work may have been compiled in Tibet on the basis of Indic elements.¹⁴ Indeed, in the Dunhuang archive we find a commentary on *The Threefold Invocation Ritual*, IOL Tib J 711, in which, in addition to the many Indic gods and spirits who are mentioned, there is also a short discussion of *terang* spirits—a category of spirits indigenous to Tibet—in a section of the text where the three worlds in Indic cosmology (*khecara*, *bhūcara*, and *nāgaloka*) are likened to the three worlds from pre-Buddhist Tibetan cosmology: the sky, the “middling” area, and the earth (*gnam*, *bar*, and *sa*).¹⁵ We will recall

that *terang* spirits from the sky, the “middling” area, and the earth appear in *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā* as one of its seemingly Tibetan, rather than Indic, features. This suggests that some of the texts included in Tibetan dhāraṇī collections may have been a locus where Indic demonologies were merged with Tibetan demonologies. It would appear that this is particularly true for those texts that are unique to the Tibetan canonical dhāraṇī collections and not duplicated in other sections of the Kangyur.

i.8 While there are no known versions of *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā* outside of Kangyur canonical collections, the text shares a significant portion of its content with another dhāraṇī text preserved under two different titles: *The Play of Uṣṇīṣādevī* (*gtsug tor lha mo rol ma*; henceforth TLR) and *The Dhāraṇī Called Uṣṇīṣā of the Playful Goddess Mahākālī* (*lha mo nag mo chen mo rol par byed pa'i gtsug tor zhes bya ba'i gzungs*). This text is found in several extracanonical collections as well as in the small canonical collections kept in four Western Tibetan monasteries. However, it is not included in any of the larger Kangyur or Tengyur collections.¹⁶ Given the fact that both of these two largely parallel works have limited canonical inclusion, it may be that some redactors of canonical collections considered them to be Indic texts, while other redactors did not.¹⁷

i.9 The present English translation of *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā* was produced on the basis of the Degé¹⁸ recension of the text, in consultation with the recension found in the Qianlong Kangyur as well as the notes from the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) of the Kangyur. The text is stable across all of the Kangyurs consulted, with the same title and only minor variants; all recensions are alike in lacking a translators' colophon. The tantra appears to have some textual problems that are likely the result of textual corruption. As a result of this, it is sometimes difficult to decipher. Where applicable, the parallel passages in *The Dhāraṇī Called Uṣṇīṣā of the Playful Goddess Mahākālī* were consulted for clarity, but given that that *Dhāraṇī* is not strictly parallel with this tantra, emendations on the basis of that text were made sparingly, and such instances are noted in the footnotes to the translation. A number of passages display verse segments in which one or more lines of verse have a slightly uneven syllable count, or where an occasional line break is not shown on the page with a *shad*, despite the segment being properly metered. We have chosen to render these passages in verse despite these anomalies, because the versified structure of the passages is nonetheless clear, and we presume the periodic uneven syllable count and lack of *shad* are textual corruptions that have crept into the text over time. Because the provenance of this text is uncertain, and because the mantras and dhāraṇīs found herein include many non-Indic elements, we

have rendered the mantra formulas in individual syllables rather than speculatively combining them into longer strings, even in cases where the intended Sanskrit term is clear. Finally, many of the deities and spirits listed in this text are unknown outside the witnesses identified above, so many of the identifications remain speculative until further resources come to light.

The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā

1.

The Translation

[F.138.b]

1.1

Homage to the glorious self-arisen goddess!

1.2

These are the eighteen emanations:¹⁹ the grahī Black Vetālī, the grahī Black Piśācī, the grahī Black Unmadā, the grahī Black Obscurer, the grahī Black Defeater, the grahī Black Seer, the grahī Black Rākṣasī, the grahī Black Vāyu, the grahī Black Indrāṇī, the grahī Black Revatī, the grahī Black Kumbhāṇḍī, the grahī Black Nāginī, the grahī Black Yakṣiṇī, the grahī Black Revatī Protectress Vetālī, the grahī Great Revatī the Lion-Faced Defeater, the grahī Great Revatī the Garuḍa-Winged Ḍākinī, the grahī Great Revatī Who Extends One Hand, the grahī One-Toothed One-Eyed Great Revatī, and the grahī Donkey-Riding Great Revatī.

1.3

There are also the additional emanations, the thirteen Ladies of the Tent who are great heart emanations: the grahī Ruler of the First Tent,²⁰ the grahī Ruler of the Second Tent, the grahī Ruler²¹ of the Third Tent, the grahī Ruler of the Fourth Tent, the grahī Ruler of the Fifth Tent, the grahī Ruler of the Sixth Tent, the grahī Ruler of the Seventh Tent, the grahī Ruler of the Eighth Tent, the grahī Ruler of the Ninth Tent, the grahī Ruler of the Tenth Tent, [F.139.a] the grahī Ruler of the Eleventh Tent, the grahī Ruler of the Twelfth Tent, and the grahī Ruler of the Thirteenth Tent.

1.4

There are the re-emanations emanated by the heart emanations: the Ruler of Epidemics, the Ruler of Strife, the Ruler of All Mārā Armies, the Ruler of Illness and Fever, the Ruler of Headaches, the Ruler of Mouth Disease, the Ruler of Blood and Throat Disease, the Ruler of Heart Disease, the Ruler of Internal Illness, the Ruler of Painful Larynx Diseases, the Ruler of Painful Thigh Diseases, the Ruler of Painful Calf Diseases, the Ruler of Ulcers, the Ruler of Wasting Diseases, the Ruler of Bladder Disease, the Ruler of Skin Diseases, the Ruler of Painful Limb Diseases, the Ruler of Rashes, the Ruler of Pox, the Ruler of Burning Itch, the Ruler of Abscesses, the Ruler of Toxic

- Potions,²² the Ruler of Poison-Derived Diseases, the Ruler of Dysentery, the Ruler of Stomach Illness, the Ruler of Plague, the Ruler of Latent Brain Disease, and the rest.
- 1.5 Know that the rulers of the four-hundred forty-four types of illnesses are emanations of Ekajaṭī.²³ Eliminate them all with the vidyāmantra blessed by the true vidyāmantra. Stab with the dagger that violently repels.
- 1.6 Eliminate a harmful graha by reciting the vidyāmantra of Black Vetālī Rākṣasī, destroyer of the triple city. Stab with the dagger.
- 1.7 Eliminate a harmful graha, an insanity-causing drum-riding graha, the graha of a dead person,²⁴ and so forth with the vidyāmantra of Mule Lady,²⁵ since these are due to the grahī Unmadā.²⁶ Recite the vidyāmantra and stab with the dagger. [F.139.b]
- 1.8 *om a ka ra pra ma ni bhyaḥ phaṭ | śa tu ma ki li ki la ya huṃ phaṭ | |*
- 1.9 Appearing as a black woman
Who sullies the yogin's eyes
Is the grahī Black Obscurer.²⁷
- 1.10 Therefore, eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of the ascetic Lekden and stab with the dagger of the preeminent goddess Mule Lady.
- 1.11 *sarva pra ma ni bhyaḥ phaṭ | ro ti baṃ ki li ki la ya hūṃ phaṭ | |*
- 1.12 If someone is afflicted by a latent brain disease or an illness where their hands and feet are burning, this is due to the graha Black Bhūta. Therefore, eliminate him with the vidyāmantra of the powerful Great Glorious One and stab with the dagger of the great Mule Lady.
- 1.13 *ja lar ye bhyaḥ phaṭ | pra ma ki li ki la ya hūṃ drūṃ | |*
- 1.14 If someone feels heavy or is afflicted by illness, or has an illness involving dullness, sleepiness, or forgetfulness, this is due to the grahī Black Defeater.²⁸ Therefore, eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of the Victory Bringer and stab with the dagger of Madhukara.
- 1.15 *ru tra ya na vyi śa bhyaḥ phaṭ | ka pa la ki li ki la ya phaṭ | |*
- 1.16 If nothing that one does ever works out and one's actions do not achieve their desired ends, this is due to the grahī Majestic Seer. Therefore eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of Skull Holder and stab with the dagger of Naked Mendicant.
- 1.17 *ca ya ma me bhyaḥ phaṭ | ro ti pa ma ki li ki la ya hūṃ drūṃ | |*

1.18 If the yogin is afflicted by an illness that causes his mind to be unstable, unsteady, and emotional,²⁹ this is due to the grahī Black Rākṣasī. Therefore, eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of Vajrapāṇi and stab with the dagger of the protector Indra.

1.19 *rakṣa ya ni bhyaḥ phaṭ | du ni rākṣa ki li ki la ya hūm drūm |* May whatever is unpleasing to the mind dissipate!³⁰

1.20 An illness that involves increased wind is due to the grahī Black Vāyu. Therefore, eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of the Seven Mothers and stab with the dagger of the Four Sisters.

1.21 *ha sa ya ni ra re bhyaḥ phaṭ | du ya ka sa ya ni ki li ki la ya hūm drūm | |*

1.22 If someone is afflicted by an illness that makes them angry, furious, talkative, and enraged, and their arms and legs move or cramp a lot,³¹ this is due to the grahī³² Black Indrāṇī. Therefore, eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of the preeminent Indra and stab with the wrathful dagger of the Wrathful One from the family.

1.23 *de va lo yā bhyaḥ phaṭ | de va ki li ki li ya hūm drūm | |*

1.24 Being unable to sleep in the middle of the night, [F.140.a]
The occurrence of powerful sorcery,
And bees appearing as pigs
Are due to the grahī Black Revatī.
Therefore, eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of the preeminent Great
Glorious One
And stab with the dagger of the Wrathful One from the family.

1.25 *de va ki li ki la yā bhyaḥ phaṭ | de va dra ti ki li ki la ya hūm hūm | |*

1.26 If one is afflicted by an illness where their limbs are burning and painful, or if one has little appetite and feels nauseous, this is due to the grahī Black Yamā. Therefore, eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of Mañjuśrī Yamāntaka and stab with the dagger of the Splendorous Invincible One.

1.27 *ya ma rā ja hriḥ ṣṭi bi kri kri nad ma hā hūm drūm | ca ya raṇ ba ni ki li ki la ya bhyaḥ phaṭ | |*

1.28 When half the body becomes withered or paralyzed,
When crippled, when the body is bruised and tender,
Or the eyes turn dark and itchy,
This is leprosy caused by sorcery
And is due to the grahī Black Nāgiṇī.

Therefore, eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of Garuḍa He
And stab with the dagger of the Old Seer.

1.29 *nā ga le ya hūm̐ hūm̐ | ca ya ka bhyaḥ phaḥ | |*

1.30 If someone is afflicted by an illness that causes their mind to feel unstable and vacuous, to feel pressure on their torso, experience a sense of futility, or feel as if their teeth are falling out, this is due to the grahī Black Yakṣiṇī.³³ Therefore, eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of Vaiśravaṇa and stab with the dagger of the Emanatress.

1.31 *ti ti ma ye bhyaḥ phaḥ | ku ku rā ja ye hūm̐ drūm̐ | |*

1.32 If someone is afflicted with skin disease, rashes, and their body itches, this is due to the grahī Black Revatī Protectress Vetālī. Therefore, eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of unimpeded Yama and stab with the dagger of the Red Lady of Desire.

1.33 *va ren he ya hūm̐ hūm̐ | ku ma la gur dang bhyaḥ phaḥ | |*

1.34 If someone is afflicted by an illness of the blood, feels heavy, cannot see far, or has an unstable and vacuous mind, this is due to the grahī Garuḍa-Winged Revatī. Therefore, eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of the powerful Great Glorious One and stab with the dagger of blazing wrathful Hūm̐chen.

1.35 *du ya kula hūm̐ phaḥ | ma ma ku du ye bhyaḥ phaḥ | |*

1.36 If someone is afflicted by an illness that cripples their right arm [F.140.b] or causes rib pain, this is due to the grahī Revatī Who Extends One Hand. Therefore, eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of Expanse of Wrath and stab with the dagger of the Powerful Red Lady.

1.37 *ma ma ri haya hūm̐ hūm̐ | ka pa la ya he bhyaḥ phaḥ | |*

1.38 If someone feels intoxicated, hemorrhages blood, and sees all sorts of forms appear before their eyes, this is due to the grahī One-Toothed One-Eyed Revatī. Therefore, eliminate her with the counteractive vidyāmantra of Lekden and stab with the dagger of the Principal Ascetic.

1.39 *rākṣa se hūm̐ drūm̐ | rākṣa lam̐ ki la ye bhyaḥ phaḥ | |*

1.40 As for the twelve grahīs of the lesser demons—³⁴

1.41 Inside a white silken tent
Is the magical emanation of the sovereign woman

- Arisen from the White Inauspicious Lady,
The powerful lady ornamented with gold and turquoise,
The grahī Wisdom Samantabhadrī.
- 1.42 Eliminate untimely rain, strife, frost, and hail caused by sorcery with the
dharmadhātu vidyāmantra and stab with the dagger of samādhi.
- 1.43 *ni dhar ma dhā tu sa ma ya hūm drum | ka ma la ca ga ye sa ma ye bhyaḥ phaḥ | |*
- 1.44 The Lady who rules the second turquoise tent
Is the great and powerful Dark Blue Lady.
Riding an ox, mule,³⁵ or horse.
She brings disaster upon worldly yogas.
- 1.45 Eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of the great and powerful Lady and stab
with the dagger of the great all-pervasive Lady.
- 1.46 *a ra li bhyaḥ phaḥ | ra du hūm drum | |*
- 1.47 The Lady who rules the third coral tent
Is the ruler of the heart inside the tent.
- 1.48 Eliminate her with the offering vidyāmantra of the yellow tent and stab with
the dagger of the Principal Ascetic.
- 1.49 *tiṣṭa tiṣṭa ni bhyaḥ phaḥ | va pā ma hūm drum | |*
- 1.50 The Lady who rules the fourth golden tent rules over all illnesses of the
throat and ulcers. Eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of Mañjuśrī Roten³⁶
and stab with the dagger of the Splendorous Invincible One.
- 1.51 *ro ro barī hūm drum | ku ku ye bhyaḥ phaḥ | |*
- 1.52 The Lady who rules the fifth dark blue tent
Is the rending spike woman.
Eliminate bladder and internal diseases,
Blood diseases, and abscesses
With the vidyāmantra of playful Yama,
And stab with the dagger of the Playful Invincible One. [F.141.a]
- 1.53 *ya go le hūm drum | phra do phra ye bhyaḥ phaḥ | |*
- 1.54 The Lady who rules the sixth tent of the inconceivably large field
Is the goddess of symptoms such as
Vomiting blood from the mouth,
The feeling of fever in the body,

And contraction of the limbs.

1.55 Eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of compassionate Yama and stab with the dagger of attachment-inducing Yama.

1.56 *ca ga ya baṁ bhyaḥ phaṭ | gur la de hūṁ drūṁ | |*

1.57 Inside the seventh oxen-hair tent
Is the Mother who strikes those who speak falsely.³⁷
She inflicts illness where blood comes from the mouth,
Kindles fever in the body like a great fire,
And acts while brandishing a copper knife.
Eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of Blazing Great Garuḍa
And stab with the dagger of the Eliminator of Poison.

1.58 *da he ya ya hūṁ drūṁ | me ca ye bhyaḥ phaṭ | |*

1.59 Inside the eighth elephant tent,
The woman who rides a mule
Rules over ulcers and lung and foot diseases.
Eliminate her with the heart vidyāmantra of Yama
And stab with the dagger of Powerful Blazing Lady.

1.60 *ca kra ki li ki la ye bhyaḥ phaṭ | ā ko laṁ hūṁ drūṁ | |*

1.61 Inside the multicolored ninth leather tent—

1.62 Are the nine preeminent *Dabren*³⁸ Medicine Ladies,
Who cause hail, frost, spell-caused illness,
Personal ruin, house collapse,
Swelling, nasal irritation,
And illnesses of the nine black ones.
Therefore, eliminate them with the vidyāmantra of the preeminent Lady of
the Expanse
And stab with the dagger of the Conqueror of Saṁsāra.

1.63 *ku ma la ya hūṁ drūṁ | śa ma ma ye bhyaḥ phaṭ | |*

1.64 Inside the dark blue tenth tent—

1.65 Are the ten Rulers of the Tent,
Who cause leprosy and itchy lesions,
Make poison, cause conflict,
And kill with knives.
Eliminate them with the vidyāmantra of wrathful Yaśodharā

And stab with the dagger of the All-Pervasive Mother.

1.66 *a ko śa me ra ra hūm drūm | pra du le bhyaḥ phaḥ | |*

1.67 Inside the eleventh tent of the secret lotus—

1.68 Is the powerful eleventh tent-ruling Lady.

A great all-pervasive lady, powerful in form,

She obstructs the passage of rainfall in the world by means of the planets

And does not grant rainfall.

Eliminate her with the vidyāmantra of Great Glorious Expanse

And stab with the dagger of beautiful Gāndhārī. [F.141.b]

1.69 *a ko muna bhyaḥ phaḥ | ca ye ma hūm drūm | |*

1.70 Inside the camphor crystal twelfth tent—

1.71 Is the mother of space, the sole mother Mukhale.

The twelve and the fourteen are complete in you.

In order to heal all beings everywhere

You reside in the essence of nectar.

You hold the heart-stalk of knowledge in your hand

And illuminate all of existence in a single moment.

1.72 Within the heart-maṇḍala of blazing clarity, the four mārās śāntiṃ ku ru svā
hā | |³⁹

The gongpo yak of the mountain peak⁴⁰ śāntiṃ ku ru svā hā | |

The twelve male mārās śāntiṃ ku ru svā hā | |

The thirteen female mārās śāntiṃ ku ru svā hā | |

The Lord of Order who Carries a White Staff śāntiṃ ku ru svā hā | |

White Sky Terang śāntiṃ ku ru svā hā | |

Colorful Terang of Intermediate Space śāntiṃ ku ru svā hā | |

Black Earth Terang śāntiṃ ku ru svā hā | |

Red grahas, tsen, and red gongpo in the northeastern direction śāntiṃ ku ru
svā hā | |

Lady who Rules Epidemic and Illness śāntiṃ ku ru svā hā | |

Medicinal and local deities⁴¹ śāntiṃ ku ru svā hā | |

1.73 If someone clearly reads aloud three times this fundamentally beneficial dhāraṇī-sūtra of the Glorious Black Goddess Uṣṇīṣa that averts grahas and swears to perform a difficult action, they will achieve whatever they wish. If one makes five oblations inside a leather cup and performs the ritual according to the text, then they will achieve whatever they wish.

1.74 If someone properly upholds this graha-averting ritual for the glorious goddess Uṣṇīṣa, recites it again and again, follows the ritual correctly, and carries oblations to a great river or the top of a high mountain, then when engaged in a great conflict they will be victorious in battle. When performing hostile rites, direct this toward the heart of the enemy. If this is directed to the Rulers of the Nine Tents, the enemy will be defeated and destroyed.

1.75 *This completes "The Glorious Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā."*

ab.

ABBREVIATIONS

C Choné

D Degé

J Lithang

K Peking 1684/1692

Q Peking 1737 (Qianlong)

TLR *lha mo nag mo chen mo rol par byed pa'i gtsug tor zhes bya ba'i gzungs*

Y Yongle

n.

NOTES

- n.1 In a non-Buddhist context grahas and grahīs primarily appear in texts related to Āyurveda, non-Buddhist Tantric systems, and astrology. However, illness-causing spirit possessors also appear in classical literature such as the *Ṛgveda*, *Atharvaveda*, and the *Mahābhārata*. The interested reader is referred to *The Self Possessed*, Frederick M. Smith’s study on possession in South Asia that deals extensively with this subject and includes a discussion of traditional understandings of the ontology of disease-causing entities like grahas and bhūtas. See especially his chapter “The Medicalization of Possession in Āyurveda and Tantra” (Smith 2006, pp. 471–578).
- n.2 The Tibetan translation of both graha and grahī is the ungendered term *gdon*, though in some texts the gender of *gdon* is specified by adding the masculine (*pho*) or feminine (*mo*) prefix, e.g. *pho gdon*, *mo gdon*. In our text, however, all are referred to simply as *gdon*, with their gender determined by associated adjectives.
- n.3 See Smith 2006 for a discussion of grahīs and their function in (primarily non-Buddhist) Indic literature. Smith writes that “[o]ne of the most prominent varieties of possession in Indian literature is demonic, disease-producing possession” (Smith 2006, p. 272), and “[t]he most common word for such invasive disease-causing spirits in Āyurveda is grahī...” (Smith 2006, p. 476).
- n.4 Ibid, p. 482.
- n.5 See Tidwell, Nianggajia, and Fjeld 2023.
- n.6 Ibid., note 16.
- n.7 Smith 2006, Chapter 12; and Tidwell, Nianggajia, and Fjeld 2023.
- n.8 Ibid.

- n.9 See Norbu, p. 166 for further details on the *srid pa 'pho dgu*.
- n.10 For more on *The Threefold Invocation Ritual*, see *The Threefold Invocation Ritual* (*spryan 'dren rgyud gsum pa*, Toh 846), [Introduction](#).
- n.11 Dalton 2016, p. 204.
- n.12 Ibid and Dalton and van Schaik 2006, p. 309, as well as [The Threefold Invocation Ritual](#) (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh846.html>) and [The Threefold Ritual](#) (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh846a.html>). Peter Skilling (1992, p. 122) has also observed a similar tripartite pattern among collections of Pali *paritta* texts used for protective ritual functions. It is therefore notable that none of the eighteen Sanskrit *Dhāraṇīsaṃgraha* texts cataloged and studied by Gergely Hidas (2021) include an opening invocation and closing dedicatory section framing the *dhāraṇīs* included in those collections. A more detailed study of the structure of Chinese *Dhāraṇīsaṃgrahas*, of which there are several, would surely prove interesting, but the scholars who have studied these Chinese works have not remarked on such a structure (see Shinohara 2014). It thus appears that this tripartite structure in *Dhāraṇīsaṃgraha* literature may remain unique to Tibetan collections.
- n.13 See the [84000 Knowledge Base page on the Compendium of Dhāraṇīs](https://84000.co/kb-articles/compendium-of-dharanis-kangyur-section) (<https://84000.co/kb-articles/compendium-of-dharanis-kangyur-section>) for further details on these collections and their texts. In Tshalpa Kangyurs that lack a Compendium of Dhāraṇīs section, most of the same texts are found at the end of the Tantra section. This is precisely the case with the present texts. In such Kangyurs, *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā* and both *The Threefold Ritual* texts are found in the Tantra section.
- n.14 See the [introduction](#) to *The Threefold Ritual*. We also find a number of the very same Indic elements from *The Threefold Invocation Ritual* (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh846.html>) referenced in *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā*: the seven mothers, the four sisters, Ekajātī, Indra, Yama, Vaiśravaṇa, grahas, yakṣīnīs, rākṣasīs, piśācīs, nāgas, garuḍas, bhūtas, kumbhāṇḍas, etc. *The Threefold Invocation Ritual* refers to these deities and other beings as “held by the hook of the vidyāmantra,” (1.17) while *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā* prescribes vidyāmantras as methods to overcome illnesses caused by such spirits.
- n.15 Dalton and van Schaik 2006, p. 309.
- n.16 In two extracanonical collections, the *mdo rgyud gsungs rab rgya mtsho'i snying po gces par btus pa 'dod 'byung nor bu'i phreng ba* compiled by Tāranātha, and the

dpe rnying rtsa chen bris ma'i skor phyogs bsdus (provenance unknown), the title is given on the title page as *The Play of Uṣṇīṣādevī* (*gtsug tor lha mo rol ma*), but the title given in both the incipit and explicit of the text itself is *The Uṣṇīṣā of the Playful Goddess Mahākālī* (*lha mo nag mo chen mo rol par byed pa'i gtsug tor zhes bya ba'i gzungs*). The latter is the title under which it is preserved in the Western Tibetan canonical collections from the monasteries at Barden, Stagrimo, Stongde, and Ego. However, in the Barden collection, the only one among these four collections that we have had access to, the short title given by the editors at the front of the text is also *The Play of Uṣṇīṣādevī* (*gtsug tor lha mo rol ma*)

(<https://www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/rktsneu/sub/index.php>

(<https://www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/rktsneu/sub/index.php>).

- n.17 It is also possible that the redactors of some canonical collections simply did not have access to these works.
- n.18 This text, Toh 987, and all those contained in this same volume (*gzungs 'dus, waM*), are listed as being located in volume 101 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 102. 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 *Vimalaprabhānāmakālacakratantṛāṭikā* (*dus 'khor 'grel bshad dri med 'od*, Toh 845), before the volume 100 of the Degé Kangyur, numbering it as vol. 101, 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.19 The text nonetheless lists nineteen.
- n.20 In this list we read the numbers as ordinal rather than cardinal numbers based on a list of these *grahīs* later in the text that uses ordinal numbers.
- n.21 This translation follows C, J, K, Q, and Y in reading *dbang byed*. D omits *dbang*.
- n.22 *dbyigs dug*, a poison made of precious substances.
- n.23 While the Sanskrit name of this goddess is usually rendered as Ekajaṭā, all of the Tibetan translations here render her name Ekajaṭī, which is indeed how

she is commonly referred to in Tibet.

- n.24 *grong rgyun gi gdon*. Literally the “continuity” of a dead person.
- n.25 We emend here and below to *shugs 'gro ma* from *shugs sgrol ma* on the basis of TLR, which reads *shugs 'gro byams ma*.
- n.26 We emend here to *smyo byed gdon yin pas na* from *smyo byed gdon du za ba yin pas na*, following a structure that repeats itself in the subsequent passages, in which illnesses or problems are attributed to one of the grahīs described in the first part of this text (using the same grammatical pattern: *X gyi gdon yin pas...*).
- n.27 This translation follows TLR in reading *sgrib byed nag mo*, which better fits the description in the verse and is one of the grahīs mentioned at the beginning of the text. D, and all other versions of *The Tantra of the Play of the Goddess Uṣṇīṣā*, read *sgrol byed nag mo*, “Black Liberator.”
- n.28 Here we emend to *phung byed nag mo* from *bud med nag mo* following the name and sequential position of this grahī in the initial list of eighteen primary emanations. Most, though not all, of the eighteen emanations appear in order in this section of the text.
- n.29 *phya phya*. Translation tentative.
- n.30 *sems la mi dga' phya phya*. Translation tentative.
- n.31 Translation tentative. The Tibetan reads *rkang lag bya btsag mang po*, the meaning of which is unclear. In TLR the corresponding line reads *rkang lag brkyang bskum bya smyang byed*, which roughly means, “their legs and arms extend, retract, and stretch out.” This suggests a condition such as spasms.
- n.32 This reading follows K, Q, and Y in reading *dbang ldan nag mo*; D reads *dbang ldan nag po*.
- n.33 We emend to *gnod sbyin nag mo* from *gnod sbyin nag po*, given the name and sequential position of this grahī (not graha) given in the initial list of eighteen primary emanations. Not all of the eighteen emanations appear in order in this section of the text, but many of them do.
- n.34 According to Nebesky-Wojkowitz (1975, pp. 277 and 315), the *ma bdud* are a Tibetan class of “lesser” (*ma*) demons, who are distinct from the *ya bdud*, “greater demons.” On the *ma bdud* and *ya bdud*, see also Blondeau 2009, pp. 204, n. 13 and pp. 231–34.

- n.35 This translation follows TLR in reading *'dre'u*; D reads *dre*.
- n.36 *'jam dpal ro tan*. The meaning of *ro tan* is ambiguous, and so has simply been phoneticized here.
- n.37 *khram la 'debs pa*. This phrase can be used to refer to suppressing those who harm the Dharma.
- n.38 *rda bran*. The meaning of this term could not be determined.
- n.39 This and the remaining mantras mix Tibetan words with transliterations of Sanskrit terms. The Sanskrit in each case means "pacify *svāhā!*"
- n.40 Emending *ri tshe* to *ri rtse*.
- n.41 *yul sa*. On the equivalence of the terms *yul sa* and *yul lha* (local deity), see Karmay 1996, p. 393.

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 All-Pervasive Mother

khyab pa ma

ཐུབ་པ་མ།

—

A deity whose dagger is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.2 bhūta

'byung po

འབྱུང་པོ།

bhūta

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.3 Black Bhūta

byung po nag po

ཐུང་པོ་ནག་པོ།

—

A graha.

g.4 Black Defeater

phung byed nag mo

ཕུང་བྱེད་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.5 Black Indrāṇī

dbang ldan nag mo

དབང་ལྡན་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.6 Black Kumbhāṇḍī

grul bum nag mo

གྲུལ་གྲུམ་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.7 Black Nāginī

klu mo nag mo

གྲུ་མོ་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.8 Black Obscurer

sgrib byed nag mo

སྒྲིབ་བྱེད་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.9 Black Piśācī

sha za nag mo

ཤ་བ་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.10 Black Rākṣasī

srin mo nag mo

སྲིན་མོ་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.11 Black Revatī

nam gru nag mo

ནམ་གྲུ་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.12 Black Revatī Protectress Vetālī

nam gru skyong byed ro langgs nag mo

ནམ་གུ་སྐྱོང་བྱེད་རོ་ལངས་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.13 Black Seer

drang srong nag mo

དང་སྲོང་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.14 Black Unmadā

smyo byed nag mo

སྐྱོ་བྱེད་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.15 Black Vāyu

rlung lha nag mo

རླུང་ལྷ་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.16 Black Vetālī

ro langgs nag mo

རོ་ལངས་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.17 Black Vetālī Rākṣasī

ro langs ma srin mo nag mo

རོ་ལངས་མ་སྲིན་མོ་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of a grahī. This seems to be another name for the grahī otherwise called Black Vetālī (*ro langs nag mo*), who is identified as one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.18 Black Yakṣiṇī

gnod sbyin nag mo

གནོད་སྦྱིན་ནག་མོ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.19 Black Yamā

ya ma nag mo

ཡ་མ་ནག་མོ།

—

A grahī.

g.20 Blazing Great Garuḍa

khyung chen 'bar ba

ཁྱུང་ཆེན་འབར་བ།

—

A deity whose vidyāmantra is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.21 Conqueror of Saṃsāra

'khor ba rab 'joms

འཁོར་བ་རབ་འཇོམས།

—

A deity whose dagger is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.22 Dark Blue Lady

mthing ka chen mo

མཐིང་ཀ་ཆེན་མོ།

—

A deity.

g.23 Donkey-Riding Great Revatī

nam gru chen mo bong zhon ma

ནམ་གུ་ཚེན་མོ་བོང་ཞོན་མ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.24 Ekajati

e ka dza TI

ཨ་ཀ་ཇ་ཏི།

ekajatā

A goddess.

g.25 Eliminator of Poison

dug chen tshar gcod

དུག་ཚེན་ཚ་ར་གཙོད།

—

A deity whose dagger is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.26 Emanatress

sprul byed ma

སྤྱུ་ལ་བྱེད་མ།

—

A goddess whose dagger is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.27 Expanse of Wrath

dbyings kyi khro bo

དབྱིངས་ཀྱི་ཁྲོ་བོ།

—

A wrathful deity whose vidyāmantra is employed in the rituals described in this text. An alternative name may be “Great Glorious Expanse” (*dpal chen dbyings*).

g.28 four sisters

sring mo bzhi

སྤྲིང་མོ་བཞི།

—

In Indic contexts, this is typically a reference to Jayā, Vijayā, Ajitā, and Aparājītā, a group of female deities who, along with their brother Tumburu (an aspect of Śiva), are the focal point of a prominent cult in the early Śaiva tantric tradition. They are frequently included in Buddhist literature among classes of malevolent spirits.

g.29 Gāndhārī

sa 'dzin ma

ས་འཛིན་མ།

gāndhārī

A goddess.

g.30 Garuḍa He

bya khyung he

བྱ་ལུང་ཉེ།

—

A deity whose vidyāmantra is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.31 Garuḍa-Winged Revatī

nam gru khyung gshog ma

ནམ་གུ་ལུང་གཤོག་མ།

—

A grahī. This seems to be another name for the grahī otherwise called Great Revatī the Garuda-Winged Ḍākinī (*nam gru chen mo mkha' 'gro khyung gshog ma*).

g.32 gongpo

'gong po · 'gong

འགོང་པོ། · འགོང།

—

A type of Tibetan spirit.

g.33 grahī

gdon

གདོན།

graha

A type of female spirit understood to cause illness through possession.

g.34 Great Glorious Expanse

dpal chen dbyings

དཔལ་ཆེན་དབྱིངས།

—

A deity whose vidyāmantra is employed in the rituals described in this text. This may be the same deity referred to as Expanse of Wrath (*dbyings kyi khro bo*).

g.35 Great Glorious One

dpal chen

དཔལ་ཆེན།

—

A deity whose vidyāmantra is mentioned in this text. This epithet is often applied to Hayagrīva or other wrathful deities.

g.36 Great Revatī the Garuḍa-Winged Ḍākinī

nam gru chen mo mkha' 'gro khyung gshog ma

ནམ་གུ་ཆེན་མོ་མཁའ་འགྲོ་རླུང་གཤོག་མ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.37 Great Revatī the Lion-Faced Defeater

nam gru chen mo phung byed seng ge'i gdong

ནམ་གུ་ཆེན་མོ་ཕུང་བྱེད་སེང་གེ་འི་གདོང་།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.38 Great Revatī Who Extends One Hand

nam gru chen mo lag gcig nyab pa

ནམ་གུ་ཆེན་མོ་ལག་གཅིག་ཉན་པ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.39 Hūmchen

hU~M chen

ལྷོ་ཚེན།

—

A wrathful deity whose dagger is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.40 Indra

dbang ldan

དབང་ལྷན།

indra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The lord of the Trāyastriṃśa heaven on the summit of Mount Sumeru. As one of the eight guardians of the directions, Indra guards the eastern quarter. In Buddhist sūtras, he is a disciple of the Buddha and protector of the Dharma and its practitioners. He is often referred to by the epithets Śatakratu, Śakra, and Kauśika.

g.41 Lady of the Expanse

dbyings kyi gtso mo

དབྱིངས་ཀྱི་གཙོ་མོ།

—

A deity whose vidyāmantra is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.42 Lekden

legs ldan

ལེགས་ལྷན།

—

A deity associated with a mantra for protection and healing.

g.43 Lord of Order who Carries a White Staff

skos rje drang dkar

སྐོས་རྗེ་བླ་འདྲེན།

—

A deity in the Tibetan Bön tradition responsible for maintaining order in the forces of nature.

g.44 Madhukara

sbrang rtsir byed pa

མཱ་ཧཱཱ་ལྷ་པོ་

madhukara

A deity whose dagger is employed in the rituals described in this text. The word *madhukara* literally means “honey-maker” and the term can also refer to a bee.

g.45 Majestic Seer

drang srong gzi can

དང་སྲོང་གཟི་ཅན།

—

A grahī. This seems to be another name for the grahī otherwise called Black Seer (*drang srong nag mo*).

g.46 Mañjuśrī Roten

'jam dpal ro tan

འཇམ་དཔལ་རོ་ཏན།

—

A deity.

g.47 Mañjuśrī Yamāntaka

'jam dpal gshin rje

འཇམ་དཔལ་གཤིན་རྗེ།

mañjuśrīyamāntaka

A wrathful form of Mañjuśrī.

g.48 Mother

ma mo

མ་མོ།

—

Ferocious female deities to which are attributed both dangerous and protective functions. In the Indian tradition, they are often in a set of seven or eight.

g.49 Mukhale

mu kha le

མུ་ཁ་ལེ།

—

The name of a powerful Tibetan female spirit.

g.50 Mule Lady

shugs 'gro ma

ལུགས་འགོ་མ།

—

A goddess.

g.51 Naked Mendicant

dge sbyong gcer bu

དགེ་སྤྱོད་གཅེར་བུ།

—

A deity whose vidyāmantra is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.52 Nine Preeminent Dabren Medicine Ladies

rda bran sman gyi gtso mo dgu

ར་བར་སྐྱམ་གྱི་གཙོ་མོ་དགུ།

—

A group of deities or spirits who cause illness.

g.53 One-Toothed One-Eyed Great Revatī

nam gru chen mo so gcig mig gcig ma

ནམ་གུ་ཚེན་མོ་སོ་གཅིག་མིག་གཅིག་མ།

—

The name of one of the eighteen primary emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.54 One-Toothed One-Eyed Revatī

so gcig mig gcig ma

སོ་གཅིག་མིག་གཅིག་མ།

—

A grahī. This seems to be another name for the grahī otherwise called One-Toothed One-Eyed Great Revatī (*nam gru chen mo so gcig mig gcig ma*).

g.55 Playful Invincible One

mi pham rol ba

མི་ཕམ་རོལ་བ།

—

A deity whose dagger is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.56 Powerful Blazing Lady

'bar ma dbang

འབར་མ་དབང་།

—

A deity whose dagger is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.57 Powerful Red Lady

dbang mo dmar mo

དབང་མོ་དམར་མོ།

—

A goddess whose dagger is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.58 Principal Ascetic

dka' thub gtso bo

དཀའ་ཐུབ་གཙོ་བོ།

—

A deity whose dagger is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.59 Red Lady of Desire

'dod pa dmar mo

འདོད་པ་དམར་མོ།

—

A goddess whose dagger is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.60 Revatī Who Extends One Hand

lag gcig nyab pa

ལག་གཅིག་ཉལ་པ།

—

A grahī. This seems to be another name for the grahī otherwise called Great Revatī Who Extends One Hand (*nam gru chen mo lag gcig nyab pa*).

g.61 samādhi

ting 'dzin · ting nge 'dzin

ཉིང་འཛིན། · ཉིང་ངེ་འཛིན།

samādhi

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

In a general sense, *samādhi* can describe a number of different meditative states. In the Mahāyāna literature, in particular in the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras, we find extensive lists of different samādhis, numbering over one hundred.

In a more restricted sense, and when understood as a mental state, *samādhi* is defined as the one-pointedness of the mind (*cittaikāgratā*), the ability to remain on the same object over long periods of time. The *Draḥor Bamponyipa* (*sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*) commentary on the *Mahāvīyutpatti* explains the term *samādhi* as referring to the instrument through which mind and mental states “get collected,” i.e., it is by the force of samādhi that the continuum of mind and mental states becomes collected on a single point of reference without getting distracted.

g.62 Skull Holder

thod pa can

ཐོད་པ་ཅན།

—

A deity whose vidyāmantra is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.63 Splendorous Invincible One

mi pham mdzes pa

མི་ཕམ་མཛེས་པ།

—

A deity whose dagger is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.64 Ten Rulers of the Tent

gur la dbang bcu

གུར་ལ་དབང་བཅུ།

—

A set of ten deities who cause disease and inflict harm. They possibly overlap with the thirteen Ladies of the Tent.

g.65 terang

the · the rang

ཐེ། · ཐེ་རང།

—

A type of Tibetan spirit.

g.66 Thempangma Kangyur

them spangs ma bka' 'gyur

ཐེམ་སྤངས་མ་བཀའ་འགྲུར།

—

One of the two textual lineages of the Kangyur. It originated from a manuscript produced at Gyantsé (*rgyal rtse*) in 1431.

g.67 Thirteen Ladies of the Tent

gur bdag bcu gsum

གུར་བདག་བརྒྱ་གསུམ།

—

A group of thirteen ladies who rule tents and are identified as subsidiary great heart emanations of the goddess described in this text.

g.68 triple city

grong khyer sum brtsegs

གྲོང་ཁྱེར་སུམ་བརྟེན།

—

An aspect of Śaiva mythology that was assimilated into the Buddhist tradition, the “triple city” was a city of asuras built by the asura architect Maya. It consisted of three levels that extended from the underworld, through the earth, and up to the heavens. Brahmā blessed Tripura so that it could only be destroyed by a single arrow, making it essentially indestructible. However, when the asuras displeased Śiva by resuming their war with the devas, he fired a divine arrow that pierced all three levels of the city, reducing them to ash.

g.69 tsen

btsan

བཙན།

—

A type of Tibetan spirit.

g.70 Tshalpa Kangyur

tshal pa bka' 'gyur

ཚལ་པ་བཀའ་འགྲུར།

—

An edition of the Kangyur produced at Gungthang (*gung thang*) monastery in central Tibet from 1347–51 under the sponsorship of the local ruler, Tshalpa Künga Dorje (*tshal pa kun dga' rdo rje*, 1309–64), providing the basis for a branch of subsequent Kangyur editions.

g.71 Vaiśravaṇa

rnam thos

རྣམ་ཐོས།

vaiśravaṇa

g.72 Vajrapāṇi

phyag na rdo rje

ཕྱག་ནེ་རྗེ།

vajrapāṇi

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Vajrapāṇi means “Wielder of the Vajra.” In the Pali canon, he appears as a yakṣa guardian in the retinue of the Buddha. In the Mahāyāna scriptures he is a bodhisattva and one of the “eight close sons of the Buddha.” In the tantras, he is also regarded as an important Buddhist deity and instrumental in the transmission of tantric scriptures.

g.73 Victory Bringer

rgyal bar byed pa

རྒྱལ་བར་བྱེད་པ།

—

A deity whose vidyāmantra is employed in the rituals described in this text.

g.74 vidyāmantra

rigs sngags

རིགས་སྔགས།

vidyāmantra

A type of mantra.

g.75 White Inauspicious Lady

mi bzang dkar mo

མི་བཟང་དཀར་མོ།

—

A deity.

g.76 Wisdom Samantabhadrī

ye shes kun du bzang mo

ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀུན་དུ་བཟང་མོ།

jñānasamantabhadrī

Samantabhadrī is usually the primordial female Buddha, consort of the primordial Buddha Samantabhadra. Her role in this text is somewhat confusing, however, because she seems here to be a type of malevolent spirit, which is very much in contradistinction to her usual role.

g.77 Yama

gshin rje

གཤིན་རྗེ།

yama

The Lord of Death.

g.78 Yaśodharā

grags 'dzin

གྲགས་འཛིན།

yaśodharā

Usually the name of Śākyamuni Buddha's wife. Here the name of a wrathful deity / mantra used to overcome disease-causing spirits.