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The Dhāraṇī for Retaining the Six Perfections

pha rol tu phyin pa drug gzung bar 'gyur ba'i gzungs

· Toh 936 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 100 (gzungs 'dus, e), folio 281.a–281.b



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SUMMARY

s.1 The text presents a series of *dhāraṇīs* for the attainment of each of the perfections.

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. Paul G. Hackett produced the translation and wrote the introduction. Rory Lindsay edited the translation and the introduction, and Dawn Collins copyedited the text. Sameer Dhingra was in charge of the digital publication process.

INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 The text presents a series of dhāraṇīs¹ for the attainment of each of the perfections, with no additional explanation. Although a common theme, there are no obvious parallels with other texts in the canon. No Sanskrit title is provided for this text, and its title is given on the basis of the Tibetan alone.

i.2 This translation of the text into English relied primarily on the Degé recension while making reference to variant readings in other recensions as noted in the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) and validated in the source texts—notably Narthang (N)—as well as the Stok Palace and Phukdrak recensions.² No previous translation of this text into a language outside the Tibetan sphere of influence is known. Meisezahl (1957) provides a diplomatic edition of the *dhāraṇīs* found in the Linden Museum Tibetan collection.

The Dhāraṇī for Retaining the Six Perfections

1.

The Translation

[F.281.a]

1.1 Homage to the Three Jewels.

By hearing this essence mantra of giving, even one time, one will obtain the perfection of giving.

1.2 *oṃ namas tasyai*³ [F.281.b] *bhagavati dānādhipataye svāhā* |⁴

1.3 By hearing this essence mantra of ethics, even one time, one will obtain the perfection of ethics.

1.4 *namaḥ sarvatathāgatānāṃ mahākāmatmakānām*⁵ | *namo bhagavatyai* | *śīlaparipūrṇas tṛaye*⁶ *śīlaṃ me* | *sādhaya sādahaya* | *kiṃ tiṣṭha sambuddho bhagavan dharmasya samājñānapayati* | *svāhā* |⁷

1.5 By hearing this essence mantra of patience, even one time, one will obtain the perfection of patience.

1.6 *namaḥ sarvatathāgatāya acintya gocarya* | *namaḥ kṣantaye*⁸ *bahubhyaḥ* | *tathāgatānām bhūtakoṭibhiḥ parivartita ye rakṣa kuru turu turu samayam anusmara* | *śākyamuni sarvatathāgatānām pāramitājñānagocarō jñānagocarō 'jñānam apāyati*⁹ | *svāhā* |¹⁰

1.7 By hearing this essence mantra of effort, even one time, one will obtain the perfection of effort.

1.8 *namaḥ sarvatathāgatānām acintya visayānām* | *namo stute bhagavate vīryapāramitā* | *vīryaṃ kuru vīrye vīrye mahāvīrye tathāgata sarvājñānam apayati*¹¹ *svāhā* |¹²

1.9 By hearing this essence mantra of meditative concentration, even one time, one will obtain the perfection of meditative concentration.

1.10 *namaḥ sarvatathāgatānām | oṃ vimale nirmale dhyāne dhyāne dhyānapriye hūṃ
phaṭ |*¹³

1.11 By hearing this essence mantra of wisdom, even one time, one will obtain the perfection of wisdom.

1.12 *namas tathāgatāya aparimitājñānagocarāya | namo bhagavate jñānapāramitā | ye
jñānam | me kuru kuru viḡaṇa¹⁴ | tathāgatasya samayam anusmara | hi hi hi hi
jñā jñā jñā jñā hūṃ hūṃ phaṭ |*¹⁵

1.13 *This completes The Dhāraṇī for Retaining the Six Perfections.*

n.

NOTES

- n.1 Of the four types of dhāraṇīs described by the fourth-century scholar-yogi Asaṅga—Dharma dhāraṇīs (*dharmadhāraṇī*; *chos kyi gzungs*), meaning dhāraṇīs (*arthadhāraṇī*; *don gyi gzungs*), mantra dhāraṇīs (*mantradhāraṇī*; *gsang sngags kyi gzungs*), and bodhisattva forbearance dhāraṇīs (*bodhisattva-kṣāntilābhāyadhāraṇī*; *byang chub sems dpa' bzod pa 'thob par byed pa'i gzungs*)—this text falls into the category of *bodhisattvakṣāntilābhāyadhāraṇīs*, which enable one to progress along the path through the acquisition of the six perfections. Cf. *Grounds of Bodhisattvas* (*bodhisattvabhūmi*; *byang chub sems dpa'i sa*; Toh 4037, fol. 144.a). A discussion of various classifications of dhāraṇīs is given in Pagel 2007.
- n.2 This text, Toh 936, and all those contained in this same volume (*gzungs 'dus*, *e*), are listed as being located in volume 100 of the Degé Kangyur by the Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRRC). However, several other Kangyur databases—including the eKangyur that supplies the digital input version displayed by the 84000 Reading Room—list this work as being located in volume 101. This discrepancy is partly due to the fact that the two volumes of the *gzungs 'dus* section are an added supplement not mentioned in the original catalog, and also hinges on the fact that the compilers of the Tōhoku catalog placed another text—which forms a whole, very large volume—the *Vimalaprabhānāmakālacakratāntraṭīkā* (*dus 'khor 'grel bshad dri med 'od*, Toh 845), before the volume 100 of the Degé Kangyur, numbering it as vol. 100, although it is almost certainly intended to come right at the end of the Degé Kangyur texts as volume 102; indeed its final fifth chapter is often carried over and wrapped in the same volume as the Kangyur *dkar chags* (catalog). Please note this discrepancy when using the eKangyur viewer in this translation.
- n.3 The Tibetan reads **namastrai*.

- n.4 This dhāraṇī translates as, “Homage to you, O Bhagavatī, sovereign over giving. May auspiciousness abound.”
- n.5 The Tibetan reads **mahākānādāmakānāṃ*.
- n.6 The Tibetan reads **śīlaparipurṇaśireyai*.
- n.7 This dhāraṇī translates as, “Homage to all the tathāgatas, those who are the embodiment of great bliss. Homage to the Bhagavatī. Cause my ethics to be elevated to fully complete ethics. Succeed. Succeed. Wherever it abides, cause all ignorance of the teachings of the perfect buddha bhagavāns to disappear. May auspiciousness abound.”
- n.8 The Tibetan reads **kṣantiyai*.
- n.9 The Tibetan reads **jñānāpāyati*.
- n.10 This dhāraṇī translates as, “Homage to all the tathāgatas, inconceivable in their range. Homage to the one abounding in patience. O you who traverse the limits of the tathāgatas. Protect. Act. Perform. Perform. Remember the commitments. O Śākyamuni, the range of the perfection of wisdom and the range of the exalted wisdom of all tathāgatas is such that it causes ignorance to disappear. May auspiciousness abound.”
- n.11 The Tibetan reads **sarvājñānāpayati*.
- n.12 This dhāraṇī translates as, “Homage to all the tathāgatas, inconceivable objects of knowledge. Homage and praise to the Bhagavatī, the perfection of effort. Engage in effort. Be heroic. Be heroic. Be greatly heroic. O Tathāgata, cause all ignorance to disappear. May auspiciousness abound.”
- n.13 This dhāraṇī translates as, “Homage to all the tathāgatas. *oṃ*. Stainless. Spotless. Concentration. Concentration. Beloved concentration. *hūṃ phaṭ*.”
- n.14 The Tibetan reads **vigāna*.
- n.15 This dhāraṇī translates as, “Homage to the tathāgatas, limitless in their range of exalted wisdom. Homage to the Bhagavatī, the perfection of exalted wisdom. O Knowledgeable One. Take notice of me. Act. Act. Remember the commitments of the tathāgatas. *Hi hi hi hi. Jñā jñā jñā jñā. Hūṃ phaṭ*.”
Meisezahl’s version adds *mahākili curu curu mahācuru mili mili mahāmili tili tili mahātīli dhume dhume mahādhume cale cale mahācale khiri khiri mahākhiri cili cili mahācili | svāhā*.”

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 dhāraṇī

gzungs

གཟུངས།

dhāraṇī^{AS}

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

g.2 effort

brtson 'grus

བརྩོན་འགྲུས།

**vīrya* ^{AD}

The fourth of the six or ten perfections, this refers to a state of mind characterized by joyful persistence when engaging in virtuous activity.

g.3 ethics

tshul 'khrims

ཚུལ་འབྲིམས།

**śīla* ^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Morally virtuous or disciplined conduct and the abandonment of morally undisciplined conduct of body, speech, and mind. In a general sense, moral discipline is the cause for rebirth in higher, more favorable states, but it is also foundational to Buddhist practice as one of the three trainings (*triśikṣā*) and one of the six perfections of a bodhisattva. Often rendered as “ethics,” “discipline,” and “morality.”

g.4 giving

sbyin pa

སྤྱིན་པ།

**dāna* ^{AD}

The first of the six or ten perfections, often explained as the essential starting point and training for the practice of the others.

g.5 meditative concentration

bsam gtan

བསམ་གཏན།

**dhyāna* ^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Dhyāna is defined as one-pointed abiding in an undistracted state of mind, free from afflicted mental states. Four states of *dhyāna* are identified as being conducive to birth within the form realm. In the context of the Mahāyāna, it is the fifth of the six perfections. It is commonly translated as “concentration,” “meditative concentration,” and so on.

g.6 patience

bzod pa

བཟོད་པ།

**kṣanti* ^{AD}

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A term meaning acceptance, forbearance, or patience. As the third of the six perfections, patience is classified into three kinds: the capacity to tolerate abuse from sentient beings, to tolerate the hardships of the path to buddhahood, and to tolerate the profound nature of reality. As a term referring to a bodhisattva’s realization, *dharmakṣānti* (*chos la bzod pa*) can refer to the ways one becomes “receptive” to the nature of Dharma, and it can be an abbreviation of *anutpattikadharmakṣānti*, “forbearance for the unborn nature, or nonproduction, of dharmas.”

g.7 wisdom

shes rab

ཤེས་རབ།

**prajñā* ^{AD}

In the context of the perfections, wisdom is the sixth of the six perfections. The translation of *prajñā* (*shes rab*) by “wisdom” here defers to the precedent established by Edward Conze in his writings. It has a certain poetic resonance which more accurate renderings—“discernment,” “discriminative awareness,” or “intelligence”—unfortunately lack. It should be remembered that in Abhidharma, *prajñā* is classed as one of the five object-determining mental states (*pañcaviṣayaniyata*, *yul nges lnga*), alongside “will,” “resolve,” “mindfulness,” and “meditative stability.” Following Asaṅga’s *Abhidharma-samuccaya*, Jamgon Kongtrul (TOK, Book 6, Pt. 2, p. 498), defines *prajñā* as “the discriminative awareness that analyzes specific and general characteristics.”

