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The Uṣṇīṣavijayā Dhāraṇī with Its Ritual Manual (2)

Uṣṇīṣavijayādhāraṇīkalpasahitā

དེབཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་གཙུག་ཏོར་རྣམ་པར་རྒྱལ་བ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་གཟུངས་རྟོག་པ་དང་བཅས་པ།

de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi gtsug tor rnam par rgyal ba zhes bya ba'i gzungs rtog pa dang bcas pa

Crown Victory of All Tathāgatas: The Uṣṇīṣavijayā Dhāraṇī with Its Ritual Manual

Sarvatathāgatauṣṇīṣavijayānāmadhāraṇīkalpasahitā

· Toh 595 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 90 (rgyud 'bum, pha), folios 237.b–242.a



Translated by Catherine Dalton
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co.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ti. Title
- im. Imprint
- co. Contents
- s. Summary
- ac. Acknowledgements
- i. Introduction
- tr. The Translation
 - 1. The Uṣṇīṣavijayā Dhāraṇī with Its Ritual Manual
- n. Notes
- b. Bibliography
 - Source Texts for This Translation
 - Other Tibetan and Sanskrit Sources
 - Secondary Sources
- g. Glossary

s.

SUMMARY

- s.1 *The Uṣṇīṣavijayā Dhāraṇī with Its Ritual Manual* is a short work in which the Buddha Amitāyus teaches the *uṣṇīṣavijayā* dhāraṇī along with its benefits and a number of short rites for its recitation.

ac.

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i.

INTRODUCTION

- i.1 *The Uṣṇīṣavijayā Dhāraṇī with Its Ritual Manual* opens in Sukhāvātī, where the Blessed One Amitāyus is residing. Amitāyus addresses the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, informing him that there are beings who suffer from illnesses and short lifespans, and introducing the *uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* as a remedy for such painful circumstances. Avalokiteśvara immediately asks Amitāyus to pronounce the dhāraṇī, which the Tathāgata does from within a state of samādhi.
- i.2 Following this pronouncement of the dhāraṇī proper, Amitāyus explains that the dhāraṇī purifies the evil deeds of someone who is pursued by the Lord of Death, and he describes some procedures through which the dhāraṇī can be used to extend such a person's lifespan. The text goes on to describe several additional rites for the dhāraṇī that will restore health and bring about long life and other benefits.
- i.3 Then, in response to a request from Avalokiteśvara, Amitāyus teaches the short *dhāraṇī of limitless life* and explains rites for a caitya, a short Amitābha sādhana together with some rites connected to it, a homa ritual, and a number of additional applications of the dhāraṇī rite to obtain results such as glory and kingship.
- i.4 This work is one among a group of texts in the Kriyātantra section of the Tibetan Kangyurs that contain the *uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* and its related rituals (*kalpa*). The present text is the second longest of four short dhāraṇī texts—three of which have the same title—that present the *uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* with its ritual manual (*kalpa*).¹ These four works share a similar narrative opening (*nidāna*) up through the presentation of the dhāraṇī proper, and several among them also share additional passages. The present text, in fact, is made up entirely of parallel passages from the slightly longer Toh 594. Interestingly, the passages from Toh 594 absent in the present text are precisely the passages that Toh 594 shares with what we will call—for the purpose of distinguishing it from the present group of dhāraṇī-kalpas—the

“primary” *uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* text (Toh 597, which is titled *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī* rather than *Uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī-kalpasahitā*).²

i.5 There are many Sanskrit witnesses of the *uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* proper,³ and the primary *uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* text (Toh 597) survives in at least one, an incomplete early manuscript.⁴ While our text appears to no longer be extant in Sanskrit, there is at least one surviving Sanskrit *uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* work that is closely related to it and belongs to the same group of related *dhāraṇī* texts described above. This work shares the same opening narrative and some of the ritual material with the texts from this group.⁵

i.6 The primary *uṣṇīṣavijayā* text (Toh 597) was first translated into Chinese by Buddhapāli in the late seventh century, and then at least five times subsequently.⁶ Several ritual manuals for the *dhāraṇī*’s recitation were also translated into Chinese,⁷ including the present text, which was translated into Chinese by Dharmadeva between 973 and 981 and is found in the Chinese canonical collection as Taishō 978.⁸ The primary *uṣṇīṣavijayā* text was significant in East Asia, and one scholar has even identified it as the most important esoteric Buddhist scripture translated into Chinese in the seventh century.⁹ Practices connected with the *uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* were important in China, in particular in conjunction with funerary rites, where the *dhāraṇī* was written on pillars near tombs, especially from the mid-Tang to Ming dynasties (ca. 800–1600 CE).¹⁰ In addition to its ritual uses, in China this *dhāraṇī* receives mention in poems and tales of miracles and is analyzed in philosophical commentaries.¹¹

i.7 The *uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* also appears to have been popular in Dunhuang. A number of Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang include just the *dhāraṇī* on its own, both in Tibetan transliteration (*dhāraṇīs*, like mantras, are commonly left untranslated in Tibetan texts) and in Tibetan translation. The primary *uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* text also appears in several Dunhuang manuscripts.¹² Interestingly, several drawings from Dunhuang show maṇḍala (altar) arrangements corresponding to *uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* texts,¹³ and one in particular, which has labels written in Chinese, depicts a maṇḍala that is nearly identical to a maṇḍala described in one of the rites in our text, even though no known ritual manual surviving in Chinese describes such a maṇḍala.¹⁴ There is also a woodblock print from tenth-century Dunhuang that has an image of Amitābha and a *dhāraṇī* written in Sanskrit, but with Chinese writing on the side. The Amitābha *dhāraṇī* from this print is very similar to (but not identical with) the second short *dhāraṇī* transmitted in the present text.¹⁵ The records of *uṣṇīṣavijayā*-related works at Dunhuang, then, suggest a close relationship between Tibetan- and Chinese-speaking Buddhist practitioners there.

i.8 In Nepal, *uṣṇīṣavijayā* dhāraṇī rituals continue to be performed as part of modern Newar Buddhist practice, where their practice is sometimes prescribed for Wednesdays in particular.¹⁶ Practices connected to the *uṣṇīṣavijayā* dhāraṇī likewise continue in modern Tibetan Buddhism. The so-called Tongchö (*stong mchod*)—the thousandfold offering practice of Uṣṇīṣavijayā, a version of which is mentioned briefly in our text—is currently performed in Tibetan monasteries, sometimes using a ritual manual composed by the nineteenth-century polymath Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo. Other notable Tibetan works on the *uṣṇīṣavijayā* dhāraṇī and its associated practices include commentaries by the great Sakya lama Butön (*bu ston rin chen grub*, 1290–1364) and the fourth Panchen Lama, Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen (*blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan*, 1570–1662).

i.9 The question of what, or *who*, exactly, Uṣṇīṣavijayā is is a complex one that cannot be clearly answered here. In short, like a number of uṣṇīṣa deities, she is sometimes identified as a protective deity, in this case a goddess, emanated from the Buddha's uṣṇīṣa. Indeed, Uṣṇīṣavijayā is clearly depicted as a goddess in a number of short sādhanas included in Indian anthologies such as the *Sādhnamāla*, compiled from the works of many authors probably during the period of the Pāla kings (eighth to twelfth century).¹⁷ Three closely similar sādhanas of a three-faced, eight armed form of the goddess are included in the Tengyur, one in each of the three related anthologies translated from the Indian collections into Tibetan in the eleventh to fourteenth centuries respectively.¹⁸ A variety of other forms are depicted or described in Chinese, Japanese, Tibetan, Mongolian, and Kashmiri sources.¹⁹ In the later Tibetan tradition Uṣṇīṣavijayā can even appear as one of a group of three long-life deities along with the Buddha Amitāyus and White Tārā. However, in our text, and indeed in all but one of the *uṣṇīṣavijayā* works in this section of the Kangyur (Toh 598), while the dhāraṇī itself uses the feminine vocative form throughout, the name *uṣṇīṣavijayā* is not rendered into Tibetan in the feminine, and the word *uṣṇīṣavijayā* is not used to refer to anything apart from the name of the dhāraṇī—the dhāraṇī of *the crown victory*. The single instance in this text in which we could interpret *uṣṇīṣavijayā* to refer to a goddess is a sentence in one of the rites for an Amitāyus sādhana that also involves reciting the *uṣṇīṣavijayā* dhāraṇī. After having properly followed the rite, the text notes that “in the early morning at dawn you will see the face of the Bhagavatī, and she will give you whatever accomplishments you desire.” The name of this Bhagavatī is not mentioned in our text, but we might well presume that she is Uṣṇīṣavijayā herself.

i.10 The range of possible answers to the question of what the name Uṣṇīṣavijayā refers to is enlarged even further by the existence of a group of related texts widely used in Southeast Asia, sharing the Pali title *Uṇhissa-*

vijaya-sutta (or in some cases simply *Uṇhissa-vijaya*) but found in a number of different forms, some in Pali but others in Siamese, Lao, Yuon, and Khmer. Some refer at least briefly to the story of the god Supraṭiṭṭhita (Pali Supaṭiṭṭhita) which, although it does not appear in the present text, is the frame story of Toh 597 and a secondary narrative element in Toh 594. But instead of the dhāraṇī of the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts these Southeast Asian texts contain a set of verses (*gāthā*) to be recited whose content is unrelated to that of the Sanskrit dhāraṇī. The *gāthā* are also found alone in several ritual compilations. Even in the vernacular versions, the verses are written in Pali. In these texts, in their own opening lines, it seems to be the verses themselves that are referred to as the Uṇhissa-vijaya.²⁰

- i.11 The present text lacks a translator's colophon. However, as noted above, it is made up entirely of passages that are parallel with Toh 594, with which it also shares the same title. That work *does* have a translator's colophon indicating that it was translated into Tibetan by the Indian scholar Dharmasena and the Tibetan translator Khampa Lotsāwa Bari Chödrak, and it is therefore an eleventh- or twelfth-century translation. However, the imperial Phangthangma catalog lists one *Uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī-vidhisahitā*, which, even if not the same as the present text, is certainly a work of a similar type.²¹ Thus, along with the records of Uṣṇīṣavijayā texts at Dunhuang, its presence in the Phangthangma catalog at the very least indicates the early presence of parts of the Uṣṇīṣavijayā corpus, including not just the dhāraṇī but also some of its associated rites, in Tibet.
- i.12 The present translation was completed on the basis of the Tibetan translation of the text found in the Tantra Collection (*rgyud 'bum*) section of the Degé Kangyur,²² in consultation with the Stok Palace Kangyur and the notes in the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*). The text is stable across all the Kangyurs consulted, with the same title and only minor variants; all recensions are alike in lacking a colophon. We have also consulted Hidas' edition and translation of the surviving Sanskrit *Uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī* text for the passages that are parallel with the present text.
- i.13 The main dhāraṇī is not identical in every detail across the five different versions in the Degé Kangyur (Toh 594–598), and the existence of further variations across different Kangyurs and versions in extra-canonical collections further complicates the picture. Reference to the dhāraṇī as presented in Hidas' edition of the Sanskrit yields useful orthographic confirmation, but may be misleading as a model given that the ten different Nepalese Sanskrit manuscripts on which it is based are of much later date than any of the present Tibetan witnesses. Here and in the other works in

the group we have therefore chosen to transcribe the dhāraṇī as it appears in the Degé version of each text, making only minor choices of orthography and adding annotations to point out the most significant discrepancies.

i.14 One noticeable difference across both Tibetan and Sanskrit versions of the dhāraṇī is the presence or absence of the syllable *om* at the beginning of certain phrases. In the present work and in Toh 594, 596, and 597 there are only three such *om* syllables, while in Toh 598 *om* appears no less than nine times, as it does in Hidas' edition from Sanskrit sources and in extra-canonical liturgies. The Tibetan translation of Toh 598 was made at a significantly later date than the other works of the group, and may possibly signal a change in usage that is also reflected in the Nepalese Sanskrit texts of even later date. This is corroborated by the absence of extra *om*-s in the Dunhuang manuscripts. The colophon of Toh 597 found in the Phukdrak (phug brag) Kangyur includes a note claiming that the texts with only three *om*-s are to be considered more correct.²³ The note also states that although there may have been Sanskrit sources with as many as nine *om*-s, the twelfth-century translator Sumpa Lotsāwa²⁴ reported that all the Sanskrit texts he had seen contained only three, and that the Sanskrit manuscripts of the texts held at Sakya monastery had no more than that. Because Sumpa Lotsāwa is known to have lived and studied in Nepal, his comment on the "correct" number of *om*-s in the Sanskrit manuscripts available to him offers a glimpse of the evolution of the text in the Nepalese tradition. As Hidas' edition of the Nepalese manuscripts suggests, the number of *om*-s in the dhāraṇī seem to proliferate, eventually reaching a total of nine.

i.15 Over the centuries, the textual transmission of the dhāraṇī has preserved the major portion of it with remarkable fidelity. Nevertheless, the few anomalies to be seen across all these closely related texts are a reminder that here, as with other dhāraṇī works, some variations over time and place are to be expected.

Crown Victory of All Tathāgatas
The Uṣṇīṣavijayā Dhāraṇī with Its Ritual Manual

The Translation

[F.237.b]²⁵

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Thus did I hear at one time. The blessed, thus-gone, worthy, perfectly awakened Buddha Amitāyus was staying in the excellent secret palace, Dharma Proclamation,²⁶ in Sukhāvātī. He said to the bodhisattva, the great being, Noble Avalokiteśvara, “Child of noble family, there are beings who suffer, are afflicted with diseases, and have short lifespans. [F.238.a] To help them, one should uphold and recite this dhāraṇī called *the crown victory of all tathāgatas* and teach it extensively to others for the sake of long life.”²⁷

1.2 Then the bodhisattva, the great being, Avalokiteśvara arose from his seat, joined his palms, and said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, please teach! Well-Gone One, please teach the dhāraṇī called *the crown victory of all tathāgatas*.”

1.3 Then the Blessed One looked upon the circle of his perfect²⁸ retinue, entered the samādhi called *the splendor beheld everywhere*, and pronounced this dhāraṇī called *the crown victory of all tathāgatas*:

1.4 “om namo bhagavate sarvatrailokyapratiśiṣṭāya buddhāya te namaḥ ।

tadyathā | om bhrūṃ bhrūṃ bhrūṃ | śodhaya śodhaya | viśodhaya viśodhaya |
asamasamantāvabhāsaṣṭaśaṅgagaganasvabhāvaviśuddhe |
uṣṇīṣavijayapariśuddhe | abhiñcantu māṃ sarvatathāgataḥ
sugatavaravacanāmṛtābhīṣekair mahāmudrāmantrapadaiḥ | āhara āhara mama²⁹
āyuhśandhāraṇi | śodhaya śodhaya | viśodhaya viśodhaya |
gaganasvabhāvaviśuddhe | uṣṇīṣavijāyapariśuddhe | sahasraraśmisañcodite |
sarvatathāgatāvalokini | śaṭpāramitāparipūraṇi | sarvatathāgatamāte³⁰ |
daśabhūmipratīṣṭhite | sarvatathāgatahrdayādhiṣṭhānādhiṣṭhite | mudre mudre
mahāmudre | vajrakāyaśaṣṭaśaṅgagaganasvabhāvaviśuddhe | sarvakarmāvaranaviśuddhe |

*pratinivartaya mamāyuroviśuddhe | sarvatathāgatasamayādhiṣṭhānādhiṣṭhite | om
muni muni mahāmuni | vimuni vimuni mahāvimuni | mati mati mahāmati |
mamati | sumati | tathatābhūtakoṭipariśuddhe | viśphuṭabuddhiśuddhe |
[F.238.b] he he | jaya jaya | vijaya vijaya | smara smara | sphara sphara |
sphāraya sphāraya | sarvabuddhādhiṣṭhānādhiṣṭhite | śuddhe śuddhe | buddhe
buddhe | vajre vajre mahāvajre | suvajre | vajragarbhe | jayagarbhe |
vijayagarbhe | vajrajvālagarbhe | vajrodbhave | vajrasambhave | vajre | vajrini |
vajram bhavatu mama śarīraṃ sarvasatvānāṃ ca kāyapariśuddhir bhavatu | me
sadā³¹ sarvagatipariśuddhiś ca³² | sarvatathāgatāś ca mām³³ samāśvāsayantū |
budhya budhya | siddhya siddhya | bodhya bodhya | vibodhya vibodhya |
mocaya mocaya | vimocaya vimocaya | śodhya śodhya | viśodhya viśodhya |
samantamocaya mocaya | samantaraśmipariśuddhe |
sarvatathāgatahṛdayādhiṣṭhānādhiṣṭhite | mudre mudre mahāmudre |
mahāmudrāmantrapadaiḥ svāhā.³⁴*

- 1.5 “Child of noble family, this dhāraṇī of the crown victory of all tathāgatas is the destroyer³⁵ of the great cudgel of the Lord of Death, the purifier, the destroyer of evil deeds. If one writes this dhāraṇī on birch bark or some other surface, places it in the center of a caitya, worships it extensively by offering whatever one has, and then circumambulates it one hundred thousand times, one will be granted an excellent lifespan and a sharp intellect. When this is done, a lifespan of seven days will become seven years, and a lifespan of seven years will become seventy years. Thus, one will obtain an excellent lifespan, a good memory, freedom from illness, and the ability to remember previous lives.
- 1.6 “If someone installs this dhāraṇī in a caitya and binds a cloth on which the dhāraṇī is written around its summit they will be freed from grave illness.
- 1.7 “Write the dhāraṇī together with one’s own name on a piece of cloth or bark using yellow pigment derived from cow bile and install it in a sandalwood caitya. Then place it at home and worship it with thousands of vast offerings. If one performs this offering rite each month while reciting the dhāraṇī eight hundred times, one will be free from illness and live for one hundred years. If a sandalwood caitya is not available, follow the same procedure with a clay caitya.
- 1.8 “One can also draw on a clean piece of cloth a caitya that is resting on a crossed vajra and ornamented with an encircling vajra garland. [F.239.a] Write one’s own name and the words of the dhāraṇī in the center of it with yellow pigment derived from cow bile. When this is installed inside an enclosed vessel made of two clay cups,³⁶ placed in the home, and worshiped with extensive offerings, one will always be protected.

- 1.9 “An additional rite is as follows: make a square maṇḍala with cow dung that has not fallen on the ground and scatter it with white flowers. Place four butter lamps at the four corners. Burn incense made of aloeswood and frankincense. Fill a vessel with perfumed water and adorn it with white flowers. Place in the center a caitya or statue with the dhāraṇī in its inner chamber. Touch it with the left hand while holding a mālā in the right hand, and recite the dhāraṇī twenty-one times at the three times of the day.³⁷ One who drinks three handfuls of that water will be free of illness and have a long life. Their enemies will fall away, and they will gain a sharp intellect and noble speech. They will remember their previous births from one lifetime to the next. If that water is sprinkled around a house, a cattle barn or horse stable, or a royal residence, there will be no fear of thieves, snakes, yakṣas, or rākṣasas, and no one will suffer from illness. If the water is sprinkled over someone’s head, they will be freed from illness.
- 1.10 “There is also the extremely beneficial *dhāraṇī of limitless life*,³⁸ which brings great pacification wherever it is applied. If it is recited in full twenty-one times over a toothbrush, one will not have any pain when chewing, and one will have a sharp intellect and a long life. If it is recited over three handfuls of water twenty-one times at the three times of the day,³⁹ whoever drinks that water will be completely freed from all illness and will live for a long time.”
- 1.11 Then the bodhisattva great being Noble Avalokiteśvara circumambulated the Blessed One Amitāyus and said, “Blessed One, how should a son or daughter of noble family [F.239.b] perform the caitya ritual? How should they accomplish such tasks as making the statue and so forth, and how should they perform the fire offering?”
- 1.12 The Blessed One replied:
- “You have asked a good question.
Great hero, how excellent!
For the love and sake of all beings,
Listen with one-pointed attention!”
- 1.13 Then the Blessed One entered into the samādhi called *glorious limitless light rays*⁴⁰ in all directions and spoke this dhāraṇī called *the limitless life of all tathāgatas*:
- 1.14 “om amṛte⁴¹ amṛtodbhave⁴² amṛtavikrānte amṛtagate amṛtagāmini amṛtāyurdatte⁴³
gaganakīrtikare sarvakleśakṣayaṃ kariye⁴⁴ svāhā
- 1.15 “Recite this dhāraṇī as many times as possible while excavating the clay for building a caitya, while applying that clay, and all the way up until the canopy is raised.”
- 1.16 Then he taught the rite:

“Now I will properly explain
The supreme caitya rite.

- 1.17 “It should be twelve finger-widths in size, adorned with many ornaments made of gold, lapis, silver, and rubies, and placed upon a lotus. Draw the Four World-Protectors holding banners in the four directions, the gods of the pure abodes holding flowers, incense, and perfumes, Śakra, Lord of the Gods, holding the parasol, and Avalokiteśvara and Vajradhara holding white tail whisks on the right and the left sides. Following proper procedure, draw these on the petals of the lotus, proceeding clockwise around the caitya. Write down the dhāraṇī called *the crown victory of all tathāgatas* and install it in the caitya’s interior relic chamber.⁴⁵ Then, sprinkle the caitya with scented water and worship it with delightfully scented flowers. Perform a thousandfold offering. Fast on the eighth day of the waxing moon, [F.240.a] and, with your mind set on the benefit of all beings, make offerings for the bestowal of long life and intelligence⁴⁶ and recite the dhāraṇī one thousand times. If this is done every month for six months, one will obtain a lifespan of a thousand years. If it is done regularly for a year, one will obtain a lifespan of a hundred thousand years. If it is performed in perpetuity, one will obtain an inexhaustible lifespan, become powerful, be undefeatable by anyone, and obtain a supreme celestial uṣṇīṣa that is unequaled by even the gods and asuras.
- 1.18 “Here is another rite. Take some earth from a very holy place, mix it with delightful perfumes, and make a caitya. Start with one thousand, and make up to five thousand caityas.⁴⁷ Every day install the *crown victory* dhāraṇī in all the caityas. Perform the extensive offering as instructed and read the dhāraṇī aloud starting with one thousand times and for as many as seven thousand recitations. Perform this every day for the dhāraṇī that bestows long life and intelligence, and dedicate one’s own roots of virtue to the shared benefit of all beings. Give up such things as restraining and beating beings. In each subsequent month make twice as many offerings and recite the dhāraṇī eight hundred times. This should be performed by oneself or by someone else in one’s stead.⁴⁸
- 1.19 “This ritual will allow one to avoid the eight types of untimely death. One will have a sharp intellect, be free from illness, live for one hundred years, be delightful to all beings, and recollect past lives. When the time comes to die, one will leave one’s body behind just like a snake shedding its skin and be reborn into a beautiful body in the world of Sukhāvātī. One will never be reborn into lower rebirths as a hell being, in the animal realm, or in the Realm of the Lord of Death. One will not even hear the word *hell*, so how could one experience the ripening of such a karmic result? One will not go to those places.”

- 1.20 Then the Blessed One Amitāyus taught the following sādhana: [F.240.b]
 “A skillful person who wishes beings to have limitless lifespans and to bring about their freedom from the pitiful state of saṃsāra should make a beautiful canvas that is the proper size out of threads that have been spun by a young maiden. Then, using a variety of colors of pigment, one should write the *crown victory* dhāraṇī inside a caitya that has been emanated from the letters of the dhāraṇī.
- 1.21 “Draw Amitāyus garlanded by thousands of light rays and seated upon a lotus and moon seat. He is luminous like the autumn moon and adorned with every ornament. He has three faces, each with three eyes, and he has eight arms. His right face is peaceful and radiant with golden light. His left face is fierce, with fangs biting down on his lower lip, and radiant with light the color of a blue utpala. His central face is charming and white. His right hands hold a crossed vajra at his heart, Amitābha seated on a lotus, an arrow, and the gesture of supreme generosity. His left hands hold a lasso with the threatening gesture, a bow, the gesture granting freedom from fear, and a vase. On his head is the syllable *oṃ* in a caitya, at his throat is the syllable *āḥ*, and at his heart the syllable *hūṃ*. At his forehead is *hrāṃ*, at his navel *hrīḥ*, and at his two feet *aṃ* *aḥ*. Arrange these syllables on his body and include the phrase *rakṣa svāhā* with one’s own name inside it.
- 1.22 “On either side of him are Padmapāṇi and Vajradhara holding white tail whisks. Above, like a flow of nectar raining down, are a pair of gods from the pure abodes. In the four directions are wrathful Acala, Kāmarāja, Nīladaṇḍa, and Mahābala. They hold a sword, a hook, a club, and a vajra, respectively, and their left hands brandish the threatening gesture to frighten malevolent beings.
- 1.23 “When one has completed it with careful attention to those details, one should fast near a caitya that has relics and worship it with a thousandfold great offering while reciting the dhāraṇī one hundred thousand times. [F.241.a] Recite the dhāraṇī one thousand times each day from the first to the fifteenth day of the waxing moon. Then, in the early morning at dawn you will see the face of the Bhagavatī, and she will give you whatever accomplishments you desire.
- 1.24 “One can also install the painting in a location that has been anointed with delightfully scented water, perform extensive worship, and recite the dhāraṇī eight hundred times each day. Or, one can make a thousandfold offering and recite the dhāraṇī a thousand times. If one does this, one’s lifespan will be limitless and one will be able to suppress others with limitless power, be able to fly, and be free from great illness. This will make anyone able to memorize and perfectly recite one thousand verses each day.

1.25 “Or if someone is unable to do that, they should install it in their home in a place that has been anointed with scented water and make whatever offerings they have. In all the coming months they should recite the dhāraṇī eight hundred times on the eighth day of the month, and every day they should recite it twenty-one times at the three times of the day. If they do this, they will have a sharp intellect and a long life. They will be full of insight, free from illness, and happy. They will live for one hundred years and remember their past lives.

“Or if one is unable to do this oneself and someone does it in one’s stead, then one will have a long life and a sharp intellect.

1.26 “Now I will explain the fire offering rite for the benefit of all beings. Build a round hearth one cubit in size and adorned with a garland of vajras. Smear it with white sandalwood or white earth and scatter white flowers on it. Place a butter lamp on each of its four sides, and worship it properly with incense and other offerings. In each of the four directions place a well-decorated and beautiful vase covered with white cloth with its openings adorned with boughs from a tree. Start a fire with wood from a date palm, and summon Agni by asking him to approach as you give three full ladles in the fire and sprinkle it with cleansing water. [F.241.b] Visualize Amitāyus clearly in the center of the hearth, recite the *crown victory* dhāraṇī, and offer three full ladles. One can also perform the fire offering while reciting the dhāraṇī together with the life-extending and intelligence-sharpening dhāraṇī *om amṛtāyurdatte svāhā*⁴⁹ eight hundred times at the three times of the day.

1.27 “If one recites the *crown victory* dhāraṇī seven times one will have a long life, a sharp intellect, and happiness and be free from illness.

“Someone who wishes to live for a thousand years can also make an extensive offering on the eighth day of the waxing moon and perform the homa at the three times of the day, and supreme long life and a sharp intellect will be bestowed upon them.

1.28 “One should not disparage beings. With this rite, one’s body will not be afflicted by illness. One will live for five thousand years, be victorious over enemies, and have a sharp intellect and a sweet voice.

“If one is unable to perform this oneself but someone performs it in one’s stead, one will obtain great peace.

1.29 “If one seeks some other accomplishment, one can recite the *great crown victory* dhāraṇī together with the life-extending and intelligence-sharpening dhāraṇī⁵⁰ while performing the fire offering one hundred thousand times. If one performs the thousandfold worship and recites the dhāraṇī one hundred thousand times at the beginning and end, one will live for a

- hundred thousand years. If one does this ten million times, one will live for ten million years. Following the practice of this rite will enable one to live for countless years, to fly, to be heroic, and to be victorious over all enemies.
- 1.30 “If one seeks glory and performs a fire offering of one hundred thousand wood apples,⁵¹ one will obtain great glory. If one seeks to be king and performs a fire offering of one hundred thousand lotuses, one will become a great king. If one performs that ten million times, one will become a universal monarch.
- 1.31 “Or, if one wishes to obtain the sword siddhi and so forth, one should display the painting in front of a caitya that contains relics, perform the great thousandfold offering, and recite the dhāraṇī one hundred thousand times. If one recites it one hundred thousand times over a sword made of the five metals and then holds the sword in one’s right hand, one will be able to travel to whatever place one thinks of, [F.242.a] take whatever form one desires, be extremely powerful, and subdue others. One will be the singular guide of all beings and then become the great, supreme physician with a limitless lifespan. One can also perform the same sādhana over a vajra, cakra, trident, and the like.
- 1.32 “This great dhāraṇī with limitless benefits that is the heart of all the tathāgatas and supremely difficult to encounter will bring about the accomplishment of any ritual action to which it is applied. Whoever recites this dhāraṇī called *the crown victory of all tathāgatas* twenty-one times at the three times of the day every day, makes a great caitya and hangs the dhāraṇī from it, and explains the dhāraṇī to others at length will be happy, powerful, and free from illness, live for a hundred years, have a sharp intellect, and remember their previous lives. When they die, they will leave their body behind just like a snake shedding its skin and be born into the world of Sukhāvatī. The word *hell* will never reach their ears, so how could they experience the ripening of such a karmic result? They will always remember their previous lives from one lifetime to the next.”
- 1.33 When the Blessed One spoke these words, his entire retinue and the world and its gods, humans, asuras, and gandharvas rejoiced and praised what the Blessed One had said.
- 1.34 This concludes “*Crown Victory of All Tathāgatas: The Uṣṇīṣavijayā Dhāraṇī with Its Ritual Manual.*”⁵²

n.

NOTES

- n.1 The four texts are Toh 594 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh594.html>), 595 (the present text), 596 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh596.html>), and 598 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh598.html>). The first three share the same title: *Crown Victory of All Tathāgatas: The Uṣṇīṣavijayā Dhāraṇī with Its Ritual Manual* (de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi gtsug tor rnam par rgyal ba zhes bya ba'i gzungs rtog pa dang bcas pa). The fourth has an ever-so-slightly different title: *Crown Victory of All Tathāgatas: A Ritual Manual for the Uṣṇīṣavijayā Dhāraṇī* (de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi gtsug tor rnam par rgyal ma'i gzungs zhes bya ba'i rtog pa).
- n.2 The surviving Sanskrit work seems, more properly, to be titled the *Sarvagati* (rather than *Sarvadurgati*)-*pariśodhana-uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī*, but either way the title provides evidence of the relationship between the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā* and *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* corpuses. For more on this relationship see J. Dalton 2016 and forthcoming. The point here is simply that Toh 597 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh597.html>) is the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī*, rather than the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā*-“*dhāraṇī* with its ritual manual” (*kalpasahitā*).
- n.3 Hidas 2020, p. 141. See also Hidas 2021b, which catalogs a number of Indic *dhāraṇīsaṃgraha* collections, many of which include the *uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī*.
- n.4 The Sanskrit of this work is preserved in what Gregory Schopen calls the “Los Angeles Manuscript,” though it appears to be held currently in Japan. This is an early manuscript from Bamiyan-Gilgit that Schopen transcribed and translated into English in an unpublished work, which we are grateful to Jacob Dalton for sharing. In addition to being incomplete, probably due to the loss of a folio, the manuscript lacks several passages that are found in the Tibetan translation of Toh 597 and contains a few passages that are absent in that translation, including two passages that are found in Toh 594. Nonetheless, the Sanskrit manuscript is by and large the same work that is

translated into Tibetan as Toh 597. More recently, the Sanskrit of the very same manuscript was studied by Gudrun Meltzer in a 2007 “limited distribution report” (Silk 2021, p. 108), to which we have not had access, as well as by Unebe Toshiya, who published the Sanskrit along with a Japanese translation in a 2015 article.

- n.5 This text has been edited on the basis of ten Nepalese Sanskrit manuscripts and translated into English in Hidas 2020. From among the works belonging to this group that are preserved in the Tibetan canon, the Sanskrit text is most closely parallel, though not identical, with the present text, Toh 595.
- n.6 The first translation is Taishō 967, followed by Taishō 968–971 and Taishō 974 (Chou 1945, p. 322).
- n.7 According to Chou, the ritual manuals surviving in Chinese are Taishō 972–973 (Chou 1945, p. 322). Hidas 2020 notes that the full set of *Uṣṇīṣavijayā*-related texts found in the Taishō canon includes Taishō 968–974, 978, and 979.
- n.8 Hidas mentions that Taishō 978 “stands closest to the Nepalese tradition” of the Sanskrit work that he has edited, which is also how he describes the relationship between the Sanskrit work and Toh 595 (Hidas 2020, p. 156n6–7). A comparison of Toh 595 and Taishō 978 shows that while neither exactly matches the Sanskrit text that Hidas edited, the Tibetan and Chinese are indeed translations of the same Sanskrit work and contain identical material apart from the Chinese translation’s inclusion of a single, very short passage about a toothbrush that is absent in the Tibetan translation (Toh 595) but present in some of the other *uṣṇīṣavijayā* texts in the Tibetan canon.
- n.9 Sørensen 2011a, p. 165.
- n.10 Sørensen 2011b, p. 386. See also Silk 2021 for further mention of the usages of the *uṣṇīṣavijayā* dhāraṇī, often alongside the *Heart Sūtra*, in China.
- n.11 Copp 2005, p. 4. For further details see Copp 2005, which addresses the topic of dhāraṇīs in medieval China using the *uṣṇīṣavijayā* dhāraṇī as a case study.
- n.12 See [IOL Tib J 307 \(http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=IOL%20Tib%20J%20307;img=1\)](http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=IOL%20Tib%20J%20307;img=1), [PT 54 \(http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=Pelliot%20tibétain%2054;img=1\)](http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=Pelliot%20tibétain%2054;img=1), [PT 6 \(http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=Pelliot%20tibétain%206;img=1\)](http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=Pelliot%20tibétain%206;img=1), and [PT 368 \(http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?](http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?)

pm=Pelliot%20tibétain%20368;img=1) for Tibetan translations of the work, IOL Tib J 322 (http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=IOL%20Tib%20J%20322;img=1) and IOL Tib J 349/3 (http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=IOL%20Tib%20J%20349;img=3) for a Tibetan translation of the dhāraṇī alone (not the whole text), and IOL Tib J 466/2 (http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=IOL%20Tib%20J%20466;img=2), IOL Tib J 547 (http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=IOL%20Tib%20J%20547;img=1), IOL Tib J 1134 (http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=IOL%20Tib%20J%201134;img=1), IOL Tib J 1498 (http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=IOL%20Tib%20J%201498;img=1), PT72 (http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=Pelliot%20tibétain%2072;img=1), and PT73 (http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_loader.a4d?pm=Pelliot%20tibétain%2073;img=1) for Tibetan transliterations of the Sanskrit dhāraṇī alone (J. Dalton and van Schaik 2006; accessed through *The International Dunhuang Project: The Silk Road Online*). The translations of the primary *uṣṇīṣavijayā* dhāraṇī text (Toh 597) appearing at Dunhuang include at least one passage parallel with rites described in our text but missing from the primary text in its Tibetan canonical translation, though present in the surviving Sanskrit manuscript corresponding to Toh 597 studied by Schopen (see J. Dalton forthcoming; Schopen unpublished).

- n.13 Schmid 2011, pp. 372–73.
- n.14 J. Dalton 2016 and forthcoming.
- n.15 See Hidas 2014, pp. 110–11.
- n.16 Bühnemann 2014; Rospatt 2015, p. 821.
- n.17 See Bhattacharyya 1928, vol. 2.
- n.18 The three are Toh 3377, 3248, and 3580, translated respectively by Khampa Lotsāwa Bari Chödrak (*kham pa lo tsA ba ba ri chos grags*, eleventh century, also translator of Toh 594 and possibly of this text, see [n.52](#)); Patshap Lotsāwa Tsültrim Gyaltsen (*pa tshab lo tsA ba tshul khrims rgyal mtshan*, twelfth century); and Yarlung Lotsāwa Trakpa Gyaltsen (*yar klungs lo tsA ba grags pa rgyal mtshan*, late thirteenth or early fourteenth century).
- n.19 See Chandra 1980.

- n.20 These Southeast Asian texts are not included in the official Pali Canon of the Theravāda tradition and are unknown in Sri Lanka. In mainland Southeast Asia, however, they are popular in rituals for extending life and in funeral rites. Whether they reflect the diffusion of texts and practices directly from India prior to the relatively recent evolution of Theravāda orthodoxy, or were transmitted via Chinese along with Chinese migrations and cultural influence in the region, remains an open question. For a detailed study of these texts and their possible origins, see Cicuzza (ed.) 2018.
- n.21 Phangthangma (2003), p. 23. While the phrase *cho ga dang bcas pa* (Skt. *vidhisahitā*) is functionally equivalent to the phrase *rtog pa dang bcas pa* (Skt. *kalpasahitā*), we unfortunately have no way of knowing whether this text was or resembled the primary *uṣṇīṣavijayā* dhāraṇī text (Toh 597) with a ritual manual attached to it, or if it resembled the present text or any of the other works in the modern canons titled *Uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī-kalpasahitā* (i.e., Toh 594 or 595); Toh 596 is too short to correspond with the text identified in the Phangthangma as having 120 ślokas, and Toh 598 is an unlikely candidate because, while it shares the opening narrative with the other texts in this set, it seems to represent a separate, and later, ritual system. The Phangthangma also lists what may be a copy of the dhāraṇī alone, outside of the framework of a sūtra (Phangthangma, p. 31). The other imperial catalog, the Denkarma, lists only the primary *uṣṇīṣavijayā* dhāraṇī text, identified clearly as the text included in the later canons as Toh 597 by its full title in that catalog: the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī* (Lalou 1953, p. 327).
- n.22 Unlike many dhāraṇī texts (including Toh 597), which tend to appear both in the Tantra Collection and the Dhāraṇī Collection sections of the Kangyurs, the texts in the genre of dhāraṇī-kalpas seem to appear exclusively in the Tantra Collection section of the Kangyurs.
- n.23 The text is F 631, Phukdrak Kangyur, vol. 117 (rgyud, dza), F.224.a–231.a. It should be noted, however, that the version of the dhāraṇī preserved in F 631 differs from the dhāraṇī in the present text much more substantially than any of the versions in the mainstream Kangyurs.
- n.24 Probably Sumpa Lotsāwa Dharma Yontan (sum pa lo tsA ba dhar ma yon tan), a translator and teacher of Sakya Jetsun Drakpa Gyaltsen, but possibly his uncle, also called Sumpa Lotsāwa, Palchok Dangpö Dorje (dpal mchog dang po'i rdor rje). Both studied in Nepal. See Treasury of Lives (<https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Sumpa-Lotsawa-Darma-Yonten/1726>).

- n.25 The title of this text and the first part, through the presentation of the *dhāraṇī*, are exactly parallel with the opening of the longer Toh 594 and closely parallel with the opening of the very short Toh 596, though that text has made a number of emendations, improving upon some readings and making others even less smooth and more complicated. The text is likewise parallel with the opening of Toh 598, though that text has more extensively edited the opening and even some aspects of the *dhāraṇī* itself.
- n.26 *chos yang dag par sdud pa'i phug khang bzangs mchog*. The Sanskrit in the closely parallel text edited by Hidas reads *dharmasaṃgītimahāguhyaprāsāde* (Hidas 2020, p. 152). The Tibetan phrase is awkward, and it seems that there may have been some textual corruption. What has been rendered in Tibetan as *phug* seems to be *guhya* in the Sanskrit parallel; perhaps the Tibetan translators were reading *guhā*—which does translate to *phug*—rather than *guhya*. Although we cannot be sure that the surviving Sanskrit witnesses represent the older reading, they provide a more coherent reading than the one in our Tibetan witnesses, so we have translated this word following the Sanskrit, rather than the Tibetan witness.
- n.27 The text here is corrupt and appears to have transmitted a line slip, where a line from slightly lower in the text made its way incongruously to a place where it does not belong, rendering this sentence nonsensical. The Sanskrit text and the parallel passage in Toh 598 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh598.html#UT22084-090-042-43>) both lack this error, confirming that it is a textual corruption. We have relied upon Hidas' Sanskrit edition to repair the Tibetan text here. The Tibetan reads *de rnams kyi phyir 'khor gyi dkyil 'khor la nye bar gzigs te/ kun du gzigs pa'i dpal gyi* ***mtshan de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi gtsug tor rnam par rgyal ba zhes bya ba'i gzungs 'di bcang ba dang / bklags pa dang / gzhan la rgya cher yang dag par ston pa ni tshe ring ba sgrub par byed pa'i ched du'o***. The passage in bold has been incongruously lifted from its proper place several lines down in the text and added here. The Sanskrit passage lacks this error but also includes several additional words absent in the Tibetan. However, as the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts are not identical in other places in this parallel passage either, and since the Tibetan text makes perfect sense without these additional elements, we have not taken the liberty of adding them in the English translation. The Sanskrit passage, in Hidas' edition (with the elements absent in the Tibetan text indicated in bold), reads *teṣāṃ arthāya hitāya sukhāya imāṃ sarvataṭhāgatoṣṇīṣavijayā-nāma-dhāraṇīm dhārayed vācayed deśayet paryavāpnuyāt* ***parebhyaś ca vistareṇa samprakāśayet | dīrghāyuskāṇāṃ upādāyati*** (Hidas 2020, p. 152). The passage in Toh 598 reads *de rnams kyi don du tshe ring bar nye bar bsgrub par bya ba'i phyir/ de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi gtsug tor rnam*

par rgyal ma zhes bya ba'i gzungs 'di gzung bar bya/ gzhan la rgya cher yang dag par bstan par bya'o.

- n.28 *thams cad dang ldan pa.*
- n.29 *mama* is not present in Hidas' edition of the Sanskrit manuscripts.
- n.30 Hidas's edition of the Sanskrit reads *sarvatathāgatamātre*, a plausible variant unattested in Tibetan sources.
- n.31 There is some variation in this phrase across the Tibetan and Sanskrit sources. Toh 594, 597, and 596 read *sadā me*; this text, Toh 598, and Toh 984 read *me sadā*; and, Hidas' Sanskrit edition has *mama sadā*. The meaning is the same in all cases.
- n.32 The Yongle and Kangxi versions of this text include the line *sarvatathāgatasamayādhiṣṭhānādhiṣṭhite* here. The Degé version of Toh 597 includes the phrase *samantān mocaya mocaya ādhiṣṭhāna*, though it is absent in other canonical recensions of the same translation. Hidas's Sanskrit edition includes *sarvatathāgatahṛdayādhiṣṭhānādhiṣṭhite* at this point.
- n.33 *mām* is absent in Hidas' Sanskrit edition.
- n.34 Hidas has translated the dhāraṇī based on his edition, and rather than retranslate it, we give his translation here. Substantive variants between the Sanskrit basis for his translation and the Degé have been noted above. "Om veneration to the glorious Buddha distinguished in all the Three Worlds. Namely, om bhrūṃ bhrūṃ bhrūṃ, purge, purge, purify, purify, O Unequalled Enveloping Splendor Sparkle Destiny Sky, O the One of Purified Nature, O the One Purified by the Topknot Victory, let all Tathāgatas consecrate me with consecrations of the nectar of the excellent Sugata's words along with great seals and mantrapadas, om bring, bring, O the One who Nourishes Life, purge, purge, purify, purify, O the One Purified by Sky Nature, O the One Purified by the Topknot Victory, O the One Impelled by Thousand Rays, O the One Beholding all Tathāgatas, O the One Fulfilling the Six Perfections, O Mother of all Tathāgatas, O the One Established in the Ten Stages, O the One Empowered by the Empowerment of the Heart of all Tathāgatas, om O Seal, O Seal, O Great Seal, O the One Purified by the Firmness of the Vajra Body, O the One Purged of all Obscurations Resulting from Actions, turn back for me O Life-purged One, O the One Empowered by the Empowerment of the Vow of all Tathāgatas, om muni muni, mahāmuni, vimuni vimuni, mahāvimuni, mati mati, mahāmati, mamati, sumati, O the One Purified by Truth and the True Goal, O the One Purged by a Burst Open Mind, om he he, triumph triumph, succeed succeed, recollect recollect,

manifest manifest, expand expand, O the One Empowered by the Empowerment of all Buddhas, om̐ O Pure One, O Pure One, O Awakened One, O Awakened One, O Vajra, O Vajra, O Great Vajra, O Vajra-essence, O Victory-essence, O Triumph-essence, O Vajra-flame-essence, O Vajra-born, O Vajra-produced, O Vajra, O the One with a Vajra, let my body become a vajra and that of all beings, let there be body-purification for me and purification of all destinies, O the One Empowered by the Empowerment of the Heart of all Tathāgatas, let all Tathāgatas provide encouragement, om̐ awake awake, succeed succeed, awaken awaken, wake up, wake up, liberate liberate, release release, purge purge, purify purify, liberate completely, O the One Purified by an Enveloping Ray, O the One Empowered by the Empowerment of the Heart of all Tathāgatas, om̐ O Seal O Seal, O Great Seal, O Great Seal and Mantrapada svāhā” (Hidas 2020, p. 154). The exact parallel with Toh 594 that began with the start of the text ends here (Toh 594 (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh594.html#UT22084-090-038-49>), folio 230.b.6), but further parallels with a different section of Toh 594 (<http://read.84000.co/translation/toh594.html#UT22084-090-038-99>) (folio 233.b.7) begin again immediately with the line starting “Child of noble family...”

- n.35 The Tibetan text reads *'dzin pa* (“holder”), while the parallel Sanskrit text edited by Hidas reads *-nivāraṇī* (“destroyer”) (Hidas 2020, p. 153). Moreover, three of Hidas’ Sanskrit witnesses here read *-harā*, also meaning “destroyer” (ibid., p. 161n142). Given the lack of sense in the Tibetan passage and the consistency of meaning in the Sanskrit witnesses, this translation follows the Sanskrit reading.
- n.36 *kham phor kha sbyar gyi nang du*. Here we follow the Stok, Narthang, Choné, Urga, and Lhasa Kangyurs, which read *kham phor* (“clay cup”), rather than the Degé, which reads the nonsensical *kham por*.
- n.37 All recensions consulted repeat “twenty-one” twice, reading *nyi shu rtsa gcig rtsa gcig*, but when the same thing happens in a passage below the extraneous *rtsa gcig* is not present in the Yongle and Kangxi Kangyurs, so we have emended the text and omitted it here, too.
- n.38 Here the text first brings up the name of the second dhāraṇī that is taught in this text: the *dhāraṇī of limitless life* (*tshe dpag tu med pa*), which is also the name of the Buddha Amitāyus. Presumably the benefits mentioned from here on refer to that dhāraṇī, which is itself taught by the Buddha Amitāyus below.
- n.39 Here we follow the Choné Kangyur, which reads *lan nyi shu rtsa gcig*, rather than the Degé Kangyur, which reads *lan nyi shu rtsa gcig rtsa gcig*.

- n.40 The term *'od dpag tu med pa*, which is translated here as “light rays” because it is part of a larger phrase, is also the name of the Buddha Amitābha, of whom Amitāyus is generally understood to be simply a different form.
- n.41 There appears to have been considerable confusion—especially, but not exclusively, in Tibetan—in the transmission of this dhāraṇī, which also appears in the parallel passage in Toh 594 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh594.html#UT22084-090-038-115>). Here, in Toh 595, the Degé recension correctly transmits the dhāraṇī with the words *amṛte*, *amṛtodbhave*, and so forth, whereas the Degé recension of Toh 594 consistently reads *amite*, *amitodbhave*, etc. The dhāraṇī as preserved in these two works in other Kangyurs varies between the two readings, sometimes even giving both readings at various places in the dhāraṇī, e.g., *amṛte amitodbhave*. A Sanskrit recension of a very similar (but not identical) Amitābha dhāraṇī preserved in a tenth-century manuscript from Dunhuang consistently reads *amṛte amṛtodbhave*, etc. (see Hidas 2014, pp. 110–11). In his edition of that dhāraṇī, Hidas also cites other Sanskrit sources (the *Mahāpratisarā*, *Sādhanaṃālā*, and *Sarvādurgatipariśodhana*, which include portions of the dhāraṇī with the forms *amṛte*, etc. Hidas 2014, p. 111n42 and n43 and p. 112n47). He also, however, cites the *Uṣṇīṣavijayāsādhana* in the *Sādhanaṃālā*, which preserves the readings *amite amitodbhave*, etc. (See Hidas 2014, p. 112n47). The version preserved in the modern Tibetan tradition, in most cases, of a short part of this dhāraṇī (also found below in the present text) that is associated with Uṣṇīṣavijayā reads *om amṛta āyurdade svāhā*, likewise using the form *amṛta*. On the preponderance of the evidence, we have thus adopted the reading *amṛte* here.
- n.42 The parallel passage in Toh 594 (<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh594.html#UT22084-090-038-115>) here adds *amṛtasambhave*, but this is absent in all recensions of our text.
- n.43 We have emended from the Degé reading here, *āyurdate*, to the theoretically more “correct” form *āyurdatte* on the basis that the latter is attested later in this same text, in the extract from this dhāraṇī repeated below at 1.26. However, it should be noted that the alternative spelling *āyurdade*, attested only in the Stok Palace and Phukdrak Kangyurs for this text at this point, is common elsewhere in this group of Uṣṇīṣavijayā texts, and seems to be the preponderant form in use in numerous sādhanas and other texts in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. See also n.49.
- n.44 We read *kariye* following the Yongle, Lithang, Peking, and Choné Kangyurs and the parallel passage from Toh 594

(<https://read.84000.co/translation/toh594.html#UT22084-090-038-115>),
rather than *karīye* in the Degé.

- n.45 *de'i ring bsrel gyi snying po can du byas te*. This translation is tentative.
- n.46 *tshe dang blo ster ba'i yon byin te*. This translation is tentative.
- n.47 *stong phrag gcig nas brtsams te ji srid lnga'am gcig gi bar du'o*. This line is perplexing, and we remain unclear about the number of caityas that the text is instructing the practitioner to make.
- n.48 *rang dang 'dra ba*.
- n.49 The spelling *amṛtāyurdade*, which is the preponderant form for this mantra in later Tibetan works, is attested for this text only in the Stok Palace, Shey, and Phukdrak Kangyurs. See also [n.43](#).
- n.50 The fact that “life-extending and intelligence-sharpening” here refers to the additional dhāraṇī *om amṛtāyurdatte svāhā* is suggested by the passage above, which refers to that dhāraṇī with precisely that phrase in the context of adding it to the main *uṣṇīṣavijayā* dhāraṇī.
- n.51 The Sanskrit word for “glory” is *śrī*, and the Sanskrit word for “wood apple” is *śrīphala* (“the *śrī* fruit”).
- n.52 This text has no translator’s colophon. However, Toh 594, which is nearly identical to this text apart from some variations (it has been ever-so-slightly edited for clarity by employing infrequent substitutions of different types of connective particles, using the less archaic form of a word, and so forth), *does* have a translator’s colophon, which reads, “It was translated, edited, and finalized by the scholar Dharmasena and by Khampa Lotsāwa, the monk Bari.” This suggests that Toh 595 was translated by the same team.

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 Acala
 mi g.yo ba
 མི་གཡོ་བ།
 acala

g.2 Agni

me lha

མེ་ལྷ།

agni

The fire god.

g.3 **Amitābha**

'od dpag tu med pa

འོད་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པ།

amitābha

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The buddha of the western buddhafiield of Sukhāvatī, where fortunate beings are reborn to make further progress toward spiritual maturity.

Amitābha made his great vows to create such a realm when he was a bodhisattva called Dharmākara. In the Pure Land Buddhist tradition, popular in East Asia, aspiring to be reborn in his buddha realm is the main emphasis; in other Mahāyāna traditions, too, it is a widespread practice. For a detailed description of the realm, see *The Display of the Pure Land of Sukhāvatī*, Toh 115. In some tantras that make reference to the five families he is the tathāgata associated with the lotus family.

Amitābha, “Infinite Light,” is also known in many Indian Buddhist works as Amitāyus, “Infinite Life.” In both East Asian and Tibetan Buddhist traditions he is often conflated with another buddha named “Infinite Life,”

Aparimitāyus, or “Infinite Life and Wisdom,” Aparimitāyurjñāna, the shorter version of whose name has also been back-translated from Tibetan into Sanskrit as Amitāyus but who presides over a realm in the zenith. For details on the relation between these buddhas and their names, see *The Aparimitāyurjñāna Sūtra* (1) Toh 674, i.9.

g.4 **Amitāyus**

tshe dpag tu med pa

ཚེ་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པ།

amitāyus

The buddha residing in the western buddha realm of Sukhāvatī, he is also sometimes identified with Amitābha. More commonly translated into Tibetan as *tshe dpag med*.

g.5 **asura**

lha ma yin

ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།

asura

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.6 Avalokiteśvara

spyān ras gzigs

སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས།

avalokiteśvara

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.7 blessed one

bcom ldan 'das

བཙུན་ལྷན་འདས།

bhagavān

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

the four māras.” This is achieved either by reading *bhagavat* as *bhagnavat* (“one who broke”), or by tracing the word *bhaga* to the root *√bhañj* (“to break”).

g.8 **caitya**

mchod rten

མཚན་རྟེན།

caitya

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The Tibetan translates both *stūpa* and *caitya* with the same word, *mchod rten*, meaning “basis” or “recipient” of “offerings” or “veneration.” Pali: *cetiya*.

A *caitya*, although often synonymous with *stūpa*, can also refer to any site, sanctuary or shrine that is made for veneration, and may or may not contain relics.

A *stūpa*, literally “heap” or “mound,” is a mounded or circular structure usually containing relics of the Buddha or the masters of the past. It is considered to be a sacred object representing the awakened mind of a buddha, but the symbolism of the *stūpa* is complex, and its design varies throughout the Buddhist world. *Stūpas* continue to be erected today as objects of veneration and merit making.

g.9 **cakra**

’khor lo

འཁོར་ལོ།

cakra

A wheel.

g.10 **dhāraṇī**

gzungs

གཟུངས།

dhāraṇī

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.11 Dharma Proclamation

chos yang dag par sdud pa

ཆོས་ཡང་དག་པར་སྟུང་པ།

dharmasaṃgīti

A secret palace in Sukhāvatī.

g.12 Four World-Protectors

'jig rten skyong ba bzhi

འཇིག་རྟེན་སྐྱོང་བ་བཞི།

caturlokapāla

Four deities at the base of Mount Meru, each one the guardian of his direction: Vaiśravaṇa in the north, Dhṛtarāṣṭra in the East, Virūpākṣa in the west, and Virūḍhaka in the south.

g.13 homa

sbyin sreg

སྟེན་སྲེག

homa

The casting of a prescribed offering into a ritual fire. The practice of homa is first attested in pre-Buddhist Vedic literature and serves as a core, pervasive ritual paradigm in exoteric and esoteric rites in both Buddhist and non-Buddhist traditions into modern times. In Buddhist esoteric rites, the ritual offerings are made repeatedly, with each throw accompanied by a single repetition of the respective mantra.

g.14 kalpa

rtog pa

རྟོག་པ།

kalpa

A ritual manual.

g.15 Kāmarāja

'dod pa'i rgyal po

འདོད་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

kāmarāja

g.16 lower rebirths

ngan 'gro

དན་འགྲོ།

durgati

Lower rebirths within cyclic existence.

g.17 Mahābala

stobs po che

སྟོབས་པོ་ཆེ།

mahābala

g.18 Nīladaṇḍa

dbyug pa sngon po

དབྱུག་པ་སྟོན་པོ།

nīladaṇḍa

g.19 Padmapāṇi

pad+ma 'chang · pad+ma

པདྨ་འཆང་། · པདྨ།

padmapāṇi

An epithet of Avalokiteśvara.

g.20 pure abodes

gnas gtsang ma

གནས་གཙང་མ།

śuddhāvāsa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The five Pure Abodes are the highest heavens of the Form Realm (*rūpadhātu*). They are called “pure abodes” because ordinary beings (*prthagjana*; *so so'i skye bo*) cannot be born there; only those who have achieved the fruit of a non-returner (*anāgāmin*; *phyir mi 'ong*) can be born there. A summary presentation of them is found in the third chapter of Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*, although they are repeatedly mentioned as a set in numerous sūtras, tantras, and vinaya texts.

The five Pure Abodes are the last five of the seventeen levels of the Form Realm. Specifically, they are the last five of the eight levels of the upper Form Realm—which corresponds to the fourth meditative concentration (*dhyāna; bsam gtan*)—all of which are described as “immovable” (*akopya; mi g.yo ba*) since they are never destroyed during the cycles of the destruction and reformation of a world system. In particular, the five are Abṛha (*mi che ba*), the inferior heaven; Atapa (*mi gdung ba*), the heaven of no torment; Sudṛśa (*gya nom snang*), the heaven of sublime appearances; Sudarśana (*shin tu mthong*), the heaven of the most beautiful to behold; and Akaniṣṭha (*’og min*), the highest heaven.

Yaśomitra explains their names, stating: (1) because those who abide there can only remain for a fixed amount of time, before they are plucked out (*√bṛh, bṛṃhanti*) of that heaven, or because it is not as extensive (*abrṃhita*) as the others in the pure realms, that heaven is called the inferior heaven (*abrṛha; mi che ba*); (2) since the afflictions can no longer torment (*√tap, tapanti*) those who reside there because of their having attained a particular samādhi, or because their state of mind is virtuous, they no longer torment (*√tap, tāpayanti*) others, this heaven, consequently, is called the heaven of no torment (*atapa; mi gdung ba*); (3) since those who reside there have exceptional (*suṣṭhu*) vision because what they see (*√dṛś, darśana*) is utterly pure, that heaven is called the heaven of sublime appearances (*sudṛśa; gya nom snang*); (4) because those who reside there are beautiful gods, that heaven is called the heaven of the most beautiful to behold (*sudarśana; shin tu mthong*); and (5) since it is not lower (*na kaniṣṭhā*) than any other heaven because there is no other place superior to it, this heaven is called the highest heaven (*akaniṣṭha; ’og min*) since it is the uppermost.

g.21 rākṣasa

srin po

མྱུ་ཁྲོ་

rākṣasa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

A class of nonhuman beings that are often, but certainly not always, considered demonic in the Buddhist tradition. They are often depicted as flesh-eating monsters who haunt frightening places and are ugly and evil-natured with a yearning for human flesh, and who additionally have miraculous powers, such as being able to change their appearance.

g.22 Realm of the Lord of Death

gshin rje'i 'jig rten

གཤམ་རྒྱུ་འཛིན་རྟེན།

yamaloka

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

The land of the dead ruled over by the Lord of Death. In Buddhism it refers to the *preta* realm, where beings generally suffer from hunger and thirst, which in traditional Brahmanism is the fate of those departed without descendants to make ancestral offerings.

g.23 **sādhana**

sgrub pa'i thabs

སྒྲུབ་པའི་ཐབས།

sādhana

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

Derived from the Sanskrit verb *√sādh*, “to accomplish,” the term *sādhana* most generically refers to any method that brings about the accomplishment of a desired goal. In Buddhist literature, the term is often specifically applied to tantric practices that involve ritual engagement with deities, mantra recitation, the visualized creation and dissolution of deity maṇḍalas, etc. Sādhana is aimed at both actualizing spiritual attainments (*siddhi*) and reaching liberation. The Tibetan translation *sgrub thabs* means “method of accomplishment.”

g.24 **Śakra**

brgya byin

བརྒྱ་བྱིན།

śakra

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.25 **samādhi**

ting nge 'dzin

ཏིང་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 *Mahāvīryūtpatti* 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.26 Sukhāvatī

bde ba can

བདེ་བ་ཅན།

sukhāvātī

Amitābha’s pure realm.

g.27 tathāgata

de bzhin gshegs pa

དེ་བཞིན་གསེགས་པ།

tathāgata

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

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

g.28 universal monarch

’khor los sgyur ba

འཁྲ་བའི་སྐྱུར་བ།

cakravartin

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

An ideal monarch or emperor who, as the result of the merit accumulated in previous lifetimes, rules over a vast realm in accordance with the Dharma. Such a monarch is called a *cakravartin* because he bears a wheel (*cakra*) that rolls (*varṭate*) across the earth, bringing all lands and kingdoms under his power. The *cakravartin* conquers his territory without causing harm, and his activity causes beings to enter the path of wholesome actions. According to Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*, just as with the buddhas, only one *cakravartin* appears in a world system at any given time. They are likewise endowed with the thirty-two major marks of a great being (*mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa*), but a *cakravartin*'s marks are outshined by those of a buddha. They possess seven precious objects: the wheel, the elephant, the horse, the wish-fulfilling gem, the queen, the general, and the minister. An illustrative passage about the *cakravartin* and his possessions can be found in *The Play in Full* (Toh 95), 3.3–3.13.

Vasubandhu lists four types of *cakravartins*: (1) the *cakravartin* with a golden wheel (*suvarṇacakravartin*) rules over four continents and is invited by lesser kings to be their ruler; (2) the *cakravartin* with a silver wheel (*rūpyacakravartin*) rules over three continents and his opponents submit to him as he approaches; (3) the *cakravartin* with a copper wheel (*tāmracakravartin*) rules over two continents and his opponents submit themselves after preparing for battle; and (4) the *cakravartin* with an iron wheel (*ayaścakravartin*) rules over one continent and his opponents submit themselves after brandishing weapons.

g.29 uṣṇīṣa

gtsug tor

ཕུལ་ཏོར།

uṣṇīṣa

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the thirty-two signs, or major marks, of a great being. In its simplest form it is a pointed shape of the head like a turban (the Sanskrit term, *uṣṇīṣa*, in fact means “turban”), or more elaborately a dome-shaped extension. The extension is described as having various extraordinary attributes such as emitting and absorbing rays of light or reaching an immense height.

g.30 vajra

rdo rje

ནཱྀྲ།

vajra

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

This term generally indicates indestructibility and stability. In the sūtras, *vajra* most often refers to the hardest possible physical substance, said to have divine origins. In some scriptures, it is also the name of the all-powerful weapon of Indra, which in turn is crafted from vajra material. In the tantras, the vajra is sometimes a scepter-like ritual implement, but the term can also take on other esoteric meanings.

g.31 Vajradhara

rdo rje 'chang

ནཱྀྲ་འཇམ་ལ།

vajradhara

In the context of this text, Vajradhara is another name for Vajrapāṇi.

g.32 Vajrapāṇi

lag na rdo rje · phyag na rdo rje

ལག་ནཱྀྲ་ེ། · ཕྱག་ནཱྀྲ་ེ།

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.33 well-gone one

bde bar gshegs pa

བདེ་བར་གསེགས་པ།

sugata

Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:

One of the standard epithets of the buddhas. A recurrent explanation offers three different meanings for *su-* that are meant to show the special qualities of “accomplishment of one’s own purpose” (*svārthasampad*) for a complete buddha. Thus, the Sugata is “well” gone, as in the expression *su-rūpa* (“having a good form”); he is gone “in a way that he shall not come back,” as in the expression *su-naṣṭa-jvara* (“a fever that has utterly gone”); and he has

gone “without any remainder” as in the expression *su-pūrṇa-ghaṭa* (“a pot that is completely full”). According to Buddhaghosa, the term means that the way the Buddha went (Skt. *gata*) is good (Skt. *su*) and where he went (Skt. *gata*) is good (Skt. *su*).

g.34 yakṣa

gnod sbyin

གནོད་སྦྱིན།

yakṣa

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.