The *Dhāraṇī*s of *Mahāvyutpatti #748*: Origin and Formation

Ulrich Pagel

School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

ABSTRACT: This paper aims to identify the sources of a list of twelve *dhāraṇī*s included in Rubric 748 of the *Mahāvyutpatti*. It produces evidence connecting this group with three similar *dhāraṇī* enumerations transmittted in the *Ratnamegha*, *Tathāgataguṇa-jñānācintyaviṣayāvatāranirdeśa* and *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśa*. The exposition of the *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśa* is particularly valuable since it preserves one of the earliest and most detailed discussions of *dhāraṇī* practice in Mahāyāna *sūtra*s. The *Ratnamegha* is closest to the *Mahāvyutpatti* and thus the most likely source for its list.

THE *MAHĀVYUTPATTI*

The *Mahāvyutpatti* ranks probably among the best-known and most widely used lexicons in Indo-Tibetan philology. It is consulted routinely in Buddhological research mapping Tibet's vast repository of *sūtra*s and *śāstra*s, brought together in the bKa' 'gyur and bsTan 'gyur. It is also an important source for the study of Sanskrit grammar in Tibet (Verhagen 1988, 23; 1994, 9–45, esp. 15–19; 1997, 1017) and some of its compilers have even been linked to historical events during the Yarlung dynasty. As it provides Tibetan equivalents for almost ten thousand Sanskrit terms and expressions transmitted in Indian Buddhist texts, the *Mahāvyutpatti* stands at the centre of a complex matrix connecting the Buddhist cultures of the two countries. Its prominence both as a lexicon and conceptual node for thousands of scriptures gave the *Mahāvyutpatti*, and its affiliate treatises, significant research exposure. It is available in three modern editions (Sakaki 1962; Ishihama & Fukuda 1989; Sárközi 1995) derived from Tibetan and Mongolian sources.

Although the *Mahāvyutpatti* was produced in a period of Tibet's history that is not particularly well documented, we possess a fairly good understanding of its purpose, funding, authorship and date of compilation. Since most of this is readily accessible in Tibetological publications, I give here no more than the briefest of summaries as a frame for our *dhāraṇī* investigation. The *Mahāvyutpatti* (Tib. (*sGra) Bye brag tu rtogs (par) byed (pa) chen mo/po*) consists of 9492 entries divided into

283 semantic rubrics (Ishihama & Fukuda 1989).[1] Each entry consists of a Sanskrit term (or expression) and a Tibetan equivalent. Although the *Mahāvyutpatti* is not dated, it is usually linked with the reign of King Khri-lde-sroṅ-bstan (CE 798–800, 802–815) and his successor Khri-gtsug-lde-btsan (CE 815–841) (Simonsson 1957, 239–42).[2] King Khri-lde-sroṅ-bstan commissioned the work in order to standardize Tibet's translation language. He did so on the advice of ministers and councillors who judged the available idioms inadequate to achieve consistent renderings of Sanskrit technical terminology.

Almost overnight, the *Mahāvyutpatti* assumed a key role in the centrally decreed (*bkas bcad*) revision/redaction process (*źu chen*) designed to regularise current methods of translation. It was complemented by two other registers (*vyutpatti*) of similar function: the *Madhyavyutpatti* (Tib. *sGra sbyor bam (po) gñis (pa)*) and **Svalpavyutpatti* (Tib. *Bye brag tu rtogs byed chuṅ ṅu*). The latter is now lost, but was still available in Bu-ston's days during the mid-fourteenth century (Ruegg 1998, 121, n.13).[3] Of the three, the *Madhyavyutpatti* is best understood. Its content, purpose and redactional principles are discussed in a good number of articles.[4] The bsTan 'gyur colophon lists the people who participated in the compilation this work. They include many of the most prominent scholars and translators of the day. The Indian contingent consisted of Jinamitra, Surendrabodhi, Śīlendrabodhi, Dānaśīla and Bodhimitra. In addition, the King sequested the services of six Tibetan scholars: Ratnarakṣita, Dharmatāśīla,[5] Jñānasena (i.e. Źaṅ sNa

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1. Sakaki arrives at a slightly higher figure (9565) largely based on lexicographic and orthographic variants encountered in the Tibetan. Throughout this paper, I use the edition prepared by Ishihama & Fukuda. This edition does not give separate numbers to the rubrics but integrates them in the overall sequence. Thus, Rubric 748 in Ishihama & Fukuda corresponds to Sakaki Rubric 25. Since Ishihama & Fukuda do not number the rubrics separately, each of the rubrics is simultaneously an entry, e.g. Rubric 748 is also listed as Entry 748, but has twelve subentries (#749–60).

2. On the dates of the Tibetan kings from CE 756 to 815, see now Dotson (forthcoming).

3. Rol-pa'i rdo-rje, in his *Dag yig mkhas pa'i 'byuṅ gnas*, lists the **Svalpavyutpatti* among the works essential for translating Tibetan texts into Mongolian. If this attestation is reliable and Rol-pa'i rdo-rje actually consulted the 'minor register', rather than reporting its usefulness in the abstract, the **Svalpavyutpatti* would have still been extant in eighteenth-century Peking. But because he cites it together with eleven other grammatical treatises and lexicons, including the *Mahāvyutpatti* and *Madhyavyutpatti*, he may simply have included it for completeness. I do not think that this passage alone gives sufficient grounds to assume that the **Svalpavyutpatti* survived that long (Taube 1978, 184–5). For a slightly different interpretation of this passage, see Simonsson (1957, 227–8).

4. Most of these are listed in Hu-von Hinüber (1997a). Others appear in Verhagen (1994) and Ruegg (1998). Since the *Madhyavyutpatti* has little bearing on the remit of the current investigation, I refer to it only in passing without full bibliographic survey. Even though the *Madhyavyutpatti* is closely allied with the *Mahāvyutpatti* in purpose and composition, it does not help us to trace the latter's content since it was primarily put together to explain the Tibetan translations chosen for a given Sanskrit *Mahāvyutpatti* expression. It does not address the provenance of any of the 413 entries on which it comments.

5. The latter two participated in the translation of the *Ratnamegha-sūtra* (mDo sde, Wa, 112v7). The importance of this will become clear in due course.

nam Ye śes sde), Jayarakṣita, Mañjuśrīvarman and Ratnendraśīla (Simonsson 1957, 241). The *Mahāvyutpatti* required an even larger team. bsTan 'gyur catalogues record that it 'was made by many translators and pandits' (*lo paṇ maṅ pos mdzad pa*) (Ruegg 1998, 120).[6] Since the catalogues give us neither the names nor overall number of participants, the staffing of its team remains unresolved. Most believe that the *Mahāvyutpatti* was put together by the same group that compiled the *Madhyavyutpatti*, perhaps enlarged through more Tibetans contributing in the burgeoning translation effort. Regardless of the actual size of the team, it was clearly a major project that would have required the combined resources of most scholars working at the royal court in that period.

SOURCES OF THE *MAHĀVYUTPATTI*

Tradition tells us that much about the circumstances of its compilation. It is not a great deal, but at least we get some sense of the scale of the project. Our sources yield less about the texts from which the Sanskrit expressions were taken. The colophon of the *Madhyavyutpatti* notes that they were brought together (*bris*) into a register (*dkar chag*), fixed as technical terms (*miṅ du btags pa*), translated from the Indian language into Tibetan, as they appear in the Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna (*… theg pa che chuṅ las 'byuṅ ba'i rgya gar gyi skad las bod kyi skad du bsgyur źiṅ miṅ du btags pa rnams dkar chag tu bris te*) (Simonsson 1957, 241). Vajrayāna materials, it would seem, were not consulted. While this narrows down the field, we are still left with a large pool of source candidates, spanning several hundred works.

Scholarship has made little headway in identifying the texts that sourced the contents of the three *vyutpatti*s (Taube 1978, 167). It is generally assumed that the terms were taken from the vast corpus of manuscripts that reached Tibet from India, Nepal and Central Asia in the eighth and ninth centuries.[7] This is of course probable but too broad to be of much use. The titles of some of the rubrics in the *Mahāvyutpatti* allow us to be more specific. Five headings reveal the provenance of the expressions they accommodate: (1) Mvy #7654 derives from the *Buddhāvataṃsaka*, (2) Mvy #7779 from the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, (3) Mvy #7912 from the *Lalitavistara,* and (4) Mvy #8695 from the *Pravrajyāvastu* (Eimer 1985). (5) Mvy #504 lists 118 meditations (*samādhi*) supposedly derived from Prajñāpāramitā texts (*śes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i naṅ nas 'byuṅ ba'i tiṅ ṅe 'dzin gyi miṅ la*), but does not reveal a specific source.

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6. Rin-chen bkra-śis, the author of the seventeenth-century *Li śi gur khaṅ* reports that the *Mahāvyutpatti* was composed 'during the reign of King Khri Ral-pa-can by sKa (-ba dPal brtsegs), Chog (-ro Klu'i rgyal-mtshan), Źaṅ (-ban Ye śes sde) and others'. In later Tibetan accounts, the first two are often cited as the sole authors of the *Madhyavyutpatti.* Their contribution to the *Mahāvyutpatti* remains therefore somewhat uncertain (Taube 1978, 174, n.29).

7. Berthold Laufer (1898, 548) was perhaps the first to come to this conclusion.

We possess some information about the origin of the *vinaya* section (Mvy #8170–9413). Hu-von Hinüber linked one whole rubric (Mvy #9036) and several expressions within another section (Mvy #9200: 9263–9289) to Guṇaprabha's *Vinayasūtra* and *Vinayasūtravṛtti*.[8] Unless the compilers of the *Mahāvyutpatti* had access to a redaction of the Mūlasarvāstivāda-*vinaya* that is no longer available, Guṇaprabha enjoyed seemingly greater esteem than the *vinaya* itself (Hu-von Hinüber 1997b, 343–4). Hu-von Hinüber's findings widen the field and compel us to include also non-canonical treatises within the purview of our investigation.

Since the *Mahāvyutpatti* contains almost ten thousand entries assembled by a dozen or more scholars from hundreds of translations, we have little choice but to examine each of its rubrics on its own. In order to give structure to this process, I propose to divide the rubrics into three genres. First, there are those that reproduce established lists. Enumerations of this kind, in particular if their content is rare or unusual, are easier to trace than groups that consist of common expressions. The 17 titles of the *Vinayavastu*, now linked to the *Vinayasūtra*, belong to this category. Second, other lists have a specific but widely used content, such as Mvy #232 'About the names of the thirty-two physical characteristics of a *Mahāpuruṣa*'. Since this list was codified early and appears in similar form in numerous texts, it would probably be very difficult to connect it to any one particular source. Third, there are a good number of sections without Indian precedent. These were put together by the team and consist of expressions drawn from a range of texts. Their composite nature renders them untraceable as a whole. It might still be possible to identify within them individual subgroups, but this would require a very substantial search effort. The third category includes, for example, the epithets of the *Tathāgata* in Mvy #81, the list of 104 titles of Buddhist scriptures in Mvy #1329 and the extensive inventory of *śrāvaka* qualities reproduced in Mvy #1077. Since the last type offers no real prospect of identification, I propose to concentrate on those lists with an established, stable content. At the hub of my search I place Mahāyāna *sūtra*s. Since the *Mahāvyutpatti* was conceived at a time when Mahāyāna spirituality was still a key concern to Tibet's ruling class, a large proportion of its resources set aside for religious patronage were directed towards the translation of its texts.[9] As a result, Mahāyāna *sūtra*s would have been a natural first port of call, offering an abundant supply of Sanskrit expressions. Furthermore, the *Mahāvyutpatti*'s very purpose was of course to systematize the language used in the translation effort. This would have tied its content intrisically to the texts whose translation it was designed to facilitate.

To begin with, we need to select a suitable Category I list. Ideally, it should consist of a set of prominent and conspicuous yet relatively rare expressions.

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8. Hu-von Hinüber 1997a; 1997b. The second publication (1997b) is particularly useful since its notes give a number of good leads to previous research on the *Mahāvyutpatti* and its commentary, the *Madhyavyutpatti*.

9. Many of these translations are recorded in the Ldan-dkar-ma catalogue, named after the palace where a large part of the translation activity took place (Lalou 1953).

It is important for them to stand out in order to allow ready identification. But they must not be too popular either since this would make it very difficult to establish their precise origin. I spotted such a list while mapping the different functions of *dhāraṇīs*. A handful of *sūtras* preserve short enumerations of *dhāraṇī*s practised by *bodhisattva*s in the more advanced stages of the path. Some of these resemble a *dhāraṇī* list included in the *Mahāvyutpatti* (#748). In one text the concurrence is complete, in others only partial. Three of them are probably related and served as prototype for the *Mahāvyutpatti dhāraṇī*s. But we are now jumping ahead of ourselves. Let us first examine the *Mahāvyutpatti* list and its environment.

Mahāvyutpatti #748 consists of twelve *dhāraṇī*s all attributed to *bodhisattvas*. It is surrounded by five other groups of *bodhisattva* practice. These include a group of nine *bodhisattva* meditations (*samādhi*) (#738), twelve *bodhisattva* powers (*bala*) (#761), ten *bodhisattva* abilities (*vaśitā*) (#772), four *bodhisattva* assurances (*vaiśāradya*) (#783) and eighteen exclusive *bodhisattva* qualities (*āveṇika dharma*) (#788). At first sight, the five seem familiar since sets of practices with identical titles and similar scope feature in many Mahāyāna *sūtra*s. But this is deceptive. First, in the *sūtra*s these practices are usually associated with the *tathāgata*, not with the *bodhisattva*. Secondly, their content is completely different. The two must therefore not be conflated.[10] Since the *Mahāvyutpatti* positions the six groups next to each other, they probably serve as a catalogue of minor practices and complement the ten perfections (*pāramitā*) cited elsewhere (#915). Despite their prominence in the *Mahāvyutpatti*, little has been written about these *bodhisattva dharma*s. Apart from Étienne Lamotte, Sylvain Lévi and Franklin Edgerton, nobody seems to have even noticed them.[11] What is their origin and how, if really so obscure, did they end up in the *Mahāvyutpatti*? Do they derive from the *tathāgata* qualities or constitute a separate tradition?

The first 'modern' reference to these six categories appears in Lévi's translation of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* (1911, 27, n.3). In an attempt to explain two sets of powers (*bala*) and assurances (*vaiśāradya*) that, according to the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, signal membership in the *tathāgata* family (*gotra*), Lévi points to lists with identical titles (both for the *buddha* and *bodhisattva*) in the *Mahāvyutpatti*. He does not know what to make of them though, calling the *bodhisattva vaiśāradya* 'une list fort obscure'. Edgerton's discussion does not go much further. Although he cites all six, because he aligns them, like Lévi before him, with the *tathāgata* qualities,

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10. The *tathāgata* qualities appear themselves in Mvy #117–347. For a canonical discussion of these attributes, turn, for example, to the *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśa* where they are called *tathāgata* activity (mDo sde, Pa, 185r6–216v1). The *Bodhisattvapiṭaka-sūtra* contains a similar exposition (dKon brtsegs, Ga, 8r6–48v6). I analyse these parallels in more detail later on. All references to the Tibetan bKa' 'gyur and bsTan 'gyur are to the sDe dge Edition (Taipei) prepared under the supervision of A. W. Barber (1991). In the transliteration of Tibetan terms, I follow the Library of Congress system.

11. I discuss their interpretation, for what it is worth, further below. But we should not pitch our expectations too high, since none of the three has much to say about those practices.

he soon gets stuck. The *bala* and *āveṇika* lists, Edgerton reports, are 'wholly dif-ferent'[12] from everything else he has seen and he describes the *samādhi* list as an 'ad hoc invention' (1953, 569). Lamotte's analysis yields a little more. He identifies four texts that contain references to our *bodhisattva dharmas* (*Śuraṃgamasamādhi, Buddhāvataṃsaka, Vikurvaṇarājaparipṛcchā* and *Ratnamegha*) but does not probe their connection with the *Mahāvyutpatti* (1970–81: 1605–8).[13] To Lamotte these practices are relatively late, in particular if compared to the age of the *buddha* attributes (p. 1606).

Today, fifty years on, we can say a great deal more about the *bodhisattva dhar-mas* and their sources. References to the six categories occur in half a dozen *sūtras*. The most important remains the *Ratnameghasūtra* (Rtm), as it contains the full set.[14] Other material is buried in the expositions of the *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānir-deśa* and *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviṣayāvatāranirdeśa*. Their accounts, in turn are complemented by a handful of citations from the *Gaṇḍavyūha, Sāgaranāgarājapari-pṛcchā, Akṣayamatiparipṛcchā, Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā, Daśasahāsrikā* and *Śatasahāsrikā Prajñāpāramitā*. Let us begin with the *Ratnamegha*.

THE *BODHISATTVA DHARMA*S OF THE *RATNAMEGHA*

The *Ratnamegha* has long been recognized to rank among the most authorita-tive Mahāyāna *sūtra*s. It is available in four Chinese translations (T. 489, T. 658, T. 659, T.660), an eighth-century Tibetan translation (sDe dge no. 231) and a large number of extracts in Sanskrit preserved in Buddhist exegetical literature. A quick glance at commentarial sources within arm's reach shows that it is cited in many places. Śāntideva, for example, quotes from the *Ratnamegha* no less than 29 times in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* (Bendall 1897–1902, 7.13, etc.).[15] The *sūtra* appears also four times in the *Akṣayamatinirdeśaṭīkā*[16] and *Bhāvanākrama* (Tucci 1978, 514.14, 530.8–9, 531.23, 533.18), three times in the *Sūtrasamuccaya* (Pāsādika 1989, 69.6, 93.22, 136.6), twice in the *Abhisamayālaṃkārālokā Prajñāpāramitā* (Wogihara 1932, 64.8–9, 960.6) and once each in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* (La Vallée Poussin [1907–12] 1970b,

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12. To be fair, Edgeton refers to a parallel listing in the *Dharmasaṅgraha* (Müller & Wenzel 1885, §74) and *Daśabhūmika* (Rahder 1926, 70.8–18) for the *vaśitā*s but his other leads are of little value, since they point to occurrences of the root term (*vaśitā, bala, dhāraṇī, samādhi*, etc.) without context.

13. At first sight, these references appear promising. However, three of the four *sūtra*s transmit only the names of the categories. Their content is quite different. The *Ratnamegha* is the only one that preserves the titles as well as the individual practices cited in the *Mahāvyutpatti* cat-egories.

14. I would like to thank Peter Skilling for drawing my attention to this parallel. Without this cru-cial lead, my investigation would have taken a very different direction.

15. For a full list, see Bendall (1897–1902, 380).

16. bsTan 'gyur, mDo sde, Ci, 66r5, 101r5–v4, 125r1–4, 125v7–126r2.

13.12)[17] and *Prasannapadā* (La Vallée Poussin [1903–1913] 1970a, 225.7). No doubt, a more systematic search would yield numerous other citations.

Most sections of the *Ratnamegha* are devoted to the *bodhisattva* path. Its exposition is broken down into about one hundred lists, each describing ten practices or qualities. Since no other *sūtra* relies quite as heavily on enumerations, they have come to form the text's hallmark. It opens with a description of the better-known *bodhisattva* practices. This includes, in due order, the ten perfections (*pāramitā*: Wa, 11v3–37r7), nine *bodhisattva* meditations (*samādhi*: 47r6–v1), twelve *bodhisattva* memories (*dhāraṇī*: 47v1–3), six super-knowledges (*abhijñā*: 47v3–5), ten *bodhisattva* abilities, (*vaśitā*: 47v5–48r3), ten *bodhisattva* powers (*bala*: 48r3–4), four *bodhisattva* assurances (*vaiśāradya*: 48r5–7) and eighteen exclusive *bodhisattva* qualities (*āveṇika*: 48v1–6). Next, the *sūtra* gives four lists of attributes connected with the Buddha: ten *tathāgata* abilities (*vaśitā*: 48v6–49r2), four *tathāgata* assurances (*vaiśāradya*: 49r2–4), eighteen exclusive *tathāgata* qualities (*āveṇika*: 49r4–v1) and thirty-two kinds of *tathāgata* compassion (*karuṇā*: 49v2–51r5). After this interlude about the Buddha, the text returns to the *bodhisattva*. Now it shifts its attention to the minor practices. These it divides into eighty-eight categories, most of which consist of ten constituents each (Wa, 54v1–109r3). Some of them are quite well known (e.g. *apramāṇa*s, *dhūtaguṇa*s) but many others are obscure. Most have no counterpart elsewhere, at least not in the format in which they appear here. I shall return to these practices later on. This section pretty much concludes the text.

A little earlier we established that the *Ratnamegha* was a frequently cited, and presumably popular, text in Buddhist India. I shall now present evidence that its fame reached well beyond the subcontinent, that its content helped to shape the *Mahāvyutpatti.* Much of my argument derives from the striking similarities that prevail between the lists of *bodhisattva* practices in those two texts. Broadly speaking, my analysis covers sequence, content and chronology. The parallels in organization are the most conspicuous, and hence make a good starting-point. Both *Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti* arrange their lists in similar sequence. The *Ratnamegha* orders them as follows: *samādhi, dhāraṇī, abhijñā, vaśitā, bala, vaiśāradya* and *āveṇika.*The *Mahāvyutpatti* starts with the meditations (#738) and then proceeds to the *dhāraṇī*s (#748), powers (#761), abilities (#772), assurances (#783) and exclusive *bodhisattva* qualities (#788). In other words, it reverses the *bala/vaśitā* order and omits the *abhijñā*s. Since the *Mahāvyutpatti* is wholly composite, compiled from multiple sources and governed by a strict editorial code, its organization is probably younger. The scholars who oversaw its gestation would have spotted that the super-knowledges are normally classed as *buddha* qualities.[18] As

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17. In his index, la Vallée Poussin lists a second *Ratnamegha* reference on page 222.11. This, however, is wrong since no such citation appears on that page or anywhere else in the text.

18. The *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśa* (Pa, 197r5–200r6), for instance, ranks three of them as *tathāgata* activities (*de bźin gśegs pa'i 'phrin las*), nos 8–10. The *Bodhisattvapiṭaka-sūtra* (dKon brtsegs, Ga, 25r7–28v4) discusses the *abhijñā*s in Chapter 4, 'About the Inconceivability of the *Tathāgata*' (*de bźin gśegs pa'i bsam gyis mi khyab pa'i le'u* (Kha, 288r1–Ga, 48v7)).

a result, they moved them to the front among the *tathāgata* attributes which open the *Mahāvyutpatti*. If the *tathāgata* qualities were compiled first, inspired by piety, convenience or chance, their order would have probably shaped the organization of the *bodhisattva* qualities. Since most *sūtras* place the *tathāgata vaśitā*s immediately before the *vaiśāradya*s,[19] the *bala*s had to be placed ahead of the *vaśitā*s. This measure aligned the *bodhisattva* practices with the more authoritative *tathāgata* attributes. The relocation of the *abhijñā*s and adjustments within the *samādhi* list (discussed below) show that the *Mahāvyutpatti* did not just copy the *Ratnamegha*. In order to achieve an appropriate configuration, it subjected the content of the *sūtra* to careful scrutiny, moved it around or deleted parts as necessary.

However persuasive, parallels in sequence alone are insufficient to establish provenance. For this we need to examine the contents of the lists. I reproduce first the *Ratnamegha* version. The Sanskrit stems from the *Mahāvyutpatti*. The annotations after the Sanskrit highlight Tibetan variants in the *Mahāvyutpatti*.

TABLE 1: Ten *bodhisattva* meditations (byaṅ chub sems dpa'i tiṅ ṅe 'dzin)

(1)   Rin chen kun tu 'phags pa (Mvy 739: *ratnasamudgata* but reads *'phags* for *'phags pa*)

(2)   Śin tu gnas pa (Mvy 740: *supratiṣṭhita*)

(3)   Mi sgul ba (Mvy 741: *ākampya*)

(4)   Phyir mi ldog pa (Mvy 742: *avinivartanīya*)

(5)   Rin chen 'byuṅ gnas (Mvy 743: *ratnākara* but reads *dkon mchog* for *rin chen*)

(6)   Ñi ma'i 'od kyi gzi brjid (Mvy 744: *sūryaprabhateja*)

(7)   Don thams cad grub pa (Mvy 745: *sarvārthasiddha*)

(8)   Ye śes sgron ma (Mvy 746: *jñānolka*)

(9)   Da ltar gyi saṅs rgyas mṅon du bźugs pa (Mvy 747: *pratyutpannabuddhasaṃmukhāvasthita* but reads *mṅon sum du* for *mṅon du*)

(10) dPa' bar 'gro ba'i tiṅ ṅe 'dzin (*śūraṃgamasamādhi* but not given in Mvy)

Table 1 shows that the meditations cited in both *Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti* are virtually identical. Differences in the Tibetan reflect editorial preference and do not call into question the Sanskrit match. The only difference is in volume. The *Mahāvyutpatti* gives nine *samādhi*s while the *Ratnamegha* has ten. The missing meditation, *Ratnamegha samādhi* 10 (*dpa' bar 'gro ba'i tiṅ ṅe 'dzin*), is the famous *śūraṃgamasamādhi*, which occurs already in Mvy #504 as the first of 118 meditations of Prajñāpāramitā origin (#505). Its inclusion in #504 explains its omission from the *bodhisattva samādhi*s. The compilers sought to avoid duplication; none of the remaining nine has a counterpart among the Prajñāpāramitā *samādhi*s.

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19. See, for example, the *tathāgata* description in the *Mahāyānopadeśa-sūtra* (mDo sde, Ba, 281r3–297r2), which gives the following order: *vaśitā, vaiśāradya, āveṇika*. The *Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchā* records the same sequence (dKon brtsegs, Cha, 228v5–6). The Tibetan version of the *Pratyutpannabuddhasaṃmukhāvasthitasamādhi* (Harrison 1978, 169–85 (20A–22B)) replaces the *vaśitā*s with the ten *bala*s but otherwise follows the same order. In his translation, Harrison provides a fine English interpretation of the *bala*s, *vaiśāradya*s and *āveṇika dharma*s (1990, 156–71). For a full discussion of the ten powers, assurances and exclusive *buddha* qualities, see Lamotte (1970–1981, 1505–1613, 1625–61).

TABLE 2: Twelve *bodhisattva dhāraṇīs* (byaṅ chub sems dpa'i gzuṅs)

(1)   dBaṅ bskur ldan (Mvy 749: *abhiṣecanī*)

(2)   Ye śes daṅ ldan pa (Mvy 750: *jñānavatī* but reads *ye śes ldan*)

(3)   sGra dbyaṅs rnam par dag pa (Mvy 751: *viśuddhasvaranirghoṣa*)

(4)   Mi zad pa'i za ma tog (Mvy 752: *akṣayakaraṇḍa*)

(5)   'Khyil ba mtha' yas (Mvy 753: *anantāvarta*)

(6)   rGya mtsho'i phyag rgya (Mvy 754: *sāgaramudrā*)

(7)   Padma bkod pa (Mvy 755: *padmavyūha*)

(8)   Chags pa med pa'i sgor 'jug pa (Mvy 756: *asaṅgamukhapraveśa*)

(9)   So so yaṅ dag par rig pa rnam par gdon mi za ba la 'jug pa (Mvy 757: *pratisaṃvinniścaya-avatāra* but reads *ṅes pa* for *rnam par gdon mi za ba*)

(10) Saṅs rgyas kyi rgyan gyi byin gyis brlabs pa (Mvy 758: *buddhālaṃkārādhiṣṭhita*)

(11) Kha dog mtha' yas pa (Mvy 759: *anantavarṇa*)

(12) Saṅs rgyas kyi sku'i kha dog rdzogs pa mṅon par bgrub pa) (Mvy 760: *buddhakāyavarṇa-pariniṣpattyabhinirhāra* but reads *yoṅs su rdzogs pa* for *rdzogs pa*)

The twelve *dhāraṇī*s of the *Ratnamegha* (reproduced in Table 2) constitute an exact match of Mvy #748. The Tibetan differs slightly twice (2, 9). Both cases mirror variants in translation terminology and do not affect the underlying Sanskrit. It is curious though that the *Mahāvyutpatti* favours *ṅes pa* over *rnam par gdon mi za ba* for *niścaya* (#757), given that it renders *viniścaya* through *rnam par gdon mi za ba* in Mvy #1382. This could of course be intentional, but might also be an editorial slip.

TABLE 3: Ten *bodhisattva* abilities (byaṅ chub sems dpa'i dbaṅ ba)

(1)   Tshe la dbaṅ ba (Mvy 773: *āyur-vaśitā*)

(2)   Sems la dbaṅ ba (Mvy 774: *citta-vaśitā*)

(3)   Yo byad la dbaṅ ba (Mvy 775: *pariṣkāra-vaśitā*)

(4)   Las la dbaṅ ba (Mvy 776: *karma-vaśitā*)

(5)   sKye ba la dbaṅ ba (Mvy 777: *upapatti-vaśitā*)

(6)   Mos pa la dbaṅ ba (Mvy 778: *adhimukti-vaśitā*)

(7)   sMon lam la dbaṅ ba (Mvy 780: *praṇidhāna-vaśitā*)

(8)   rDzu 'phrul la dbaṅ ba (Mvy 781: *ṛddhi-vaśitā*)

(9)   Chos la dbaṅ ba (Mvy 779: *dharma-vaśitā*)

(10) Ye śes la dbaṅ ba (Mvy 782: *jñāna-vaśitā*)

Once again, the *Mahāvyutpatti*/*Ratnamegha* lists run very close (Table 3). This time, they display discrepancies in organization, not translation. Rtm *vaśitā* 7 appears as Mvy *vaśitā* 8, Rtm *vaśitā* 8 as Mvy *vaśitā* 9 and Rtm *vaśitā* 9 as Mvy *vaśitā* 7. Otherwise, the two are identical. References to *bodhisattva vaśitā*s are quite rare. I found only three other lists in the *sūtra*s. Of these, the ten *vaśitā*s of the *Daśabhūmika* (Rahder 1926, 70.8–18) are probably most famous. The same set surfaces twice in the *Tgjn* (Tsa, 129v2–130r1, 135v1–2), once with commentary and once as a plain list. The *Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchā* (dKon brtsegs, Cha, 231r4–233r3) preserves a different group of *vaśitā*s (*tshe, lus, chos, byin gyis rlabs*). But for the first, this does not match the *Ratnamegha* version.

TABLE 4: Ten *bodhisattva* powers (byaṅ chub sems dpa'i stobs)[20]

(1)   bSam pa'i stobs (Mvy 762: *āśaya-bala*)
(2)   lHag pa'i bsam pa'i stobs (Mvy 763: *adhyāśaya-bala*)
(3)   sByor ba'i stobs (Mvy 764: *prayoga-bala*)
(4)   Śes rab kyi stobs (Mvy 765: *prajñā-bala*)
(5)   sMon lam gyi stobs (Mvy 766: *praṇidhāna-bala*)
(6)   sPyod pa'i stobs (Mvy 768: *caryā-bala*)
(7)   Theg pa'i stobs (Mvy 767: *yāna-bala*)
(8)   rNam par 'phrul ba'i stobs (Mvy 769: *vikurvaṇa-bala*)
(9)   Byaṅ chug kyi stobs (Mvy 770: *bodhi-bala*)
(10) Chos kyi 'khor lo rab tu skor ba'i stobs (Mvy 771: *dharmacakrapravartana-bala*)

Table 4 gives the *bodhisattva bala*s as recorded in the *Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti*. Like the *vaśitā*s, the *bala* lists possess identical content but differ in arrangment. Rtm *bala* 6 corresponds to Mvy *bala* 7 and Rtm *bala* 7 matches Mvy *bala* 6. Apart from this, the two are the same.

TABLE 5: Four *bodhisattva* assurances (byaṅ chub sems dpa'i mi 'jigs pa)

(1)   gZuṅs kyis thos pa 'dzin ciṅ don bstan pa la mi 'jigs pa (Mvy 784: *dhāraṇīśrutodgrahaṇā-arthanirdeśa-vaiśāradya*)

(2)   bDag med pa khoṅ du chud pas gźan gyis gtse ba'i mtshan ma mi 'byuṅ źiṅ raṅ bźin gyis spyod lam smad du med pa'i las gsum yoṅs su dag pa'i bsruṅ ba chen po phun sum tshogs pa'i mi 'jigs pa (Mvy 785: *nairātmyādhigamāt paraviheṭhanānimittasamudācāra-sahajānadhigateryāpathatrikarmapariśuddhamahārakṣasaṃpanna-vaiśāradya*)

(3)   Chos bzuṅ ba yun du mi brjed pa daṅ thabs daṅ śes rab mthar phyin pas sems can sgrol ciṅ dad bston pa daṅ dge ba'i bar chad du mi 'gyur ba'i mi 'jigs pa (Mvy 786: *sadodgr̥hītadharmāvismaraṇaprajñopāyaniṣṭhāgatasattvanistāraṇaprasādasaṃdarśana-śubānantārāyika-vaiśyāradya*: *ston* for *bston*)

(4)   Thams cad mkhyen pa ñid kyi sems ma ñams śiṅ theg pa gźan gyis mi 'byuṅ bar dbaṅ yoṅs su rdzogs pa daṅ sems can gyi don rnam pa thams cad du yaṅ dag par thob par bya ba la mi 'jigs pa (Mvy 787: *sarvajñātācittāsaṃpramoṣānyayānāniryāṇasaṃpūrṇavaśitā-sarvaprakārasattvārthasaṃprāpaṇa-vaiśāradya*: *ma* for *mi*, *'byuṅ* for *'gyur*)

Table 5 reproduces the *bodhisattva* assurances as they appear in the *Ratnamegha*. Again, there is no substantive difference between the *Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti*. Except for a handful of redactional variants in the Tibetan, the lists are virtually identical.

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20.   The *bodhisattva* powers (*bala*) and *bodhisattva* assurances (*vaiśāradya*) are discussed in Lamotte (1970–81, 1605–1613). He also cites two sets of exclusive *bodhisattva* qualities (*āveṇika dharma*) but offers little by way of explanation (p. 1607). Apart from the *Ratnamegha*, in the *sūtra*s the three occur together only in the *Vikurvaṇarājaparipr̥cchā*. As in the *Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti*, the powers appear here first (mDo sde, Ba, 202v6–203v1), followed by four assurances(203v1–5) and eighteen exclusive *bodhisattva* qualities (203v5–207v2). Since the *Vikurvaṇarājaparipr̥cchā* preserves a different set of *vaiśāradya*s and *āveṇika dharma*s, it cannot have been the source for the *Mahāvyutpatti*.

TABLE 6: Eighteen exclusive *bodhisattva* qualities (byaṅ chub sems dpa'i chos ma 'dres pa)

(1)   Ma bstan pa'i sbyin pa can (Mvy 789: *anupadiṣṭadāna*)

(2)   Ma bstan pa'i tshul khrims can (Mvy 790: *anupadiṣṭaśīla*)

(3)   Ma bstan pa'i bzod pa can (Mvy 791: *anupadiṣṭakṣānti*)

(4)   Ma bstan pa'i brston 'grus can (Mvy 792: *anupadiṣṭavīrya*)

(5)   Ma bstan pa'i bsam gtan can (Mvy 793: *anupadiṣṭadhyāna*)

(6)   Ma bstan pa'i śes rab can (Mvy 794: *anupadiṣṭaprajñā*)

(7)   bsDu ba'i dṅos pos sems can thams cad sdud pa (Mvy 795: *saṃgrahavastusarva-sattvasaṃgrāhaka*)

(8)   Yoṅs su bsṅos ba'i cho ga śes pa (Mvy 796: *pariṇāmanavidhijñā*)

(9)   Thabs la mkhas pas sems can thams cad kyi spyod pa'i dbaṅ gi theg pa'i mchog gis 'byuṅ ba ston pa (Mvy 797: *upāyakauśalyasarvasattvacaritādhipatyaparamayānaniryāṇa-saṃdarśaka*: *dbaṅ gis* for *dbaṅ gi*, *'byuṅ bas* for *'byuṅ ba*)

(10) Theg pa chen po las ma ñams pa (Mvy 798: *mahāyānācyuta*)

(11) Mya ṅan las 'das pa'i sgo ston pa (Mvy 799: *saṃsāranirvāṇamukhasaṃdarśaka*: adds *'khor ba daṅ* at the beginning)

(12) Źuṅ daṅ snrel źi'i rgyud la mkhas pa (Mvy 800: *yamakavyatyastāhārakuśala*)

(13) Ye śes sṅon du 'gro ba'i mṅon par 'du mi byed ciṅ kha na ma tho ba med par tshe rabs thams cad du mṅon bar 'phags pa (Mvy 801: *jñānapūrvaṃgamānabhisaṃskāra-niravadyasarvajanmābhimukhapravṛtta*: *'gro bas* for *'gro ba'i*, *mṅon du źugs pa* for *mṅon bar 'phags pa*)

(14) Lus daṅ ṅag daṅ yid kyi las kyi mtha' dge ba bcu daṅ ldan pa (Mvy 802: *daśakuśala-upetakāyavāgmanaskarmānta*)

(15) sDug bsṅal gyi phuṅ po thams cad bzod pa'i lus len pas sems can gyi khams thams cad yoṅs su mi gtoṅ ba (Mvy 803: *sarvaduḥkhaskandhasahānātmopādanasarvasattvadhātu-aparityāgina*)

(16) 'Gro ba thams cad mṅon par dga' bar ston pa (Mvy 804: *sarvajagadabhirucisaṃdarśakā*)

(17) Byis pa daṅ ñan thos mi bzad pa ji sñed cig gi naṅ na yaṅ dge ba maṅ po'i rin po che'i śiṅ dpag bsam ltar brtan pa'i thams cad mkhyen pa ñid kyi sems yoṅs su ma ñams pa rnams (Mvy 805: *kiyatkṛcchrabālaśrāvakamadhyaśubhavyūharatnakalpavṛkṣadṛḍha-sarvajñatācittāsampramuṣita*)

(18) Chos thams cad kyi thabs sbyin pas dbaṅ bskur ba thob par bya ba'i phyir saṅs rgyas kyi chos btsal ba bstan pa las mi ldog pa rnams (Mvy 806: *sarvadharmapaṭṭāvabaddhābhi-ṣekaprāptibuddhadharmaparyeṣṭisaṃdarśanānivṛtta*: adds *phyir* before *mi ldog pa*)

Table 6 does not require much comment. It enumerates the eighteen exclusive *bodhisattva* qualities (*āveṇika dharma*). Also here, *Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti* preserve identical lists. Even though the *āveṇika dharma*s constitute the most voluminous group by far, they correspond practically word for word, arranged in the same order, in both texts.

In sum, for five of the six categories the *Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti* give the same practices and adopt matching principles of organization. The only discrepancy occurs in the meditation group where the *Mahāvyutpatti* is one *samādhi* short. Since it lists the missing meditation elsewhere in a prominent position, this exclusion must have been a deliberate editorial decision to avoid repetition within its rubrics. The parallels between the *Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti* suggest that the two are connected. Since the *Ratnamegha* was composed before the

Mahāvyutpatti, it was either the source for the *Mahāvyutpatti* or both took material from a third, as yet unidentified, common work.

In order to test the hypothesis of a shared source, we need to find another text with all six lists. Lévi and Edgerton knew of no such work. Lamotte met with similar enumerations in the *Śuraṃgamasamādhi, Buddhāvataṃsaka* and *Vikurvaṇarājaparipṛcchā.* But since the content of these does not correspond to even one of our lists, let alone all six, they must constitute a different tradition. Perhaps we need to look elsewhere. As it is not viable to search the whole bKa' 'gyur for all six lists, I limit my efforts to the first two: the nine *samādhi*s and twelve *dhāraṇī*s. Any text that served as blueprint for the *Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti* must include those as well. If there is none, we can be fairly confident that the *Mahāvyutpatti* took its *bodhisattva* practices from the *Ratnamegha.* If we find a text with both lists, we examine them and look for the remaining four.

I begin with the *samādhi* list. Descriptions of meditations are very frequent in Mahāyāna *sūtra*s. Some develop in-depth discussions of the actual contemplative processes, but most give only the names of the *samādhi*s and perhaps the benefits that derive from their practice. As a rule, the meditations are either connected with the *buddha* or the *bodhisattva.* In total, I counted over 1250 different titles. This figure is certain to go up if one were to scan all texts of the bKa' 'gyur and include references to individual *samādhi*s. For this paper, I searched the Phal po che (Avataṃsaka), dKon brtsegs (Ratnakūṭa) and mDo sde (Sūtra) sections for lists of nine or more meditations. The vast majority is linked with the *Tathāgata* (1068 meditations over nine lists). *Bodhisattva samādhi*s are fairly rare and appear by title only in the *Gaganagañjaparipṛcchā* and *Gaṇḍavyūha* (175 over two lists).[21] Among all those lists, I found not a single one that would match, or even approximate, Mvy #738. Several of its *samādhi*s occur in other *sūtra*s but never as a group.[22] Of course, until we have identified, and then examined, all the sources behind the *Mahāvyutpatti,* this does not establish a connection with the *Ratnamegha.* But it gives us some indication of the rarity of its *bodhisattva samādhi*s. It appears that not many people knew of those meditations, individually or as a set.

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21. I spotted these meditations in the following sources. (1) *Tathāgata samādhi*s: *Maitreyaparipṛcchā,* dKon brtsegs, Cha, 108r1–4 (10 meditations); *Karaṇḍavyūha,* mDo sde, Ja, 221v3–222v3 (64 meditations), 235r2–7 (17 meditations), 243v7–245r3 (34 meditations); Tgjn, mDo sde, Tsa, 139v6–140v4 (47 meditations); *Drumakinnararājaparipṛcchā,* Harrison (1992, 97.10–99.15) (50 meditations), *Bodhisattvapiṭaka,* Pagel (1995, 419–22) (101 meditations); *Akṣayamatinirdeśa* (Braarvig 1993, 58.33–60.19) (118 meditations); *Mahāmegha-sūtra,* mDo sde, Wa, 146v5–153v4 (436 meditations); *Śatasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā,* Ghoṣa (1902–14, 1412.8–1414.21) (121 meditations); *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā,* Mitra (1888, 490.11–492.6) (60 meditations). (2) *Bodhisattva samādhi*s: *Gaganagañjaparipṛcchā,* mDo sde, Pa, 290r6–292v6 (78 meditations); *Gaṇḍavyūha,* Suzuki & Idzumi (1949, 36.22–40.1) (97 meditations) (Phal po che, 304v5–308r2).

22. The *ratnākarasamādhi* (Mvy #743, Rtm 5), for example, features in position 8 of the list of the *Drumakinnararājaparipṛcchā* (Harrison 1992, 98.1); the *śuraṃgamasamādhi* is included in the *Śatasāhasrikā* (Ghoṣa 1902–14, 1412.8).

THE *DHĀRAṆĪ*S OF *MAHĀVYUTPATTI* #748

References to *dhāraṇī*s, like meditations, are a regular feature in *sūtra* exposi-
tions. About a hundred texts speak of *dhāraṇī*s. Some interpret them as a type of
scriptural memory that *bodhisattva*s produce during the advanced phases of the
path. Others use the term to refer to magic spells recited for worldly or spiritual
gain. Even though we possess now several good publications of *dhāraṇī* practice,
significant gaps remain. For example, we still await a study mapping its full seman-
tic range. Very often, *dhāraṇī*s play a role in the acquisition of learning and thus
promote recollection or understanding. Elsewhere, the term *dhāraṇī* is close to
mantra and introduces a particular magic formula. Mahāyāna *sūtra*s preserve a
handful of expressions where *dhāraṇī* and mantra are juxtaposed. The *Sūryagarbha*
and *Buddhanāmasāhasrapañcaśatacaturtripañcadaśa*, for instance, speak of
dhāraṇīmantra. Others employ the terms *dhāraṇīmantrapada*,[23] *dhāraṇīpada*[24] and
vidyamantra(pada).[25] When *dhāraṇī* introduces a magic formula, the term *mantra-
pada* is often used to close the spell. This happens in twenty-one *sūtra*s. A small
number of texts speak of non-Buddhists mantras, in particular Dravidian man-
tras,[26] brahmin mantras, *vaiśya* mantras and *śudra* mantras.[27] In total, I identified
thirty-seven *sūtra*s that contain magic formulae. In some, the spells appear towards
the end to give protection and closure, but many others place them in the centre
of their discourse.[28] Altogether, the *sūtra*s preserve about one hundred and eighty

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23. For example, see the *Anantamukhanirhāra* (Inagaki 1987, 150.3–4); *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* (Kern &
    Nanjio 1908–12, 396.3, 400.1); *Mahāmegha*, mDo sde, Wa, 259r4.

24. This expression appears in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* (Kern & Nanjio 1908–12, 398.3/5/8,
    399.2/7/9); *Mahāmegha*, mDo sde, Wa, 257r4; *Daśakṣitigarbha*, mDo sde, Źa, 114v7, 115v2 and
    Daśabhūmika (Rahder 1926, 79.10).

25. See, *Gaganagañjaparipṛcchā*, mDo sde, Pa, 318v5, 327r1; *Daśakṣitigarbha*, mDo sde, Źa, 115v5,
    Saptabuddhaka, mDo sde, Ya, 14r2–5, *Sāgaranāgarājaparipṛcchā*, mDo sde, Pha, 196v3, 197r1;
    Sūryagarbha-sūtra, mDo sde, Za, 124r7, Za, 126v7, 127r4.

26. This term, although cited several times in exegetical literature, is not very frequent in the
    *sūtra*s. I found only one reference in the bKa’ ‘gyur: In the *Bhadrakarātrī* (mDo sde, Sa, 162v4),
    a text belonging to the Śrāvakayāna, Dravidian is translated with *’gro ldiṅ pa* (*dramidha*). For a
    detailed analysis of one such Dravidian spell, see Bernhard (1967).

27. To my knowledge, these terms are used only once, and not in a Mahāyāna *sūtra*. They are cited
    in the *Sārdūlakarṇāvadāna* (mDo sde, Aḥ, 249v7, 250r2, 250r3/4). Since the *avadāna* does not dis-
    cuss the content of these mantras, there is not much we can say about them. At any rate, they
    do not appear to be Buddhist in origin.

28. These include the following texts: *Acintyabuddhaviṣayanirdeśa, Ākāśagarbha, Anantamukhanirhāra,
    Āṭānāṭīya, Bhadrakarātrī, Brahmaviśeṣacintipariprcchā, Buddhākṣepaṇa, Buddhanāmasahasrapañca-
    śatacaturtripañcadaśa, Daśakṣitigarbha, Drumakinnararājaparipṛcchā, Dvādaśabuddhaka, Gaganagañja-
    pariprcchā, Karaṇḍavyūha, Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka, Laṅkāvatāra, Mahāmegha, Mahāmeghavāyumaṇḍala-
    parivartasarvanāgahṛdaya, Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra, Mahāsamāja, Nāmāṣṭāśatikā Prajñāpāramitā,
    ’Phags pa rtogs pa chen po yoṅs su rgyas pa’i mdo, Ratnaketuparivarta, Saddharmapuṇḍarīka, Sāgara-
    matiparipṛcchā, Sāgaranāgarājaparipṛcchā, Saptabuddhaka, Samyagācāravṛttaganavarṇavinayakṣn
    ti, Saptapañcaśatikā Prajñāpāramitā, Sarvadharmaguṇavyuharāja, Sarvatathāgatādhiṣṭhānasattvāva-
    lokena, Śrīmahādevīvyākaraṇa, Sūryagarbha, Suvarṇaprabhāsottama, Tathāgataguhyaka, Tathāgata-
    śrīsamaya, Vaiśālīpraveśa, Vimalaprabhāparipṛcchā.*

(different) spells.[29] Some use very similar material, perhaps derived from a shared source. Their length varies considerably. Many consist of twelve or fewer components, other are much longer. Most have between thirty and fifty elements. The longest spell, transmitted in the *Ratnaketuparivarta*, divides into 118 components (Kurumiya 1978, 131.6–135.4). Table 7 assembles the principal expressions related to the term *dhāraṇī*.

References to *dhāraṇī* (*gzuṅs*) as a cognitive quality[30] appear in fifty-three sources.[31] Many of them align *dhāraṇī* with recollection (*anusmṛti*),[32] meditation

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29. The status of some of the formulae is uncertain since many duplicate parts of other spells. In order to resolve this and establish the exact number, one would need to enter all formulae into a database and establish viable identity criteria. My figure does not take into account overlap.

30. A detailed account of the link between *dhāraṇī* and knowledge is preserved in the *Ajātaśatru-kaukṛtyavinodanā* which contains one of the earliest discussions of *bodhisattva dhāraṇī* practice (mDo sde, Tsha, 238v2–239v1):

> Next, Mañjuśrī explained at length the *Dharma* exposition called *Dhāraṇī* to the assembled *bodhisattvas*. What is *dhāraṇī* here? *Dhāraṇī* is infallible recollection, unwavering comprehension, lucid intelligence, realised understanding, knowledge to explain the path by pointing to the true nature of all factors, safeguarding the fruit after one has attained it, knowledge how to enter into flawless conduct, knowledge of the different wording of all teachings. O son of good family, *dhāraṇī* causes [the *bodhisattva*] to hold in mind (*'dzin par byed do*) all factors of existence. How does *dhāraṇī* cause him to hold them in mind? It causes him to hold them in mind as empty, signless and wishless. He holds them in mind as dispassionate, abstracted and non-existent, as same, non-abiding, non-originating and non-arising, ... as lacking in self-existence and existence, ... as lacking in self and sentience ... as non-cognized (*gzuṅ ba med pa*), non-practised (*sbyor ba med pa*) and non-arisen (*ma byuṅ ba*), as neither seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching or mentally apprehending. Therefore it is called *dhāraṇī.*

31. I noted the use of the term *dhāraṇī* in the following *sūtras*, listed here in alphabetical order: *Ajāta-śatrukaukṛtyavinodanā, Akṣayamatinirdeśa, Akṣayamatipariprcchā, Anantamudrā, Aṣṭādaśasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, Bhadrakalpika, Bhadramāyakāravyākaraṇa, Bodhisattvapiṭaka, Buddhākṣepaṇa, Buddhasaṅgīti, Buddhāvataṃsaka, Catuṣkanirhāra, Daśabhūmika, Drumakinnararājapariprcchā, Gaganavarṇavinayakṣānti, Gaṇḍavyūha, Guṇaratnasaṅkusumitapari-prcchā, Kāśyapaparivarta, Lalitavistara, Mahāprātihāryanirdeśa, Mahāyānopadeśa, 'Phags pa byaṅ chub sems dpa' byams pa dga' ldan gnam du skye ba blaṅs pa'i mdo, Pañcaviṃśatikasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, Pitāputrasamāgamana, Prajñāpāramitā Namāṣṭāśatikā, Pratyutpannabuddhasaṃmukhāvasthitasamādhi, Pūrṇapariprcchā, Puṣpakūṭadhāraṇīsūtra, Rāṣṭrapalapariprcchā, Ratnacūḍapariprcchā, Ratnamegha, Ratnolka-dhāraṇī, Samādhirāja, Samādhyagrottama, Saṃdhinirmocana, Samyagācāravṛttagaganavarṇa-vinayakṣānti, Sarvadharmapravṛttinirdeśa, Sarvavaidalyasaṃgraha, Śatapañcaśatikā Prajñāpāramitā, Śatasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, Sukhāvatīvyūha, Śūraṅgamasamādhi, Susthitamatidevaputrapariprcchā, Suvikrāntacintadevaputrapariprcchā, Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviṣayāvatāranirdeśa, Tathāgataguhyaka, Tathāgatajñānamudrāsamādhi, Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśa, Ugradattapariprcchā, Upāyakauśalya, Vajramaṇḍadhāraṇī, Vajrapāṇi Prajñāpāramitā, Vidyutprāptapariprcchā, Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*. This list demonstrates, if nothing else, that *dhāraṇī*s are much more frequent in the *sūtras* than hitherto assumed. It also establishes that they are not limited to a particular time period. Some of the *sūtras* that include *dhāraṇī*s have early Chinese translations (*Ajātāśatrukaukṛtyavinodanā, Drumakinnararā japaripṛcchā*), others are a good deal later (*Samādhirāja*). A study of the use of *dhāraṇī*s in Mahāyāna *sūtras*, based on these and related sources, is in progress.

32. Two texts in particular connect *dhāraṇī* practice with the recollection of the Buddha. In the *Anantamukhanirhāra* we meet with the following statement: 'The *bodhisattva* who holds in mind

TABLE 7: Variants in *dhāraṇī* terminology

Dhāraṇī/Mantra term	Canonical source
dhāraṇīmantra	*Buddhanāmasāhasrapañcaśatacaturtripañcadaśa*
	Sūryagarbha
dhāraṇīmantrapada	*Anantamukhanirhāra*
	Mahāmegha
	Saddharmapuṇḍarīka
dhāraṇīpada	*Daśakṣitigarbha*
	Daśabhūmika
	Mahāmegha
	Saddharmapuṇḍarīka
Vidyamantra(pada)	*Gaganagañjaparipṛcchā*
	Daśakṣitigarbha
	Sāgaranāgarājaparipṛcchā
	Saptabuddhaka
	Sūryagarbha
Dravidian mantra	*Bhadrakarātrī*
Brahmin, vaiśya and śudra mantra	*Sārdūlakarṇāvadāna*

the [preceding 108-component] *dhāraṇī*, contemplates neither conditioned nor unconditioned factors of existence, nor does he grasp them, posit them, hanker after them or denominate them. ... He practices only the recollection of the Buddha (*saṅs rgyas rjes su dran pa*)' (mDo sde, Na, 292r7–v3; Inagaki 1987, 153.1–15).

Jñānagarbha, in his commentary to the *Anantamukhanirhāra*, links *artha-dhāraṇī* with the practice of *buddha* recollection (Inagaki 1987, 102). The *Gaṇḍavyūha* refers to *buddha* recollection twice in a list of ten *dhāraṇī* cycles (Suzuki & Idzumi [1934] 1949, 305.17–306.1; Phal po che, A, 150r6–v4):

Furthermore, I shall expound the Doctrine to sentient beings through ten thousand *dhāraṇī* cycles (*dhāraṇīmaṇḍala*). What ten? (1) The *dhāraṇī* cycle called 'gathering the whole ocean of the *Dharma*' (*sarvadharmasamudrasamavasaraṇa*), (2) *dhāraṇī* cycle called 'sustaining power of all factors of existence' (*sarvadharmādhiṣṭhāna*), (3) *dhāraṇī* cycle called 'holding in mind all clouds of the *Dharma*' (*sarvadharmameghasaṃpratīccha*) (4) *dhāraṇī* cycle called 'lamp of the recollection of all *tathāgatas*' (*sarvatathāgatasmṛtipradīpa*), (5) *dhāraṇī* cycle called 'lamp of the ocean of the deeds of all beings' (*sarvasattvakarmasamudrapradīpa*) [Tib: 'essence which illuminates the ocean of the deeds of all beings'], (6) *dhāraṇī* cycle called 'gathering [Tib: 'applying oneself to'] the whole pure ocean of the methods of the vehicles (*sarvayānanayasamudravimalasamavasaraṇa*), (7) *dhāraṇī* cycle called 'pronouncing the turning of the wheel of the names of all *tathāgatas*' [Tib: 'essence of the lamp of the whole ocean of *buddhas*'] (*sarvatathāgatanāmacakrāvartanirghoṣa*), (8) *dhāraṇī* cycle called 'gathering of [Tib: 'applying oneself to'] the elucidation of the ocean of previous resolutions of the *buddhas* of the three times' (*tryadhvabuddhapūrvapraṇidhānasāgaranirdeśa-samavasaraṇa*), (9) *dhāraṇī* cycle called 'swift turning towards all factors of existence' [Tib: 'proclamation of the turning (*gloṅ*) of the wheel of the names of all *tathāgatas*'] (*sarvadharmābhimukhāvartavega*), and (10) *dhāraṇī* cycle called 'light of entry into all-knowing' [Tib: 'going forth to the power of all-knowing'] (*sarvajñatāveśaprabha*).

(*samādhi*), mindfulness (*smṛti*)[33] or inspired eloquence (*pratibhāna*).[34] Their frequency in the *sūtra*s and association with key Buddhist practices render *dhāraṇī*s, both as an instrument of cognition and a resource in magic, central to the *bodhisattva* training.[35] Such prominence would also explain their inclusion in the *Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti* alongside other key *bodhisattva dharma*s.

Since both texts give us specific *dhāraṇī* titles, we need to narrow down our analysis and focus on *sūtra*s that record the names of *dhāraṇī*s. Most *dhāraṇī*s for which we have a title consist of a spell. It is usually appended at the end of the formula. From here it rarely moves. That is to say, the titles of *dhāraṇī* spells do not appear in lists removed from the formula they designate. The titles of *dhāraṇī*s linked with cognition, in contrast, occur rarely in isolation. Most are batched in lists, part of a larger catalogue of practices. In total, I counted forty-three different *dhāraṇī* titles. Thirty-eight appear in four separate clusters. The remainder

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33. The connection to mindfulness is explicit in the *Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchā,* which proffers in general much useful information about the *bodhisattva* training (dKon brtsegs, Cha, 234r6–7):

    O son of good family, furthermore, through the *bodhisattva*'s power of faith, he does not approach any other [teacher] with devotion. Through the power of energy, he does not become dismayed at a later time (*bar ma dor*). Through the power of mindfulness, he attains *dhāraṇī* and inspired eloquence. Through the power of meditation, he teaches the factors of existence to be alike (*mtshuṅs par chos*). Through the power of discriminative understanding, he eliminates all doubt in all sentient beings.

34. For a discussion establishing the link between *dhāraṇī* and *pratibhāna*, see Braarvig (1985; cf. Lamotte 1970–81, 1860). The *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśa* brings many of these associations together into a single catalogue of *dhāraṇī* practices (*alaṃkāra*) (mDo sde, Pa, 159r6; 164r1–165r3):

    (1) O son of good family, the *dhāraṇī* practices of the *bodhisattva* are of one kind: Infallible recollection. (2) O son of good family, they are two kinds: memory and retention. (3) O son of good family, they are of three kinds: skill in meaning, phonemes and etymology. (4) O son of good family, they are of four kinds: statements free from lust, statements that are refined, statements about liberation and statements without falsehood. (5) O son of good family, they are of five kinds: reliance on meaning, gnosis and *sūtra*s of certain meaning, reliance on the true nature of being, reliance on the supramundane over the mundane. (6) O son of good family, they are of six kinds: [to develop] a conduct that matches one's statements, [to show] allegiance to statement that correspond with truth, to teach statements that are worthy to be kept in mind without conceit ... (7) O son of good family, they are of seven kinds: [to develop] inspired eloquence that is swift-paced, forceful, quick and dispassionate, that is without interruption, undistorted and consists of definitions (*śin tu ṅes pa'i tshig*). (8) O son of good family, they are of eight kinds: knowledge of the languages of gods, *nāga*s, *yakṣa*s, *gandharva*s, *asura*s, *garuḍa*s, *kinnara*s and *mahoraga*s. (9) O son of good family, they are of nine kinds: lack of worry while in *saṃsāra*, absence of despondency in speech, fearlessness when explaining the Doctrine, ... (10) O son of good family, they are of ten kinds: knowledge how to teach resolutely to all those who harbour doubts, ... knowledge how to embark on analytic knowledge granted by the Buddha. O son of good family, the ten *dhāraṇī* practices of the *bodhisattva* are of this kind.

35. Until quite recently, many scholars thought *dhāraṇī* to be a marginal phenomenon in Mahāyāna *sūtra*s. See, for example, Lamotte (1970–81, 1860) ('Dans les oeuvres canoniques, les Mantra sont rares et font figure de hors-d'oeuvre.') Lamotte then proceeds to cite passages from the *āgama*s and *Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka* that contain mantras.

are scattered over five texts, on occasion in duplicate or replicating *dhāraṇīs* in the lists.[36]

DHĀRAṆĪ LISTS OUTSIDE THE *RATNAMEGHA*

I begin our analysis with the ten *dhāraṇī* cycles (*maṇḍala*) of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* as this is fairly well known. It is preserved in Sanskrit and has been available in a critical edition for more than seventy years (Suzuki & Idzumi [1934] 1949, 66.13–23; Phal po che, Kha, 331v4–332r1).

TABLE 8: The *dhāraṇīs* of the *Gaṇḍavyūha*

(1)   Śrutodgrahaṇa
(2)   Śāntamukha
(3)   Anantāvarta (Mvy 753)
(4)   Bhūmyavacāraṇānugama
(5)   Tejovatī
(6)   Padmavyūha (Mvy 755)
(7)   Svaravivikta
(8)   Gaganagarbha
(9)   Jyotiṣakuṭa
(10) Sāgaragarbha

How does the content of Table 8 compare to the *dhāraṇīs* of the *Mahāvyutpatti*? Two of the ten have a counterpart: *anantāvarta* (3) and *padmavyūha* (6). The first matches Mvy #753, the second Mvy #755. The other seven have no parallel. *Gaṇḍavyūha* 10 (*sāgaragarbha*) resembles Mvy #754 (*sāgaramudrā*). I conclude that the *dhāraṇīs* of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* and *Mahāvyutpatti* are not particularly close as a group even though they show some overlap. Another list occurs in the *Akṣayamatiparipṛcchā* of the Ratnakūṭa collection. This text too distinguishes ten *dhāraṇīs* (dKon brtsegs, Cha, 181r3–6) (Table 9).

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36. These include the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (Vaidya 1964, 8.31–32): *meruśikharakūṭāgāra-dhāraṇī*, *ratnaśikharakūṭāgāra-dhāraṇī*, *daṇḍa-dhāraṇī*, *nigraha-dhāraṇī*, *ākarśaṇa-dhāraṇī*; *Pūrṇaparipṛcchā* (dKon brtsegs, Ṅa, 199r3–4): *maṅ du thos pa'i dṅos gźi'i tshig bźi, rnam pa sna tshogs kyi tshig bdun, sgo'i tshig bcu bźi pa*; *Bhadrakalpika* (mDo sde, Ka, 14r4, Ka, 337v5–6): *saṅs rgyas thams cad kyi bka' daṅ ṅes pa'i tshig daṅ dbyaṅs sdud pa, khyim can*; *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśa* (mDo sde, Pa, 231r5): **dhāraṇī-dhāraṇī (gzuṅs gzuṅs),* (mDo sde, Pa, 231r7–233r6): *ratnapradīpa-dhāraṇī* (*rin chen sgron ma'i gzuṅs*); *Ratnaketuparivarta* (Kurumiya 1978, 37.14): *ratnaketu-dhāraṇī*; *Sāgaranāgarājaparipṛcchā* (mDo sde, Pha, 137r6): *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī (mi zad pa'i za ma tog ces bya ba'i gzuṅs*); *Buddhākṣepaṇa* (mDo sde, Ya, 48r6): **sarvasiddhajñānamukha (thams cad grub pa'i ye śes kyi sgo*); *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (Ñi khri, Kha, 371v2–372r3): *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī*, *sāgaramudrā-dhāraṇī*, *padmavyūha-dhāraṇī*, **pragrāhaka-dhāraṇī*; *Daśasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (Khri pa, Ṅa, 366v2–367r4): *akṣayakaraṇḍa, sāgaramudrā, padmavyūha*; *Śatasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* ('Bum, Tha, 143v3–144r5): *akṣayakaraṇḍa, sāgaramudrā, padmavyūha, *pragrāhaka*. I would like to thank Peter Skilling for the *dhāraṇī* references in the last two Prajñāpāramitā texts.

TABLE 9: The *dhāraṇīs* of the *Akṣayamatiparipṛcchā*

(1)   Khyad par gyi byin gyi brlabs (**viśeṣādhiṣṭhita*)
(2)   gŹan gyis mi thub pa (**aparājita*)
(3)   Rab tu gnas pa (**pratiṣṭha*)
(4)   gDul dka’ ba (**durdānta*)
(5)   Yon tan sna tshogs (**nānāguṇa*)
(6)   Ye śes kyi dkyil ’khor gyi sgron ma (**jñānamaṇḍalapradīpa*)
(7)   Khyad par du ’phags pa (**viśiṣṭha*)
(8)   rÑog pa med pa’i rtog pa (**anāvilakalpa(na)*)
(9)   sGo mtha’ yas pa’i rgyan (**anantamukhālaṃkāra*)
(10)   Zad mi śes pa’i za ma tog (Mvy 752: *akṣayakaraṇḍa*)

Here, each *dhāraṇī* is associated with a particular stage (*bhūmi*) in ascending order. The last and presumably most advanced *dhāraṇī*—*akṣayakaraṇḍa*—corresponds to the fourth of the *Mahāvyutpatti*. None of the remaining nine has an exact counterpart. Three of them share material with the *Mahāvyutpatti* (*sgo mtha’ yas pa’i rgyan, khyad par gyi byin gyi brlabs, rab tu gnas pa*) but fall well short of a full match. Clearly, if the *Akṣayamatiparipṛcchā* or *Gaṇḍavyūha* were consulted for the *Mahāvyutpatti* list, they did not impress. Together they would have contributed only three *dhāraṇīs*. While the two may have inspired the formation of the *Ratnamegha* list in some loose sense, they are not a credible source for the *Mahāvyutpatti*.

For this we leave behind the well-charted territory of the Avataṃsaka and Ratnakūṭa collections and enter the Sūtra section of the bKa’ ’gyur. Here we meet with two texts that contain valuable thought on *dhāraṇī*: the *Tathāgata-mahākaruṇānirdeśa* (Tmkn) and *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviṣayāvatāranirdeśa* (Tgjn). The *Tmkn* contains the longest (and perhaps earliest) exposition of *bodhisattva dhāraṇīs* among the *sūtras*. It develops this in two phases. First, it batches *dhāraṇī* with three seminal practices (*alaṃkāra*).[37] All three are well known and constitute together the bedrock of Buddhist spirituality: (1) *śīla-alaṃkāra*, (2) *dhyāna-alaṃkāra* and (3) *prajñā-alaṃkāra.* To this the text adds, crucially for us, (4) *dhāraṇī-alaṃkāra* (Pa, 159r7–165r3). The juxtaposition of *dhāraṇī* with *śīla, dhyāna* and *prajñā* attests to its status as a major practice. Since it features in fourth position, it was probably still new but accepted nonetheless. *Dhāraṇī-alaṃkāra* itself consists of ten subcategories, but because none of them bears on the *Mahāvyutpatti* list we ignore their content for the time being (Pa, 164r1–165r3). The second part of the *dhāraṇī* exposition is significantly more relevant. It emerges towards the end of the text

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37. The term *alaṃkāra* possesses a wide semantic range in Indian literature. In poetry it is often rendered by ‘ornament’ or ‘adornment’. Gonda (1975, 265–6) rejects this association for religious texts. References in the *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* and related works indicate that initially *alaṃkāra* was not at all about aesthetics. It designated a set of magical-religious expedients bearing ritual function in spiritual practice. Judging by the *alaṃkāra* passage of the Tmkn, which aligns *alaṃkāra* with *śīla, dhyāna, prajñā* and *dhāraṇī*, this would indeed be a more appropriate interpretation.

(219r4–233v5) where Dhāraṇīśvararāja enquires about the forces that guide the *bodhisattva*'s conduct in the world. His actions are governed by eight *dhāraṇī* (Pa, 219r1–228r2) (Table 10).

TABLE 10: The *dhāraṇīs* of the *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśa*

(1)	sGra dbyaṅs rnam par dag pa (Mvy 751: *viśuddhasvaranirghoṣa*)
(2)	Mi zad pa'i za ma tog (Mvy 752: *akṣayakaraṇḍa*)
(3)	'Khyil ba mtha' yas (Mvy 753: *anantāvarta*)
(4)	rGya mtsho'i phyag rgya (Mvy 754: *sāgaramudrā*)
(5)	Pad ma vyūha (Mvy 755 *pad ma bkod pa: padmavyūha*)
(6)	Chags pa med pa'i sgor 'jug pa (Mvy 756: *asaṅgamukhapraveśa*)
(7)	So so yaṅ dag par rig pa rnam par ṅes pa la 'jug pa (Mvy 757: *pratisaṃvinniścayāvatāra*)
(8)	Saṅs rgyas kyi rgyan byin gyis brlabs pa (Mvy 758: *buddhālaṃkārādhiṣṭhita*)

The content of this list runs very close to Mvy #748. Its eight *dhāraṇīs* are all included in the *Mahāvyutpatti*, even in identical order. Of course, the *Tmkn* is four *dhāraṇīs* short, but this does not deflect from the significance of its enumeration. Since Mvy #748 accomodates the whole list, the eight may have been an early prototype. But because the *Tmkn* list is so much shorter, we need to look for an intermediary that bridged the gap to the *Mahāvyutpatti*. As it stands today, the *Tmkn* cannot have been the direct source for either Mvy #748 or the *Ratnamegha*.

If the *dhāraṇīs* of the *Tmkn, Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti* all belong to the same tradition, we need to establish the circumstances that led to the longer list. Was the *Ratnamegha* the first text to produce the missing four or did it adopt them from another source? This leads us to the *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviṣaya-avatāranirdeśa*. The *Tgjn* is a relatively short and obscure text that describes how spiritual friends (*kalyāṇamitra*) assist the *bodhisattva* in his spiritual quest. It matters to us since it cites ten *dhāraṇīs* among the many benefits that derive from such association (mDo sde, Tsa, 140v4–7) (Table 11).

TABLE 11: The *dhāraṇīs* of the *Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviṣayāvatāranirdeśa*

(1)	Saṅs rgyas kyi sku daṅ kha dog mtha' yas pa yoṅs su 'grub pa sgrub pa (Mvy 760: *buddhakāyavarṇapariniṣpattyabhinirhāra*, saṅs rgyas kyi sku'i kha dog yoṅs su rdzogs pa mṅon par bsgrub pa)
(2)	Ye śes daṅ ldan pa (Mvy 750: *jñānavatī, ye śes ldan*)
(3)	sGra dbyaṅs rnam par dag pa (Mvy 751: *viśuddhasvaranirghoṣa*)
(4)	Mi zad pa'i za ma tog (Mvy 752: *akṣayakaraṇḍa*)
(5)	mTha' yas 'khyil pa (Mvy 753: *anantāvarta, 'khyil ba mtha' yas*)
(6)	rGya mtsho'i phyag rgya (Mvy 754: *sāgaramudrā*)
(7)	Padma bkod pa (Mvy 755: *padmavyūha*)
(8)	Chags pa med pa'i sgor 'jug pa (Mvy 756: *asaṅgamukhapraveśa*)
(9)	So so yaṅ dag par rig pa rnam par ṅes pa la 'jug pa (Mvy 757: *pratisaṃvinniścayāvatāra*, ṅes pa for rnam par ṅes pa)
(10)	Saṅs rgyas kyi rgyan gyis byin gyis brlabs pa (Mvy 758: *buddhālaṃkārādhiṣṭhita*, saṅs rgyas kyi rgyan byin gyis brlabs pa)

So what do we make of this group? How does it help us link the *Tmkn* with Mvy #748? First, we note that it falls still short of the lists in the *Mahāvyutpatti* and *Ratnamegha*. Two *dhāraṇī*s are missing: *abhiṣecanī* and *anantavarṇa*. Both appear at the periphery in position (1) and (11). The *Tgjn* reproduces the middle part or main body of our lists: Mvy #750–58 and Rtm 2–10. It also encompasses the eight *dhāraṇī*s of the *Tmkn* (Tgjn 2–10). Second, the *Tgjn* gives in first position the *dhāraṇī* that comes last in both *Mahāvyutpatti* and *Ratnamegha* (*buddhakāyavarṇaparinispattyabhinirhāra*). This suggests that the order at the margins had yet to be fixed. The centre ground was secured first. Third, the Tibetan of four *dhāraṇī*s of the *Tgjn* differs slightly from the version preserved in the *Mahāvyutpatti, Ratnamegha* and *Tmkn* (Mvy#750/Rtm2; Mvy#757/Rtm9/Tmkn7; Mvy#758/Rtm10/ Tmkn8; Mvy#760/Rtm12). Finally, the *Tgjn* does not consider its list closed. It speaks of the ten *dhāraṇī*s as an example of a much larger group (*de dag la sogs pa gzuṅs bye ba khrag khrig 'bum phrag graṅs med pa dag kyaṅ*; Tsa, 140v7). The *Tmkn* and *Ratnamegha* do not allow for either addition or subtraction. Their lists are tightly indexed to the surrounding discourse and hold a specific place within the matrix of *bodhisattva* practice. How do we explain these differences?

It is odd that the *Tgjn* should begin its list with a *dhāraṇī* that marks normally the highpoint of the path and comes elsewhere last while retaining the order of the remaining nine. The explanation lies in the passage that introduces its *dhāraṇī* cluster. We noted already that the *Tgjn* derives the attainment of *dhāraṇī* from the company of virtuous friends (Tsa, 128v7). *Bodhisattva*s who cultivate (*yoṅs su 'dzin pa*) such a relationship obtain two types of *dhāraṇī*: (1) *dbaṅ bskur bar 'gyur ba'i gzuṅs* and (2) *rgya mtsho dam pa'i sñiṅ po dri ma med par snaṅ ba 'od gsal ba'i gzuṅs*. The first is very close to Mvy#749/Rtm1 (*abhiṣecanī/dbaṅ skur ldan*); the second recalls *Gaṇḍavyūha* 10 (*sāgaragarbha/rgya mtsho sñiṅ po*). The reference to *dbaṅ bskur bar 'gyur ba'i gzuṅs* underscores the *Tgjn*'s proximity to the *Ratnamegha* as this contains a *dhāraṇī* with a similar title. It is also one of the four not attested in the *Tmkn*. The *Tgjn* contains two more *dhāraṇī* references. Both speak of a *buddhakāya-ananta-varṇa-niṣpattyabhinirhāra-dhāraṇī* (*saṅs rgyas kyi sku daṅ kha dog mtha' yas yoṅs su 'grub pa*) (134v3, 137r5). The title is of interest as it appears to be composite, accommodating two *dhāraṇī*s cited in the *Ratnamegha: buddhakāya-varṇa-parinispattyabhinirhāra* and *ananta-varṇa*. If the *Ratnamegha* used the *Tgjn* as source, it is conceivable that it split the compound into two in order to achieve, together with *dbaṅ bskur bar 'gyur ba'i gzuṅs*, a list of twelve. Perhaps it is a reflection of their origin that the former are listed next to each in the *Ratnamegha* (11/12). On the other hand, the reference to *buddhakāyānantavarṇaparinispattyabhinirhāra* ahead of the list may explain why this *dhāraṇī* ranks first in the *Tgjn*. It is mentioned twice early on and might have been considered foundational to the whole group. The closing sentence seems to support this as it cites the *buddhakāyānantavarṇa-parinispattyabhinirhāra* as an example for all other *dhāraṇī*s produced through trust in the *Tgjn* (139v1, 140v6–7). The Buddha gives it first because he regards it pivotal to all *dhāraṇī* practice. This may have also been the reason why the *Ratnamegha* moved it to the very top. If we recognize *dbaṅ bskur bar 'gyur ba* as a variant

translation for *abhiṣecanī* and divide *buddhakāyānantavarṇaniṣpattyabhinirhāra* into *ananta[-varṇa]* and *buddhakāyavarṇapariniṣpattyabhinirhāra*, the gulf to the *Ratnamegha* is practically closed. Some questions though remain. For example, we still do not know why the *Ratnamegha* favoured *dbaṅ bskur bar 'gyur ba'i gzuṅs* over *rgya mtsho dam pa'i sñiṅ po dri ma med par snaṅ ba 'od gsal ba'i gzuṅs*. Both appear in the prologue to the *Tgjn*'s *dhāraṇī* list, yet only the first is included.

The proposed ties between the *Tmkn*, *Tgjn*, *Ratnamegha* and Mvy #748 yield the following chronology. The *Tmkn* was the first to assemble a group of *bodhisattva dhāraṇīs,* accompanied by a systematic exposition of their application. The *Tgjn* adopted the central list but increased the *Tmkn*'s eight *dhāraṇīs* to ten. The *Ratnamegha*, in turn, drew on the *Tgjn* and added two more *dhāraṇīs*. In the late eighth century, its list of twelve was spotted by the Tibetans and incorporated into the *Mahāvyutpatti.* For this transmission to work, we need to compare it to the dates of our texts. I begin with the *Mahāvyutpatti.* The colophon of the *Madhyavyutpatti* places the *Mahāvyutpatti* into the reign of Khri-lde-sroṅ-bstan (CE 798–800, 802–815). Some entries were perhaps prepared a little earlier, but most of the work will have been done in the early ninth century. We know a good deal less about the *Ratnamegha.* Quotations in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* show that it existed, in pretty much its current form, by the eighth century. Because it is cited in the *Prasannapadā* and *Madhyamakāvatāra,* it cannot be later than the first half of the seventh century. The *Akṣayamatinirdeśaṭīkā,* which quotes the *Ratnamegha* four times, poses some difficulty. The Tibetan tradition attributes the *Akṣayamatinirdeśaṭīkā* to Vasubandhu (Freeman 1991, 107–8, 112, 114). More recently it has been connected with Sthiramati, redacting material brought together by Vasubandhu before him (Braarvig 1993, cxxviii–cxxx). If Sthiramati was responsible for the final version, as is likely, the *Akṣayamatinirdeśaṭīkā* moves the *terminus ad quem* to the middle of the sixth century. The date of its first Chinese translation (T. 658, CE 503) propels the *Ratnamegha,* now a good fifty years younger, into the late fifth century. This version, though, cannot have been the source for the *Mahāvyutpatti* since the Chinese does not contain any of our six lists. They appear first in Dharmaruci's late-seventh-century translation (T. 660, CE 693) (Lamotte 1970–81, 1608). This brings them fairly close to the reign of Khri-lde-sroṅ-bstan and the compilation of the *Mahāvyutpatti.* It is even conceivable that Dharmaruci used the same Sanskrit redaction as his colleagues in Lhasa a hundred years later. We know much less about the other two *sūtras.* Quotations of the *Tmkn* figure in the *Ratnagotravibhāga* (Johnston 1950, 3.15–17, 6.11–17),[38] *Madhyamakāvatara* (La Vallée Poussin [1907–12] 1970b, 426) and *Sūtrasamuccaya* (Pāsādika 1989, 30.6–32.7, 129.1–130.14).[39] But because these treatises are all quite late, they do not tell us much about its origin. The first Chinese translation of the *Tmkn* dates to CE 291 (T. 398). This

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38. This text, as well the following two treatises, uses the *sūtra*'s alternative and perhaps more popular title, *Dhāraṇīśvararājaparipṛcchā*. For more information about this title, see Pagel (2007, 93 n79).

39. For further attestations see Ruegg (1969, 519).

establishes it as a third-century work. The *Tgjn* was less popular among commentators. It makes a brief appearance in the *Ratnagotravibhāga* (Johnston 1950, 3.7–10) and *Sūtrasamuccaya* (Pāsādika 1989, 14.11–24, 200.19–202.10) but nowhere else. It was rendered into Chinese between CE 334 and 431 (T. 302), but this translation is no longer extant. The earliest available Chinese version (T. 303) dates to the late sixth century (CE 585–601). Neither the *Tmkn* nor the *Tgjn* is cited in the *Akṣayamatinirdeśaṭīkā*.

Of course, none of these dates reveal the exact age of our texts. They tell us when they were first translated or called upon in *sūtra* exegesis. Some may have been around for centuries, others put together in the year of their translation. The dates are not without value though, for they issue benchmarks against which to measure text-internal data. In our case, they confirm that the proposed progression is chronologically feasible; that it all began with the *dhāraṇī*s of the *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśa,* the oldest of the four texts, continued with the *Tgjn* and ended in the *Ratnamegha*, which came to source Mvy #748.

AND AGAIN: *RATNAMEGHA* AND *MAHĀVYUTPATTI*

So far, my analysis of Mvy #748 drew primarily on the transmission of a single list of *bodhisattva dhāraṇī*s found in three different texts. I now shift focus and examine whether the *Ratnamegha* provided any other material for the *Mahāvyutpatti*. Because its exposition consists predominantly of lists, most would readily lend themselves to such a transfer. In the end, surprisingly few did.

Altogether, the *Ratnamegha* distinguishes 108 categories of Budddhist practice. Eighty-eight of those describe fairly minor components.[40] The remaining twenty contain important material about the *buddha* and *bodhisattva*. This includes, for example, four groups of *tathāgata* attributes that it shares with the *Mahāvyutpatti*: ten *tathāgata* powers (*bala*: Wa, 48v6–49r2; Mvy #117), four *tathāgata* assurances (*vaiśāradya*: 49r2–4; Mvy #128), eighteen exclusive *buddha* qualities (*āveṇika*: 49r4–50r1; Mvy #133) and thirty-two types of *tathāgata* compassion (*karuṇā*, 49v1–51r5; Mvy #152). These are all well known and have parallels in other *sūtra*s.[41] Their prominence makes it difficult to identify the text from which the *Mahāvyutpatti* took those four lists. The *Ratnamegha* is a strong candidate. Its own *tathāgata* lists match the *Mahāvyutpatti's* in content and organization. Moreover, if the *Ratnamegha* was the source for the *bodhisattva dharma*s, why not also for the *buddha dharma*s? But because the *buddha dharma*s appear in many *sūtra*s in exactly that format,[42] it is virtually impossible to tie them to any one text. This does not

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40. I have reproduced the whole list, with *Mahāvyutpatti* parallels, in the appendix.
41. The list of 32 *tathāgata* compassions appears also in the *Brahmaviśeṣacintiparipṛcchā* (mDo sde, Ba, 45r7–47v3), *Bodhisattvapiṭaka* (Ga, 34r6–40r3) and the Tmkn (Pa, 175v4–182r3). For a good analysis of compassion in the Mahāyāna, see Lamotte (1970–81, 1705–17).
42. For a discussion of their format and early codification, see Lamotte (1970–81, 1505–1661).

apply to the minor *bodhisattva* qualities (Wa, 54v1–109r3). Each of these divides into ten factors connected to their cultivation. Some are well known and follow a clearly perceptible order (e.g. four *apramāṇas* (25–28), twelve *dhūtaguṇas* (41–52)). Most are strung together in random sequence. If there was ever a design behind their organization, it was not thought to require an explanation.

But how do they help us prove the link between the *Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti*? On first impression, they have little in common. Fewer than half (38) possess a counterpart in the *Mahāvyutpatti*. Even those that have a match appear in a different order, sometimes scattered over many rubrics. Rtm 74 and 75, for example, correspond to Mvy #1099 and #6331; Rtm 83 and 84 parallel Mvy #2415 and #9130. But the clue, I think, lies in these variations. Within this chaos, there are a number of minor, faintly affiliated attributes that appear in both texts side by side. Some are not recorded elsewhere in the *sūtras*, others have distant relatives. In many cases, their juxtaposition can only be explained if they were transported as a pair/group from the *Ratnamegha* to the *Mahāvyutpatti*. I give now some examples. Rtm 14 (*rigs pa'i spobs pa*, Wa, 65r3–v1) and Rtm 15 (*grol ba'i spobs pa*, 65v1–3) correspond to Mvy #876 (*yuktapratibhāna*) and Mvy #877 (*muktapratibhāna*). Rtm 22 (*stoṅ pa ñid kyi spyod yul ba*, 70v5–71r2), Rtm 23 (*mtshan ma med pa la gnas pa*, 71r2–71r4) and Rtm 24 (*smon lam thams cad la gnas pa daṅ bral ba*, Wa, 72v3–4) match Mvy #820 (*śūnyatāgocara*), Mvy #821 (*animittavihārī*) and Mvy #822 (*sarvapraṇidhānaniśrayavigata*). *Śūnyatā*, *animitta* and *apraṇihīta* form of course a well-known triad that is recorded separately in the *Mahāvyutpatti* (#1545–7). Their connection in Mvy #820–3 is not clear. This applies also to the next five entries. Rtm 25 (*byams pa'i bdag ñid can*, 72v5–73r1), Rtm 26 (*sñiṅ rje'i bdag ñid can*, 73r1–5), Rtm 27 (*dga' ba la gnas pa*, 73r5–v4) and Rtm 28 (*btaṅ sñoms la gnas pa*, 73v4–74r2) correspond to Mvy #878 (*maitryātmaka*), Mvy #879 (*karuṇātmaka*), Mvy #880 (*muditāvihārī*) and Mvy #881 (*upekṣāvihārī*). The first four components derive from the immeasurables (*apramāṇa*). Like *śūnyatā*, *animitta* and *apraṇihīta*, the *apramāṇa*s constitute a discrete practice with its own *Mahāvyutpatti* rubric (#1506). The *Ratnamegha* divides them into pairs (*ātmaka/vihārī*) which is quite unusual. The *Mahāvyutpatti* reproduces them here in the same order (Mvy #878–81). Both cite *abhijñāvikriḍita* next (Mvy #884, Rtm 29). A few entries earlier, we meet in both with *yutkapratibhāna* (Mvy #876, Rtm 13) and *muktapratibhāna* (Mvy #877, Rtm 14). The juxtaposition of these expressions is unlikely to be a coincidence. All eight were probably transfered as a group to the *Mahāvyutpatti*. There are not many texts that expound these practices. Most concentrate on more popular topics, such as the *pāramitā*s, *bhūmi*s and *bodhicittotpada*. But the *Ratnamegha* would have been also a very convenient parent. Three-quarters of its exposition consists of serial enumerations, stringing together hundreds of practices. Such format facilitates the identification and extraction of individual items in preparation for transfer to another text. At this point, we should also recall that the translators of the *Ratnamegha* (Ratnarakṣita, Dharmatāśīla) were both involved in the compilation of the *Mahāvyutpatti*. The fact that the two appear first in the list of Tibetan contributors (Simonsson 1957, 241) indicates that they must have

been of senior rank and probably had some say in the selection of source materials. At the very least, they would have had intimate knowledge of the *Ratnamegha* and its enumerations.[43]

Let us now return to the *bodhisattva dhāraṇī*s and examine the factors behind their inclusion in the *Mahāvyutpatti*. The *Mahāvyutpatti* was comissioned as a register of Buddhist terminology for use in the translation of Indian canonical sources. The inclusion of an expression would have been determined by its frequency, centrality and popularity. While it is not too difficult to assess frequency or centrality, there are no ready criteria to measure popularity. Furthermore, most entries consist only of headwords without indication about content or application. This holds true also for Mvy #748. Thus, in order to learn more of the nature and purpose of its *dhāraṇī*s, we need to turn to the expositions from which they derive.

The *Ratnamegha* is a good starting-point since it contributes context and establishes the scope of the *dhāraṇī*s. Through their inclusion among six lists of *bodhisattva dharma*s, it places them firmly within the *bodhisattva* training. Their position between *bodhisattva* meditations and super-knowledges confirms the contemplative environment of their production. Most *sūtra*s embed *dhāraṇī*s similarly within the practice of meditation and mindfulness (Braarvig 1985, 22; Copp forthcoming; Gyatso 1992, 175–8; Inagaki 1987, 100–105; Lamotte 1970–81, 1855–66). Since the *Ratnamegha* consists predominantly of bare lists, perhaps designed to achieve maximum coverage, it does not describe any of its *dhāraṇī*s. But because it constitutes the final stage of a long process of transmission, spanning four hundred years, it fixes their number at twelve.

The *Tgjn* provides context and gives us some sense of the evolution of our *dhāraṇī*s. Most appear also here in a bare list without commentary or annotation. As in the *Ratnamegha*, its list comes right after a group of meditations. In a separate section, several folios earlier, the *Tgjn* discusses the circumstances that lead to the production of three other *dhāraṇī*s: the *abhiṣecanī* (mDo sde, Tsa, 128v7), *anantavarṇa* and *buddhakāyavarṇapariniṣpattyabhinirhāra* (mDo sde, Tsa, 137r4–5). All three manifest through the company of virtuous friends (*kalyāṇamitra*). Mastery of the *buddhakāyavarṇapariniṣpattyabhinirhāra* allows the *bodhisattva* to pervade the spheres of the world with his newly acquired *buddha* body (Tsa, 137r7–8). Perhaps because the latter is a very advanced accomplishment, both *Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti* place it at the top of their lists. In the *Tgjn*, strangely though, it ranks first. Since the Buddha does not explain its allocation, and we possess little other information about this particular *dhāraṇī*, it is difficult to make sense of this decision. I suspect that the *dhāraṇī* was positioned ahead of all other because

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43. On the role of these two translators in the larger revision process and their connection to the *Ratnamegha*, see Scherrer-Schaub (2002, esp. 297–304). This important publication throws very interesting light on the historical events surrounding the compilation of the *Mahāvyutpatti* corpus and is the first to highlight, albeit from a very different angle, the connection between the *Ratnamegha* and *Mahāvyutpatti*. In many ways, Scherrer-Schaub's findings corroborate the close affiliation between the two brought out here through the twelve *dhāraṇī*s and surrounding bodhisattva practices.

it was considered fundamental to the whole group. The remaining *dhāraṇī*s (as well as the meditations and a host of other attainments) manifest through trust in the *Tgjn* (Tsa, 139v1–141r1). They do not appear to be connected to any specific practice or attainment. How does this compare to the exposition of the *Tmkn*? As the oldest of our sources, one would perhaps expect it to yield more detail.

THE *DHĀRAṆĪ*S OF THE *TATHĀGATAMAHĀKARUṆĀNIRDEŚA*

The *Tmkn* preserves the most comprehensive description of *dhāraṇī* practice discovered so far. The liberal use of metaphors and profusion of examples indicate that its account may have been the first of its kind. Since its eight *dhāraṇī*s all appear in the *Mahāvyutpatti*, it is of considerable value to our investigation. According to the *Tmkn, dhāraṇī*s serve primarily to secure the transmission of the *Dharma* and thereby contribute to universal liberation (mDo sde, Pa, 219r4–5):

> O son of good family, when *bodhisattva*s are established in the following [eight] *dhāraṇī*s, they hold in mind [the utterances] spoken by all the *buddha*s. The doctrine that they preached will not disappear. And because they are well spoken (*legs par bśad pas*) they appease all sentient beings.

As a group, the eight help the *bodhisattva* to improve his teaching skills. This they achieve in different ways. The first *dhāraṇī*, called *viśuddhasvaranirghoṣa* (219r7–222v2), maps the resonance of the *Dharma* and its vast reach in the universe.[44] It issues the ability to condense any number of sermons within the sound *A. A* stands here for the absence of attribution and prevents conditioned predication (mDo sde, Pa, 219v4–7):

> In order to appease with such resolution as many sentient beings as he wishes, he makes appear by magic (*sbyin gyis brlabs te*) the lion throne

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44. The *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra* contains in Chapter 43 a useful but short passage which describes a *ghoṣapraveśa-dhāraṇī* (Lamotte 1970–81, 1866). However, because this does not overlap with the *viśuddhasvaranirghoṣa*, it falls outside the remit of the present investigation. A similar discussion occurs already in Chapter 1 (Lamotte 1970–81, 319–21) where the *ghoṣapraveśa-dhāraṇī* is cited alongside two other *bodhisattva dhāraṇī*s (*śrutadhara, vibhajyajñāna*). Again, the description is quite different but it closes with an interesting list of ten *dhāraṇī*s reproduced here in Lamotte's conjectural Sanskrit titles (Lamottte 1970–81, 321): (1) *śāntī*, (2) *ananta*, (3) *bhūmyanupaśyanā*, (4) *anubhāva*, (5) *padmavyūha*, (6) *ghoṣapariśuddhi*, (7) *gaganagarbha*, (8) *sāgaragarbha*, (9) *sarvadharmabhūmiprabheda* and (10) *sarvadharmārthāloka*. Three of them appear in the *Gaṇḍavyūha* (5, 7, 8), two in the *Tmkn, Tgjn* and *Ratnamegha* (5, 6). Three more correspond in part with *dhāraṇī*s of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* list (1, 2, 3). The overlap between the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra* and other canonical lists suggests that this particular cluster is probably composite, drawn from a range of *sūtra*s. Since three of its *dhāraṇī*s have no parallel in any of our six lists (4, 9, 10), it is possible that these derive from a seventh, as yet unidentified, source.

that reaches as high as (*tshad tsam ma*) half a mile, a full mile, a moun-
tain range and the *Brahmāloka*, sits down on it and teaches the *Dharma*.
While he is sitting on the lion throne in that way, he illuminats all the
buddha-fields of the ten directions and hears all the teachings that the
*buddha*s, blessed ones have preached. And after he has heard them, he
keeps them in mind with the help of the power of *dhāraṇī* and does not
forget them. With the help of that quality (*chos*) he perceives (*so sor myoṅ
ba*) the meaning (*don*) of the *Dharma*. Since he listens to other teachings
(*chos*), he does not confuse (*sgrib par mi byed pa*) [his audience] while
teaching the Doctrine. Since he teaches the *Dharma*, he does not confuse
[his audience] while listening to the Doctrine. Since he penetrates the
one sound of letters (*yi ge'i sgra gcig*), he teaches entry into all the sounds
of letters. Through (*tshul gyis*) enunciating the first of the letters, called
A, he enunciates the vast gateway to the *Dharma* (*chos kyi sgo mtha' yas*):
through the characteristic of non-motion (*'oṅ ba med pa*), all factors of
existence lack in motion; through non-transformation (*'pho ba med pa*),
all factors do not transform; through non-fixation (*gnas med pa*), all fac-
tors lack fixation.

Mastery of the *viśuddhasvaranirghoṣa-dhāraṇī* enables *bodhisattva*s *to* purify their
body, speech and mind (221v6–222r6) and to communicate with people regardless
of language or spiritual disposition (222r6–v1):

> A *bodhisattva* who is established in this *dhāraṇī* pervades (*rgyas par 'geṅs
> so*) with light as many buddha-fields as he has communicated (*go bar byed
> pa*) with his voice. That is to say, since he has attained the distinguished
> purity of this very *dhāraṇī* (*gzuṅs 'di ñid kyi ma 'dres pa'i khyad par*), he will
> produce with the help of that light the *Dharma* method preached by all
> the *buddha*s of the ten directions.

The second *dhāraṇī*, entitled *akṣayakaraṇḍa*, addresses conceptual extension. It
establishes the infinitude of the constituents of existence and describes its appli-
cation to the *bodhisattva*'s knowledge of the *Dharma* (222v2–3, 224r3–4):

> The teaching of this *dhāraṇī* is inexhaustible (*akṣaya*). The teaching about
> impermanence, saying 'matter (*gzugs*) is impermanent' is inexhaustible.
> The teaching about suffering, saying 'matter is suffering' is inexhaust-
> ible. The teaching about non-substantiality, saying 'matter is non-sub-
> stantial' is inexhaustible. …
>   Knowledge how to speak of the inexhaustibility (*mi zad pa*) of this heap
> (*za ma tog*) of a body arisen from the four great elements, knowledge
> how to embark on the inexhaustible *Dharma* discourse *Ratnakaraṇḍaka*
> (Mvy #1408) and inexhaustible knowledge of the teaching (*bstan pa śes
> pa mi zad pa*), this is called *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī*. Through teaching this
> introductory exposition the *akṣayakaraṇḍa*[-*dhāraṇī*] will continue to be
> pronounced for a world age or more.

The *anantāvarta-dhāraṇī*, the third in the *Tmkn*, sets the parameter of liberation and describes the process through which it is achieved. It explains their operations using the components *anta* (*mtha'*) and *āvarta* (*'khyil ba*) (224r4–v7):

> The term *anta* [indicating parameter] is about annihilation (*chad pa*) and permanence (*rtag pa*). The term *āvarta* [indicating process] is about the twelve factors of dependent co-origination. Through the condition of ignorance the karmic forces arise. ... Through the condition of becoming death, old age, affliction, suffering, unhappiness, etc., arise. ... The term *anta* is about *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*. The term *āvarta* [indicates] that all factors are by nature in *nirvāṇa*. O son of good family, both *anta* and *āvarta* are boundless teachings.

This *dhāraṇī*, if properly accomplished, prepares for the attainment of two other *dhāraṇīs*: *artha-dhāraṇī* and *vyañjana-dhāraṇī* (224v7–225r1):

> The *bodhisattva* who is established in the *anantāvarta-dhāraṇī* complies [both] with infinitude (*mtha' yas pa*) and the turning of the Doctrine (*chos 'khyil ba*). Even though he teaches the Doctrine indefinitely [for] a hundred thousand world ages, he will not reach the limit of the gnosis (*ye śes*) of the *dhāraṇī* of meaning (*artha*) and syllables (*vyañjana*).[45] This is to embark on pursuing the *anantāvarta-dhāraṇī*.

The *sāgaramudrā-dhāraṇī* charters the content of the Doctrine. The first component of this *dhāraṇī*, *sāgara* (*rgya mtsho*), is compared to a vast receptacle holding all earthly manifestations (*gzugs su snaṅ ba*) (e.g. trees, mountains, etc.) (225r2–6). The second element, *mudrā* (*phyag rgya*), refers to the defining features of the *Tathāgata*. They consist of forty-three letters that summarize individual points of the Doctrine. The letter *A* stands for the teaching of non-instigation (*anabhisaṃkāra*), *Ra* for the proposition that all factors of existence are originally pure (*rajas*), *Pa* for the concept of absolute truth (*paramārtha*), and so forth. As a group, these letters/ headwords constitute the *arapacana* syllabary (225r6–226r6):[46]

> O son of good family, a *bodhisattva* who is thus established in the *sāgaramudrā-dhāraṇī* is of the same physical character (*lus rgya daṅ mtshuṅs pa*) as all sentient beings. He is of the same vocal character as all sentient beings. He is of the same mental character as all sentient beings. The *bodhisattva* describes (*kha'i sgo nas ... 'byuṅ ṅo*) the *buddhas*, blessed ones in the ten directions who have embarked [on] the task

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45. The Tibetan reads here *don daṅ tshig 'brus gzuṅs*. This phrase is certain to refer to the division of *dhāraṇī* practice into memory of meaning (*artha*) and memory of letters (*vyañjana*). Meaning and letter constitute the first two *dhāraṇī* categories of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Wogihara 1930–36, 272.12–274.22) and other exegetical sources (Inagaki 1987, 103). For an analysis of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* passage, see Gyatso (1992, 175–6), Inagaki (1987, 100–2) and Kapstein (2001, 237–8).

46. On the *arapacana* syllabary, see now Pagel (2007, 18–38).

of promulgating the teaching of the *Dharma* (*chos kyi ston pa*) bearing
the same defining features (*phyag rygas btab ba daṅ mtshuṅs pa*). All the
*bodhisattva*s who promulgate the defining features (*phyag rgya btab pa*)
of the *Tathāgata* are not led [astray] by other (*ananyaneya*) when they
describe, without conceptualising, all the defining features using the
tathāgata marks. Now, they describe the defining features as follows:
the letter *A* is the defining feature of *anabhisaṃskāra*; the letter *RA* is the
defining feature. ... O son of good family, in that way, every *bodhisattva*
understands how to describe the defining features of all those sayings
(*yi ge*) that [are used to] explain the Doctrine. O son of good family, this
is to walk through the gate [leading] to the *sāgaramudrā-dhāraṇī*.

We are told here, I think, that *sāgaramudrā* prepares the *bodhisattva* for the onto-
logical propositions encapsulated within the *arapacana* syllables. Put simply, it
gives him the ability to penetrate the attributes and constituent processes of
conditioned existence (226r5).

The fifth *dhāraṇī*, called *padmavyūha*, highlights the diversity of the *buddha-
dharma*. It compares the plurality of teachings with the variations among lotus
flowers. Each lotus is the source of a particular *Dharma* genre. In order to illustrate
the breadth of the *Dharma*, the Buddha divides his discourses into ten well-known
subcategories: *sūtra, geya, vyākaraṇa, gāthā, uddāna, nidāna, itivṛttaka, jātaka, vaip-
ulya* and (*dharma*)*upadeśa* (226r7–v1).[47] But the lotus flower is more than a meta-
phor. It is the direct source of *buddha* activity (226v2–4):

The [*bodhisattva*] who issues from the lotus flowers that have thus
appeared will not only eliminate the suffering which produces that
[lotus] (*de byed pa'i sdug bsṅal*) but also perform *buddha* activity. Light
rays will issue from all the pores of the *bodhisattva*'s body. And more
lotus flowers will spring from those light rays. Then manifestations
(*gzugs*) of the *bodhisattva* will issue from those lotus flowers. Once they
disperse into the vast, immeasurable world sphere of the ten directions,
the [*bodhisattva*s] perform *buddha* activity. This is to walk through the
gate [leading] to the *padmavyūha-dhāraṇī*.

The *asaṅgamukhapraveśa-dhāraṇī* examines the *Dharma* from a different angle.
It describes the *bodhisattva*'s attitude towards the teachings of the Buddha. The
asaṅgamukhapraveśa-dhāraṇī requires him to remain detached from their content
and expression, no matter how precious these may appear (226v6–227r4):

[The *bodhisattva*] is not attached (*la mi chags pa*) to one teaching (*bstan
pa*), two teachings, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine or ten teach-

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47. Most lists of *aṅga*s fall into one of two categories: they have either nine or twelve items.
The present enumeration gives ten. This, of course, does not necessarily mean that it is two
members short since lists fluctuate. For a good introduction to the *aṅga*s, see Lamotte (1958,
158–62).

ings. He is not attached to twenty, thirty, etc., teachings. ... Although he teaches [the Doctrine] using grammatical coherent words (*ldan pa: anvita*), powerful language (*'byor ba*), definitions (*śin tu ṅes pa'i tshig*), meaning (*artha*) and syllables (*tshig 'bru*), he is not attached or fettered to [these teachings]. This is the *dhāraṇī* called *asaṅgamukhapraveśa*.

The *pratisaṃvinniścayāvatāra-dhāraṇī*, item seven in our list, draws on the four analytic knowledges (*pratisaṃvid*). It describes the universal reach of the *Dharma* when expounded by a *bodhisattva* in command of meaning (*artha*), referent (*dharma*), etymology (*nirukti*) and eloquence (*pratibhāna*). Each of the four knowledges is inexhaustible (*akṣaya*) (277r4–5) and appeals to a particular segment of the population (227r5–7):

> All sentient beings of the eastern world assemble around [a *bodhisattva*] who has attained such [analytic] knowledge and inquire, using their own language (*raṅ raṅ skad kyis*), about skill in meaning (*don la mkhas pa*). The people of the southern world [assemble around him and] enquire about skill in referents. The people of the western world enquire about skill in etymology. The people of the northern world enquire about skill in eloquence.

For the *bodhisattva* to teach in all those languages simultaneously, he achieves command of a type of meta-language that allows him to engage in various discourses at the same time (*dus gcig tu brjod ciṅ skad sna tshogs la 'jug pa*). In the end, he relies no longer on conventional speech but communicates through the *Dharma* language (227v1):

> Since he knows [how] to penetrate language, he [is able to] conform with all [types of] language. He appeases the mental manifestation (*sems kyi rnam par rig pa: cittavijñapti*) of all sentient beings using a single language.

The eighth *dhāraṇī, buddhālaṃkārādhiṣṭhita*, signals that the *bodhisattva* has attained buddhahood. It confers the activity of the *buddha*'s body, speech and mind. Nourished through the sustaining power of the *Tathāgata*, he casts aside weariness, understands the disposition of all people and adjusts his discourses to meet their spiritual needs. The *buddhālaṃkārādhiṣṭhita-dhāraṇī*, in short, confers receptivity to the infinity of teaching modalities (227v5–228r1):

> Although [the *bodhisattva*] teaches the Doctrine continuously (*rgyud kyis*) without nourishment for as long as he wishes – one day, two days, three days, four days, seven days, two weeks, one month, etc., up to ten thousand years – because he persists (*śin tu yoṅs su bzuṅ ba'i phyir*) through the sustaining power of the *Tathāgata*, his *Dharma* introduction (*dharmamukha*) does not perish. His body and mind do not weary. [Instead] he acquires four [types of] high knowledge (*śes pa chen po*). Which four? He understands (*śes pa*) [how] to analyse the disposition and sayings of

sentient beings, he understands the [four] inexhaustible analytic knowl-
edges, he understands how to differentiate between the vehicles (*theg pa
ji ltar rnam par dgod pa*) and he understands [how] to teach the Doctrine
suitably [adapted] to individual [people].

This *dhāraṇī,* therefore, just as its seven predecessors, is concerned with the
spread and transmission of the Doctrine. But while the others focus on the *Dharma*
or the *bodhisattva*'s attitude towards the *Dharma* (its resonance (1), extension (2),
parameter/processes (3), content (4), diversity (5), attitude (6) and reach (7)), the
buddhālaṃkārādhiṣṭhita maps the intellectual capability of the audience. It signals
the point where the *bodhisattva* fulfils his true teaching potential and acquires
the body, speech and mind of a Buddha in its full glory. It is the moment of coro-
nation (227v2–5):

> O son of good family, in the upper part of [a place called] 'sPyi gtsug gi
> draṅ thad' located in the middle of the great *maṇḍaladhātu* there shall
> emerge the manifestation (*sku*) of a *Tathāgata* in gold, in the form of an
> image adorned with the *buddha*'s [thirty-two] physical characteristics
> and [eighty] features of beauty. That *tathāgata* image places its right hand
> on top of the head of a *bodhisattva* who has attained such *dhāraṇī* and is
> [now] sitting on the great *Dharma* throne. As soon as the hand touches
> [his head] the *bodhisattva* acquires the [*Tathāgata*'s] physical, vocal and
> mental conduct, beautified through *buddha* practices (*alaṃkāra*). Once he
> has acquired such qualities (*chos*), because he is [now able to] penetrate
> the mental disposition of the whole of *saṃsāra*, he teaches the Doctrine
> individually in a suitable manner.

These extracts reveal that the *Tmkn* posits a close link between *dhāraṇī,* scriptural
memory and teaching. This association is well known from other sources.[48] Since its
exposition suffers from a few loose ends and makes no attempt to stratify *dhāraṇī*
practice, the *Tmkn* was probably among the first to write about *dhāraṇī* in detail. To a
degree, it would have drawn on expositions in earlier sources. But because our under-
standing of the circumstances in which Mahāyāna *sūtras* were composed is patchy, it
is not clear how exactly it evolved. In the next section we learn that four of its eight
*dhāraṇī*s are used in six other texts. But this by itself does not tell us a great deal. We
need first to take a closer look at the ways in which these *sūtras* describe them.

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48. In addition to the passages discovered by Braarvig (1985; *Akṣayamatinirdeśa, Daśabhūmika,*
    Saṃdhinirmocana, etc.) there is one other explicit attestation for the connection between the
    three. It appears in the *Bhadramāyākāravyākaraṇa* and runs as follows:
    > O Bhadra, if a *bodhisattva* possesses four qualities he attains *dhāraṇī.* Which four? (1)
    > He is insatiable in his striving for great learning. (2) He venerates devotedly those who
    > possess great learning. (3) He applies himself to teach the *Dharma* to others. (4) He aims
    > to understand the hidden meaning of the *Tathāgata*'s teachings by arranging the words
    > and letters into the right sequence. (Régamey [1938] 1990, 46.3–8)

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Four of the *dhāraṇī*s in our lists appear outside the Tmkn/Tgjn/Rtm/Mvy. They include the (1) *akṣayakaraṇḍa*, (2) *anantāvarta*, (3) *sāgaramudrā* and (4) *padmavyūha*. They are used in six different *sūtra*s: *Gaṇḍavyūha* (*anantāvarta*, *padmavyūha*), *Akṣayamatiparipṛcchā* (*akṣayakaraṇḍa*), *Sāgaranāgarājaparipṛcchā* (*akṣayakaraṇḍa*), *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā* (*akṣayakaraṇḍa*, *sāgaramudrā*, *padmavyūha*), *Daśasāhasrikā* (*ditto*) and *Śatasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (*ditto*). As a group, the four make up the centre of the *Tmkn* cluster and constitute perhaps its nucleus. They appear also in identical position and order in the *Tgjn* and *Ratnamegha*. As time went by, their number was increased through additional *dhāraṇī*s. We noted earlier that in the longer lists the *dhāraṇī*s in the middle stayed put; only the *dhāraṇī*s at the periphery moved around. Unfortunately, the situation is not as simple as it may seem. First, the four are not attested jointly in any of the six texts. Three occur together in Prajñāpāramitā sources, but the fourth (*anantāvarta*) is cited only in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*. Secondly, in two of the Prajñāpāramitā texts (*Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā* and *Śatasāhasrikā*), the *akṣayakaraṇḍa*-, *sāgaramudrā*- and *padmavyūha-dhāraṇī*s are accompanied by a fourth *dhāraṇī* which is not included in the *Tmkn*. It is called *pragrāhaka-dhāraṇī* (*yoṅs su 'dzin pa'i gzuṅs*).[49] A similar *dhāraṇī* is already known from the *Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanā* (mDo sde, Tsha, 239r4):

> O son of good family, *dhāraṇī-dhāraṇī* (*gzuṅs gzuṅs źes bya ba ni*) is correct conduct (*nan tan: pratipatti*) that complies with the Doctrine (*chos*) [applied] to those teachings (*chos de dag la*). Therefore it is called *dhāraṇī*.

The Prajñāpāramitā *dhāraṇī*s surface all in the same chapter (*phyir mi ldog pa'i le'u*) and carry similar definitions. Above all, they help safeguard the transmission of the *Dharma* (Ñi khri, Kha, 371v2–7; Khri pa, Ṅa, 366v2–7; 'Bum, Tha, 143v3–144r1):

> [The Blessed One said:] 'Furthermore, O Subhūti, a *bodhisattva*, *mahāsattva* who does not fall back does not harbour any doubt or ambiguity about the Doctrine which the *Arhant, Tathāgata Samyak Saṃbuddha* teaches. He holds in mind everything that the *buddha*s, blessed ones say. Once he commits that to memory, he does not allow it to perish (*chud za bar mi byed do*). Why? Because in that way he attains memory (*dhāraṇī*)'. Then the venerable Subhūti spoke the following words to the Blessed One: 'O Blessed One, what [kind of] memory does the *bodhisattva*, *mahāsattva* attain so that he does not seek for the *sūtra*s preached by his (*de'i*) Tathāgata to vanish (*cha ba pa mi 'tshal ba lags*)?' The Blessed One replied:

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49. Both texts use the same Tibetan expression: *de bźin du rgya mtsho'i phyag rgya daṅ | pad mo rnam par bkod pa daṅ | yoṅs su 'dzin pa'i gzuṅs*); *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*, Ñi khri, Kha, 371v6; *Śatasāhasrikā*, 'Bum, Tha, 43v7.

> 'O Subhūti, it is when he attains the *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī* that the *sūtras*
> preached by his *Tathāgata* do not perish. Likewise, it is when he attains
> the *sāgaramudrā-dhāraṇī*, *padmavyūha-dhāraṇī* and **pragrāhaka-dhāraṇī*
> that the *sūtras* preached by his *Tathāgata* do not perish.'

This passage mirrors the application of *dhāraṇī* found in so many other *sūtras*.
*Dhāraṇī*s constitute an instrument which enables the *bodhisattva* to hold in mind
the teachings he received from the *Tathāgata*. But the Prajñāpāramitā texts go
a little further and include all spoken words ('Bum, Tha, 44r1–4; Ñi khri, Kha,
371v7–372r3):

> Subhūti asked: 'O Blessed One, does [the *bodhisattva*] not seek for any-
> thing [ever] spoken by *śrāvakas*, gods, *nāgas*, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*,
> *garūḍas* and *mahoragas*, let alone what is preached by the *Tathāgata Arhant
> Samyak Saṃbuddha*, never to vanish (*cha ba*)?' The Blessed One replied: 'O
> Subhūti, the *bodhisattva*, *mahāsattva* does not harbour doubt or ambigu-
> ity about any of their sayings (*skad*), expressions (*brda*) or sounds (*sgra*)
> whatsoever (*ruṅ ste*). Why? Because he attains memory (*gzuṅs*)'.

Since the transmissional history of the long Prajñāpāramitā works is intri-
cate and largely unresolved, I am not able to explain why all three texts contain
almost identical *dhāraṇī* extracts. It is likely that the passages are connected and
drew on each other, but it is not clear which of the three came first. The fact
that the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā* and *Śatasāhasrikā* yield four *dhāraṇī* titles, while the
Daśasāhasrikā records only three (omitting **pragrāhaka-dhāraṇī*), shows that they
are a little closer. Since the *Daśasāhasrikā* contains the shortest list, it preserves
perhaps the earliest version. On the other hand, because the Prajñāpāramitā texts
are intertwined, all three passages could also derive from a single source. We
simply cannot tell.

There is not much point in turning to the *Gaṇḍavyūha* either, since its
padmavyūha appears in a bare list, without indication of its purpose, scope or
context. Its neighbours (*tejovatī-*, *svaravivikta-dhāraṇī*) are quite different too. In
fact, apart from the last (*sāgaragarbha*), none of the remaining nine can be linked
with the Prajñāpāramitā *dhāraṇī*s. And even this might be quite unrelated, since
we have no means to establish that *sāgaragarbha* and *sāgaramudrā* possess the
same content.

The situation in the *Akṣayamatiparipṛcchā* is similar. It too has one *dhāraṇī* with
a match among the Prajjñāpāramitā *dhāraṇī*s. This time it is *akṣayakaraṇḍa*. The
akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī is the last of its list. It marks the end of the path and mani-
fests on the tenth stage (Cha, 181v6). The advanced position indicates that the
akṣayakaraṇḍa might rank highest, but because the *Akṣayamatiparipṛcchā* does not
explain its *dhāraṇī*s either, this cannot be verified. The other *dhāraṇī*s have no
counterpart in our lists. Two might derive from similar attainments (Akṣ 1: *khyad
par gyi byin gyis brlabs* (*viśeṣādhiṣṭhāna) with Tmkn 8: *buddhālaṃkārādhiṣṭhita* and
Akṣ 9: *sgo mtha' yas pa'i rgyan* (**anantamukhālaṃkāra*) with Tmkn 3: *anantāvarta*),
although again, without description, we cannot substantiate such a link.

Our last stop is the *Sāgaranāgarājaparipṛcchā.* This text holds much promise since it devotes a whole chapter to a single *dhāraṇī*: the *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī* (*mi zad pa'i za ma tog gi gzuṅs kyi le'u*, Pha, 135r1–145v6). No other *sūtra* describes a *dhāraṇī* in that much detail. For the *Sāgaranāgarājaparipṛcchā, akṣayakaraṇḍa* embodies the inexhaustibility of the *Dharma.* This it tackles from two perspectives. First, it defines the scope of the Buddha's discourses (*gtam*). These it considers are infinite in nuance, reach and variation (Pha, 137r4–v7). Put simply, the text confirms the diversity of expression within the Doctrine. Second, the *Sāgaranāgarājaparipṛcchā* argues that the *Dharma* is conceptually inexhaustible because it derives from components that are inexhaustible by themselves. To make its point, the *sūtra* lists sixteen groups of practices,[50] all connected with *akṣayakaraṇḍa*. I reproduce the first three (137v7–138r3):

> O lord of serpents, the *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī* should be understood through four inexhaustibilities (*mi zad pa ñid*). What four? The inexhaustibility of analytic knowledge (*pratisaṃvid*), gnosis (*jñāna*), discriminative understanding (*prajñā*) and inspiration of recollection (*dhāraṇīpratibhāna*). Those are the four.

> O lord of serpents the *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī* should be understood through four things difficult to fathom (*duravagāha*). What four? Intention (*bsam pa*) difficult to fathom, intellect (*blo*) difficult to fathom, *Dharma* entry (*chos la 'jug pa*) difficult to fathom and embarking on the conduct of people (*sems can kyi spyod pa la 'jug pa*) difficult to fathom. Those are the four.

> O lord of serpents, the following four should be understood as the quintessence (*sñiṅ po*) and components (*yi ge*) of the *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī*. What four? It is the quintessence (*sñiṅ por byed pa*) for understanding (*śes rab*), for accomplishment (*sgrub pa*), [for] fixation in patient acceptance (*bzod pa la gnas pa*) and [for] carrying out (*uttāraṇa*) one's planned undertakings (*brtsams pa ñams 'og tu chud par byed pa*). Those are the four.

This extract portrays the *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī* as a receptacle of advanced practices and insights. Its holder gains access to analytic knowledge, gnosis, and so on, as these are its very constituents. Bhāvaviveka makes use of this interpretation when he refers to this passage in the *Tarkajvāla* to challenge the efficacy of

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50. The full list runs as follows: (1) inexhaustibility (*mi zad ba ñid: akṣayatva*), (2) difficult to fathom (*gtiṅ dpag dka' ba: duravagāha*), (3) quintessence and letters (*sñiṅ po daṅ yi ge*), (4) ascertainment (*ṅes par 'byed pa: niścaya*), (5) light (*snaṅ ba: āloka*), (6) zeal (*rtun pa: ātāpin*), (7) perpetual *Dharma* search (*chos yoṅs su tshol ba mthar thug pa med pa*), (8) insatiability (*chog mi śes pa: atṛpta*), (9) difficult to reach (*tshugs par dka' ba*), (10) absence of contamination (*ma 'dres pa: asaṃbhinna*), (11) absence of blame (*smad du med pa*), (12) power (*stobs: bala*), (13) inexhaustible, great treasure (*gter chen po mi zad pa*), (14) immeasurability (*tshad med pa ñid*), (15) presence of purpose (*don yod pa ñid: sadarthatva*), (16) attainment of assurance (*mi 'jigs pa thob pa*) (Pha, 137v7–139v2).

mantra practice (Kapstein 2001, 246, 250).[51] Towards the end of the *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī* chapter, the Buddha describes the achievements that spring from the practice of this *dhāraṇī*. It places the *bodhisattva* on the seat of awakening, reveals the various sources (*'byuṅ gnas*) of the Doctrine and turns him into their receptacle (*za ma tog: karaṇḍa*) (Pha, 144r5–6). Ultimately, *akṣayakaraṇḍa* achieves comprehension of all sounds (*sgra thams cad la 'jug pa*) (Pha, 144r7). Bhāvaviveka, again in the *Tarkajvāla,* discloses the individual components used in communication (Kapstein 2001, 250.14–17):

> [The *bodhisattva* who embarks upon the *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī*] penetrates (*'jug pa*) the phonetic systems (*yi ge'i lugs*), names (*miṅ*), expressions (*brda ba*) and *Dharma* terminology (*chos kyi brda ba*).

The passage brings us back to the first, and perhaps quintessential quality of *akṣayakaraṇḍa*: competence in language and the constitutent discourses of the *Dharma.* The *Tmkn* puts forward a very similar interpretation (Pa, 224r1–3):

> Likewise, [a *bodhisattva*] who understands (*'jug pa*) [how] to pronounce a single sound (*sgra*) [taken from] amongst (*bar la*) the aggregates, elements and sensefields, [from amongst] all accumulations of names (*miṅ*), phrases (*tshig*) and phonemes (*yi ge*) as well as all factors of existence (*chos*), once he perceives [the *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī*] as an inexhaustible teaching (*bstan pa mi zad pa śes par*), will engage at length in all [teachings] (*thams cad la rgyas par sbyar ro*).

This extract, in turn, connects the *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī* with the ability to preach the *Dharma.* Any one sound, provided it is produced through this *dhāraṇī*, has the potential to secure the diffusion of the Doctrine. The practice of *akṣayakaraṇḍa*, then, is primarily about the preservation of the Buddha's teachings and their circulation among men. In a sense, it is both the most fundamental and advanced form of *dhāraṇī*: it lays the foundation for the path and constitutes its high point when brought to perfection.

The *akṣayakaraṇḍa* is the only *dhāraṇī* of our twelve that is described in two sources. The disappointing attestation of the others reduces the value of our findings since they cannot be independently confirmed. As a result, they do not carry over to other sources or traditions within Buddhism, let alone apply to Buddhism as a whole. What we have achieved today places *dhāraṇīs* on the map, but it does not charter their application or explain their rise to prominence in the tantras. This, in any case, was not what we set out to do. Our aim was to identify the origin

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51. Bhāvaviveka does not quote the whole passage, but produces a summary of the principal elements. Furthermore, he does not consider the remainder of the chapter where the Buddha connects the *akṣayakaraṇḍa-dhāraṇī* with the *bodhisattvapiṭaka* (Pha, 139v3) and the attendant practices. Both Braarvig (1997) and Kapstein (2001) consult this passage in order to extrapolate Bhāvaviveka's stance on the application of mantras.

and formation of the *bodhisattva dhāraṇī*s in the *Mahāvyutpatti*. In this, I believe, we had some success.

CONCLUSIONS

Our investigation identified the *Ratnamegha* as the probable source for the twelve *dhāraṇī*s of the *Mahāvyutpatti*. The *Ratnamegha* contains a cluster of *dhāraṇī*s with identical content and sequence. Since it is not included in all Chinese versions, but appears only in a late-eighth-century translation – a mere hundred years before the compilation of the *Mahāvyutpatti* – it is possible that the cluster was added subsequently. If this is true, the *Mahāvyutpatti* might well have used a similar redaction as the Chinese.

We also managed to chart the transmission of the *dhāraṇī*s before their inclusion in the *Ratnamegha*. Similar but shorter lists are used in the *Tmkn* and *Tgjn*. Their format and content suggests that the *dhāraṇī*s appeared first in the *Tmkn*. From here, they entered the *Tgjn*, which in turn became the source for the *Ratnamegha*. It is difficult to sketch the history of Mvy #748 prior to the *Tmkn*. Three of its twelve *dhāraṇī*s (*akṣayakaraṇḍa, sāgaramudrā, padmavyūha*) feature as a group in the *Śatasāhasrikā, Daśasāhasrikā* and *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*. But because the passages in which they occur are almost identical and may go back to a single source, we should not give too much weight to this attestation. If they derive from the same text, they are not independent. By the same token, their transfer from text to text would underpin their collective popularity. Because the three sit in the middle of all *dhāraṇī* lists in identical order, they may have been their early core.

The *Tmkn* gave us an opportunity to examine the purpose and diversity of the *dhāraṇī* genre. Its account records important progression in *dhāraṇī* conception. By the time the *Tmkn* was composed, the Mahāyāna had begun to catalogue, and differentiate between, a growing number of *dhāraṇī*s. For the first time perhaps, its scholars felt sufficiently confident to define their content, rank them and connect the *dhāraṇī*s to other practices.

While investigating the transmission of Mvy #478, we saw that also its adjacent rubrics (#738, #761–88) derive in all likelihood from the *Ratnamegha*. In content and organization, the five are virtually identical in both texts. Many depict categories of *bodhisattva* practice that have no known parallel in other *sūtra*s. Like the *dhāraṇī*s, they too appear only in the *Ratnamegha*'s late Chinese and Tibetan translations.

But to map their origin and transmission, one would need to prepare a study similar to this for each category. And even that would not necessarily yield firm results. In fact, also much of what I have said about *dhāraṇī*s must remain tentative. There are about four dozen other *sūtra*s that speak of *dhāraṇī* practice. Although none is linked to Mvy #748, they will need to be examined before too long. We have made a start, but there is still a long way to go.

ABBREVIATIONS

Sanskrit

Akṣ	*Akṣayamatiparipṛcchā*	Tgjn	*Tathāgataguṇajñānācintyaviṣayāvatāranirdeśa-sūtra*
Dharmas	*Dharmasaṅgraha* (Müller)	Tmkn	*Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśa-sūtra*
Mvy	*Mahāvyutpatti*	Rtm	*Ratnamegha-sūtra*

Tibetan

Phal po che	*Buddhāvataṃsaka* in Tibetan bKa' 'gyur
dKon brtsegs	*Ratnakūta* collection in Tibetan bKa' 'gyur
mDo sde	*Sūtra* collection in Tibetan bKa' 'gyur
Ñi khri	Section title of *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* in Tibetan bKa' 'gyur
Khri pa	Section title of *Daśasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* in Tibetan bKa' 'gyur
'Bum	Section title of *Śatasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* in Tibetan bKa' 'gyur
Ka, Kha, etc.	Indicates volume numbers in bKa' 'gyur

Other

Tib	Tibetan
#	Entry/Rubric reference in the *Mahāvyutpatti*

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APPENDIX: EIGHTY-EIGHT CATEGORIES OF MINOR *BODHISATTVA* PRACTICES

RATNAMEGHA: MDO SDE, WA, 54V1–109R3

 (1) nam mkha' daṅ mtshuṅs pa
 (2) nam mkha' daṅ mtshuṅs pa
 (3) zla ba daṅ 'dra ba
 (4) ñi ma daṅ 'dra ba
 (5) seṅ ge daṅ 'dra ba
 (6) 'dul ba (Mvy 10, *damya*)
 (7) caṅ śes pa (Mvy 1083, *ājāneya*)
 (8) pad ma daṅ 'dra ba
 (9) sems rgya che ba
(10) rnam par dag pa (Mvy 289, *viśuddha*)
(11) sems nem nur med pa

(12) blo rgya mtsho daṅ mtshuṅs pa

(13) blo źib pa

(14) rigs pa'i spobs pa can (Mvy 876, *yukta-pratibhāna*: rigs par spobs pa)

(15) grol ba'i spobs pa can (Mvy 877, *muktapratibhāna*: spobs pa grol ba)

(16) rnam par dag pa'i spobs pa can

(17) sems can thams cad mgur bar byed pa'i spobs pa can

(18) tshig gzuṅ bar 'gyur ba

(19) chos brjod pa

(20) chos kyi rjes su 'braṅ ba (Mvy 1024, *dharmānusāsrī*)

(21) chos kyi dbyiṅs la mkhas pa (Mvy 1092, *dharmadhātukuśala*)

(22) stoṅ pa ñid kyi spyod yul ba (Mvy 820, *śūnyatāgocara*)

(23) mtshan ma med pa la gnas pa (Mvy 821, *animittavihārī*)

(24) smon lam thams cad la gnas pa daṅ bral ba (Mvy 822, *sarvapraṇidhānaniśrayavigata*)

(25) byams pa'i bdag ñid can (Mvy 878, *maitryātmaka*)

(26) sñiṅ rje'i bdag ñid can (Mvy 879, *karuṇātmaka*)

(27) dga' ba la gnas pa (Mvy 880, *muditāvihārī*)

(28) btaṅ sñoms la gnas pa (Mvy 881, *upekṣāvihārī*)

(29) mṅon par śes pas rnam par rol pa (Mvy 884, *abhijñāvikriḍita*)

(30) mi khom pa brgyad rnam par spaṅs pa

(31) byaṅ chub kyi sems ma stor ba

(32) tshe rabs dran pa (Mvy 227, *jātismara*)

(33) dge ba'i bśes gñen daṅ ma bral ba

(34) sdig pa'i grogs po yoṅs su spaṅs pa

(35) de bźin gśegs pa'i sku'i chos ñid thob pa

(36) lus rdo rje ltar sra ba

(37) ded dpon chen po

(38) lam la mkhas pa

(39) lam ma log par ston pa

(40) rtag tu rgyun mi chad par sems mñam par gźag pa

(41) phyag dar khrod pa (Mvy 1131, *pāṃśukūlika*)

(42) chos gos gsum pa (Mvy 1132, *traicīvarika*)

(43) phyiṅ pa can (Mvy 1133, *nāma(n)tika*)

(44) bsod sñoms pa (Mvy 1134, *paiṇḍapātika*)

(45) stan gcig pa (Mvy 1135, *aikāsanika*)

(46) zas phyis mi len pa (Mvy 1136, *khalupaścād-bhaktika*)

(47) dgon pa pa (Mvy 1137, *āraṇyaka*)

(48) śiṅ druṅ pa (Mvy 1138, *vṛkṣamūlika*)

(49) bla gab med pa (Mvy 1139, *ābhyavakāśika*)

(50) dur khrod pa (Mvy 1140, *śmāśānika*)

(51) cog bu pa (Mvy 1141, *naiṣadika*)

(52) gźi ji bźin pa (Mvy 1142, *yāthāsaṃstarika*)

(53) rnal 'byor spyod pa (Mvy 1644, *yogācāra*)

(54) mdo sde 'dzin pa (Mvy 5138, *sūtradhara*)

(55) 'dul ba 'dzin pa (Mvy 5139, *vinayadhara*)

(56) cho ga daṅ spyod yul daṅ spyod pa daṅ spyod lam phun sum tshogs pa

(57) ser sna daṅ phrag dog daṅ bral ba

(58) sems can thams cad la sems sñoms pa

(59) de bźin gśegs pa la mchod pa daṅ rim gro bya ba la mkhas pa

(60) ṅa rgyal bcom pa

(61) dad pa maṅ ba

(62) kun rdzob la mkhas pa

(63) don dam pa la mkhas pa

(64) rten ciṅ 'brel bar 'byuṅ ba la mkhas pa

(65) bdag śes pa (Mvy 2400, *ātmajña*)

(66) 'jig rten śes pa (Mvy 2399, *lokajña*)

(67) saṅs rgyas kyi źiṅ yoṅs su dag pa dag tu skye ba

(68) mṅal gyi dri mas ma gos par skye ba

(69) khyim gyi gnas nas mṅon par byuṅ ba

(70) 'tsho ba yoṅs su dag pa

(71) yid yoṅs su mi skyo ba

(72) de bźin gśegs pa rnams kyi bka' bźin byed pa

(73) bźin 'dzum źiṅ khro gñer med pa

(74) maṅ du thos pa (Mvy 1099, *bahuśruta*)

(75) dam pa'i chos yoṅs su 'dzin pa (Mvy 6331, *saddharmaparigrāhaka*)

(76) chos kyi rgyal po'i sras (Mvy 1093, *dharmarājaputra*)

(77) brgya byin daṅ tshaṅs pa daṅ 'jig rten skyoṅ bas bstsu (?) ba

(78) bsam pa daṅ bag la ñal śes pa

(79) sems can yoṅs su smin par bya ba cho ga śes pa

(80) des pa

(81) 'grags na bde ba

(82) bsdu ba'i dṅos po la mkhas pa

(83) tshul du śis pa (Mvy 2415, *prāsādika*)

(84) gnas bca' ba (Mvy 9130, *āśrayaṇīyam*)

(85) rtsi'i rgyal po'i śiṅ chen po lta bu

(86) bsod nams bya ba la brtson pa

(87) sprul pa la mkhas pa

(88) myur du bla na med pa yaṅ dag par rdzogs pa'i byaṅ chub mṅon par rdzogs par 'tshaṅ rgya ba