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**Fragments of Dhāraṇī Blockprints from Khara-Khoto  
(Serindian Fund of IOM, RAS)**

With Appendix by Alla Sizova

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*Abstract:* The paper focuses on a blockprinted *dhāraṇī* from Khara-Khoto belonging to the group of unidentified and unpublished fragments in the Serindian Fund of the IOM, RAS. The characters used in the text of the print have much in common with the *pāla* script that was widespread in the North-Eastern India and associated with the Pala Empire. The print exists in several fragments. Judging by the content, it comprised two independent parts. Their relationship to each other, as well as the total number of pages, remain unknown. The first block of text has survived in its entirety. It has five lines of text. The first four lines are a triple repetition of the *Akṣobhya Buddha Dhāraṇī*. The fifth line consists of five *bija* mantras and the well-known “Buddhist creed”, the *Ye dharmā* mantra. Only half of the second block of text has survived but still it can be identified and is presumed to be the *mūlamantra*, *hṛdaya* and *upahṛdaya* from the *Bodhiḡarbhālaṅkāralakṣa dhāraṇī*. Part of the print is also half of an engraved image. Features of the image and its stylistic peculiarities make it very similar to the printed engravings in the Tangut and Dunhuang collections. It is assumed that the entire blockprint could have been a compilation of selected prayers used in common Buddhist ritual practice. The type of paper, image and script suggest a date for the blockprint around the 12th c.

*Key words:* IOM collection, editions, Indian paleography, Central Asia Buddhism, Sanskrit blockprint, *dhāraṇī*, Khara-Khoto

### Origin of the fragments

The fragments of blockprinted *dhāraṇī* (4+4) were kept among the unrecorded Khara-Khoto materials from Piotr Kozlov's Mongolia and Sichuan expedition of 1907–09 and were assigned shelf numbers SI 6575 and SI 6576 in the Serindian Fund IOM, RAS in February 2014. They were enclosed in a large-format light brown envelope.<sup>1</sup> The envelope was marked

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<sup>1</sup> Beside these, the envelope also contained materials that, on 9 September 2014, were allotted shelf numbers SI 6578 and SI 6579 (SI 6578, inv. No. 6634. A small fragment of

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“Ind. coll.<sup>2</sup>. Kh-Kh”<sup>3</sup> (in blue pencil; possibly Evgenii Kychanov's handwriting) and “Ind. coll.”<sup>4</sup> (graphite pencil, unidentified handwriting) and carried two brief notes: “Envelope was found in Tangut collection, box T No. 190, 26 May 59”<sup>5</sup> and “Envelope with fragm[ents] of Tibetan m[anuscript]s”<sup>6</sup> (both inscriptions in graphite pencil, Kychanov's handwriting).

Obviously, the envelope bears no relationship to either inv. No. 90 of the Tangut collection, which is considered missing,<sup>7</sup> or shelf number Tang. 190 that was given to the corresponding item in the Tangut collection much later than 1959. The collection of manuscripts and documents at IOM, RAS still includes two boxes of unidentified Tangut materials marked “T 12” and “T 214”. We presume that E.I. Kychanov discovered the envelope in question on 26 May 1959 in a similar box marked “T 190”.

### Description of Fragments

SI 6575,<sup>8</sup> inv. No. 6631. Blockprint. The text is contained within a double frame, the outside line thicker than the inside one. Concertina binding type: After restoration all four fragments have been combined on one leaf 27.7×9.7 cm. Single sided. 9 horizontal lines. Vergé paper with faintly visible lines (approx. 7 per cm), thin, smooth, light, almost white.

SI 6576, inv. No. 6632. Blockprint. Concertina<sup>9</sup> binding type: 4 separate parts. Two of the parts are combined on one leaf (text on one side, 5 horizontal lines); another part is half of a text (text on one side, 6 horizontal lines); the last part is half of an engraving. The parts with text contain decorative images of four stupas in each of five lines. The size of each part is 19.5×9.2 cm. Vergé paper with faintly visible lines (approx. 7 per cm), thin, smooth, brownish-grey.

printed text serving as part of an image of Ushnishavijaya with *dhāraṇī* text (an example of the same image is in the State Hermitage Tangut collection under shelf number H-2536, cf.: SAMOSYUK 2006. Currently under restoration. SI 6579, inv. No. 6635. Part of a paper-bound Tibetan manuscript book. Currently under restoration), as well as three sheets of recent paper that were most probably inserted by a researcher interested in the manuscript. These sheets bear various Buddhist images as well as a prayer in the Tibetan language.

<sup>2</sup> Underlined in the original text.

<sup>3</sup> “Инд. колл. X-X”.

<sup>4</sup> “Инд. колл.”.

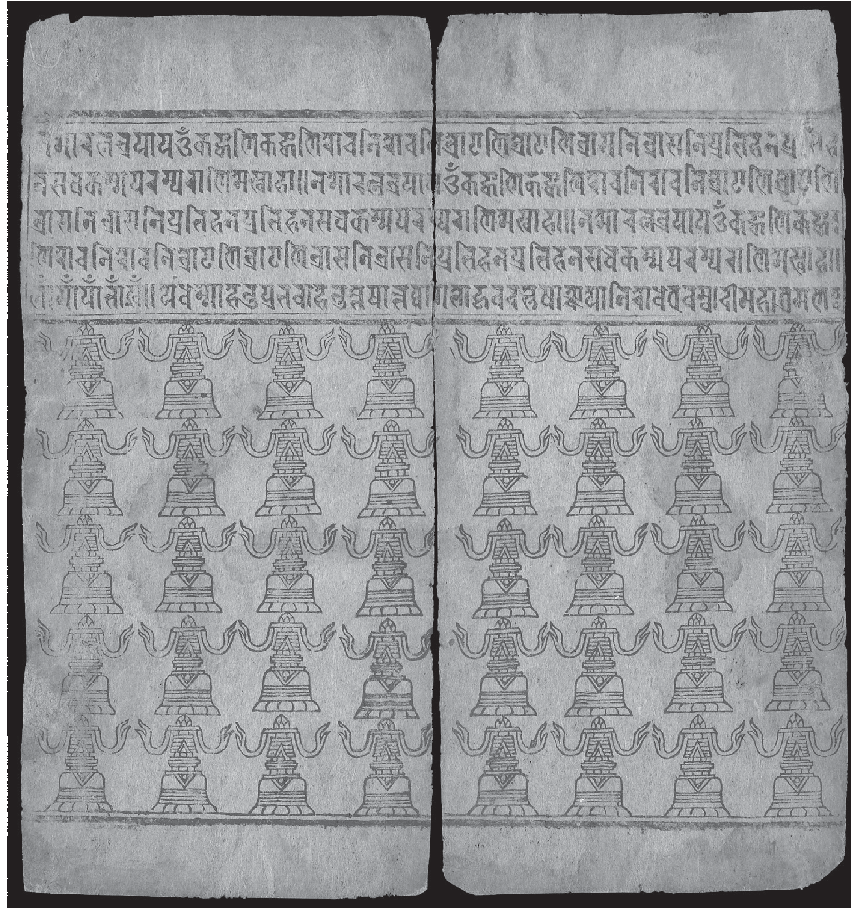
<sup>5</sup> “Найден конверт в тангутском фонде в ящике T № 190, 26/V.59”.

<sup>6</sup> “Конверт с фрагм[ентами] тибетских р[укопи]сей”.

<sup>7</sup> According to inventory book No. 1 of the Tangut collection (Department of Manuscripts and Documents, IOS, RAS, call number Arh. 119/1).

<sup>8</sup> We expect a forthcoming article by Alla Sizova is to be dedicated to this blockprint.

<sup>9</sup> Concertina binding was commonest for Khara-Khoto in comparison to scrolls and blockprints with butterfly binding (TERENT'EV-KATANSKY 1971, 239; MENSNIKOV 1984, 88–89).



Pl. 1 — Fragments 1 and 2 of the blockprint SI 6576, inv. No. 6632.  
 (Serindian Fund of the IOM, RAS): Akṣobhya (= Mitrugpa *dhāraṇī*) \*3;  
*bija*-mantras; *ye dharmā*.

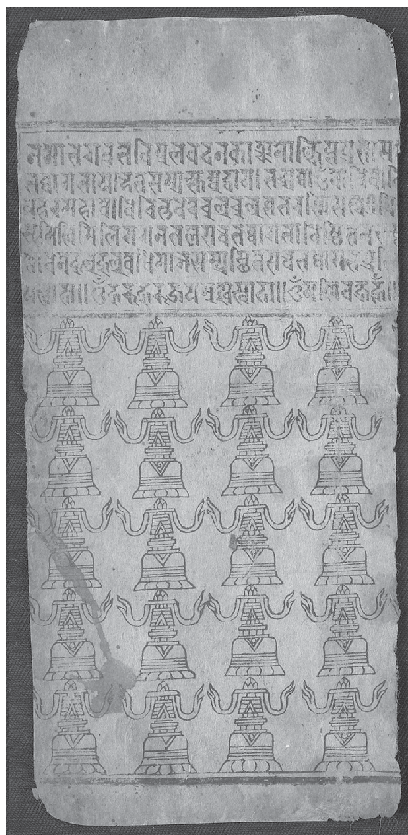
The blockprint is most likely a local Tangut production.<sup>10</sup> This hypothesis is also supported by the type of material the text is printed on — vergé paper with approximately 7 lines per cm.<sup>11</sup> Paper is thin, smooth, brownish-grey, that places it in the most widespread VIII type<sup>12</sup> of “popular and cheap”<sup>13</sup> paper.

<sup>10</sup> MENSHIKOV 1961, 143–144.

<sup>11</sup> Tangut paper most commonly has exactly 7 (KYCHANOV 1999, 10; MENSHIKOV 1984, 94).

<sup>12</sup> TERENT'EV-KATANSKY 1990, 29.

<sup>13</sup> KYCHANOV 1999, 10.



Pl. 2 — Fragment 3 of the blockprint  
SI 6576, inv. No. 6632.

(Serindian Fund of the IOM, RAS):  
*mūlamantra* from *Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣa*  
*dhāraṇī*, *hṛdaya*, *upahṛdaya*.



Pl. 3 — Fragment 4 of the blockprint  
SI 6576, inv. No. 6632.

(Serindian Fund of IOM, RAS): the right side  
of the engraving.

The full text block is enclosed within a double rectangular frame. It marks off the upper, right and left margins and separates the text from the decorative stupa-shaped elements. The engraving, like the text block, is placed within a double rectangular frame. The blockprint pages have a bottom border marking off the lower page margin. It consists of two black ink lines, one thin, one thick. The total height of the frame between upper and lower margins is 16 cm. The height of the upper margin is approximately<sup>14</sup> 2.5 cm, that of the lower margin 1.5 cm. The height of the text block, inside the frame, is 4.5 cm.

<sup>14</sup> The edges are damaged and uneven.

The type of paper, character of the image and particular features of the script make it possible to date the blockprint to approximately the 12th c.

### Script Type

The text is executed in an Indian script,<sup>15</sup> of the north-eastern group. The script used in the blockprints is rather distinctive, it is known from numerous epigraphic monuments and manuscripts<sup>16</sup> and has been identified by researchers as separate script type, without, however, a consistent term having emerged by which to name it. It has been referred to as *pāla* script, *gaudī*

<sup>15</sup> See the Appendix by Alla Sizova. It was made for the fragment SI 6575. The scripts used in the blockprints SI 6575 and SI 6576 are almost identical.

<sup>16</sup> In the British Museum (according to data found on the Museum website):

Museum shelf number 1967, 1018.2. Copper-plate charter. Plate of hammered copper inscribed with sixteen lines in Sanskrit recording. Inscription Type Nagari. India. Madhya Pradesh, Ujjain, 12th c.:

[http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?assetId=230676&objectId=223701&partId=1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?assetId=230676&objectId=223701&partId=1)

Museum shelf number 1880.356 Slab. Inscription. Made of stone (schist). Inscription Type Nagari. India, 10th c.:

[http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?assetId=542101&objectId=182051&partId=1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?assetId=542101&objectId=182051&partId=1)

Museum shelf number 1967, 1018.1 Copper-plate charter. Plate of hammered copper inscribed with sixteen lines of Sanskrit recording. Inscription Type Nagari. India. Madhya Pradesh, Ujjain, 1135 A.C.:

[http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?assetId=23725&objectId=223702&partId=1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?assetId=23725&objectId=223702&partId=1)

In the collection of Cambridge University (according to the University website):

MS Add.1464, 11–12th c. *Pāla* script: <http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-01464/1>

MS Or.142.1, 12th c. *Pāla* script: <http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-OR-00142-00001/1>

MS Add.1688, 11th c. *Pāla* script: <http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-01688/1>

MS Or.725.2, 11th c. *Kuṭīla* script: <http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-OR-00725-00002/1>

MS Or.149, 11th c. *Kuṭīla* script: <http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-OR-00149/1>

According to BENDALL 1883:

MS Add. 866

MS Add. 1686

MS Add. 1693

Yarlung Museum, Tsethang:

An illuminated manuscript on Pattra pages. Late 11th c. This manuscript was on display from 19 August to 26 November 2006 during “Tibet — Klöster öffnen ihre Schatzkammern”, an exhibition at the Villa Hügel, Essen. It is catalogued as No. 26, 219–225. <http://asianart.com/exhibitions/tibet/7.html>

Art Institute of Chicago:

Buddhist illuminated palm leaf manuscript pages Pala, Eastern India opaque watercolor on palm leaf, 12th c. <http://asianart.com/articles/batton/fig02.html>

script, proto-bengali and even siddham/*siddhamāṭṭkā* or *kuṭīla*, depending on the chosen paleographic tradition. In several cases it has been called ranjana or lanydza.<sup>17</sup> I have elected to use the term *pāla* here, as the one most precisely indicating the place and time characteristics of this script type as well as the theme of the text recorded by the script.

### Description of the Text

The text of the preserved part of blockprint consists of two complete independent blocks. The principle and reason behind the connection between the two blocks, as well as the original number of blocks, remain unknown. Obviously, each independent block of text occupied two “pages” of the concertina and was enclosed within a double frame.

The first block of text, which is extant in its entirety, consists of five lines of text where first four are a triple repetition of *Akṣobhya (Mitrugpa dhāraṇī)*<sup>18</sup> *dhāraṇī*.<sup>19</sup> The fifth line consists of five *bija* mantras and the well-known *Ye dharmā* mantra.

The second block of text, which features only half of a text unit, consists of the *mūlamantra*, *hṛdaya* and *upahṛdaya* (Pl. 1) from the *Bodhigarbhāṅkārakṣa dhāraṇī*.

### Transliteration

Fully preserved blockprint: (Pl. 1)<sup>20</sup> *Akṣobhya (= Mitrugpa dhāraṇī) \*3; bija mantras; ye dharmā.*

(01) *na mo ra tna tra yā ya oṃ ka ṅka ṇi ka ṅka ṇi ro ca ni ro ca ni tro ca ṇi tro ca ṇi trā sa ni trā sa ni pra ti ha na pra ti ha*

(02) *na sa rva ka rmma pa ra mpa rā ṇi me svā hā || na mo ra tna tra yā ya oṃ ka ṅka ṇi ka ṅka ṇi ro ca ni ro ca ni tro ca ṇi tro ca ṇi*

(03) *trā sa ni trā sa ni pra ti ha na pra ti ha na sa rva ka rmma pa ra mpa rā ṇi me svā hā || na mo ra tna tra yā ya oṃ ka ṅka ṇi ka ṅka*

<sup>17</sup> They do indeed have similarities, but Ranjana is a separate ornamental script that developed on the territory of Nepal, although under considerable influence of this regional form. As for Lanydza, it is nothing but distorted *Ranja*. It is the Tibetan variant of the script and they differ slightly from each other, although the difference is not significant. E.I. Kychanov uses “lanydza” as the term to identify the script of Sanskrit inscriptions in Tangut documents.

<sup>18</sup> Same as *Akṣobhya Buddha Dhāraṇī*, *Akṣobhya Buddha mantra*, *Mitrugpa mantra*, *Kaṅkani mantra*.

<sup>19</sup> EL 2004, 133; 153.

<sup>20</sup> Pl. 1.

- (04) *ñi ro ca ni ro ca ni tro ca ñi tro ca ñi trā sa ni trā sa ni pra ti ha na  
pra ti ha na sa rva ka rmma pa ra mpa rā ñi me svā hā ||*
- (05) *Lām mām pām tām kham || ye dha rmmā he tu pra bha vā he tu nte  
ṣā nta thā ga tohya va da tte ṣā ñca yo ni ro dha e va mvā dī ma hā  
śra ma ṇaḥ*

Half blockprint:<sup>21</sup> the *mūlamantra* from the *Bodhigarbhālankāralakṣa dhāraṇī, hrdaya, upahrdaya*.

- (01) *na mo bha ga va te vi pu la va da na kā ñca no tkṣi pta pra bhā sa:...*
- (02) *ta thā ga tā yā rha te sa mya ksa mbu ddhā yā ta dya thā oṃ bo dhi  
bo [dhi]...*
- (03) *pra ha ra ma hā bo dhi ci tta dha re cu lu cu lu śa ta ra smi sa ñco  
di...*
- (04) *sa mi li mi li ga ga na ta le sa rva ta thā ga tā dhi ṣṭhi te na bha  
[sta]...*
- (05) *śo dha ne hu lu hu lu bo dhi mā rga sa mpra sthi te sa rva ta thā ga ta  
pra [ti]...*
- (06) *ya svā hā || oṃ hu ru hu ru ja ya mu khe svā hā || oṃ ma ñi va jre  
hūṃ || ...*

### ***Akṣobhya Buddha Dhāraṇī***

This work has been known under several titles. It has been referred to as the *dhāraṇī* or *Akṣobhya mantra* (or *Mitrugpa* in Tibet version), or, after one of the first words of the text, as the *kaṅkaṇī mantra*. Its full title is *Ārya-sarvakarmāvaraṇa-viśodhanī-nāma-dhāraṇī* “The Noble *dhāraṇī* that Thoroughly Removes all Karmic Obscurations”. It has survived down to the present and is commonly used in ritual (Pl. 2). This *dhāraṇī* features widely in the Tibetan canon.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Pl. 2.

<sup>22</sup> Tibetan: འཕགས་པ་ལས་ཀྱི་སྐྱོབ་པ་ཐོས་ཅད་རྣམ་པར་སྐྱོང་བ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་གཟུངས། (*phags pa las kyi sgrub pa thams cad rnam par sbyong ba zhes bya ba'i gzungs*), Sanskrit: आर्य-सर्वकर्मवरण-विशोधनी-नाम-धारणी (*ārya-sarvakarmāvaraṇa-viśodhanī-nāma-dhāraṇī*), Mongolian: *qutuy-tu üiles-ün qamuy tüidker-i teyin böged arilyayui ner-e-tü tarni*. Recensions: Derge: (D 743) *rgyud, tsha* 236a3–236b7 (vol. 94) Peking: (Q 401) *rgyud, tsa* 89b3–90b3 (vol. 8, p. 162) Narthang: (N 652) *rgyud, ma* 1b1–3b7 (vol. 95) Cone: (C 406) *rgyud, tsa* 98b4–99b4 (vol. 17) Lhasa: (H 690) *rgyud, ba* 361a1–362a7 (vol. 93) Li-tang: (J 712) *rgyud 'bum, tsa* 89a7–90a6 (vol. 100) Urga: (U 743) *rgyud 'bum, tsha* 236a1–236b7 (vol. 95) Derge: (D 1009) *gzungs, waṃ* 178a1–179a1 (vol. 102) Peking: (Q 634) *rgyud, ya* 184a8–185b1 (vol. 11, p. 251) Cone: (C 639) *rgyud, ya* 189b1–190b2 (vol. 24) Li-tang: (J 923) *rgyud 'bum, ya* 161a8–162a7 (vol. 107) Urga: (U 1011) *gzungs 'dus, waṃ* 178a1–179a1 (vol. 102).

### ***Bija Mantras***

*Bija* or seed<sup>23</sup> mantras are generally monosyllabic mantras with final nasalization. Each *bija* mantra has specific meaning or several meanings, it can also be connected with a certain deity, quality or element: *lām* — seed of the Earth mandala, *rām* — seed of the Divine Lotus, *khām* — *bija* mantra of Amoghasiddhi Buddha,<sup>24</sup> etc. *Bija* mantras not only represent the essence of the “sacred speech” — “*vākśakti*”, but also they are used in various Buddhist tantric practices and rituals, as part of the visualization process. For example: “We imagine that... four petals of the heart chakra are opening clockwise starting from the East, as syllables lam, mam, ram and tam.<sup>25</sup> In turn, they transform into dark blue Dakini in the East, green Lama in the North, red Khandarohi in the West and yellow Rupini in the South”.<sup>26</sup> Or: “In the South-East the white syllable Lam, *bija* mantra of Lochana, transforms into a black cow, in the South-West the blue syllable Mam, *bija* mantra of Mamaki, transforms into a red dog, in the North-West the red Ram, *bija* mantra of Behzarahi, transforms into a white elephant, in the North-East the green Tam, *bija* mantra of Tara, becomes a green horse”.<sup>27</sup>

*Bija* mantras *lām mām pām tām kham*, used separately or in combination with other similar elements, form part of many *dhāraṇī* and mantras, both independent and included in various rituals. It is in this exact combination and sequence that they are attested in the *Abhidhānottara Tantra* (9–10th cc.) in the description of a purifying visualization practice.<sup>28</sup>

### ***Ye dharmā***

*Ye dharmā* is one of the most common mantras in Buddhist manuscripts and epigraphic texts. It has been regarded as something of a “Buddhist credo”.<sup>29</sup> Actually it is the *Pratītyasamutpāda gāthā* from *Arya-pratītyasamutpāda-sūtra*.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Sansk. *bija* means “seed”.

<sup>24</sup> KELSANG 1997, 105; 123.

<sup>25</sup> In another source (KELSANG 1991, 165) the same four *dakini* are associated with other syllables — Ya, Ra, La, Wa.

<sup>26</sup> KELSANG 1997, 105–106.

<sup>27</sup> KELSANG 1997, 123.

<sup>28</sup> GRAY 2014, 17: “There is earth, water, fire, wind and, likewise, space, thus: *lām mām pām tām kham*. These correspond to the goddesses Laying Low (*pātani*), Killing (*māraṇi*), Attracting (*ākaraṇi*), Lady of the Dance (*nartasvarī*), and ‘Lotus Blaze’ (*padmajvālini*). It is taught that they are like space and like the sky.”

<sup>29</sup> STCHERBATSKY 1923, 40; OWEN 2012, 64.

<sup>30</sup> KYAW 2011, 386.



From the 4–5th cc. onwards it is found across South Asia,<sup>31</sup> South-East Asia<sup>32</sup> and even Central Asia.<sup>33</sup> It has been reproduced on all kinds of material (paper, stone, metal, clay tablets), commonly in Sanskrit or Pali, more rarely in Prakrit.<sup>34</sup> The script could be of almost any kind, although various derivatives of Brahmi were most commonly used. This mantra has been inscribed both independently and as a supplement to other Buddhist texts. The combination in one artifact of *Ye dharmā* mantra and a *mūlamantra* has been attested in an inscription on terracotta plate of the 7th–9th cc. from Nalanda. The interesting coincidence is that the “credo” line comes right after the *mūlamantra* from the *Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣa dhāraṇī*,<sup>35</sup> the text of which is also present in blockprint SI 6576.

### *Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣa dhāraṇī*

The text has been identified through SCHOPEN 2005.<sup>36</sup> According to this text is a part of the *dhāraṇī* (in the meaning of mantra) referred to as the *Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣa / Bodhimaṇḍalalākṣālaṅkāra*<sup>37</sup> *dhāraṇī*, which is in turn a fragment of a larger work under the same title (*Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣa / Bodhimaṇḍalalākṣālaṅkāra dhāraṇī*) comprising over 20 separate *dhāraṇī* (mantras).<sup>38</sup>

<sup>31</sup> MCAR 2014, 44–46.

<sup>32</sup> LK 2014, 59; KYAW 2011, 385–386.

<sup>33</sup> SKILLING 2011, 378.

<sup>34</sup> SKILLING 2003, 273.

<sup>35</sup> SCHOPEN 2005, 333.

<sup>36</sup> SCHOPEN 2005, 316–317.

<sup>37</sup> The text has survived in several printings. In Sanskrit SN (“*Nālandā* tablet inscriptions” — inscriptions on several terracotta tablets found in Nalanda, SCHOPEN 1982, 107–108) and SC (also known as the “Cuttack slab inscription”, GHOSH 1941, 171–174) the title of *dhāraṇī* is not mentioned at all. Earlier Tibetan versions use the title *Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣa*, and later ones, translated from Chinese, use *Bodhimaṇḍalalākṣālaṅkāra*. However, both bear the same Tibetan title *Byang chub snying po'i rgyan 'bum zbez ba'i gzungs*. G. Schopen assumes this to be a “false Sanskritization of the Tibetan title” and suggests that original title was still *Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣa dhāraṇī* (SCHOPEN 2005, 315).

<sup>38</sup> According to G. Schopen there are eight Tibetan versions: two versions in the Cona Kanjur (No. 142 and 550), two in the Beijing Kanjur (No. 139[P1] and 545[P2]), two in the Derge Kanjur (No. 509[D1] and 920[D2]), one in Narthang Kanjur (No. 456) and one in Lhasa Kanjur (No. 478[L]) (SCHOPEN 2005, 315–316; 321–322). Presented here are the actual *dhāraṇī* (mantras) in “Tibetized” Sanskrit with short explanations in Tibetan before and after the Sanskrit text. There are also two versions containing the full text of the great *Bodhimaṇḍalalākṣālaṅkāra dhāraṇī*, namely Denge Kanjur (No. 508[XD]) and Lhasa Kanjur (No. 477[XL]). However, they are Tibetan translation from Chinese translation and are likely

In his article, G. Schopen presents the full text<sup>39</sup> that reads as follows:<sup>40</sup>

Om<sup>41</sup> namo bhagavate vipulavadanakāñcanot<sup>42</sup>kṣiptaprabhāsaketumūrdhane  
tathāgatāya arhate samyaksambuddhāya / namo bhagavate śākyamunaye  
tathāgatāya arhate samyaksam<sup>v</sup><sup>43</sup> uddhāyā<sup>44</sup> / tadyathā / bodhi bodhi / bo-  
dhini bodhini<sup>45</sup> / sarvatathāgatagocare / dhara dhara / hara hara / prahara  
prahara / mahābodhicittadhare / culu culu / śataraś<sup>46</sup> misañcodite /  
sarvatathāgatābhiṣikte / guṇe guṇavate / sarvabuddhaguṇāvabhāse<sup>47</sup> / mili  
mili / gaganatale pratiṣṭhite<sup>48</sup> / sarvatathāgatādhiṣṭhite<sup>49</sup> / nabhastale / śame  
śame / praśame praśame<sup>50</sup> / sarvapāpaṃ praśamane / sarvapāpaṃ vīśodhane /  
hulu hulu / mahā<sup>51</sup> v<sup>52</sup> odhimārgasampratiṣṭh<sup>53</sup> ite / sarvatathāgatasu<sup>54</sup> pratiṣṭhite /

to contain elements that were not in the Indian original (SCHOPEN 2005, 329–330). There is evidence that a Tibetan translation from a Sanskrit original has been discovered by Cristina Scherrer-Schaub among the manuscripts of Pelliot's Dunhuang collection (P.T. 555) (SCHOPEN 2005, 339).

<sup>39</sup> The text has been reconstructed from the following sources: D1, D2, P1, P2, L, XL, XD, as well as the Sanskrit inscriptions SC and SN. See footnote 37 and 38. The text of the print is almost identical to the Sanskrit texts of *dhāraṇī* (mantras) in SC and SN, with some significant differences (mostly in spelling) from the Tibetan versions. The surviving part of the blockprint has none of the explanatory elements that are present in both Sanskrit and Tibetan versions. It is possible that the full version of the blockprint did not have these parts. The *mūlamantra* text could, obviously, have been used independently. At least, that is what G. Schopen concludes, and one cannot but agree with him. Especially since at least one proof of such independent use exists: “Professor G. Fussman informed me about a stamp used to imprint a *dhāraṇī* on a clay bulla. The stamp would have been found in the region of Qunduz, in Bactrian Afghanistan. It is inscribed in *Brāhmī* of the 5th–6th cc. The *dhāraṇī* on this stamp is the *mūlamantra*, ḥḍaya and upaḥḍaya from the *Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣa dhāraṇī*” (SCHOPEN 2005, 338).

<sup>40</sup> A cursive font indicates the parts that correspond to the missing section of our print; discrepancies between his text and our print are underlined; footnotes indicate similar deviations from the Sanskrit texts of SN and SC.

<sup>41</sup> Om is missing from blockprint SI 6576.

<sup>42</sup> In the SC version and our version: \*kāñcanotkṣipta. SN: \*kāñcanākṣipta.

<sup>43</sup> In SI 6576 \*buddh. In SN and SC **b** is replaced by **v**.

<sup>44</sup> In SI 6576: \*buddhayā. SN has arhate samyaksamvuddhāya not in the same place but after śākyamunaye.

<sup>45</sup> In SI 6576: om bodhi bo[dhi]. SN: om vodhi vodhi vodhi instead of SC: bodhi bodhi bodhini bodhini.

<sup>46</sup> Palatal ś is present only in the Sanskrit texts. The Tibetan texts use s. Our text also uses s.

<sup>47</sup> In SI 6576: \*sa.

<sup>48</sup> In SI 6576, as well as in D1, D2, SN, there is no pratiṣṭhite, in SC it is present.

<sup>49</sup> SC: the whole word is missing.

<sup>50</sup> SN: praśame praśame is missing.

<sup>51</sup> SI 6576 lacks mahā.

<sup>52</sup> In SN and SC: **b** is replaced by **v**. In SI 6576 \*boddhi.

<sup>53</sup> In SN and SC: \*samprasthite as in SI 6576. In the Tibetan versions: \*sampratiṣṭhite.

<sup>54</sup> In SN and SC: sarvatathāgatapra[ti] as in SI 6576. In the Tibetan versions: sarvatathāgatasuprati.

*śuddhe svāhā* / (*mūlamantram*<sup>55</sup>) / *oṃ arvatathāgatavyavalokite* / *jaya svāhā* / (*hrdayam*<sup>56</sup>) / *oṃ*<sup>57</sup> *huru huru* / *jayamukhe svāhā* / (*upahrdayam*<sup>58</sup>) / *oṃ vajrāyuse svāhā*<sup>59</sup> /

Judging by the presence of the *mūlamantra* text in SC and SN, it was familiar to Buddhists in Orissa no later than the 10th c. and to Nalanda Buddhists in Bihar as early as the 6th–9th cc.<sup>60</sup>

The geography of the distribution of this text is extremely wide.<sup>61</sup> Beside Eastern India it has been found in Kashmir (7th–8th cc.), Ratnagiri<sup>62</sup> and the Kunduz province of north-eastern Afghanistan (5th–6th cc.).<sup>63</sup> The discovery of blockprint SI 6576 has widened still more the known territory of this text's use.

### Description of the Image

Only the right half of the engraved image (Pl. 3) has survived as the left side of the page is missing.

Apparently the central part of the engraving was occupied by a figure of the Buddha sitting<sup>64</sup> on a patterned elevation. Among the extant details is the radiance around the head and body in the form of divergent rays. The rays around the head are edged with a three line circle. The rays around the body are edged with two suchlike circles. Depicted above the Buddha's head are divergent rays in shape of bars with flowers and clouds between them. To the left of the Buddha are figures of two bodhisattvas and a standing monk with folded hands. In the lower right corner there is a guard(?) with a sword. In the background there are five more figures (guards? wrathful deities?). The heads of creatures within the Buddha's trail are bordered by circles. The engraving bears no inscriptions or cartouches. This last peculiarity apart, the style and content of the image is highly reminiscent of other engravings from the Tangut and Dunhuang collections.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Present in SC, absent in SN.

<sup>56</sup> Present in SC, absent in SN and in SI 6576.

<sup>57</sup> In SN and SC *oṃ* is absent.

<sup>58</sup> Present in SC, absent in SN and in SI 6576.

<sup>59</sup> In SN, SC, XL, XD this whole phrase is absent. It is present in all short Tibetan versions. In SI 6576: *oṃ maṇi va jre hūṃ*.

<sup>60</sup> SCHOPEN 2005, 332.

<sup>61</sup> SKILLING 2011, 379.

<sup>62</sup> SCHOPEN 2005, 338–339.

<sup>63</sup> STRAUCH 2009, 37–56.

<sup>64</sup> The surviving part of the image of the Buddha does not contradict the idea that he may be sitting in the standard *Akṣobhya* Buddha pose, *Bhumisparsha* mudra.

<sup>65</sup> Shelf numbers: No. 158, T. 320 (see. KYCHANOV 1999, 769); TK-247; Tang. 61; Dh. 03143.

## Conclusion

As a single whole the blockprint can be characterized as follows. As indicated by Professor Menshikov, the *dhāraṇī* that have been discovered in the region and served as independent incantatory texts, are mostly not fragments of larger Buddhist works but, rather, locally composed texts: “At any rate, it has not been possible to locate specific *dhāraṇī* within canonical sutras and tantric corpus”.<sup>66</sup> In our case we find a common *dhāraṇī* of Sanskrit origin, widespread across a rather large territory and even, like the *Kaṅkani* mantra and *Ye dharmā*, still widely used in everyday Buddhist practice today. Their combination is most likely of local origin, as the principles of alignment are not quite understandable and, as far as one can judge, do not correspond canonical rules. Quite typical for Khara-Khoto Buddhist (tantric) literature of the 11th–14th cc. are prayer corpora and so called ceremonials<sup>67</sup> that include whole collections of mantras and *dhāraṇī*. The content of the blockprint makes it possible to assume that in our case we are dealing with precisely this type of document, i.e., a written record of the verbal content of a ceremony, standard and widespread enough to be richly decorated and reproduced by printing. The fragmentary nature of the extant material does not allow further deductions to be made.

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<sup>66</sup> MENSNIKOV 1984, 20–21.

<sup>67</sup> MENSNIKOV 1984, 21.

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## Appendix

Akshara List of the blockprint SI 6575, inv. No. 6631.  
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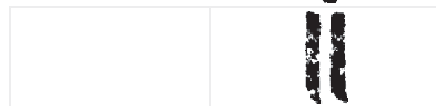
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