Saya Hamanaka,
Alla A. Sizova

**Imperial Postscript to the Tangut, Chinese and Tibetan Editions of the Dhāraṇī-sūtras in the Collection of the IOM, RAS**

Abstract: Three parallel editions of dhāraṇī-sūtras in Tangut, Chinese and Tibetan languages were published in the Tangut state in 1149. The Tibetan edition is of particular importance, because until recently specimens of printing in Tibetan, that could belong to an earlier date, were not extant. All the editions are equal in terms of their contents and contain the postscript written by the Emperor Renzong. The main goal of this article is to introduce the previously unpublished Tibetan text of the postscript in correspondence with the Tangut and Chinese versions. Besides, the article provides information about the study, preservation state, and codicology of all the three editions.

Key words: Tibetan block prints, Tangut block prints, Chinese block prints, Khara-Khoto, Xi Xia, Emperor Renzong

During the long reign of the Emperor Renzong of Western Xia (1139–1193) the propagation of Buddhism in the Empire, including translation and publication activities, reached its heights. Colophons of Tangut texts state that various Buddhist texts were published in Tangut, Chinese and Tibetan in thousands of copies for distribution among the participants of the local Dharma assemblies. However, currently we have at our disposal only one example of such an edition in all the three languages, that survived to our time. Namely,
this is the Avalokiteśvara dhāraṇī-sūtra and Uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī-sūtra, printed together in one volume and provided with the postscript written by the Emperor Renzong himself. The books were published in 1149, the first year of the new reign period, called “Heavenly Prosperity”. The Tibetan edition is of particular importance, because until recently specimens of printing in Tibetan, that could belong to an earlier date, have not been found anywhere.

The book (under the call number Kh. Tib. 67) became famous thanks to the State Hermitage Museum exhibition “Lost Empire of the Silk Road”, that was held from June 25 to October 31, 1993 in Switzerland with the support of the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection Foundation. In 1996, the exhibition catalogue was published in Chinese, thus introducing Kh. Tib. 67 to scholars from China and Japan. During the first decade of the new century they made a significant contribution to the study of this block print.

In 2004, Shirai Satoko published an article on the first of the three texts of Kh. Tib. 67 (see the Table “Contents of the Editions” below), namely, the Avalokiteśvara dhāraṇī-sūtra. She transliterated and translated the Tibetan text into Japanese and described the linguistic features of this version of the text in comparison with its variants from the Beijing and Derge canons.

Tangutologist Shi Jinbo in his article “A brief study of the earliest Tibetan block prints” paid special attention to Kh. Tib. 67 (as well as Kh. Tib. 63/68) as the example of “butterfly-binding”. Speaking about its contents, he expressed the opinion that Kh. Tib. 67 could contain numerous descriptions of rituals.

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2 For the Tibetan edition this date is applicable with a high degree of probability, for reasons discussed below.

3 The situation changed when Matthew Kapstein discovered a large block-printed protective circle (with the syllables of Sanskrit dhāraṇī printed in Tibetan letters) in the collection of Dunhuang texts of Paul Pelliot at the National Library of France. He presented a paper dedicated to this discovery under the title “The Earliest Example of Printing in the Tibetan Script: Remarks on a Dhāraṇī-amulet from Dunhuang” at the conference “The Written Legacy of Dunhuang” (September 3, 2016, IOM, RAS). This item can be considered the earliest identified Tibetan block print. In addition, among the finds made in Turfan there are numerous prints of YE DHARMA. Radiocarbon analysis of one of the examples (from the Otani Collection at the Ryukoku University) showed that the sheet was printed between 880 and 1140. At the same time, if we limit ourselves to the texts in the Tibetan language (and not only in Tibetan script), the block print discussed in this article appears to be the earliest example known to us.

4 A description of Kh. Tib. 67 for the exhibition catalogue was prepared by Lev S. Savitsky (PIOTROVSKY 1993: 278).

5 Xiaoshi de wangguo 1996.

6 SHIRAI 2004.

7 SHI 2005.
identiﬁed the ﬁrst text, giving its name in Chinese, and mentioned the translator Jayānanda, whose name is found in the colophon of the second text.

Unlike the dhāraṇī-sūtras, that became a subject of textual analysis conducted by Shirai Satoko and Duan Yuquan, the Tibetan text of the Imperial postscript (more precisely, its fragments) has never been published. Prof. Lin Ying-chin greatly contributed to the study of the Tangut and Chinese texts of the postscripts, making their collation and interlinear translation into Chinese. However, she did not use the Tibetan text and her work is not easily accessible to non-Chinese speakers.

Saya Hamanaka, one of the authors of this article, made a translation of the Tangut text of the Imperial postscript into English. We introduce the translation with a brief overview of the important issues connected with the study, preservation state, and codicology of all the three editions.

Establishing the Connection Between the Tangut, Chinese and Tibetan Editions

The article written by Shen Weirong, based on his report at the Paris seminar “Edition, éditions: l’écrit au Tibet, évolution et devenir” in May 2008, turned out to be a breakthrough in establishing the connection between the editions. He indicated the existence of the Chinese equivalent for the Tibetan book. He was also the ﬁrst to identify the second text as a version of the Uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī-sūtra that has not been preserved in the existing editions of the Tibetan Buddhist canon. He did not describe the third text of the collection (the postscript) in any detail, since it was beyond the scope of his interests. However, the call numbers of the corresponding Chinese block prints in the St. Petersburg collection (TK-164 and TK-165) which he referenced sufﬁced to locate the missing information in the catalogue of Lev N. Menshikov.

Meanwhile, as it later became clear, the Tangut Collection of the IOM, RAS contained a book completely identical to TK-164 and TK-165 — Tang. 109 (old inv. No. 6796, 6821). The connection between Tang. 109 and the Chinese block prints TK-164 and TK-165 was revealed and described by Nishida Tatsuo in the introduction to “The Catalogue of Tangut Buddhist Texts”. The colophon

8 DUAN 2010.
9 LIN 2011.
10 SHEN 2010.
11 KYCHANOV 1999: XXV–XXVI.
of Tang. 109 mentions the exact date of the edition: “...the text was distributed to the people by Emperor Ren-xiao I title 1 / in the first year under the reign title of Heavenly Prosperity under the cyclic signs of Snake-Earth (in 1149)” (Kychanov 1999: 581; see also our translation of the postscript). Nishida rightfully assumed that the same dating is applicable to the Chinese edition, where the corresponding part of the postscript is lost.

Summarizing the above, the connection between the Chinese and Tibetan editions was identified by the Chinese researcher Shen Weirong. However, he was unaware of the existence of the exact Tangut counterpart, containing the date of the publication (year 1149). According to Kurtis Schaeffer, Shen Weirong in his report gave the exact year 1153, the reasons for giving this particular date remain unclear.

The first clearly articulated reference unifying together the three editions was made in the article written by the Tangutologist Duan Yuquan. Following the indications of Shen Weirong, he used Kh. Tib. 67 in the study of certain aspects of the Tangut version of the Uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī-sūtra. He worked with particular fragments of the Tibetan block print, namely the right side of f. 49 and ff. 50–53.

The history of the studies on this Tibetan block print and its Tangut and Chinese counterparts has been discussed in greater detail in an article written by Alexander Zorin and Alla Sizova. Beyond that, the authors found that all Tibetan block-printed fragments, that received different call numbers at the time of the formation of the Tibetan collection of the texts from Khara-Khoto — Kh. Tib. 63, 64, 67, 68 — belong to the same edition. While Kh. Tib. 64 was immediately connected to Kh. Tib. 67 and was never treated as something different, the two other items appeared separately in the academic literature. Meanwhile, these two items make up two fragments of the whole, the part of the dhāraṇī-sūtra of Uṣṇīṣavijayā, that consists purely of sacred Buddhist formulae that are traditionally believed to have a great magical power. These fragments are absent among the folios of Kh. Tib. 67, so it can be assumed that they were extracted by the owner of the book

12 In the catalogue itself Tang. 109 (old inv. Nos. 6796, 6821) is not described in detail. In addition to Tatsuo Nishida’s remarks in the introduction, it contains only a description of the second text, the dhāraṇī-sūtra of Uṣṇīṣavijayā. The first text (the dhāraṇī-sūtra of Avalokiteśvara) is not mentioned anywhere, although it is fragmentarily preserved; the postscript is not marked as a separate structural unit of the book.

13 Schaeffer 2009: 9, 165–166.

14 Duan 2010: 29.

15 Zorin & Sizova 2019.
for making an amulet, etc. However, one cannot be completely sure of this assumption because of some differences in sizes of the folios of Kh. Tib. 67 and Kh. Tib. 63/68. The scope of the extant Tibetan text was extended by identifying the item Or. 8212/1914 kept at the A. Stein Collection in the British Library\textsuperscript{16} as part of the edition. Finally, in 2019, in the process of inventorying the Serindia Collection of the IOM, RAS, a small fragment of the block print was found, that was the left part of f. 39 (based on the comparison of the fragment with the manuscript Kh. Tib. 126 containing text 2). Another page, that should be attributed to Kh. Tib. 63/68 (identified as the left side of f. 40), was among the disjointed fragments in the Tibetan Collection of the IOM, RAS. It was published by H. Stoddard (based on a photograph provided by V.L. Uspensky).\textsuperscript{17}

### Contents of the Editions

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<td>སྱིན་རྗན་དགེ་བོ་བྱེད་ཞིབ་ཏུ་གཤེགས་པ་རྩོམ་པ་ནི་འཕྲིན་པ་འབུམ་པ། རྩོམ་པ་བྱས་པར་འཕྲིན་པ་འབུམ་པ། ཞེས་བྱ་བ།&lt;br&gt;Dhāraṇī of the Holy Compassionate Avalokiteśvara with [the exposition of its] benefits, compiled according to the sūtras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ཙྱིན་རྗན་དགེ་བོ་བོད་ཞིབ་ཏུ་གཤེགས་པ་རྩོམ་པ་ནི་འཕྲིན་པ་འབུམ་པ། རྩོམ་པ་བྱས་པར་འཕྲིན་པ་འབུམ་པ། སྐྱེ་ཆོས་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་ཞིབ་ཏུ་གཤེགས་པ་རྩོམ་པ་ནི་འཕྲིན་པ་འབུམ་པ། རྩོམ་པ་བྱས་པར་འཕྲིན་པ་འབུམ་པ། སྐྱེ་ཆོས་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་གི་མཆོག་པ་དང་།&lt;br&gt;Dhāraṇī of the Victorious Uṣṇīṣavijayā with [the exposition of its] benefits, compiled according to the sūtras</td>
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</tbody>
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\textsuperscript{16} \textsc{Takeuchi} 1997–1998: No. 674.  
\textsuperscript{17} \textsc{Stoddard} 2010: 364.  
\textsuperscript{18} The colophon of the first Tibetan text has not been preserved; the title was reconstructed on the basis of colophon of the same work found in the manuscript Kh. Tib. 126 (with a slight editorial revision). The original title in Kh. Tib. 126 reads as follows (reconstructed text is marked with angle brackets): \texttt{<'phags pa?'> I spyan ras gzigs kyi dbang phyug | thugs rje chen po'i gzungs phan yon <dang bcas pa mdo> 'las btus pa. The version of this work contained in Kagyur is entitled \texttt{'phags pa spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug thugs rje chen po'i gzungs phan yon mdor bsdu pa zhes bya ba (“Dhāraṇī of the Holy Compassionate Avalokiteśvara with a summary of [its] benefits”)} (D723; \textsc{U} et al. 1934: 123).
Imperially composed postscript-aspiration to [the edition] of the “Dhāraṇī of the Holy Compassionate Avalokiteśvara” and “Dhāraṇī of the Victorious Uṣṇīṣavijaya”

Preservation State and Location of the Tangut, Chinese and Tibetan Block Prints

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<th>Block print</th>
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<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Tibetan</th>
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<td>Tangut</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tang. 109</td>
<td></td>
<td>? ~ 攸_VALIDATE_UTF8\text{[f. 1R–13R]}</td>
<td>攸_VALIDATE_UTF8 ～ 殢氂_VALIDATE_UTF8</td>
<td>殢氂_VALIDATE_UTF8 ～ 殢氂_VALIDATE_UTF8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td></td>
<td>十一 ～ 十七</td>
<td>十八 ～ 二十一</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TK 164</td>
<td>[f. 1R–10L]</td>
<td>十一 ～ 十七</td>
<td>十八 ～ 二十一</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TK 165</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>[f. 11R–17L]</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>[f. 18R–21R]</td>
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<td>Kh. Tib. 67</td>
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<td>～ ～ ?</td>
<td>? ～ 五十四</td>
<td>五十五 ～ ?</td>
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<td>[f. 1–?&gt;27]</td>
<td>～ ～ ?</td>
<td>[f. ?&lt;34–54]</td>
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<td>Or. 8212/1914</td>
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<td>(Stoddard 2010, 364)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Format and Other Features of the Editions

Folio. Two pages of the text were carved on one woodblock and printed on the recto side of the folio. The verso side remained empty.

Sizes of the folios slightly vary: for Tangut — 17.3/17.5×12.2/12.5, for Chinese — 17.5×13.0 (TK 164), 16.5/18.0×13.0 (TK 165), for Tibetan — 17.5×12.6/12.8 (Kh. Tib. 67), 16.0/16.3×11.0/11.5 (Kh. Tib. 63/68). Meanwhile, the sizes of the woodblocks are almost identical: for Tangut — 15.3/15.5×9.3/9.5,
Format. TK 165 has not undergone conservation. Tang. 109 was restored for the purpose of publishing this article in August, 2020. Both provided clear evidence of the original appearance of the editions.

Each folio was folded in its center. Blank pages of the verso side were glued to the adjacent folios, as it is shown in a scheme (dotted line shows the fold, hatch shows the adhesive joint).

As a result, folded folios formed a Western-style codex, that greatly resembled a so-called “butterfly”-format, with the only difference that the blank pages could not be seen.

In the course of time the paper on the folds frayed, and folios began to fall apart. Intact folios and folios half-separated and completely separated into left and right halves can be found in Kh. Tib. 67, Tang. 109 and TK 165.

Pages of Kh. Tib. 63/68 remained glued only on the joints, therefore it resembles “concertina” (on the blank sides of the folios it has remnants of the Tangut manuscripts used for pasting purposes: strengthening the original paper and joining the pages together). TK 164 underwent conservation procedures and now appears as a pile of flattened folios, though the folds can be clearly seen.

Lines. Vertical Tangut and Chinese lines go from right to left. One page has 9 lines, one line has 14 characters (for both Tangut and Chinese).

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19 We express our sincere gratitude to the Chief Conservator of the IOM, RAS Liubov Kriakina for the microscopic examination of the cover, that made possible the exact identifying of its fabric and pigment.
Horizontal Tibetan lines go from the left page to the right page. One folio has 6 lines.

_Foliation._ In all the three editions foliation is situated on _baikou_. Tangut and Chinese have their respective designation, in the Tibetan edition Chinese numerals are used. Furthermore, in the Tibetan edition, foliation is given additionally (but also in Chinese) in the lower margin on either side from the fold.

_Short title on baikou._

Text 1. Tangut: 𘜶𗈁 Chinese: 大悲
Text 3. Tangut: 𘜶𗈁 (f. 21), □□□ (f. 22), 𗏡𘁨 (f. 23) Chinese: 後序

Short titles in Tibetan edition are absent.

_Cover._ Tang. 109 has detached remnants of the blue silk cover. The ornamented fabric was dyed with indigo. The silk fragment used to be on a spine of the codex and has three stitches made with the blue thread. The fold of the book bears traces of stitches, one still with a blue thread.

According to Menshikov’s catalogue, TK 165 had “a cover made of blue cloth with ornaments”, however, it seems that it was separated in the course of the preservation procedures.

_Engraving s._ TK 164 has three engravings thematically connected to the dhāraṇī-sūtras.21

20 The characters are illegible, but one can expect to see here the short title of _Uṣṇīṣavijaya_. In that case the short titles on the folios of the postscript would form the sequence, related to the edition as a whole: 𘜶𗈁 — [𗵣𗖻] — 𗏡𘁨.

21 All the three engravings are printed on the whole folio.

Engraving 1. On the left side: the Eleven-faced Great Compassionate Avalokiteśvara, who sits in vajrasana on a lotus throne with two rows of petals, in the center of the throne is the syllable _hrīḥ_ (Pala script), two offering goddesses to the right and to the left; on the right side: four bodhisattvas facing Avalokiteśvara.

Engraving 2. On the left side: _Uṣṇīṣavijaya_, who sits on a lotus throne inside a richly decorated caitya, the syllable _ūṃ_ is located in the center of the throne, in the space above the caitya there are two offering goddesses on the right and on the left; on the right side: four bodhisattvas facing _Uṣṇīṣavijaya_, objects hovering in the space above them symbolize various types of offerings.

Engraving 3. On the left side: the Buddha on a lotus throne, hands folded in dharmachakramudra; flanked by two disciples (Ānanda and Mahākāśyapa) and two bodhisattvas, behind him a bodhi tree; on the right side: the eight deities of the planets.
Imperial Postscript

Imperial postscript consists of (i) main text, (ii) aspiration, (iii) verses (gāthās) and (iv) colophon.

In the main text the Emperor explains the benefits of the dhāraṇīs, retelling in an extended or abridged manner the contents of the dhāraṇī-sūtras published in this edition, as demonstrated by the following examples.

Postscript: “If [one] wash [himself] in the flowing water or ocean, all the aquatic sentient beings that contact purified water will exhaust all the heavy karma [and] will be reborn in the Buddha-field (buddhakṣetra)” (Tangut 22R5–7, Chinese 19R1–3, Tibetan 59L3–5).

Dhāraṇī-sūtra: “If those, who recite and grasp the dhāraṇī of Mahākaruṇā, wash themselves, entering into the flowing water or into the ocean, and if the water that washed their bodies touches the sentient beings, who reside there, all [their] heavy evil transgressions will be purified, and they will be born miraculously in lotus at the other Pure Lands”.22

Postscript: “[Even when one] encounters the shadow [of the dhāraṇī] and touches the dust [of the dhāraṇī], [he] will not fall into the three lower realms” (Tangut 22R9–L1, Chinese 19R5–6, Tibetan 60R2).

Dhāraṇī-sūtra: “If [someone] will write down this dhāraṇī and attach it to the top of the flag, or place it on the top of the mountain, or on the high building, or on the top of the stūpa, [those on whom] its shadow will fall, [whom] its dust will touch, even if only for a moment, will never be reborn in the three lower realms”.23

Furthermore, the Emperor lists his own meritorious deeds, including the publication of these very editions (Postscript: Tangut 22L2–4, Chinese 19R7–9, Tibetan 60R4–61L1): this part is of particular importance, because it provides us with information on the number of printed copies. It is noteworthy, that in the Tangut and Chinese versions there are no mentions about the Tibetan language.

22 |gal te thugs rje chen po ’i gzungs ’dI ’don cing yongs su ’dzin pa de dag chu klung ’am | rgya mtshor zhugs te khrus byas pa las | de nas gnas pa ’I sems can de dang | de dag gi lus bkrus pa ’I chus lus la reg par gyur nai | sdig pa ’I las dang kha na ma tho ba lei ba thams cad yongs su byang nas | zhing yongs su dag pa gzhan dag du | pad ma la rdzus te skye bar ’gyur bas (Manuscript Kh. Tib. 126, f. 41).

23 gal te gzungs ’dI bris nas | rgyal mtshan gi rtse mo la btags nas | ri rtse ’am | rtseg khang ’am | mchod rten gyi thog de bzhag la | de ’i grib ma phog gam | de ’i rdul phog gam | yud tsam mngon na | de yang nang song gsum de myi skye (Manuscript Kh. Tib. 126, f. 48).
Moreover, the number of copies in Tibetan version is different, being seventeen thousand instead of fifteen. It seems unlikely that the number of Tibetan texts could exceed the Tangut and Chinese ones. It can be assumed that the Tibetan version was printed last, and that the total number of copies was corrected: the number of Tibetan copies was simply added to the original fifteen thousand. Based on this assumption, we can determine the exact number of Tibetan editions — two thousand. The fact of the Tibetan version printed last (and not mentioned in Tangut and Chinese text) cast doubt to its immutable dating. However, taking into account the very purpose of the publication, distribution to the people at the Dharma gathering, we nevertheless can assume that the Tibetan edition must have been printed almost simultaneously with the others.

The Tibetan language of the postscript is characterized by grammatical deviations, that effect the supposed meaning of the text. For example, the phrase “all the virtuous benefits will be gained” (Tangut 21L7–8, Chinese 18L2–3) is rendered into Tibetan as thams cad dge ba’I don ‘grub, where the word thams cad (‘all’) that should be placed in the postposition, precedes its object, dge ba’I don (‘virtuous benefits’). The phrase “[they] aid the creatures and deeply benefit the sentient beings” (Tangut 21L6–7, Chinese 18L2) in Tibetan translation is rendered into: “[they] aid wide creatures (skye bo rgya chen) and benefit deep sentient beings (zab pa’I sems can)”. These deviations can be explained by the tendency to follow the Tangut word-order and prove that the Tibetan text of the postscript was translated from Tangut.

Considering the fragmentary state of the Chinese and Tibetan texts, the translation was based primarily on the Tangut version. In the aspiration part several passages of Chinese texts have no correspondent parts in Tangut (they are marked in brackets).

**Translation**

**Title**

21R4–6 帝製聖觀自在大悲心懺持後序發願文
18R1–3 御製聖觀自在大悲心懺持後序發願文

Imperially composed postscript-aspiration to [the edition] of the “Dhāraṇī of the Holy Compassionate Avalokiteśvara” and “Dhāraṇī of the Victorious Uṣṇīṣavijayā”.
I respectfully explain. The power and virtue [of these] dhāraṇīs will encompass the worlds as numerous as [the grains of] sand [in] the Ganges.

The exceedingly wonderful power of [these] profound words transcends a hundred million of kalpas.

The stains of obscurations will instantly disappear when these dhāraṇīs are heard.

How this profound meaning can be expressed [in words]?

Therefore, the dhāraṇī of Īśvara Mahākaruṇā stands out amongst [the other teachings of the] doctrine (dharmaparyāya).

Uṣṇīṣavijaya consolidates true essence of the mūdras of Buddha, it is the one power that saves the universe.
[It is the only] one, [that] brings welfare [to] the sentient beings. [We] accept and maintain [its] great miraculous efficacy, [and] the benefit is certain to be received.

Sacred reverence and faith are indisputable.


[They] widely aid the creatures and deeply benefit the sentient beings.

If the sound is heard, the great exceeding cause will be earned. If the shadow is touched, all the virtuous benefits will be gained.
[If one] divides the sea into drops, [he can] know the amount. [If] the world is divided into particles, [they] can be counted.

Only the merits of the doctrine (dharmaparyāya) of Mahākarunā (Great Compassionate) cannot be measured.

Each [dhāraṇī] possesses superior ability, both have [their] respective benefits.

Therefore, as it is explained in “[Dhāraṇī of the] Holy Compassionate Avalokiteśvara [with the exposition of its] benefits”, if the dhāraṇī of Mahākarunā is recited one or seven times with concentration, the samsāric obscurations of the hundred billion of kalpas will be exhausted.

[If] life is about to be lost, various Buddhas of ten directions will come to stretch out their hands, and according to aspirations [the person] will be reborn in the Pure Land.
If one washes himself in the flowing water or ocean, all the aquatic sentient being that contact purified water will exhaust all the heavy karma [and] will be reborn in the Buddha-field (buddhakṣetra).

Also, as it is stated in the “[Dhāraṇī of the] Victorious Uṣṇīṣavijaya [with the exposition of its] benefits”, the devaputra Supratiṣṭhatī recited the sentences of dhāraṇī and thus [he] was released from the harm of being born as seven kinds of animals, [and] also gained a long life.

[Even when one] encounters the shadow [of the dhāraṇī] and touches the dust [of the dhāraṇī], [he] will not fall into the three lower realms.

By predictions given to bodhisattvas [he] will turn into a son of Buddha (bodhisattva).

These dhāraṇīs have many such benefits.
I, seeing these exclusive benefits, arose pure faith, requested the craftsmen to carve and publish [both dhāraṇī-sūtras in] fifteen thousand (in Tibetan: seventeen thousand) copies in Tangut and Chinese [and] donated [them].

Officials and [common] folk in the Tangut state should read and recite [these texts] sincerely, respectfully receive and put them on the elevated place (or one’s head).

I also will attach [these dhāraṇī-sūtras] on [my] clothes, will recite the dhāraṇīs with one-pointed concentration and aspire the prominent cause to be fulfilled.

To accomplish many virtues, [I] ordered the propagation of the true doctrines of Mahāyāna.
[I ordered] to establish [rituals of] fire-offerings and secret mandalas, to read the sūtras aloud incessantly, to distribute (spread) Tripitaka in golden letters, to dress all the sacred statues in the Empire in gold, to worship [them] and make offerings.

[I] requested monks to fast upon performing a great assembly. I [organized] food donation ceremony in the chambers of the Palace and a Buddhist service in front of the statue of the Buddha in the Temple.

Only few of such good deeds [done] with respect and true faith can be mentioned, as all cannot be explained.

Based on these exclusive good [deeds], I aspire:

(ii) Aspiration

May the Holy Emperor Chongzong (wṣ tuj) transcend the three realms [and] ride on the cloud of Dharma (dharmameghabhūmi) of the Ten stages.

May [he] avoid the four forms of births [and] attain the ocean of Bhūtatathātā of One Truth. May [he] silently help [the world] to be governed peacefully by itself without any action.

May [he] calmly help [the state to follow] the ideal way of maintaining peace and order. May [his] descendants flourish.
Also, by these virtuous powers, the empire of the founder [will be] stable and prosperous, {[and] the winds of harmony [will] spread near and far}.

The foundations of the state [will] flourish, {a destiny of morality and peace [will be] protected from beginning to end, the Imperial ancestral temple and temples of land and grain (i.e. the state) [will] continue and be sustained forever, and Imperial succession [will be] unending.} The four quarters [of the Tangut state will] be firmly established in serenity, [the peace will be] solid and unshakable in the universe. {Worship [will be] responded to with feelings of … and sincerity. Prayers [will] bring the signs of good fortune. Peace [will] long be sustained, [and] in the end [there will be] no upheaval}.

May the whole country under Heaven live peacefully. May all the things [we] desire be accomplished.

[i] want to record the divine merits [of the dhāraṇīs], therefore [i] compose a hymn. The gāthās say [the following]:

(iii) Gāthās (Verses)

| 23L1 | 法門廣闢理淵微 終始保清平之運延宗社而克永守曆數以無疆 |
| 20L5 | 法門廣闢理淵微 持讀□□□□□ |

24 Fragments in curly brackets have no correspondence in the Tangut text.
25 Due to the discrepancies between the Tangut and Chinese versions, phrases were numbered for the convenience of comparison.
26 In Chinese: the nine provinces [will] achieve an unshakable stability.
Gates [of] Dharma open widely, the truthfulness is profound. By reading [and] reciting [the dhāraṇīs] the pure faith [becomes] exceptional.

Avalokiteśvara-dhāraṇī has secret and profound sentences. Uṣṇīsavijaya [is] the seal [of] the essence of the Buddhas.

They are able to reduce and eliminate the transgressions [of] the seven realms. [They are] a surpassing cause to be reborn in the Pure Land.

The Great Dharma burns a torch and makes it light up brightly, [it] drives the boat of compassion [that] crosses the sea of suffering.

[One] gains full satisfaction [for the things he] is supposed to want or hope for. In accordance with the heart and wishes, all matters [get] accomplished.

If one constantly holds and recites [the dhāraṇīs], consequently [he] obtains [the four] Immeasurables (apramāṇa) [and] the ten stages (daśabhūmi) of the Noble path.

(iv) Colophon

First year [of] the “Heavenly Prosperity”, Earth-Snake [1149]. Month: … Day: …

Devoted to Heaven, exemplary of the Way, glorious in martial affairs, patron of the arts, of godly deliberations and divine intelligence, he who judges the causes, repulses the demons, integral, harmonious, elegant and venerated Emperor, respectfully bestowed [the publication of this edition].

27 The translation of the Emperor’s title is based on (Shi 2020: 277).
TK-165, f. 20
Tibetan text

Kh. Tib. 67, f. 56R

Kh. Tib. 67, f. 57
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