

༄༅། །སྤྲུལ་མཁེ་རྒྱལ་འབྱོར་ཡེ་ཤེས་མཆོག་སྤྱུལ།

The Bestower of Supreme Wisdom: A Guru Yoga

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo



KHYENTSE VISION
PROJECT

bla ma'i rnal 'byor ye shes mchog stsol

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Khyentse Vision Project: Translating the Works of
Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo begins this work by qualifying guru yoga as the ultimate swift path of the great secret Vajrayāna. Most guru yoga texts include the fundamental Buddhist ritual of taking refuge, the bodhicitta foundation of Mahāyāna, the practice of purification and accumulation, the tantric practice of receiving empowerments, the generation and perfection stages, and dedication. In this way, guru yoga comprises a comprehensive, coherent, and rich practice.

Guru yoga is one of the most widespread Vajrayāna spiritual practices among the followers and traditions of Tibetan Buddhism.¹ In this tantric practice, the guru is visualized as the central figure and then praised and invoked. The mantra associated with the guru's name is recited, empowerments are received, and the guru eventually dissolves into the practitioner. The prevalence of the practice underscores the fundamental role that a guru or spiritual teacher plays in Buddhist practice in general and tantric practice in particular. Another reason for the wide dissemination of such texts is that many uniquely exoteric and esoteric Buddhist practices are coherently arranged within them.

Despite its relative brevity, this practice text reveals the profound, vast, and swift aspects of Vajrayāna. The colophon does not give the place and time of the composition, but the one who requested the practice is identified as a paṇḍita from the south named Karma Vijaya.

One of the learned Nyingma disciples of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, the third Dodrubchen Jigme Tenpe Nyima (1865–1926), wrote a long commentary manual on this guru yoga text.² This manual is not only detailed in its explanation of how to put this guru yoga into practice, but it quotes liberally from a range of scriptures, emphasizing the importance of the practice within the wider tradition. It also includes substantial biographical notes on Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo.

OUTLINE

I. PROLOGUE

II. GURU YOGA

A. Preliminaries

B. Main Practice

1. Visualization

2. Seven-Limbed Practice

3. Supplication

4. Remaining in Meditative Equipoise

C. Conclusion

ཡེ་ཤེས་མཆོག་སྨྲེ།

The Bestower of Supreme Wisdom

Homage to the guru!

I. Prologue

Once you have purified your mind stream through renunciation and precious bodhicitta, you should take devotion toward the guru as the heart of the path. Single-pointedly cultivating this profound yoga is the ultimate, swift path of the great secret Vajrayāna.

II. Guru Yoga

To put this into practice in a very concise way, there are the three parts: preliminaries, the main practice, and the conclusion.

A. Preliminaries

The first is:

བདག་གཞན་མཁའ་བྱུང་འགྲོ་བ་མ་ལུས་ཀུན།།

dak zhen kha khyab dro wa ma lü kün

To liberate myself and others—all beings throughout space without exception—

སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་སྤྱིད་པའི་མཆོ་ལས་བསྐྱེད་བྱའི་བྱིར།།

duk ngal si pé tso lé dral jé chir

From the suffering of the ocean of saṃsāra,

ལྷ་མ་དགོན་མཆོག་གསུམ་ལ་སྐྱབས་མཆི་ཞིང་།།

la ma kōn chok sum la kyab chi zhing

I take refuge in the guru and the Three Jewels,

ཟབ་མོའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་བསྐྱེད་པར་སེམས་བསྐྱེད་དོ།།

zab mö nal jor gom par sem kyé do

And generate the mind of enlightenment to cultivate this profound yoga. [226]

Recite this three times or as often as possible, training the mind.

B. Main Practice

The second has four sections.

1. VISUALIZATION

First, visualize the basis for the accumulations.

ཨོ་ཤུན་ཏུ་རྫོག་བཟོ་སྤྱོད་ཐུ་མ་ཨུ་ཏུ་ཀོ་ཏྟི།

om shunyata jnana benza sobhawa atmako ham

OM ŚUNYATĀJÑĀNA VAJRASVBHĀVA ĀTMAKO 'HAM

སྟོང་བཅུད་གཟུང་འཛིན་མི་དམིགས་སྟོང་པའི་ངང་།།

nö chü zung dzin mi mik tong pé ngang

Within the state of emptiness, there is no world or beings, nor subject or object, to be perceived.

ཟབ་གསལ་གཉིས་མེད་ཡེ་ཤེས་གཅིག་ཤུའི་འབྲུལ།།

zab sal nyi mé yé shé chik pü trül

There is only the display of wisdom—profound, luminous, and nondual.

སྲིད་ཞིའི་ཉམས་འགྱུར་དུ་མར་འཆར་བ་ལས།།

si zhi nyam gyur du mar char wa lé

From the arising of the various experiences of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa,

གནས་ཡུལ་ཅིར་སྤང་དག་པ་རབ་འབྱམས་ཞིང་།།

né yül chir nang dak pa rab jam zhing

Whatever places appear are infinite pure realms.

འོག་མིན་གསང་ཆེན་རྡོ་རྗེའི་ཕོ་བྲང་དབུས།

ok min sang chen dor jé po drang ü

At the center of the great secret vajra palace of Akaniṣṭha,

མདུན་གྱི་ནམ་མཁར་ཡིད་འཕྲོག་མཆོད་སྤྱོན་གྱིས།

dün gyi nam khar yi trok chö trin gyi

In the sky before me, amidst clouds of enchanting offerings,

མངོན་པར་དཀྱིགས་པའི་རིན་ཆེན་སངས་གཉེན་གྱི།

ngön par trik pé rin chen seng gé tri

Is a jeweled lion throne.

དར་ཟབ་འཕོལ་བཅུགས་དུར་སྤྱིག་གདན་གྱི་སྟེང་།

dar zab böi tsek ngur mik den gyi teng

On a saffron-colored mat atop a pile of silken cushions

རིགས་ཀྱན་བྱབ་བདག་སུམ་ལྷན་རྡོ་རྗེ་འཛིན།

rik kün khyab dak sum den dor jé dzin

Is the vajradhara who upholds the three vows, the universal sovereign of the enlightened families,

འཇམ་དབྱངས་སླ་མ་མཁྱེན་བཅུའི་དབང་ཕོ་ནི།

jam yang la ma khyen tsé wang po ni

Guru Mañjuśrī, Khyentse Wangpo.

དཀར་དམར་མདངས་ལྷན་གཟི་བུའི་དཔལ་དུ་འབར།

kar mar dang den zi ji pal du bar

He has a rosy-white complexion, radiating splendor.

ཞལ་རས་རྒྱས་ཤིང་སྤྱན་ཟུང་རྒྱུམ་ལ་འབྲེལ།

zhal ré gyé shing chen zung dum la khyil

His face is replete, with beautifully rounded eyes.

ཕྱག་གཡས་མཆོག་སྤྱོན་ཕྱག་རྒྱས་སྐལ་བཟང་ལ།

chak yé chok jin chak gyé kal zang la

In the mudrā of supreme generosity, his right hand

དངོས་སྤུབ་མཆོག་སྤྱོད་རྡོ་རྗེ་ཆོ་བུམ་འཛིན།

ngö drub chok tsöl dor jé tsé bum dzin

Bears a vajra and a longevity vase that grants supreme siddhis to the fortunate ones.

གཡོན་པས་མཉམ་གཞག་གིས་རབ་བྱེད་དང་།།

yön pé nyam zhak shé rab dril bu dang

His left hand, in the gesture of meditative equipoise, bears the bell of wisdom

ལེགས་བསྐྱམས་པས་མཐའ་ཡས་ཆོས་རྒྱུ་སྟོན།།

lek bam nam pé ta yé chö tsül tön

And a volume of scripture that teaches the infinite modes of Dharma.

སྐུ་ལ་ཆོས་གོས་ནམ་གསུམ་མཛེས་པར་བསྐྱབས།།

ku la chö gö nam sum dzé par lub

His body is elegantly clothed in the three Dharma robes

སྡེ་སྟོན་རབ་འབྱམས་འཛིན་པའི་པཎ་འུ་གསོལ།།

dé nö rab jam dzin pé pan zhu söl

And he wears the hat of a paṇḍita³ who has mastered countless scriptures.

ཞབས་རྩུང་རྡོ་རྗེའི་སྐྱེལ་ཀྱང་དང་པོར་བཞུགས།།

zhab zung dor jé kyil krung drang por zhuk

He sits straight, with his two legs in the vajra posture.

མཆོག་གསུམ་དེ་བོ་ཙུ་གསུམ་རྒྱ་མཆོའི་བདག།

chok sum ngo wo tsa sum gya tsö dak

He is the essence of the Three Jewels and lord of the ocean of the Three Roots. [227]

སྐུ་གསུམ་དབྱེར་མེད་རིགས་བརྒྱའི་འཁོར་ལོས་སྐྱུར།།

ku sum yer mé rik gyé khor lö gyur

He is inseparable from the three kāyas and turns the wheel of the hundred families.⁴

དེས་པས་སྲིད་ཞིའི་འཇིགས་པ་འཕྲོག་མཛད་པ།།

dren pé si zhi jik pa trok dzé pa

Just the thought of him dispels all fears of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa

སྐྱབས་ཀྱན་འདུས་པའི་དེ་བོར་ལྷམ་མེར་གསལ།།

kyab kün dü pé ngo wor lham mer sal

And he vividly appears as the embodiment of all refuges.

2. SEVEN-LIMBED PRACTICE

Second, practice the seven limbs, which encapsulate the key points of the three aspects of accumulation, purification, and enrichment.

སྐྱབས་གནས་ཀྱི་འདུས་དཔལ་ལྷན་སྒྲ་མ་ལ།

kyab né kün dü pal den la ma la

To the glorious guru who embodies all sources of refuge,

བདག་དང་མཁའ་མཉམ་འགྲོ་བ་མ་ལུས་ཀྱི།

dak dang kha nyam dro wa ma lü kün

I and all beings without exception throughout space

སྒོ་གསུམ་གྱི་པ་ཆེན་པོས་ཕྱག་འཛུལ་ཞིང་།

go sum gü pa chen pö chak tsal zhing

With great respect offer prostrations with our three doors.

ལུས་དང་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་བཟང་མཆོད་སྤྲིན་འབུལ།

lü dang long chö kün zang chö drin bül

We present our body, wealth, and cloudbanks of Samantabhadra offerings.

ཆོ་རབས་བསགས་པའི་སྤྱི་གཏུང་སྤྱིང་ནས་བཤགས།

tsé rab sak pé dik tung nying né shak

We wholeheartedly confess our faults and transgressions accumulated over lifetimes.

བྱང་ཆུབ་སྤྱོད་མཆོག་རྒྱ་མཚོར་རྗེས་ཡི་རངས།

jang chub chö chok gya tsor jé yi rang

We rejoice in ocean-like supreme bodhisattva conduct.

ཆོས་འཁོར་བསྐྱར་བཞིན་རྟུ་ཏུ་བཞུགས་གསོལ་འདེབས།

chö khor kor zhin tak tu zhuk söl deb

We supplicate you to always remain, turning the wheel of Dharma,

དག་ཆོགས་འགོ་ཀྱན་རྣམ་མཁྱེན་ཐོབ་ཕྱིར་བསྐྱོ།

gé tsok dro kün nam khyen tob chir ngo

And we dedicate the accumulated merit so that all beings attain omniscience.

This is to be combined with prostrations, as is suitable. If you wish, offer a maṇḍala.

3. SUPPLICATION

Third, fervently pray.

འཇམ་པའི་དབྱངས་སོགས་སྤྲས་བཅས་རྒྱལ་ཀྱི།

jam pé yang sok sé ché gyal kün gyi

To the glorious lama, *lord* of scholars and siddhas,

མཁྱེན་བརྩེ་རྣམས་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་གཅིག་བསྟུས་པ།

khyen tsé nü pé yé shé chik dü pa

The sole embodiment of the wisdom of *knowledge, love, and power*

མཁས་གྲུབ་དབང་པོ་དཔལ་ལྷན་སྒྲ་མ་ལ།

khé drub wang po pal den la ma la

Of all the victors along with their heirs, *Mañjughoṣa* and others—

སྙིང་ནས་གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་སོ་བྱིན་གྱིས་སྒྲོབས།

nying né söl wa deb so jin gyi lob

From the depths of my heart I pray, grant your blessings!⁵

Recite this as much as possible, as well as other prayers you know.

If you wish, also recite the name mantra:

ཨོཾ་ཀུརུ་རྩུ་མ་ལྷན་སྒྲོ་ཡ་སྒྲ་སྒྱི་ཧྱུྃ།

om ah guru manjughosha sarwa siddhi hung

OM ĀḤ GURU MAÑJUGHOṢA SARVA SIDDHI HÜṂ

4. REMAINING IN MEDITATIVE EQUIPOISE

Fourth, having received the empowerment, merge your mind with the guru's and rest in meditative equipoise. [228]

སྒྲ་མའི་གནས་གསུམ་རྩི་རྩེའི་འབྲུ་གསུམ་ལས།

la mé né sum dor jé dru sum lé

From the three vajra syllables at the three places of the guru,

འོད་ཟེར་བདུད་མྱེ་རིམ་དང་ཅིག་ཅར་བྱུང་།

ö zer dü tsi rim dang chik char jung

Rays of light and nectar issue forth, first separately and then simultaneously,

རང་གི་གནས་གསུམ་ཞུགས་ཤིང་ཐིམ་པ་ཡིས།

rang gi né sum zhuk shing tim pa yi

Entering and dissolving into my three places.

དབང་བསྐྱར་སྒྲིབ་སྦྱངས་སྒྲིན་གྲོལ་དངོས་གྲུབ་ཐོབ།

wang kur drib jang min drol ngö drub tob

Thus the empowerments are bestowed, obscurations are purified, and the accomplishments of maturation and liberation are attained.

མཐར་ཉི་ལྷ་མ་འོད་ལྷ་རང་ལ་བེམ།།

tar ni la ma ö zhu rang la tim

Finally, the guru melts into light and dissolves into me.

སྤྱགས་ཡིད་གཅིག་འདྲེས་དགོངས་པའི་ཕྱལ་ཆེན་རྫོགས།།

tuk yi chik dré gong pé tsal chen dzok

The guru's mind and my own mind merge as one, and the creative power of realization is perfected.

དུས་གསུམ་རྟོག་པས་མ་བསྐྱད་གཞུག་མའི་རང་།།

dü sum tok pé ma lé nyuk mé ngang

Unstained by the thoughts of the three times, in the state of the innate nature

སྟོ་འདས་འོད་གསལ་ཆོས་སྐྱའི་རང་ཞལ་བལྟ།།

lo dé ö sal chö kü rang zhal ta

I behold the true face of the luminous dharmakāya beyond conception.

Reciting these words, keep their meaning in mind and settle in meditative equipoise.

C. Conclusion

The third part is the conclusion. When you arise from your meditation session, say:

དག་བ་འདི་ཡིས་བདག་སོགས་ཡིད་ཅན་ཀུན།།

gé wa di yi dak sok yi chen kün

Through this virtue, may all sentient beings, myself and others,

འཁོར་ལོའི་མགོན་པོས་འབྲལ་མེད་རྗེས་བཟུང་ནས།།

khör lö gön pö dral mé jé zung né

Never be separated from the lord of the maṇḍala and always be under his care,

དད་དང་མོས་གུས་དམ་ཚིག་རྣམ་དག་པས།།

dé dang mö gü dam tsik nam dak pé

And by having pure faith, devotion, and samaya,

རྗེ་བཙུན་སྤྱ་མའི་སྒོ་འཕང་ལྷུང་ཐོབ་ཤོག།

jé tsün la mé go pang nyur tob shok

May we quickly attain the state of the noble guru!

In this manner, conclude by dedicating merit and making aspirations. Know that appearances, sound, and thought are the three secrets of the guru. In this way, take the great seal of devotion as the

path. Never separate from this perspective, and spend time engaging in virtuous actions, such as the ten Dharma activities.

Karma Vijaya, the paṇḍita from the South who has accomplished mastery of discernment regarding the views of numerous sciences, exhorted from afar with great earnestness that I write something like this. Thus, this was composed by the servant Khyentse Wangpo, who delights the guru Mañjughoṣa.

Sarvadā suśreyassiddhir astu.⁶

NOTES

1. Of the more exalted examples of guru yoga practiced among the different Tibetan Buddhist lineages, one finds the *lam zab bla ma'i rnal 'byor* in the Sakya tradition, the *mi la'i bla sgrub* of various Dagpo Kagyu traditions, numerous *gu ru'i bla sgrub* practices in the Nyingma tradition, and the *dga' ldan lha brgya ma* in the Geluk tradition.
2. *bla ma'i rnal 'byor ye shes mchog stsol nyams su len tshul khrid yig tu byas pa grub pa mchog gi dpal ster.*
3. Although both the 1977 and 2014 editions have *zbu*, this appears to be an error and the translation here reads the text as *zhva*.
4. The topic of the hundred families is understood differently, depending on factors like lineage, tantric cycles, etc. According to an explanation given by Gorampa (*gsung rab dgongs gsal*, 249), this topic is related to the *Hevajratantra* in terms of the ground, the path as two stages, and the resultant state.
5. In this stanza, Khyentse Wangpo engages in a play on words, using terms (represented in italics) that mirror the meaning of his name.
6. “May there always be superbly excellent accomplishment!”

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GLOSSARY

Akaniṣṭha

འོག་མིན། • *’og min* • akaniṣṭha

Literally, “Unsurpassed.” This is the highest of the pure lands and the form realm. It is held to be the dwelling place of Vairocana Buddha.

great seal

ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོ། • *phyag rgya chen po* • mahāmudrā

This refers to taking devotion as the path.

heart

སྟོག་ • *srog* • jīva

Literally, “life force.”

hundred families

རིགས་བརྒྱ། • *rigs brgya*

The assembly of peaceful and wrathful deities of *zhitro* (*zhi khro*) practice.

innate nature

གཏུག་མ། • *gnyug ma*

The beginningless and natural state of being.

Karma Vijaya

ཀར་བེ་ཇ་ཡ། • *karma bi dza ya* • karma vijaya

Although the historical details of this master are unknown, he is mentioned in various Nyingma lineage prayers as the heir of the awareness holders.

lion throne

སེང་གེ་འི་ཁྲི། • *seng ge’i khri* • simhāsana

In India, lions traditionally appear as a motif on the Buddha’s throne, symbolizing protectors of the Dharma. In Tibet, the motif is comprised of snow lions.

mastered scriptures

སྡོམ་མཁོན་པ། • *sde snod 'dzin pa*

This Tibetan idiom describes those with mastery of the Tripiṭaka.

merge minds

སྤྱུག་ཡིད་བསྐྱེད། • *thugs yid bsres*

Literally, “combining enlightened mind with the thinking mind.” Mingling one’s mind with that of the guru.

mind stream

རྒྱུད། • *rgyud* • *santāna*

One’s mind stream as moment-to-moment awareness.

mudrā of supreme generosity

མཚན་སྤྱིན་ཕྱག་རྒྱ། • *mchog sbyin phyag rgya* • *varadamudrā*

Hand placed on the knee, facing upward, granting pardon and boons. This mudrā is often associated with Green Tārā and White Tārā.

name mantra

མཚན་སྤྱུག་པ། • *mtshan sngags*

Mantra that specifically includes the name of the deity or master being practiced.

preliminaries

སྡོམ་འགོ། • *sngon 'gro*

The preliminary practices that form the foundation for the main practices of the generation and completion stages.

protector

མགོན་པོ། • *ngon po*

Chief or primary figure of the maṇḍala, also known as the lord of refuge.

Samantabhadra offerings

ཀུན་བཟང་མཚན་སྤྱིན། • *kun bzang mchod sprin*

A tantric form of offering where the figure of Samantabhadra is visualized with a gem, which emanates two more Samantabhadras with gems, and so forth, until all space is filled.

ten Dharma activities

ཆོས་སྦྱོར་རྣམ་པ་བཅུ། • *chos spyod rnam pa bcu*

The ten Dharma activities include copying scriptures, making offerings, giving alms, listening to teachings, reading scriptures, comprehending the teachings, explaining the teachings, reciting sūtras, contemplating the meaning of the teachings, and meditating.

The Clarification of the Intentions of the Scriptures

གསུངས་རབ་དཔྱེད་པ་གསལ། • *gsungs rab dgongs gsal*

This is the lengthiest commentary authored by Gorampa on the *Differentiation of the Three Vows* (*sdom gsum rab dbye*) by Sakya Paṇḍita.

three doors

སྒོ་གསུམ། • *sgo gsum*

Body, speech, and mind.

three places

གནས་གསུམ། • *gnas gsum*

Head (symbolizing the body), throat (symbolizing the speech), and heart (symbolizing the mind).

Three Roots

རྩ་གསུམ། • *rtsa gsum*

In tantric Buddhist practices, the Three Roots in which one takes refuge are the guru, the tutelary deity (*yi dam*), and the ḍākinī.

three secrets

གསང་བ་གསུམ། • *gsang ba gsum*

Vajra body, speech, and mind.

three syllables

འབྲུ་གསུམ། • *'bru gsum*

OM AḤ HŪM.

three times

དུས་གསུམ། • *dus gsum*

Past, present, and future.

vajradhara holding the three vows

སུམ་ལྷན་རྩི་འཛིན། • *sum ldan rdo rje 'dzin*

The three vows are the vows of individual liberation (*so sor thar pa'i sdom pa*), the commitments of the bodhisattva (*byang chub sems dpa'i sdom pa*), and the tantric pledges (*gsang sngags kyi sdom pa*). These three sets of vows not only complement but reinforce each other. Without the foundation of the first set, it is argued that the latter ones cannot be observed. These three sets of vows are held to comprise the whole spectrum of Buddhist practices that Tibetans inherited from their Indian teachers.