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རྗེ་རྗེ་མོལ་སྤྱ་གསལ་སྟོང་བྱང་འཇུག

**The Unity of Luminosity and Emptiness:
A Spontaneous Vajra Song Connected to the
Path Practice of the Secret Empowerment**

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KHYENTSE VISION
PROJECT

This text includes Vajrayāna content. Please be aware that some Vajrayāna texts may only be fully understood and appreciated through receiving the necessary empowerments, transmissions, or practice instructions from a qualified teacher.

gsang dbang gi lam khyer dang rjes su 'brel ba'i rdo rje'i thol glu gsal stong zung 'jug

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

The Unity of Luminosity and Emptiness is the second of four spontaneous vajra songs¹ that arose in Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo's mind during a feast gathering held on the holy tenth day of the waxing moon, the monthly tantric festival of Guru Padmasambhava. Each of the four songs corresponds to one of the four Vajrayāna empowerments granted to practitioners of the inner tantras. The four empowerments correspond respectively to the four levels of practice on the Vajrayāna path, which culminate in the four realizations of unity specified in the song titles. When we receive the four empowerments from a vajra master during a ritual ceremony, they are called *ground* empowerments; when we take them individually during daily sādhana practice, they are called *path* empowerments; and when they manifest as complete realization, they are called *fruition* empowerments. Generally speaking, empowerments purify, grant blessings, authorize the disciple to engage in particular practices, and sow the seeds of liberation into the four kāyas or dimensions of awakening.

The first empowerment is the Vase Empowerment, which introduces the disciple to generation stage practice, the yoga of form. This empowerment purifies and blesses the body and subtle channels, authorizes the disciple to undertake deity visualization, and sows the seed of the nirmāṇakāya. Generation stage practice destroys belief in solidly existing appearances and culminates in the realization of the unity of appearance and emptiness.

The second empowerment is the Secret Empowerment, which introduces the disciple to the completion stage practice with concepts. This empowerment purifies and blesses the speech and subtle winds, authorizes the disciple to engage in mantra recitation and practices to transform the subtle winds, channels, and essences, and sows the seed of the saṃbhogakāya. Completion stage practice with concepts destroys attachment to ordinary speech and energy and culminates in the realization of the unity of luminosity and emptiness.

The third empowerment is the Wisdom Empowerment, which introduces the disciple to the path of skillful means. This empowerment purifies and blesses the mind and subtle essences, authorizes the disciple to engage in the three types of *mudrā* (*karmamudrā*, *amayamudrā*, and *jñānamudrā*), and sows the seed of the dharmakāya. The path of skillful means destroys attachment to impure perceptions and culminates in the realization of the unity of bliss and emptiness.

The fourth empowerment is the Precious Word Empowerment, which introduces the disciple to completion stage practice without concepts and sows the seed of the svābhāvikakāya. This empowerment purifies the body, speech, and mind of all karmic and cognitive obscurations. The introduction to the nature of mind enables the disciple to practice the Great Perfection, based on the unity of awareness and emptiness.

In these joyous vajra songs, Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo supplicates the four kāyas of the Guru and celebrates the path and realization of each of their corresponding four empowerments, ending each song with an aspiration to reach their ultimate realizations.

གསལ་སྒྲོང་ཟུང་འདུག

The Unity of Luminosity and Emptiness

O joy!

When the unchanging essence drops of relative supreme bodhicitta
Spread blissfully through the citadels of the five channel wheels,
The interfacing channel knots are released into the pure central channel.
Saṃbhogakāya guru, unity of luminosity and emptiness, think of me!
Grant your blessings that the channel elements may arise as letters!

The vine of the uniting central channel, entwined
With the play of the *lalanā* and *rasanā* lateral channels,
Is adorned with the beautiful flowers of the five cakras.
In the pure, luminous interior of these arrayed channel elements,
The ten winds² of conditioned existence serve as a natural causal nexus,
Giving rise to the twenty-one thousand thought patterns, which are mounted upon
their movement.
By binding the aggregates, elements, and sense bases within the pure essence drops,
May I delight in the radiant jewel and unborn recitation.

The white and red essences are the *ḍākinī* dancers of means and knowledge.
As they blaze and drip, may I partake of the nectar of the four joys,
Which brings the essential realization of bliss-emptiness, whereby the delusion of
mental afflictions
Encounters the cool shade of the *ḍāka*, all-pervasive great bliss.

By perfecting the sacred lands and abodes of the *ḍākinī* citadel within my body,
May I partake of the deeply blissful feast offering of A and HAM³ in union.

By offering the immaculate essence at the gathering,⁴
May I join in the celebration of fresh supreme and common activities.

When the ultimate music of melting bliss resounds in the throat cakra
As the *āli kālī* syllables of means and knowledge,
May the empire of the great wheel assembly come under my sway.
May I attain the level of Immortal Vidyādhara!

May virtue prevail!

NOTES

1. The titles of the four songs are *The Unity of Appearance and Emptiness*, *The Unity of Luminosity and Emptiness*, *The Unity of Bliss and Emptiness*, and *The Unity of Awareness and Emptiness*.
2. Ten kinds of wind or vital energy. These consist of the five root winds (*rtsa ba rlung lnga*): (1) the life-supporting wind of the breath (*srog 'dzin gyi rlung*), (2) the downward-voiding wind responsible for elimination/secretion/reproduction (*thur sel gyi rlung*), (3) the ascending wind responsible for speech (*gyen rgyu'i rlung*), (4) the fire-accompanying wind responsible for digestion (*me mnyam gyi rlung*), and (5) the pervasive wind responsible for metabolism, circulation, and muscular movement (*khyab byed kyi rlung*); and the five branch winds (*yan lag gi rlung lnga*), which are (6) the naga wind that resides in eyes (*klu'i rlung*), (7) the tortoise wind that resides in the ears (*rus sbal gi rlung*), (8) the lizard wind which resides in the nose (*rtsangs pa'i rlung*) (9) the divine giving wind that resides in the nose (*lha sbyin gi rlung*), and (10) the wealth god wind that resides in the tongue (*nor lha rgyal gi rlung*).
3. These are the seed syllables of the female and male vital essence. The female vital essence is in the form of a short red A syllable below the navel and male vital essence is in the form of an upside-down, white HAM syllable at the crown.
4. A place where the dākas and dākinīs always gather.

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GLOSSARY

āli kāli

ཨ་ལི་ཀ་ལི། • *a li ka li* • ālikāli

The Sanskrit vowels and consonants, of which the vowels embody sublime knowledge (*prajñā*) and the consonants embody skillful means (*upāya*). All of the letters are deities.

Immortal Vidyādhara

འཆི་མེད་གུབ་པའི་རིག་འཛིན། • *'chi med grub pa'i rig 'dzin*

Awareness-holder with power over lifespan, the second of the four *vidyādhara* levels.

svābhāvikakāya

ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་སྐྱེ། • *ngo bo nyid sku* • svābhāvikakāya

The svābhāvikakāya is the ultimate buddhakāya, the union of the three other kāyas. Its wisdom aspect is called the wisdom dharmakāya, its luminous appearance in the perception of pure beings is the sambhogakāya, and its physical appearance in the perception of impure beings is the nirmāṇakāya.

ten winds

རྩུང་བརྒྱ། • *rlung bcu* • daśa vāyavaḥ

The ten winds are ten kinds of subtle vital energy, consisting of five root winds (*rtsa ba rlung lnga*) that govern the body's various functions, and five branch winds (*yan lag gi rlung lnga*) in specific places in the body.