

༄༅། །ལྷ་བའི་རིམ་པ་མདོར་བསྡུས་པའི་དོ་རྗེའི་
སྒྲ་ཟབ་དོན་སྤྲིང་པོ།

**The Heart of the Profound Meaning:
A Vajra Song That Summarizes the Stages of
the View**

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo



KHYENTSE VISION
PROJECT

lta ba'i rim pa mdor bsdu pa'i rdo rje'i glu zab don snying po

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Khyentse Vision Project: Translating the Works of
Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

This succinct yet comprehensive and profound composition summarizes in a few lines the approaches to the view according to various systems, from Sūtra to Tantra. The vajra song begins with a verse on the nature of the mind, followed by a summary of the four classical tenet systems of Indian Buddhist thought, pointing out the limitations of the three so-called lower systems and describing the essence of the Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka view. This is followed by two verses that introduce the view according to the path of the highest class of Buddhist Tantra, including its cultivation and ultimate result, as exemplified by the Hevajra Lamdre system. The song concludes with two stanzas that convey the purpose of the composition and dedicate its merit.

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo composed *The Heart of the Profound Meaning* as an offering for the enjoyment of his teachers. In the colophon he identifies himself as a “young and carefree vagabond yogi,” which could indicate that he wrote the poem in his early twenties, around the time of his first trip to Central Tibet.¹ The only explicit mention of a tantric teaching in the text refers specifically to the Hevajra Lamdre system, likely placing the work in close proximity to Khyentse Wangpo’s early training in the Sakya tradition.

ཟབ་དོན་སྒྲིང་པོ།

The Essence of the Profound Meaning

ཨ་ཧོ།

a ho

Abo!

རྟག་པ་མ་ཡིན་སྒྲོས་བྲལ་གྱི་ཡེ་ཤེས།།

tagpa ma yin trödral gyi yeshé

Not permanent, pristine wisdom beyond elaborations;

ཆད་པ་མ་ཡིན་འོད་གསལ་གྱི་རང་གདངས།།

cheпа ma yin ösal gyi rang dang

Not nothing, the natural radiance of luminosity;

གཉིས་དང་གཉིས་མིན་པ་མཐའ་ལས་འདས་པའི།།

nyi dang nyi min pata ledepé

Transcending the extremes of being both or neither—

སེམས་ཀྱི་དོ་རྗེའི་རང་ཞལ་ལ་འདྲད་དོ།།

sem kyi dorjé rangzhal la dü do

I bow to the true face of the vajra of the mind.

ཕྱི་དོན་རྩམ་བྱུབ་བྱེ་སྤྲེལ་བའི་གཞུང་དང་།།

chidön dzé drub jemawé zhung dang

The Vaibhāṣikas' system holds external phenomena to be substantially existent;

བདགས་ཡོད་ལས་ལེན་མདོ་སྤེལ་བ།

tak yö khelen dodepé tawa

The Sautrāntikas' view accepts imputed existence;

སེམས་ཅམ་བདེན་གྲུབ་རྣམ་བདེན་དང་རྣམ་རྟུན།

sem tsam den drub nam den dang nam dzün

And the proponents of true and false images maintain that only mind is real—

བདེན་གཉིས་ཡ་བྲལ་རྟག་ཆད་ལས་མ་འདས།

den nyi ya dral tagché lé ma dé

Separating the two truths, they do not go beyond eternalism and nihilism.

ཀུན་རྫོབ་རྒྱ་རྒྱེན་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་ལས་སྦྱེས་ཤིང་།

kündzob gyü kyen tendrel lé kyé shing

The relative arises in dependence on causes and conditions,

སྦྱེས་ཅམ་ཉིད་ནས་སྟོང་ཉིད་དུ་ཤར་བའི།

kyé tsam nyi né tongnyi du sharwé

Yet dawns as emptiness the very moment it appears—

བདེན་གཉིས་བྱུང་འཇུག་ལས་ལེན་དང་བྲལ་བ།

den nyi zungjuk khelen dang dralwa

The final conclusion of the Prāsaṅgikas is that the union of the two truths,

ངེས་དོན་མཐར་ཐུག་ཐལ་འགྲུར་བའི་གྲུབ་མཐའ།

ngedön tartuk talgyurwé drubta

Beyond assertion, is the ultimate definitive meaning.

གསལ་སྟོང་དབྱེར་མེད་གཞི་དུས་ཀྱི་དགེས་རྟོག་།

sal tong yermé zhi dü kyi gé dor

The indivisibility of clarity and emptiness is Hevajra at the time of the ground;

ཉམས་སུ་སྟོང་ཡང་བསམ་བཞིན་ལས་འདས་ཤིང་།

nyam su nyong yang sam jö ledé shing

Although experienced, it is beyond thought or description—

ཏོག་ཚླགས་རང་གསལ་རྩིན་པ་རུ་རྩལ་པའི།

tok tsok rangsal jenpa ru nubpé

Observe the luminosity of the mind's true nature,

འོད་གསལ་སེམས་ཀྱི་གནས་ལུགས་ལ་གཟིགས་དང་།

ösal sem kyi neluk la zik dang

Where all thoughts dissolve into its naked natural clarity.

དེ་གའི་ངང་དུ་ཡིད་བྱེད་ཀྱི་སྒོ་དང་།

degé ngang du yijé kyi lo dang

In that state, the conceptual mind and all dualistic appearances

གཉིས་སྒྲར་ཐམས་ཅད་རིག་འོ་རུ་སྒོལ་བའི།

nyi nang tamché rik ngo ru drölwé

Are liberated into the essence of pristine awareness. [7]

ཉམས་ཚུང་ཚུ་བོའི་རྒྱན་འབབས་ལྟར་གོམས་པས།

nyamnyong chuwo gyünbab tar gompé

Through familiarization with this experience continuously flowing like a river,

མཚོག་དངོས་འབྲུག་པའི་ངལ་འཚོལ་སྦྱར་རོ།

chok ngödrubpé ngaltso la jaro

One gains the solace of supreme accomplishment.

ཨ་ཏྲེ་རིས་མེད་མཁས་གྲུབ་ཀྱི་ཞལ་ལུང་།

aho rimé khedrub kyi zhalung

Aho! Being well-versed in the teachings of unbiased scholars and siddhas,

མང་དུ་བློས་པའི་རྒྱལ་ཁམས་ཀྱི་བྱ་བས།

mang du töpé gyalkham kyi ja dral

A young and carefree vagabond yogi

རྣལ་འབྱོར་གཞན་རྒྱུའི་གང་ཤར་གྱི་སྒྲུ་དབྱངས།

naljor zhönü gang shar gyi luyang

Offers this spontaneous song

བཤེས་གཉིན་མཚན་གི་གཟིགས་མོ་རུ་ཕུལ་ལོ།

shenyen chok gi zikmo ru pülo

For his sublime masters to enjoy.

དགེ་བ་དེ་ཡིས་སྲིད་ཞི་ཡི་ཚེས་ཀྱན།

gewa dé yi si zhi yi chö kün

By this merit, may all beings realize the heart of the definitive secret,

འཁོར་འདས་དབྱེར་མེད་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་རུ་བསྐྱམས་པའི།

khor dé yermé chakgya ru dampé

Which binds all phenomena of existence and peace

ངེས་གསལ་སྤྱིད་པོ་འགོ་ཀྱན་གྱིས་རྟོགས་ནས།

ngé sang nyingpo dro kün gyi tok né

With the seal of the inseparability of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa,

དོན་གཉིས་འགྲུབ་པའི་སྟོན་ལམ་ཞིག་ཞུའོ།

dön nyi drubpé mönlam zhik zhu'o

And thus accomplish the two purposes.

By Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo.

NOTES

1. Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo was famous for being an accomplished scholar at a very early age. At the age of sixteen, for instance, he wrote the *theg pa'i rnam dbye gsal bar byed pa'i gtam legs bshad ngo mtshar chu gter* (KVP B394), a remarkable doxographical work that discusses at length many subtle points of a multitude of systems of Buddhist thought and praxis, both Sūtra and Tantra.

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GLOSSARY

beyond elaborations

སྤྲོས་བྲལ། • *spros bral*

A phrase used to describe ultimate reality, indicating that it lies beyond the scope of the conceptual mind.

emptiness

སྟོང་པ་ཉིད། • *stong pa nyid* • *śūnyatā*

The lack of inherent existence and the freedom from all conceptual elaborations.

essence of pristine awareness

རིག་པོ། • *rig ngo*

Synonym for the nature of the mind. Pristine awareness is the most subtle, inherently unstained level of awareness, temporarily obscured by the veils of mental afflictions and conceptual thought.

Hevajra

དཀེས་རྡོར། • *dges rdor* • *hevajra*

One of the main deities of the highest class of Buddhist Tantra from the New Translation period (eleventh century onward), Hevajra is of central importance in the Sakya and Kagyu traditions.

inseparability of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa

འཁོར་འདས་དབྱེར་མེད། • *'khor 'das dbyer med*

The name of the ultimate view according to the Lamdre system of practice.

luminosity

འོད་གསལ། • *'od gsal* • *prabhāsvara*

The mind's inherent quality of knowing.

Prāsaṅgika

ཐལ་འགྱུར་བ། • *thal 'gyur ba* • prāsaṅgika

Literally, “Consequentialists.” One of the two main subschools of Madhyamaka.

Proponents of this school do not establish any thesis on their own but merely demonstrate that any thesis about ultimate reality is untenable by pointing out the unwanted or impossible consequences of such views.

pristine wisdom

ཡེ་ཤེས། • *ye shes* • jñāna

Generally, the nonconceptual wisdom of an awakened being. Depending on the context, however, the term can have a wide range of meanings, from the luminous awareness primordially present in the mindstreams of all beings to specific kinds of wisdom of the path, to the resultant, nonconceptual wisdom of a buddha.

relative

ཀུན་རྫོབ། • *kun rdzob* • saṃvṛti

One of the two categories used to determine the nature of phenomena. Relative or conventional reality is explained to be the way things appear, as opposed to ultimate reality, which is the way they really are.

Sautrāntika

སངས་སྤྲེལ། • *mdo sde pa* • sautrāntika

Literally, “Sūtra Followers.” The Sautrāntika system relies closely on the sūtras and rejects the authority of the Abhidharma treatises accepted by the Vaibhāṣika. In Tibetan doxographical works, it is listed as one of the two philosophical systems of the Śrāvakayāna, the other being Vaibhāṣika. Both schools accept the true existence of external phenomena in terms of partless particles and of mind in terms of indivisible moments of awareness.

supreme accomplishment

མཆོག་དངོས་འགྲུབ་པ། • *mchog dngos 'grub pa*

The attainment of perfect awakening or buddhahood.

true and false images

རྣམ་བཤེན་དང་རྣམ་རྟུན། • *nam bden dang nam rdzun*

These terms are associated with two schools of thought in the Mind Only system. These schools agree in their assertion that the images apprehended by the mind—that is, the object-aspect of dualistic perception—are mental phenomena rather than externally existent phenomena, but they differ with regard to the ontological status of these images. According to the proponents of true images (sometimes called True Aspectarians), these images are real phenomena, and the senses are veridical, whereas the proponents of false images (also called False Aspectarians) assert that they are not real because they are based on delusion.

two purposes

དོན་གཉིས། • *don gnyis*

The accomplishment of benefit for oneself and others.

two truths

བདེན་གཉིས། • *bden gnyis* • satyadvaya

The relative truth of the way things appear and the ultimate truth of the way things really are. These two categories, used to determine the nature of phenomena and perception, are defined differently according to various schools of thought and practice.

Vaibhāṣika

བེ་ཐུ་བ། • *bye smra ba* • vaibhāṣika

Literally, “Vibhāṣa Followers.” The Vaibhāṣika system relies on the authority of the encyclopedic Abhidharma work known as the *Mahāvibhāṣa*, or *Great Commentary*. In Tibetan doxographical works, Vaibhāṣika is listed as one of the two philosophical systems of the Śrāvakayāna, the other being Sautrāntika. Both schools accept the true existence of external phenomena in terms of partless particles and of mind in terms of indivisible moments of awareness.

vajra of the mind

སེམས་ཀྱི་རྡོ་རྗེ། • *sems kyi rdo rje* • cittavajra

A tantric term for the ultimate nature of the mind. It is one of the three vajras, the other two being the vajra of the body and the vajra of speech.