

༄༅། །འཇམ་དབྱངས་དམར་སེར་གྱི་བསྟེན་ཐབས་ལུང་གསལ།

A Brief and Clear Manual for the Approach Retreat of Orange Mañjughoṣa

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo



KHYENTSE VISION
PROJECT

This text is intended to be read and practiced by those who have received the requisite Vajrayāna authorizations, transmissions, and instructions. If you are unsure whether you have received the appropriate permissions, please consult a qualified Dharma teacher of the relevant tradition.

jam dbyangs dmar ser gyi bsnyen thabs nyung gsal

B608

Kabum, vol. 10 (tha), 246.5–248.3, Dzongsar 2014.

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INTRODUCTION

A Brief and Clear Manual for the Approach Retreat of Orange Mañjughoṣa is a short text explaining the basic outline of a specific type of retreat in the tradition of the early Sakya masters. It employs a method called *nyen pa* in Tibetan,¹ which can be translated as “approach” or “approximation” vis-à-vis the deity—in this case Orange Mañjuśrī—through the extensive recitation of mantra during the creation stage of tantric practice.

In the collected works of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, this text is found in a section entitled “Related to Mañjuśrī,”² immediately followed by Khyentse Wangpo’s own sādhana for this practice. It is also included in the second volume of the Compendium of Sādhana,³ where it is part of the cycle on Orange Mañjuśrī Arapatsana.

འཇམ་དབྱངས་དམར་སེར་གྱི་བསྟན་ཐབས།

A Manual for the Approach Retreat of Orange Mañjughoṣa

*Namo Mañjuśrīye!*⁴

To carry out the approach retreat for Orange Mañjughoṣa as a single deity, having first correctly received the corresponding authorization and pith instructions, [247] retreat to an isolated and pleasant location, and clean it well. If you have a statue, a painting, or a relief sculpture of Mañjuśrī, position it facing you and place the offering tormas in front of it. Observing the promised discipline, and maintaining cleanliness of body and purity of conduct, start the retreat at sunrise on an astrologically auspicious date. Engage in the practice at a rate of four sessions per day. You may perform a sādhana composed by the supreme founding masters of Sakya, or other reliable liturgies that contain the exact words of the founding masters, such as the sādhana written by Khedrub Palden Döndrub.⁵

Ideally, you should carry out an approach retreat based on signs, until signs of accomplishment are experienced. Second best is an approach retreat based on time, where you practice for a duration of six months. At the very least, you will engage in an approach retreat based on numbers, accumulating the mantra 800,000 times, including the supplementary recitations. As a fire offering is not explicitly mentioned, it is not necessary to perform it.

During every session, at the end of the mantra recitation, recite the dhāraṇī that increases wisdom and intelligence:

NAMO MAÑJUŚRĪYE KUMĀRABHŪTĀYA | BODHISATVĀYA | MAHĀSATVĀYA |
MAHĀKĀRUṆIKĀYA | TADYATHĀ | OṂ ARAJE | VIRAJE | ŚUDDHE VIŚUDDHE |

ŚODHAYA VIŚODHAYA | AMALE | VIMALE | NIRMALE | JAYAVARE | RURU CALE | HŪṂ
HŪṂ HŪṂ | PHAṬ PHAṬ PHAṬ SVĀHĀ⁶

Since Pagpa Rinpoche stated that one should recite this dhāraṇī as circumstances permit, [248] recite it as much as possible, a hundred or at least twenty-one times.

Offer the tormas at the end of the second session or after the early morning session. Between sessions, diligently recite praises to Mañjuśrī, such as *Chanting the Names of Mañjuśrī*, and make maṇḍala offerings. When you experience signs of obstacles, protect yourself through the meditation and mantra recitation of Acala.

By diligently practicing in this way, you will initially give rise to retentive memory, and gradually the power of your intelligence will reach perfection in prosody and other fields of knowledge. This is certain.

This was written by Mañjughoṣa. May it be virtuous.

NOTES

1. *bsnyen pa*.
2. *'jam skor*.
3. The Compendium of Means of Accomplishment (*sgrub thabs kun btus*) is a vast collection of tantric meditation manuals and rites compiled by Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo and his disciple Jamyang Loter Wangpo (ngor pa dpon slob blo gter dbang po, 1847–1914). See Khyentse Wangpo and Ngorpa Pönlob Loter Wangpo, 1970 & 2015.
4. “Homage to Mañjuśrī.”
5. An important sādhana for Orange Mañjuśrī in the Sakya tradition was composed by Sakya Paṇḍita Kunga Gyaltsen (1182–1251). He was the fourth of the five founding masters of the Sakya tradition, who, like Khyentse Wangpo, was regarded as an emanation of Mañjuśrī. This sādhana is found in the second volume of the Compendium of Means of Accomplishment in the same section as this text.
6. Various scribal errors have also been emended here, based on *'jam dbyangs dmar ser gyi bsnyen thabs nyung gsal*, 284.2. This variant of the mantra also presents slight differences compared to the older form found in the dhāraṇī literature of Nepal. See Hidas, *Powers of Protection*, 117: OM NAMO BHAGAVATE
MAÑJUŚRIKUMĀRABHŪTĀYA BODHISATTVĀYA MAHĀSATTVĀYA
MAHĀKĀRUṆIKĀYA | TADYATHĀ | OM ARAJE VIRAJE ŚUDDHE VIŚUDDHE
ŚODHANI VIŚODHANI AMALE VIMALE JAYAVĀHANI RURU CALE HŪM HŪM HŪM
PHAṬ PHAṬ PHAṬ SVĀHĀ.

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GLOSSARY

Acala

མི་གཡོ་བ། • *mi g.yo ba*

A wrathful deity and a Dharma protector, regarded as an emanation of either Vairocana, Akṣobhya, or Mañjuśrī. He figures among the ten wrathful deities of many maṇḍalas of the two highest classes of Buddhist tantra.

approach retreat

བསྟེན་པ། • *bsnyen pa*

A meditation retreat in which a certain number of mantras are recited in order to approach the deity.

Chanting the Names of Mañjuśrī

འཇམ་དཔལ་མཚན་བརྗོད། • *'jam dpal mtshan brjod* • *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*

An important tantric text, sometimes referred as the “King of Tantras.”

dhāraṇī

གཟུངས། • *gzungs*

The term dhāraṇī may refer to the ability to retain teachings, or to mnemonic devices, similar in form to mantras, that enable one to achieve this as well as other aims.

fire offering

སྦྱིན་སྟེག་ • *sbyin sreg* • *homa*

A tantric ritual involving offering substances into a fire, often carried out at the completion of mantra retreats.

Khedrub Palden Döndrub

མཁས་གུབ་དཔལ་ལྷན་རྟོན་གྲུབ། • *mkhas grub dpal ldan don grub*

Khedrub Palden Döndrub (mkhas grub dpal ldan don grub, 1563–1636) was the sixteenth abbot of Ngör Ewaṃ Chöden Monastery (ngor e waM chos ldan).

Pagpa Rinpoche

འཕགས་པ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ། • *'phags pa rin po che*

Drogön Chögyal Pagpa (1235–1280), the fifth of the five founding masters of the Sakya tradition.

single deity

དཔའ་བོ་གཅིག་པ། • *dpa' bo gcig pa* • ekavīra

The single form of a deity, visualized without its maṇḍala retinue.

torma

གཏོར་མ། • *gtor ma* • bali

A ritual cake offered to deities.