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Oral Instructions of the Supreme Siddha:
A Brief, Clear, and Concise Sādhana of
Mañjuśrī Vādisiṃha

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo

'jam dpal smra ba'i seng ge'i sgrub thabs nyung gsal snying por dril ba grub pa mchog gi zhal lung

B607

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Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	iv
ORAL INSTRUCTIONS OF THE SUPREME SIDDHA	1
NOTES	5
BIBLIOGRAPHY	7
GLOSSARY	9

INTRODUCTION

Oral Instructions of the Supreme Siddha is a brief sādhana of Mañjuśrī Vādisiṃha,¹ a particular form of Mañjuśrī seated on a blue lion. In the Collected Works of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, it is found in the “Mañjuśrī Section,”² comprising texts devoted to practices centered around various embodiments of enlightened wisdom from different lineages.³ The text is also included in the Compendium of Sādhana,⁴ where it is part of the cycle on Mañjuśrī from the lineage of the Indian siddha Padampa Sangye, alluded to in the title as the “supreme siddha.”⁵

Khyentse Wangpo’s composition is based on a shorter, versified text found in the Tengyur simply entitled *Sādhana of Mañjughoṣa Vādbhisimha* and attributed to Jetsun Dampa Gyagar, which is one of the names of Padampa Sangye. The same practice, with slight variations, is also included in the Compendium of Sādhana, where its author is identified as a certain Kamalaśīla. This dual attribution does not imply a contradiction, however, since Kamalaśīla was the monastic ordination name of Padampa Sangye.⁶

The sādhana itself combines the practice of Mañjuśrī with that of his female counterpart Sarasvatī. Added to the practice liturgy are notes about related practices, such as tormas offerings, yogas of sleep and rising, and brief instructions for retreat. The text concludes with a list of the temporary and ultimate benefits of this practice.

Oral Instructions of the Supreme Siddha was composed at the request of Kunzik Tulku Rinpoche Karma Ngedön Wangpo, who is probably Chogtrul Karma Ngedön Wangpo, a Kagyu master mentioned in Khyentse Wangpo’s biography, from whom he received numerous teachings.⁷

གྲུབ་པ་མཚོག་གི་ཞལ་བྱུང་།

Oral Instructions of the Supreme Siddha

Namo guru Vādisiṃhāya!

Those gifted with intelligence, who are moved by the thought of renunciation and bodhicitta, wish to accomplish the gateways of meditative concentration and the dhāraṇī of Mañjuśrī Vādisiṃha, and possess the aim of swiftly achieving the pristine wisdom of omniscience, should correctly receive the authorization and oral instructions for this practice. They should abide by the samayas and vows, and retreat to a secluded and pleasant meditation cabin to engage in the practice.

This practice has three parts: preparation, main practice, and conclusion. [241]

Preparation

Visualize the objects of refuge as if truly present in the sky in front of you, with Guru Mañjughoṣa as the main refuge. In their presence, take refuge, generate bodhicitta, and meditate on the four immeasurables, as it is commonly done.

Main Practice

OM SVABHĀVA ŚUDDHĀḤ SARVADHARMĀḤ SVABHĀVA ŚUDDHO 'HAM

Out of emptiness appears a blue, backward-twisting lion as a seat, on it a lotus-and-moon disc, in the center of which is the essence of the true nature of your mind in the form of a red syllable DHĪḤ. On the ground in front of it, on a lotus and moon, is the syllable HRĪḤ, deep blue in color. Light radiates from both syllables, making offerings to all noble ones and dispelling the darkness of ignorance of all beings. The

light returns and is absorbed into the two syllables. From the complete transformation of the DHĪḤ, you instantly appear as Ārya Mañjuśrī, red in color, with one face and two arms.

Your right hand holds aloft the blazing sword of wisdom, and the thumb and ring finger of your left hand hold at your heart the stem of an utpala. (Even though more recent manuals state that the hands are in the gesture of expounding the Dharma, the intention of the ancient root texts is exactly as it is given here. Similarly, other disagreements between the text here and these later manuals stem from the fact that the intent of the ancient text has been maintained.) Upon the flower that blooms next to your left ear is a volume of the *Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines*. [242]

Adorned with all the silk garments and jewel ornaments, your appearance is peaceful, smiling, and charming. Most of your hair is tied up in a topknot and crowned with a blazing wish-fulfilling jewel, while the rest hangs to the left in five locks. You sit in the fully crossed vajra posture. From the BHRŪḤ at your heart appears a yellow wheel with four spokes. In its center stands an upright sword, four fingerbreadths long, with a red DHĪḤ encircled by the root mantra on its handle.

From the complete transformation of the syllable HRĪḤ, the goddess Sarasvatī appears before you. She is of blue color, slightly wrathful and smiling, and displays a most charming air. Holding a sword and a book in her hands, she is adorned with all the silk garments and jewel ornaments. Her dark blue hair is tied up in a topknot crowned with a jewel, and the rest hangs down in braided tresses. She stands in a dignified posture. At her heart, on a moon disc, is a sword, four fingerbreadths long, with a blue HRĪḤ encircled by the syllables of her mantra on its handle.

Light radiates from the seed syllables at the heart of both Mañjuśrī and his consort to invoke an inconceivable assembly of jñānasattvas:

OM VAJRASAMĀJAḤ | JAḤ HŪḤ BAḤ HOḤ

Think that they are now inseparable and maintain the meditative concentration of the illusion-like appearance of the deity [243] for a long time.

When this becomes tiresome, practice the mantra recitation. Light radiates from the seed syllable and the mantra garland at your heart, transforming the outer world into an immeasurable mansion, and all the beings contained therein attain the state of Mañjuśrī and his consort.

Then, an endless string of DHĪḤ syllables issues from the DHĪḤ at your heart. It comes out of your right nostril, enters the consort's left nostril, and is absorbed into the HRĪḤ at her heart. From there emerges, as if released, a string of HRĪḤ syllables that exits through her right nostril to enter your body through your left nostril. It transforms into the *āli kāli* mantra,⁸ which then fills your entire body. Even the

pores of your skin are filled with the syllables of the mantra. Think that all mental darkness is thus dispelled and that the light of wisdom shines ever brighter.

From this continuously circling string of mantras issues forth an endless swarm of wisdom bees together with rays of light spreading in the ten directions. They gather the blessings of all the buddhas, bodhisattvas, and sublime gurus from the ten directions, the wisdom of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, and the powers of all ordinary beings. All this is absorbed through the top of your head, so that your body is blessed with pristine wisdom.

Again light radiates, gathering the essence of the three collections of the Buddha's teaching, the knowledge [244] of the paṇḍitas learned in the five fields of knowledge, the abilities of the spiritual teachers, and the potency of all medicines. All this is absorbed into your tongue, so that your speech is blessed with power.

Light radiates again, gathering the vital essence of all plants and trees, the light of the sun and the moon, and the brilliance of the jewels found in the ocean, invoking the wisdom and power of the gods, nāgas, planets, and stars, as well as the minds of the sovereigns and rulers.⁹ All this is absorbed into your heart, so that your mind is blessed with the pristine wisdom of nondual bliss and emptiness. While maintaining this visualization, recite the mantra as much as possible:

OM HRĪḤ DHĪḤ MAME DĪPAṂ MAÑJUŚRĪ MŪḂ HRĪḤ PRAJÑĀVARDHANI HRĪḤ
DHĪḤ SVĀHĀ

At the end, stabilize the power of the mantra by reciting the vowels and consonants and the essence of dependent arising.¹⁰

Conclusion

To conclude, pray: “Lord Mañjughoṣa, grant your blessing so that all the darkness of ignorance of myself and all sentient beings be dispelled and that the special wisdom of selflessness may be born in our mindstreams.”

Light radiates from the seed syllable at your heart, melting all the worlds and beings of the three realms into light. The light is absorbed into you, you dissolve into the wheel at your heart, the wheel dissolves into the sword, the sword [245] dissolves into the DHĪḤ, and the DHĪḤ transforms into a red bindu, which then melts into light. As all appearances dissolve into the experience of vivid redness, think that you have thus gained mastery over all worldly and transmundane siddhis. Rest your mind in the state of luminous emptiness.

When you arise from this state, you instantly appear in the form of Lord Mañjughoṣa. Conclude with this prayer:

By this virtue, may I swiftly
Accomplish the state of Mañjuśrī and his consort,
[And lead all beings to their level,
Leaving not a single one behind.]

Make other prayers of dedication and aspiration, and then engage in the practice of daily conduct.

In between sessions, bless the tormā made of whatever substance is available to you, invite the jñānasattva, and offer the tormā with the root mantra, to which is added IDAṂ BALIṂTA KHA KHA KHĀHI KHĀHI. Then make offerings, sing praises, and recite prayers.

When you go to sleep, sleep in the state of luminous emptiness. When you wake up, imagine that from empty space an assembly of countless Sarasvatīs call you with the mantra DHĪḤ HRĪḤ, and you arise with the illusory body of the deity.

For the practice of approach,¹¹ follow the guidelines for cleanliness and recite 400,000 mantras, plus the supplementary amount, at a rate of three or four sessions a day. Alternatively, you may persist in your recitation until you see the signs described in the texts, either in your waking life or in your dreams. The fire offering for the supplementary mantra recitation, the accomplishment of the pills to enhance the effect of the practice, [246] and the vast activities to benefit oneself and others should be learned directly from the ancient root texts and their commentaries.

As a temporary result of applying yourself in this practice, boundless wisdom will be born and you will obtain supernatural knowledge and inconceivable gateways of meditative concentration and dhāraṇīs. The ultimate result of this is the attainment of perfect awakening in the form of the wisdom being Ārya Mañjuśrī. This is certain.

Having placed the crown jewel-like command of the All-Seeing Tulku Rinpoche Karma Ngedön Wangpo¹² on my head, I, the learned monk Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, composed this brief essence sādhanā of Mañjuśrī Vādisiṃba exactly in accordance with the intent of the ancient root texts of oral instructions by Dampa Sangye, the guide of the supreme siddhas. May the merit of this composition be the cause for all beings to quickly attain the state of the hero Mañjuśrī.

Sarvadā kalyāṇaṃ bhavatu!

NOTES

1. Tib. *'jam dpal smra ba'i seng ge*. Literally, this title means “Mañjuśrī, Lion Among Speakers.”
2. Tib. *'jam skor*.
3. This section includes texts related to four deities: Mañjuśrī, Sarasvatī, Acala, and Prajñālokakṛtya. While the first two are generally well known and widely practiced, the latter two may be more obscure. Acala (mi g.yo ba, “The Immovable”) is a wrathful deity and 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. Prajñālokakṛtya (shes rab gsal byed ma, “Illuminating Wisdom”) is a form of Vajravārāhī, one of the principal female forms of enlightened wisdom in the highest class of Buddhist Tantra.
4. The Compendium of Sādhanas (*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 ('jam dbyangs slob blo gter dbang po, 1847–1914). See Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo and Ngorpa Ponlop Loter Wangpo, 2015 & 1970.
5. Padampa Sangye (pha dam pa sangs rgyas, b. eleventh cent.–d. 1117; BDR C P0RK1174) is at the origin of the Zhije lineage and is closely related to the Chöd tradition, which became widespread through the efforts of the female teacher Machik Labdrön (ma gcig lab sgron, 1055–1149). Padampa Sangye, renowned for his yogic accomplishments, is said to have visited Tibet on several occasions.
6. Padampa Sangye is also regarded as an emanation of Kamalaśīla (740–795; BDR C P7641), the Indian teacher famous for his debate with a Chinese Buddhist master at the court of Trisong Detsen and his three works entitled *Stages of Meditation* (*sgom rim*).
7. Akester, *The Life of Jamyang Khyentsé Wangpo by Jamgön Kongtrül*, 107–8.
8. The *āli kāli* is composed of the vowels and consonants of the Sanskrit alphabet. For a discussion on its adoption into Tibetan, see Miller, “Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Āli, Kāli as Grammatical Terms in Tibet,” 125–47.
9. Literally, “the minds of the kings and queens.”
10. That is, the *āli kāli* and the YE DHARMA mantra.

11. That is, the basic retreat.
12. Kunzik Tulku Rinpoche Karma Ngedön Wangpo (kun gzigs sprul pa'i sku rin po che kar+ma nges don dbang po), tentatively identified as the First Chagtsa Tulku, Kunzang Ngedön Wangpo (mid-eighteenth century–1816). Although this great lama passed away before Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo was born, one of his primary disciples, the Second Moktsa Chöying Dorje (rmog rtsa chos dbyings rdo rje, eighteenth–nineteenth century), was Khyentse Wangpo's uncle. The command to write such a text could have been passed down through this connection.

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GLOSSARY

āli kāli

ཨྲ་ལི་ཀ་ལི། • *A li kA li*

The mantra composed of the vowels (*āli*) and consonants (*kāli*) of the Sanskrit alphabet.

bindu

བྲིག་ལེ། • *thig le*

A technical term with various meanings depending on the context (e.g., linguistic, esoteric), commonly translated as “seminal point” or “droplet.”

bodhicitta

བྱང་སེམས། • *byang sems*

Literally, “mind of awakening.” The resolve to attain awakening and to accomplish its causes. In the Mahāyāna, this resolve is based on the wish to attain buddhahood to benefit all sentient beings.

Dampa Sangye

དམ་པ་སངས་རྒྱལ། • *dam pa sangs rgyas*

Dampa Sangye (d. 1117) was the progenitor of the Zhije tradition.

emptiness

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

A synonym for ultimate reality.

five fields of knowledge

གནས་ལྗེ། • *gnas lnga* • *pañcavidyāsthāna*

The five main subjects studied traditionally by Buddhist scholars: the Buddhist doctrine, logic, linguistics, medicine, and arts and crafts.

four immeasurables

ཚད་མེད་བཞི། • *tsbad med bzhi* • catvaryapramāṇāni

The four meditations of love, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity cultivated toward all—that is, infinite—sentient beings.

gateways of meditative concentration and dhāraṇī

ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན་དང་གཟུངས་གྱི་སྒོ། • *ting nge 'dzin dang gzungs gyi sgo*

- samādhidhāraṇīmukha

The ability to achieve states of meditative concentration and extraordinary powers of retentive memory. The term dhāraṇī may refer to this ability to retain teachings, or to mnemonic devices, similar in form to mantras, that enable one to achieve this as well as other aims.

jñānasattva

ཡི་ཤེས་སེམས་དཔལ། • *ye shes sems dpa'*

The wisdom aspect of the deity, invoked to merge with the form of the deity created in meditation, called samayasattva, or “pledge being”.

Kunzik Tulku Rinpoche Karma Ngedön Wangpo

ཀུན་གཟིགས་སྐུལ་པའི་སྐུ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ཀམ་རེས་དོན་དབང་པོ། • *kun gzigs sprul pa'i sku rin po che kar+ma nges don dbang po*

Kunzik Tulku Rinpoche Karma Ngedön Wangpo may be tentatively identified as the First Chagtsa Tulku, Kunzang Ngedön Wangpo (mid-eighteenth century–1816).

meditative concentration

ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན། • *ting nge 'dzin* • samādhi

A state of one-pointed concentration.

paṇḍita

པཎྌི་ཏ། • *paN+Di ta*

Sanskrit title for a scholar trained in traditional fields of knowledge.

Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines

བརྒྱད་སྟོང་པ། • *brgyad stong pa* • Āṣṭasahasrikāprajñāpāramitā

A central Mahāyāna text expounding the profound doctrine of emptiness.

samaya

དམ་ཚིག། • *dam tshig*

The sacred bond and commitment upheld by practitioners of Vajrayāna.

selflessness

བདག་མེད། • *bdag med* • nairātmyā, anātmā

The lack of inherent existence.

śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas

ཉན་རང། • *nyan rang*

The two types of practitioners on the path of individual liberation. Śrāvakas (also “hearers” or “disciples”) are those who have heard the teachings from a human teacher; whereas pratyekabuddhas (also “independent realizers”) practice in solitude and gain insight based on karmic imprints from previous lives.

supernatural knowledges

མངོན་པར་ཤེས་པ། • *mngon par shes pa* • abhijñā

Five types of abilities attained through meditative accomplishment: divine sight, divine hearing, knowing others’ minds, knowing past lives, and the ability to perform miracles. To these worldly accomplishments, a sixth supernatural knowledge is added, which can only be attained through insight: knowing the exhaustion of defilements.

torma

གཏོར་མ། • *gtor ma* • bali

A ritual cake offered to deities.

utpala

ལྷུང་ལ། • *ut+pal*

A blue lotus or waterlily.

vajra posture

དོ་རྩེའི་སྐྱེལ་མོ་ཁྱུང། • *rdo rje'i skyil mo krung* • vajraparyāṅka

Seated, fully crossed-legged posture, where the backs of the feet are placed on the thighs of the opposite legs. Also called lotus posture in other contexts.