



A CHEST OF AMṚITA

An Instruction Manual on the Practice of White Tara

— JAMGÖN KONGTRUL LODRÖ THAYE —



BENCHEN PUBLICATIONS



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JAMGÖN KONGTRUL LODRÖ THAYE

Translated by
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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

This text¹ — *A Chest of Amṛita: Instructions for the Long-Life Practice of Kalyāṇī Cintāmaṇicakra*² — presented here, has been the very basis for teaching the meditation instructions for the contemplative practice of White Tārā within the Karma Kamtsang tradition ever since it was composed by its author, Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye³. As he himself informs us, there was a much more detailed instruction manual by the Ninth Karmapa Wangchuk Dorje⁴, but it had apparently been lost already before Kongtrul's time. Thus, he set out to compose his own, based on his own vast experience and realization, as well as on the works of Jonang Kunga Drölchog⁵ and Jonang Jetsün Tāranātha⁶, and oral instructions which he had received from one of his root teachers at Palpung Monastery, the seat of the Tai Situpas, in Derge, Eastern Tibet.

1. *bka' brgyud sngags mdzod*, Vol. 1, pp. 171-205

2. Skt. *kalyāṇī*; Tib. *dge ba can ma* means Virtuous One. Skt. *Cintāmaṇicakra*; Tib. *yid bzhin 'khor lo* means Wish Fulfilling Wheel.

3. *'jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas*, 1813-1899.

4. *dbang phyug rdo rje*, 1556-1603.

5. *jo nang kun dga' grol mchog*, 1507-1566.

6. *jo nang rje btsun tā ra nā tha*, 1575-1635.

These instructions would be implemented together with either one of three White Tārā sādhana texts available to us nowadays in the Karma Kamtsang school. The first of these (*The Daily Practice of White Tara*), and by far the most widespread one, was composed by the Eighth Tai Situpa, Chökyi Jungne⁷, which he however signed with his alternate name of Tenpe Nyinje⁸. The second is by Jamgön Kongtrul himself. The last of these three was composed relatively recently by the late Kyabje Tenga Rinpoche (1932-2012) and is a much-abbreviated version of its forerunners. Nevertheless, the same meditation instructions do apply in all three cases.

I would like to impress upon the reader that instruction manuals of this sort are not aimed at an audience of beginners, but rather at seasoned practitioners who have received a thorough education in this sort of contemplative practice and its ideas and conventions. Manuals of this sort get right to the point and presume the reader to be familiar with all the preliminary points and ideas. For Tibetan practitioners, especially those who grew up in a monastic setting, this hardly needs mentioning. For non-Tibetans things are a bit harder because they lack an education along these lines, much essential material remains untranslated, and there is a lack of curiosity regarding these matters on the part of many. Therefore, if too many points seem unclear, it might be wise to approach an authentic teacher, or at the very least an experienced practitioner, for clari-

7. *tā yi si tu chos kyi 'byung gnas*, 1700-1774.

8. *bstan pa'i nyin byed*.

fication. Please do not assume that you will be able to understand and apply it all after just a single reading.

The late Kyabje Tenga Rinpoche, himself an eminent and life-long practitioner of White Tārā, has taught these instructions in greater or lesser detail many times to many of his students, eastern and western alike, and it seemed high time to present this text in a fitting form. Thus, we would like to produce this version as one of the first from the newly formed Benchen Publications office. May it contribute to the long lives of all our eminent upholders and propagators of the Buddhadharma, and may it be a cause for Kyabje Tenga Rinpoche's swift return to this world.

We would like to express our thanks to the Tsadra Foundation and particularly to Venerable Gelong Jamchen Tendzin (Sean Price) for their generous support in making this publication possible.

*Gelong Karma Sherab Drime (Thomas Roth),
Benchen Monastery*



དགེ་བ་ཅན་མ་ཡིད་བཞིན་འཁོར་ལོའི་ཆོ་བྱིད་དཔལ་ལྷན་མར་མེ་མཇོད་ཀྱི་
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A Chest of Amṛita: Instructions for the Long-Life
Practice of Kalyāṇī Cintāmaṇicakra in the Pure
Unalloyed Tradition of Atisha Dīpaṃkara

by Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye

NAMO GURU-ĀRYA-TĀRĀYE!

Homage to Guru Ārya Tārā!

The physical signs of greatness, scented with camphor,
Drip hundreds of rays of amṛita, that augment
The water-treasures of long life in this world.
As the splendour of my heart, she continuously resides there as the
guru.

I completely prostrate myself to the lotus feet of
The compassionate gurus of the lineage derived from her,
Who themselves enjoy the treasury of the two siddhis
That is gained from this tradition, and who give it to others.

Though I see many traditions as being quintessential nectar,
I shall explain my own tradition of superior power and essence,
The tradition of Atisha, joined into a single stream
With the instructions of the Karma Kamtsang and the Jetsün
Jonangpa.⁹

Ācārya Vāgiśvarakīrti¹⁰ said:

9. Jonang Tāranātha [1575-1635], one of the greatest and most important masters of the Jonang school.

10. The late 10th/early 11th century Indian master, born in Vārāṇasī, who composed the first White Tārā sādhanas, the practice of which was revealed to him by Tārā herself. He had frequent visions of Tārā and once received from her a famous Mahāmudrā instruction known as the *phyag rgya chen po yi ge med pa* — *The Mahāmudrā without words/letters*, which is still transmitted mainly within the Sakya

For as long as someone with Dharma conduct,
Who has tamed his senses, lives in saṃsāra,
For that length of time, he will gather accumulations such as
merit,
And develop that which will accomplish enlightenment.

I have not seen anything within saṃsāra,
That is more precious than life.
Therefore, using many means,
Practise thoroughly the evasion of death.

Why? Because with the union of means with wisdom,
There will not be the slightest difficulty.

Thus, as a means for attaining a long life, from the very beginning,
it is correct to apply yourself with diligence in every way to this superior deity, the supreme basis for the attainment of enlightenment.

This kind of inconceivable method has originated from the tradition passed down from the compassionate Teacher, and is superior to such external activities as special substances, medicine, and

tradition. It can also be found in Kongtrul's *gdams ngag mdzod*. Vāgiśvarakīrti was the founder of the present-day Newar Vajrayana tradition in Nepal. He is considered to still reside within the Śāntipura temple on Svayambhūnāth. A prophecy says that he will remain there until there is almost no dharma left in the Nepal valley. Only then will he re-emerge to rekindle the dying flames of the Buddha's teachings. When the previous Kalu Rinpoche once visited Svayambhūnāth in the 1970's, he sat down to meditate before the sealed doors of the Śāntipura temple. When he emerged from his meditative concentration, he whispered to his attendant: Ācārya Vāgiśvarakīrti is indeed still here..."

creating auspicious interdependence. It is perfect and marvellous for those who are practicing the inner yoga. On the conventional level, it protects from all fears, hindrances and obstacles to the attainment of enlightenment, such as the eight and sixteen terrors. It brings the swift and easy attainment of deathless life and, on the ultimate level, the supreme siddhi.

It has been clearly taught in such tantras as the *Tārā-bhava-tantra*¹¹ [*Origin of Tārā*], and is of the family of Śrī Hayagrīva, which is one of the six subdivisions of the Anuttara Mother Tantras. Into this land of snow mountains, there have entered the four, five, six or other enumerations of the amṛita rivers of the Cintāmaṇīcakra instruction-traditions.

Amongst these, there is the lineage that is superior in conviction, experience and validity, due to its unhindered attainment of both the accomplishment of the siddhi of long life and the wisdom of Mahāmudrā. It is the lineage successively transmitted from Śrī Dīpaṃkara, who was a student of Ācārya Vāgīśvarakīrti and Lord Suvarṇadvīpa, and from the second Buddha, the Bhikṣu Physician.¹²

11. This tantra has been lost in the human world for a long time. However, an important fragment of it, containing the twenty-one praises, is still extant. It is included in the *Derge Kangyur*, text no. 726, vol. *Tsha*, pp. 202a-217a; TBRC 22084094, pp. 403/1-433/2, entitled: Skt. *Sarva-tathāgata-mātānī-tāra-viśvakarma-bhava-tantra-nāma*; Tib. *de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi yum sgrol ma las sna tshogs 'byung ba zhes bya ba'i rgyud*; *The Tantra named: The Source of the Various Activities of Tārā, the Mother of all the Tathāgatas*.

12. Gampopa Sönam Rinchen [1079-1153].

It has been transmitted as the yidam deity of the Lokeśvara Karmapas and their students, and has become embellished by the amṛita speech of the Vajradhara of this age of conflict, Tāranātha.

I shall explain — as an independent system — all of the unalloyed, profound instructions, which are like the essence of jewels, that I received from my guru.

There are three parts:

1. The Preliminaries
2. The Actual Practice
3. The Conclusion



THE PRELIMINARIES

This has two sections:

1. The four general preliminaries
2. The specific gathering of accumulations

THE FOUR GENERAL PRELIMINARIES

1. The Meditation and Mantra of Vajrasattva

Rise at daybreak before the crows caw, and wash yourself clean. Seat yourself upon a comfortable seat, in the bodhisattva posture.¹³ Expel the stale breath¹⁴ three times, thinking that you are eliminating negative karma, obscurations, obstacles to life, and so on. Imagine the following:

Above the head of myself in my ordinary form, is a lotus and moon seat. Seated upon this is Vajrasattva, inseparable from my guru. His body is white, he has one face and two arms. His right hand holds a vajra to his heart. The left hand rests a bell against his hip. He is beautified by all the physical features of a great being and by all the adornments. At his heart, the 100-syllable mantra is arranged like pearl beads. In my own heart, seated upon a lotus and moon, is the Bhagavatī, indivisible from my guru, with the syllable TAM in her heart.

With regret for wrong actions and with intense devotion to the inseparable guru and yidam, recite the following:

13. In this posture the right leg rests loosely before the left.

14. This is the residual breath that stagnates in the *lungs* and is not removed unless one empties the *lungs* fully.

*Lord! Through ignorance and stupidity,
I have transgressed and broken my commitments.
Lord guru! Give me refuge!
Oh Master Vajradhara!
Embodiment of compassion!
Master of all beings, I take refuge in you.*

*I confess and repent all the bad actions, obscurations, faults and
downfalls, the breakages of the root and branch commitments that
I and all beings have created.*

*I do not conceal them,
I do not hide them,
I pray that you cleanse and purify them!*

*Due to my prayer, Vajrasattva, smiling, melts into light and enters
into me through the top of my head. He merges into the White
Tārā at my heart. I invoke her mind with mantra repetition and
devotion so that a flow of white amṛita and light-rays emerges from
the TAM in the Bhagavatī's heart. The interior of her body is filled.
Amṛita, like a flow of milk descends from the tip of the little finger
of her right hand in the gesture of supreme generosity. The interi-
or of my body is filled. All negative karma, obscurations, illness,
demons, premature death and the breaking of samaya are washed
away, like chaff by water, and exit through the pores. The body
becomes transparent, bright white and pure like a crystal ball.*

Repeat as much as you can, the 10-syllable mantra of Tārā, joined with the 100-syllable mantra of Vajrasattva.

Conclude by imagining:

As a result of that prayer for the fulfilment of wishes, confession, purification, and so on, the Bhagavatī melts into light. She merges into me, so that I truly become the Bhagavatī.

Then rest in the nature of all phenomena without the concepts of the three spheres.¹⁵

If you are doing just this practice in a session of its own, then you must conclude with a dedication of merit. The same is true for all the following practices.

If you wish to do this practice in a simplified form as a regular practice, then do the following:

In the heart of myself in my ordinary form, upon a moon disk, there is the white syllable TĀṂ encircled by the 100-syllable mantra like a string of pearls. Light-rays like moonbeams shine from them. My body is filled. Illness, demons, negative karma, obscurations, karma and its ripened results, together with this body of flesh and blood is washed away, so that my body has the nature of light.

Imagining that, repeat the ten syllables and the hundred syllables. In conclusion, make this supplication:

15. Concepts of subject, object and action.

*Goddess! Through ignorance and stupidity,
I have transgressed and broken my commitments.
Guru Tārā! Give me refuge!...*

...and so on, as in the previous supplication to Vajrasattva.

*Due to my supplication, the syllables and their seat melt into light.
This merges into me, so that faults are purified as the original and
ineffable dharmadhātu.*

Thus, rest in the equanimity of meditation.

If these instructions were in accordance with the general sequence, this would be practised following the refuge and bodhicitta. However, there is no reason why everything should have to follow the same format. Also, this procedure is based upon the tradition of the ancient instructions. For example, if you put food, etc., into an impure vessel, it will be wasted. In the same way, someone with obscurations will not develop the true realisations of the path. Therefore, if one begins by cleaning the obscurations, faults and downfalls of the “vessel”, there will be no difficulty in developing the samādhis of the two processes.¹⁶ It is very important to commence with this meditation as it is the equivalent of washing and rinsing out the vessel.

16. The development, creation or generation process of imagining the deity, and the completion or perfection process with and without characteristics.

2. Taking Refuge

Imagine the following:

In space before me is a lotus plant with a perfect profusion of branches, leaves and fruits. In the centre of its four outspread petals is seated the guru and the bhaṭṭārikā inseparable, having the external appearance of Lord Amitābha, and being the embodiment of all the gurus. Upon the front petal is Ārya Tārā, the union of all the yidams. Upon the right petal is Śākyendra,¹⁷ the union of all the buddhas. Upon the rear petal is Mahāmāṭṛikā,¹⁸ who is the entirety of the Dharma Jewel. Upon the left petal is Avalokita, the union of all the sanghas. Around and in-between them, are ḍākas, ḍākinīs, dharma-protectors and guardians, amassed like clouds.

If you wish to, you may make offerings, praises and supplications, but this is not necessary during regular practice. Imagine that all beings, who have all been your mothers, are gathered, with you as their leader. Contemplate their experience of suffering. Think: “Protect them from these sufferings!”, and with complete sincerity, acting as the leader of all beings, you all go for refuge with physical, verbal and mental veneration, reciting the refuge in a great surge of sound.

Recite “I and all beings...” and count an appropriate number of repetitions of “To the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha...”

17. Another name for Śākyamuni.

18. The Great Mother, i.e. Prajñāpāramitā.

Developing the Enlightened Attitude

Consider all beings throughout endless space. Think, “Not even one of them has not been my parent during beginningless time. They wish to have happiness, but are wandering, without ever any liberation, in the unendurable ocean of saṃsāra’s sufferings. How terrible! I shall bring every single one of them to the state of deathless, eternal, pure, complete buddhahood.”

Making a commitment, with that thought, is the development of the enlightened attitude of aspiration.

In order to accomplish that, I must swiftly and easily attain the relative results of a long life, health, the pacification of obstacles, and particularly the indestructible, long life of the guru and the happiness of beings, and also the ultimate result of the state of Ārya Tārā, the mother who gives birth to all the Buddhas of the three times. In order to do that, I shall practise, with great diligence, the creation and completion processes of Bhaṭṭārikā Cintāmaṇīcakra, and reach their fulfilment. I shall not give up this yidam, even at the cost of my life, until I have accomplished it.

Making that thought and commitment, and then engaging upon the practice, is the perfect development of the enlightened attitude of application.

Verbally, recite the long metrical “Until Enlightenment” prayer, or recite a few times “For the sake of all beings...”

In conclusion imagine the following:

The refuge objects dissolve into light and merge into the guru. He also dissolves into light and merges with me, so that all the blessings of the jewels and the guru have entered my being.

If you always have the faith and certainty that practising this will definitely bring all qualities and siddhis, it will be a true instruction that will bring the swift accomplishment of all your aims.

3. The Maṇḍala Offering

Commence by cleansing and purifying the “shrine-maṇḍala” [There is no need to sprinkle it with purifying water and so on].¹⁹

Imagine that by reciting HŪṢ, there is protection from obstacles, and if you wish, scatter [upon the maṇḍala] a small heap of grains. Recite OM VAJRA BHŪMI ĀḤ HŪṢ.

Imagine that upon the golden ground there is Mount Meru, the four continents, with their islands and all the various kinds of offerings. Upon Mount Meru and the four continents are lotus and moon seats. Moisten the maṇḍala with water containing saffron and the five substances of the cow.²⁰ While doing that, recite: OM VAJRA REKHE ĀḤ HŪṢ.

19. This is a footnote by Jamgön Kongtrul.

20. The urine, dung, milk, curd and butter of a particular kind of cow, specially treated and made into a purification substance.

Imagine that everywhere between the continents and the mountains is filled with scented water that possesses the eight qualities,²¹ and is encircled by the perimeter of iron mountains. Upon the central seat appears the syllable TĀṢ, and upon the seats in the four directions appear TĀṢ MUṢ ĀḤ and HRĪḤ.

In the heart of myself appearing as Cintāmaṇicakra, there is a white TĀṢ upon a moon. Light-rays radiate from that. They invite into the upper space before me, my root guru in the form of Guru Amitābha, encircled by the lineage gurus. Below them is Bhaṭṭārikā Ārya White Tārā, together with the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. OM VAJRA SAMAJAḤ.

Recite the above as an invitation, making the vajra gathering gesture.

Upon the [shrine-maṇḍala] place in the centre and the four directions, either fresh flowers, as accords with the Indian tradition, or if they cannot be obtained, piles of grain, as is the Tibetan practice.

Recite: PADMA KAMALĀYA SATVAM

By reciting that the [invited] wisdom-deities merge into the seed-syllables upon the seats, so that they transform into the following:

Upon Mount Meru resides Guru Tārā, with Amitābha as her crown adornment, encircled by the lineage gurus.

21. It is (1) cool, (2) delicious, (3) light, (4) soft, (5) clear, (6) pure, (7) does not harm the throat, (8) and does not harm the stomach.

Upon Videha in the east, reside the hundred and eight Tārās, encircled by the yidams of the four and six Tantras.

Upon Jambudvīpa in the south, resides Śākyamuni, encircled by the buddhas of the three times.

Upon Godānīya in the west, resides Mahamatrika, encircled by the Dharma in the form of texts.

Upon Kuru in the north, resides Avalokita, encircled by the Mahāyāna and Hinayāna sanghas.

In-between them reside all the ḍākas, ḍākinīs, dharma-protectors and guardians, massed like clouds.

Imagining that, place [the shrine-maṇḍala] upon some high surface in front of you. If you possess them set out actual external offerings.

Imagine that yourself and all beings emanate bodies as numerous as the particles of all the realms, and you all make prostrations to the guru. Recite NAMO GURU BHYAḤ.

Then turn your attention to the yidams and recite: NAMA ĀRYA-TĀRĀ... etc., and also the two-line prayer called “The Kind One”.

Imagine that light-rays from your heart manifest many glorious, beautifully adorned goddesses that make individual offerings. Combine the successive visualisations, mudras and mantras such as AR-GHAM... etc.:

White offering goddesses trickle onto the heads, from special washing flasks made of gold and aquamarine, the water that possesses the eight qualities.

Red goddesses cool the feet with pure water that contains cleansing substances, such as the five amṛitas and the five “outer-layers”.

White goddesses scatter onto the heads beautiful water-born, pasture-born and mind-born flowers.

Smoke-coloured goddesses offer to the noses natural and composite aromatic incenses.

Light-red goddesses present to the eyes the bright illumination of the worlds in the ten directions, by jewels, suns, moons and lamps.

Green goddesses sprinkle and rub from a conch onto the various parts of the body, such as the heart, scents such as camphor, saffron and sandalwood.

Red goddesses offer to the tongues composite, transformed and natural, divine and human foods of a hundred flavours.

Blue goddesses play for the ears divine music, such as that made by cymbals, flutes, lutes and drums.

Imagine that the gurus and deities are pleased with immaculate bliss. Then the offering goddesses merge into the seed-syllable in your heart.

In order to repeat and strengthen the preceding offerings, and in order to complete the remainder of the seven branches, recite “Bhagavati...” etc.

While doing that, make an offering, without regard for yourself, of all other offerings, of your body, possessions and all your merit in the three times, manifested as Bodhisattva Samantabhadra’s clouds of offerings.

Confess with intense regret and guilt all the bad actions that you and all other beings committed, represented by the unconfessed inherently negative actions, and those that are negative purely through being proscribed. Make the commitment to never repeat them again, even at the cost of your life.

Rejoice with sincere joy and happiness in whatever good actions and dharma-qualities conducive to purification that exist within saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.

Request the continuous turning of the dharma wheel of the unsurpassable, supreme yāna, just as Mahābrahma repeatedly supplicated the Buddha.

Supplicate the guru to remain, with a fixed, stable life, without cessation, purely in this Guru Bhaṭṭārikā form, until saṃsāra has been emptied.

Dedicate all merit in the three times, for the attainment of the state of Bhaṭṭārikā Tārā, who is Prajñāpāramitā, the mother of the buddhas.

Pray that through the merit from the previous seven branches, you may be inseparable from and cared for by Bhaṭṭārikā Cintāmaṇi-cakra throughout all your lives, and may you reach the limits of the ocean of bodhisattva activity.

Then, focusing your mind on the assembly of deities, recite the ten syllables conjoined with whatever supplementary words are appropriate.

Next, wipe the offering-maṇḍala clean of dust, and place upon it piles of either precious substances, or grain that has been moistened with saffron-water.

You can offer the general thirty-seven aspect offering; however, in accordance with the Ninth Karmapa's explanation,²² you offer the five piles as described earlier in the section on generating the deities before you [upon the shrine-maṇḍala], and you repeat and count "The pure realms..."

In conclusion make various offerings with the prayer "The wish-fulfilling...", in which one makes the offering in the external shape of Mount Meru and the continents, but internally it is indistinguishable from one's own skandhas and elements, inseparable from the limitless adornment of particular offerings within the realms of the five types of buddhas, such as the Vajra Mount Meru and so on, all these being offered as the self-arisen enjoyment of suchness, the fundamental clarity.

22. Karmapa Wangchuk Dorje [1556-1603], he composed an authoritative instruction manual for White Tārā practice for the Kagyu tradition. Unfortunately, that text is lost.

Imagine that they receive the most perfect pleasure from this offering, and recite the prayer for the fulfilment of wishes, “Guru Cintāmaṇīcakra...”

Gather together the piles of grains on the shrine-maṇḍala and place them upon your head, while imagining:

The assembly melts into light that enters through the crown of my head, so that I become indistinguishable from the kāyas that are the result of the completion of the two accumulations.

This instruction has been given in terms of an independent system, with each practice being done in individual sessions. However, if you cannot do this in such a detailed way, then, whether you have a deity-maṇḍala in your practice or not, one does not have to do any blessing or deity generation for the shrine-maṇḍala. Instead, just as is presented in the course of the sādhanā text, you just invite the assembly into space before you, and offer them the seven branches and the maṇḍala. If you are doing the practice in a very simplified form, then you can also practice the guru yoga at this point, by doing the supplication and receiving the empowerments.

4. Guru Yoga

Imagine the following:

Above my head, there is a precious throne supported by eight snow-lions. Upon this, in the centre of an eight-petalled white lo-

tus, is my guru, indistinguishable from Bhaṭṭārikā Cintāmaṇīcakra. She is white, the same colour as the light of the autumn moon.²³ Her costume and adornments are complete. The three syllables adorn her three places. In her heart, upon a moon-disk, there is a wheel with the seed-syllable and the mantra-circle. Light-rays radiate from those letters, inviting each of the lineage gurus and Jewels. They merge into the guru so that she becomes the union of all the Jewels.

Develop this kind of certainty:

*In brief, you are truly the ocean of Jewels.
Through just thinking of you,
You bestow all the supreme and mundane siddhis.
You are like a wish-fulfilling jewel.*

It is taught that if you wish, you can make offerings and praises at this point.

Next, recite once the lineage prayer just as it is, as an independent text. [Karma Tegchok Tenpel must be introduced following Pema Nyinje.²⁴]

Then, if you wish to count repetitions of a supplication, though nothing is particularly specified here, one should count the four

23. According to Ven. Tenga Rinpoche, this actually means the post-monsoon moon when the sky has become cleared of its haze of dust.

24. This is Kongtrul's principal teacher of White Tārā, as described towards the end of this text.

lined “Mothers throughout space” prayer, in accordance with the general practice of the precious Kagyu lineage. Within the body of the text itself is the “Seven Line Refuge Prayer”. Recite that an appropriate number of times with fiercely intense faith and devotion.

Upon concluding that, place your hands together and recite the prayer for the fulfilment of wishes: “Guru Cintāmaṇicakra...”

Receiving as a blessing the four empowerments in terms of the path:

From the forehead of the indistinguishable guru and the Bhagavatī, there appears the amṛita of the body and a ray of white light.

From the throat, there appears the amṛita of speech and a ray of red light.

From the heart, there appears the amṛita of mind and a ray of blue light.

From the navel, there appears the amṛita of awareness and a ray of yellow light.

They enter my four places. My entire body is filled. I am purified of the four obscurations. I receive the four empowerments. The blessings of body, speech, mind and awareness have entered into me. I have gained the capacity to manifest the four kāyas.

The guru dissolves into light and merges into me, so that we become indivisible.

Then rest in meditative equanimity in the natural state.

If you wish to have a condensed form of the practice, invite the assembly as described above. Offer homage, offerings, etc., and offer the maṇḍala. Then imagine:

The retinue in the assembly merges into the principal figure. The indivisible guru and the Bhagavatī comes onto the top of my head, where she resides on a lotus and moon seat.

Then, following the supplication, imagine:

Guru Bhagavatī melts into light and merges into me so that the guru's three secrets and my three doors have become indivisible.

That contains within itself the four empowerments.

THE SPECIFIC GATHERING OF THE ACCUMULATIONS

The practices described above, such as the maṇḍala offering, also gather the accumulations. However, as they are methods for developing the precious bodhicitta, and as the two bodhicittas are the causal condition for the accomplishment of buddhahood, they are taught separately and specifically here.

1. The Specific Relative Accumulation

Earnestly apply yourself to the four immeasurables:

a) Immeasurable love:

May all beings, my parents, as endless as space, not only possess present and long-term happiness, but also naturally practise their cause, a perfect abundance of good actions.

b) Immeasurable compassion:

May they naturally discard suffering and its cause, negative actions.

c) Immeasurable joy:

May they never be apart from, not just temporary, apparent happiness, but the sublime happiness of being eternally free of suffering.

d) Immeasurable impartiality:

May they be free of identifying, with the bias of attachment and aversion, anyone as an enemy, friend, and so on, but instead have the outlook of the great equanimity, where everyone is seen as being travellers in the same boat.

At the same time recite the four immeasurables slowly. They are called the four brahmavihāras, because through just that meditation you will be reborn in the abode of Brahma. Also, due to their inter-relationship with the omniscient mind, they are a cause for the attainment of the ultimate mahābrahma, complete buddhahood. They are called the “Four Immeasurables” because they are an exceptional mode of thinking that does not just refer to a few beings or a short duration of time, but to limitless beings and eternal happiness.

2. The Specific Ultimate Accumulation

Here it is not necessary to go through all the methods of entering into emptiness as the conclusion of processes of analysis, such as “the four great reasons.”²⁵ What is definitely necessary here is resting in a non-conceptual meditation.

25. (1) Analysis of the cause: not born from self, other, both or absence of cause; (2) analysis of the result: co-existence with cause, non co-existence, or both not possible; (3) analysis of the nature: neither one nor many; (4) the great interdependence of all phenomena.

This should not be merely the conceptual comprehension of “unity”: an illusion-like awareness that interconnects emptiness — as merely the non-existence of any intrinsic characteristics — with merely that non-existence in the form of relative mental projections. This should instead be the meditative equanimity that rests in the ultimate totality, the complication-free awareness, which is the supreme of all the various kinds of emptiness.

In order that beginners may be able to seal that emptiness, and in order for those who have the realisation of the true nature to renew their own meditative state with words, one recites the ŚŪNYATĀ mantra.

The meaning of the ŚŪNYATĀ mantra:

ŚŪNYATĀ means emptiness. All the phenomena included within perceiver and perceived, such as the outer world, one’s own body and so on, whatever is other than the mind, do not exist. The mind, which is nothing other than awareness, has no true existence of its own. This is primordial emptiness.

JÑĀNA means wisdom. However, that emptiness, is not just the absence of matter, as in space. It is the ultimate awareness, with everything appearing.

VAJRA means thunderbolt,²⁶ which is the nature of that emptiness, its being eternal, unchanging, peaceful and ever-enduring.

26. It is the indestructible weapon of Indra, which when thrown creates lightning. It is

SVABHĀVA means nature. That vajra-wisdom exists as the nature, the true condition of all phenomena.

ĀTMAKA means identity. As that is truly the true nature, it is the identity of the ultimate.

AHAM means “I am”. The adoption of the identity, knowing that this is the nature of one’s own mind.

Thus, emptiness eliminates the extremes of relative conceptual-complication. Wisdom and the rest bring the understanding of the meaning indicated by the ultimate wisdom-vajra. Rest in this natural state for as long as you can.

also used as a euphemism for the diamond or any powerful weapon!



THE ACTUAL PRACTICE OF WHITE TĀRA

This has two sections:

1. The utpattikrama [development process]
2. The sampannakrama [perfection process]

THE WHITE TĀRĀ UTPATTIKRAMA (DEVELOPMENT PROCESS)

1. The Deity Yoga

The first of these [the Deity-Yoga], is in three subsections:

- a) The practice of the deity-yoga through the four aspects;
- b) Offerings and praise;
- c) Training in clarity, stability and mindfulness of purity.

The Four Aspect Practice of the Deity-Yoga

*The Approach Aspect*²⁷

From emptiness, there arises the sound of HŪṂ, which is the appearance aspect of the natural mind, unadulterated by thought and concept. Due to the awakening effect of it filling the whole of space, the vajra ground appears underneath. Standing upon that is the vajra wall. Upon that is the vajra-tent,²⁸ with a vajra crest-adornment. Upon the inside, where the roof and wall meet, is the vajra-canopy. Upon the outside, there is the hanging vajra-lattice. On the outer

27. Tib. *bsnyen pa*; The first of the four aspects of the intensive practice of a meditation deity.

28. Here meaning a conical roof.

surface of this tent-house, there is a network of crossed arrows, the notch end inserted into the tent-house, and the vajra-points facing outwards. It is totally surrounded by a blazing inferno. This is all white in colour, immense, vast, and cannot be destroyed by obstacle-makers and misguiders, nor even the fire and wind of the end of the aeon can destroy it. Within its centre, a white BHRŪṂ, the seed syllable of Vairocana, transforms into a divine palace made entirely from the moonstone jewel. It is square, with four doors, four toraṇa, and a limitless variety of adornments and offerings. Within its centre, a white PAṂ syllable transforms into a white lotus, which is a particular kind of water-born flower. It has fully developed petals and leaves and has a precious stalk that is solid and hard.

Upon its anther-centre, a white A transforms into a full moon-disk that is free of any disfiguring stains. Upon that seat, due to the power of previous prayers and compassion, one's own mind, in the form of a white TĀṂ syllable with the lengthened vowel, the crescent and bindu, transforms into a white utpala with stem and leaves, adorned by a white TĀṂ. It emits an inconceivable radiance of light-rays that shine without impediment into all the worlds of the ten directions. This makes offerings to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. It eliminates from beings, the eight or sixteen fears, such as that of premature death, and purifies the two obscurations and their subliminal tendencies. All beings are then brought to the level of Ārya Tārā.

These light-rays are then drawn back inwards and merge into the utpala and TĀṂ, which then transform into: "...myself as Ārya Tārā..."

etc., meditating in accordance with the visualisation description of the sādhana as you proceed through it, until “...with a moon as a rear curtain.”, visualising the entirety of the body.

The Close Approach Aspect²⁹

Meditate that at her forehead, there is a white OM̐, at the throat, a red ĀḤ, and in the lower part of the heart region there is a blue HŪṂ. They are the vajra body, speech and mind of all the Buddhas. Meditate that in the centre of the heart, there is a lotus, a moon and a white TĀṂ syllable, shining with light-rays.

The Accomplishment Aspect³⁰

Light rays radiate from that, inviting — together with reciting VAJ-RA SAMĀJAH, and the “vajra-gathering” gesture — the awareness beings from the dharmadhātu, the Potala and so on. They reside in space before you, and emanated goddesses make offerings as in the earlier section on gathering the accumulations.

Due to reciting DZAḤ HŪṂ BAṂ HOḤ, they merge into the commitment being,³¹ becoming united with it. Think that they will never depart until enlightenment is achieved.

29. Tib. *nye ba'i bsnyen pa*; The second aspect of deity-practice.

30. Tib. *sgrub pa*; The third aspect of deity-practice.

31. The deity you yourself have visualised.

*The Great Accomplishment Aspect*³²

Light-rays radiate again from the seed-syllable TĀṂ in your heart. They invite the empowerment deities: the five [male and female] buddhas, the bodhisattvas and the male and female wrathful deities. Make offerings to them as previously described. Due to making a supplication for empowerment, the five buddhas focus their minds upon you, the male and female bodhisattvas make offerings and recite prayers for good fortune, the male and female wrathful deities chase away obstacle-makers, and the five consorts, holding precious flasks filled with amṛita, recite mantra and verse, and give empowerment.

The liquid from the flasks fills your body completely. The stains of your three doors are purified. The excess liquid overflows and transforms into the “crest-adornment”, the lord of the family: Ami-tābha, in nirmāṇakāya form, his hands in the meditation gesture and holding a begging bowl. The empowerment deities all merge into him.

The Offerings and Praises

Exactly as occurs in the paradise called The Enjoyment of Emanations,³³ goddesses emanated from yourself make particular offer-

32. Tib. *sgrub pa chen po*; The fourth aspect of tantric deity practice.

33. This is the second highest paradise in the desire realm. Above it is Māra's paradise called The Enjoyment of Others' Emanations.

ings to you, as previously described. They sing your praises with a hundred melodies and then are re-absorbed into yourself.

The Training in Clarity, Stability and Recollection of Purity

This is in three subsections:

- a) Training in the clear image of the deity;
- b) Training in unshakeable identification;
- c) Training in the recollection of purity.

Training in the Clear Image of the Deity

Having in that way created the deity through the completion of the four aspects, and having made the offerings and praises, you must train in fixing your mind one-pointedly upon the clear image of the deity. This is in fact the principal practice of the first [the utpattikrama] process, the mantra repetition in itself being an aspect of it.

The beginner focuses attention on successive details, and, when a little clarity has been obtained, focuses upon everything simultaneously. Therefore, to begin with there is a successive visualisation of these aspects of the deity's body: the body is as white as the autumn moon and as clear as moonstone; it radiates, to vast distances, light-rays of five different colours that are too bright to look upon; she has wide eyes and long ear lobes; one half of the area of an eye is white and the rest is black; she has the beautiful eyelashes of the supreme cow, and slightly curving eyebrows.

The perfume of the utpala flower wafts from her nose and mouth. Her lips are clean and red. She has forty even teeth and a slender and supple tongue. Her hair is as black as obsidian and is bound at the nape of her neck, the unbound locks of hair hanging down to the right and left. She has a round throat with three lines. Her fingers are as slender and supple as rolled lotus leaves. She has other features of perfect, wonderful beauty. Just seeing this beauty, which one would never tire of looking at, brings perfect bliss. She has firm and round breasts, a slim waist and broad hips. Her secret lotus is prominent, like a turtle's back. She has all the other attributes of being like a girl of sixteen years old, smiling and desirable so that she destroys the stability of the three worlds.

Her face has three eyes, one being upon her forehead. There is an eye upon each palm of the hand and sole of the foot. Altogether she has seven beautiful, smiling, eyes of wisdom.

Her right hand is stretched out upon her knee, making the gesture of supreme generosity. Her left hand is at the heart, with the thumb and ring-finger joined together and the others erect. It holds the stem of a white utpala that has the most perfect leaves, colour, and scent, its petals blossoming beside her ear. She is adorned in jewelry made of various precious things, but mainly white pearls.

(1) Her head is adorned at the hairline, by a string of blossomed lotuses made of gold, upon which are human and divine jewels radiating light rays into the far distances. (2) She has round precious earrings with inset jewels, (3) a necklace that adorns her throat, (4) a longer necklace that reaches to her breasts, (5) a long necklace that

reaches below her navel, (6) armlets upon her upper arms and bracelets at her wrists, that are identical except for size, (7) and anklets tied around her ankles. All of these are beautified by being in such forms as “three precious centres”, where three strings of jewels are interconnected, and so on, and they are beautified with many hanging clusters of small jewels. (8) She has a golden belt inlaid with jewels, from which hang networks and clusters of precious skin, from the tips of which hang jingling spherical bells. She wears a white silk upper garment embroidered with gold, a silk skirt of various colours like a rainbow, and a “lower-skin” of the colour of azurite,³⁴ these being garments of different lengths.³⁵ The whole of the upper and lower body is beautifully adorned by many garlands of divine flowers.

She is seated upon a lotus and moon seat, with her legs in the vajra posture and her upper body erect and straight. Her back rests against the complete full disk of the moon, free of stains and radiating cooling rays of light into the far distance.

Continue by successively imagining and focusing the mind upon the visualisation from the inside outwards: the lord of the type upon her head, the three syllables at her three places, the wish-fulfilling

34. The Tibetan word means a dark blue mineral pigment, more familiar to those versed in chemistry as copper sulphate. It is also used for medicine, the same word also being used for a medicinal substance derived from bamboo.

35. According to Ven. Tenga Rinpoche this is like a short skirt that is worn above the tight multi-coloured lower garment.

wheel at her heart, the lotus and moon seat, the divine palace of moonstone, and the external protective tent.

Alternate that with visualising from the outside inwards: the protective tent, the divine palace, the seat, the deity's body.

In particular, focus the mind one-pointedly upon the details, that is to say the outer appearances and the clarity. When a clear vision of this has developed, then train in focusing on the general appearance, and meditate for a long time upon its being an appearance without any true nature, like a reflection in a mirror, as vivid and distinct as a rainbow,³⁶ and as all-pervading as the moon's reflection on water. Through doing this, the least capable will gain a clear mental image, for the medium it will appear as if truly present, for the best it will be even clearer and more stable than that, so that whatever action or siddhi one describes will be accomplished without any impediment.

Training in the Unshakeable Identification

Whether the deity's body is clear or not, discard the identification of yourself as an ordinary being, and think "I truly am Bhaṭṭārikā Cintāmaṇīcakra, who is Prajñāpāramitā, the mother who gives birth to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. I possess all of her body, speech, mind, qualities and activity".

36. Literally "the bow of Indra".

If you can maintain this identification continuously throughout both the sessions and the inter-session periods, it will bring you every single blessing that there is.

Training in the Recollection of Purity

This body of the deity is not like your ordinary body that is composite and material. It is all the results, the dharma qualities manifested as form. The body is white in colour due to the two obscurations and their latent tendencies having been eliminated. She radiates her own five coloured light, due to the all-pervading manifestation of the five wisdoms' own power. Her one face is the one taste of suchness. The legs, neither dwelling in the extreme of saṃsāric existence or nirvāṇic peace, are due to the realisation of the union of the two realities.³⁷ She has the seven eyes that see the true nature of phenomena exactly as it is, due to the three doors of liberation,³⁸ and which, with compassion, engage with the entire multiplicity of phenomena, due to the four immeasurables.

The right hand makes the supreme gift of the two siddhis. The left hand's thumb and ring-finger being joined due to the union of means and wisdom. She holds a white utpala due to being liberated from the concealing layer of defects, and due to the perfect blossoming of the qualities that were to be realised.

37. Conventional and ultimate reality.

38. (1) Emptiness, (2) absence of characteristics, (3) absence of aspiration.

The hair is tied together into one knot, due to all the extremes of conceptual complication being bound within the dharmadhātu. She is beautiful and desirable because she is the mother of all the buddhas and because she never forsakes beings, due to her compassion.

She is adorned with various silk garments and jewels, because she possesses limitless qualities and activities. Her body sits up straight because she never wavers from the vajra-samādhi. She sits in the vajra-posture, because she is never affected by the kleśas.

Amitābha symbolises her buddha-family. She rests her back against a moon, due to the waxing of immaculate bliss. The moon-seat is because she is full of the ultimate bodhicitta. The white lotus seat is because she engages with saṃsāra due to the conventional bodhicitta, but is unstained by its faults. The seat manifests due to her continuously residing within those two enlightened attitudes. Understanding those and other features, protects from the conceptualisation of attachment to [the image of Tārā] as a deity of material splendour.

2. The Repetition Yoga

The Meditation on the Wish Fulfilling Wheel

Directly in the centre of the heart of myself imagined as White Tārā, there is a horizontal eight-petalled white lotus and moon disk. Upon them there is a white wheel with a rim and eight spokes. In its centre, there is a white TĀṂ. When you are repeating the ten syllable mantra as the main mantra repetition practice, imagine that above the TĀṂ's bindu, an OM is suspended like a hovering bird. Below the TĀṂ, there is a HĀ within the hollow in the wheel's hub. Upon the eight spokes are imagined the other eight syllables only.

When you are repeating the mantra conjoined with its supplement, meditate that TĀṂ is upon the centre of the wheel, encircled clockwise³⁹ by OM MAMA ĀYUḤ PUNYA JÑĀNA PUṢṬIṂ KURU HĀ,⁴⁰ commencing from in front [of the TĀṂ]. Upon the eight spokes, starting from the front, are TĀ, RE, TUT, TĀ, RE, TU, RE and SVĀ, all facing inwards. They all shine with their own light and are white like pearls. Focus your mind one-pointedly upon this stable and unwavering image, meditating with a definitively clear image.

39. That is, facing inwards.

40. On the inner rim of the wheel.

The Actual Main Repetitions

The Cessation Repetition

Breath naturally. Focussing one-pointedly upon the wheel in the heart and the syllables emitting their own distinct sounds, is the application of mental cessation.

The Vajra Repetition

Expel the stale breath three times, meditating that you are eliminating negative karma, obscurations, their latent tendencies and other obstacles to life. Practising the gentle breathing or intermediate breathing, meditate that when exhaling, light radiates from the TĀṂ in the heart, which is then re-absorbed with the inhalation. When the breath is held, focus your mind upon the TĀṂ. Do this meditation a hundred times or more.⁴¹

The Radiation-Absorption Repetition

If you become tired or weary of those meditations, or when you have gained clarity in them, do the vocal mantra repetition conjoined with the visualisation of the quintessence of life being drawn in and merging into you.

41. Ven. Tenga Rinpoche very much encourages us to train in the vajra repetition a lot.

Hold a blessed rosary that is either appropriate to the activity⁴² or is made of bodhi seeds. Repeat the mantra without the eight faults,⁴³ such as being too fast or too slow.

Imagine that white light-rays radiate from the wheel and syllables, that fill the whole of the inside of your body. You become utterly purified of negative karma, obscurations, illness, demons, premature death, and in particular, all the karmic obscurations that cause a short life, such as murder and the theft of that which sustains life.

The light-rays radiate outwards, and all the quintessence and vitality of the inanimate world, everything which is comprised of the four elements of earth, water, fire and air, is drawn inwards, in the form of amṛita. It merges into your body and the wheel at your heart, and becomes the basis for your mind and your body's life functions, so that you obtain a strong, unshakeable, vajra life.

Alternatively, imagine that the light-rays radiate out, and without anyone being harmed, the quintessence of the life and prosperity of animate beings, such as life-vidyādhara, devas and rishis, panditas, siddhas and kalayāṇamitras, cakravartins, the protectors of the di-

42. Bearing in mind the fundamentally peaceful activity of White Tārā, a rosary made of pearls or mother-of-pearl would be suitable, as would be one made of lotus seeds.

43. The eight faults are: (1) repeating the mantra too quickly so as to slur the individual syllables, (2) repeating too slowly so as to disconnect the syllables, (3) repeating in too loud a voice so as to cause irritation, (4) repeating in too low a voice so that the abilities might not manifest, (5) blurring the speech due to drowsiness, (6) being too agitated so that the mind wanders and concentration is lost, (7) interrupting ones repetition with ordinary speech, (8) shortening and/or prolonging certain syllables.

rections and the eight classes of spirits, are drawn in and merge into you as described in the preceding visualisation.

Alternatively, imagine that the light-rays radiate out and make offerings to all of the three Jewels and three Roots, invoke the oaths of worldly spirits, drawing the blessings of body, speech and mind, the qualities of wisdom, love and power, and in particular all the siddhis of deathless life and of wisdom. They are drawn inwards in the form of light-rays that merge into you so that your radiance and majesty shines intensely, and you attain the siddhi of vajra life.⁴⁴

When you are applying the power of this practice, or using it for specific effects, repeat mainly the extended mantra. While repeating the mantra with its long life appendix, sometimes imagine that through the power of devotion, you invoke the mind of the lord of the family above your head. Light-rays from his heart draw in, as amṛita, the quintessence of the whole of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. This enters the begging bowl in his hands. The amṛita melts, boils and overflows, into your brahma aperture. The whole of your body becomes like a crystal flask filled with milk.

At the conclusion of the sessions, supplement the practice with the Sanskrit alphabet and the hundred syllable mantra. Make it endur-

44. Though not mentioned specifically by Kongtrul, it would be customary to add a fourth visualisation at this point. One would imagine how light again radiates from ones heart, this time pervading the realms of the six types of beings, purifying all their sufferings and the causes thereof, in particular the suffering and fear of untimely death and whatever might potentially cause it. When concluding the mantra repetition, this light would be gathered back into one's heart.

ing by reciting the OM YEDHARMA mantra, and so on as is generally done, and then enter any of the perfection process practices.

THE WHITE TĀRĀ SAMPANNAKRAMA (COMPLETION PROCESS)

1. The Completion Process with Characteristics

Meditation on the Protective Sphere

If you practise [the completion process protective-sphere] in relation to the visualisation of yourself as the deity, then do so at the completion of the mantra repetition, from the gradual dissolution until the reappearance as the “body of unity”,⁴⁵ as described further on.⁴⁶ If you do [the completion process protective-sphere practice] at any time that is convenient, then you should do so in the following way only.

From emptiness, there appears instantaneously the white “wheel-tent”⁴⁷ with ten spikes, one in each of the main and intermediate directions, making eight, and one below and one above, making another two. The tips of the spikes are sharp and revolve clockwise so fast that they cease to be visible.

45. The union of appearance and emptiness.

46. In the perfection process meditation without characteristics.

47. A sphere with ten spikes protruding from it, literally termed a wheel, and the spikes are called spokes.

Within its round middle, in the centre, there is a lotus and moon seat. Upon this is myself as Bhaṭṭārikā Cintāmaṇicakra, with the full adornments and costume, the lord of the family, and the wheel and syllables at the heart.⁴⁸

Within the base of the hollow upper spike, is the syllable OM. Within the base of the lower spike is HĀ. Within the bases of the hollow spikes of the main and intermediate directions, are the syllables TĀ, RE, TUT, TĀ, RE, TU, RE and SVĀ, arranged clockwise and facing inwards. All these syllables are white and shining with light-rays.

Both the syllables and the “wheel” are solid, unchanging and seamless, so that not even the wind of the end of the aeon blowing hail could force an entry. Imagine that and rest in meditation for a long time.

When this protective sphere is being done as the main practice, meditate that within the wheel tent, the gurus are in its upper region. Others who need protection, are — in order of superiority — on your right and left. Animals and so on, are below you.

When the lights radiate to, and return from, below, you have also to imagine that this radiation and absorption occurs for all that you are protecting.

Then white light-rays like moonbeams are radiated from the wheel and syllables in your heart. They fill your body and eliminate nega-

48. According to Ven. Tenga Rinpoche, if one wants to simplify a little here, one would imagine only a moon-disk with a TĀM syllable in one's heart.

tive karma, obscurations, demons, obstacle-makers, disruptions and the fear of timely and untimely death.

The light rays shine again, radiating externally and purifying all the stains of the world and its inhabitants. The world becomes Sukhāvātī, and its inhabitants, all beings, reach the state of Tārā.

The lights make offerings to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and their body, speech, mind and non-dualistic awareness are attracted in the form of white light rays. They fill your body and merge into the wheel and syllables in your heart, so that the peaceful activity is accomplished and your majestic radiance shines intensely.

The rest of the light at a distance of one span from the surface of the “wheel-tent”, encloses it as a sphere of light, a solid, unchanging, seamless protective “tent” of light rays, which not even the wind at the aeon’s end could pass through. Imagine that the entire interior intermediate space [between the sphere of light and the spiked sphere] becomes filled with blue utpalas that have just opened their blossoms. Then rest within the equanimity of meditation, or alternatively, if you are primarily visualising the protective sphere, repeat the ten-syllable mantra.

Repeat the above with the following changes: light-rays radiate again, this time yellow, the colour of polished gold. They fill the body, eliminate death and increase life span, good fortune, prosperity, wealth, power, possessions, fame, meditation experiences and realisation. The light rays radiate outwards, and so on, attracting yellow light rays. The activity of increasing is accomplished. The re-

mainder of the light, becomes a spherical tent of light enclosing the white sphere of light with an intermediate space of one span, which becomes filled with blue utpalas.

Apply the same procedure for the rest: red light, the colour of rubies, brings into its power all of the animate and inanimate, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, wisdom, love and power. Red light-rays are absorbed and the powerful activity is accomplished. There appears a red “tent” of light around the second “tent” of light.

Iron coloured light,⁴⁹ like the sky at daybreak, destroys all that is adverse, such as the five poisons, enemies, obstacle makers, misguiders, and so on. Due to the blue light being absorbed, wrathful activity is accomplished. Around the third “tent” of light there forms a “tent” of blue light.

Green light rays, the colour of emeralds, instantaneously accomplish the supreme and mundane siddhis. Due to the green light being absorbed, various activities are accomplished. Around the fourth “tent” of light, there forms a “tent” of green light.

Liver coloured [interlinear note: “This is taught to be blue mixed with maroon.”] light-rays, like the colour of sapphires, make all activity and siddhis firm and lasting. Due to the liver coloured light-rays being absorbed, the blessings and accomplishment of activity become stable and cannot be destroyed by anyone whosoever.

49. Described by Ven. Tenga Rinpoche as light-blue.

Around the fifth tent of light, there forms a tent of liver coloured light.

Though these six successive light tents are all variations of that of the peaceful white light, there are no words to recite for them. Nevertheless, one visualises each of these in detail.

In conclusion, one rests for a long time in meditation on the union [of appearance and emptiness] that is like the moon's reflection on water, without attachment to bliss or clinging to clarity, as described in the following sentence:

All of them, are neither truth nor falsehood, like an illusion, the moon's reflection on water, an optical illusion, a mirage and a reflection in a mirror. An appearance without any real nature, the essence of Prajñāpāramitā.

If one wearies of the meditation, think that all internal and external sounds, and the movement of breath, are the spontaneous sound of the Tārā mantra naturally arising. Think that it is indivisible sound and emptiness, neither truth nor lie, like an echo. With that understanding, and in a state of relaxation, with only the tip of the tongue moving slightly, repeat the ten syllable mantra as much as you can. Finally, absorb everything into the clear light and reappear as the body of unity.

Concerning this meditation, it is said in some earlier texts that there are seven tents of light and so on, but it is this series of six that have been practised.

Planting the Dagger of Life in the Heart

The body of oneself as Cintāmaṇicakra, is perfectly empty on the inside. This body which is like a white silk tent, or a white crystal vase, has in its centre the straight life-essence channel, like a crystal pillar. Its upper end stops just short of the crown of the head, and the lower end stops just short of the secret place. The upper end is blocked by a white bindu which is the nature of bliss. The lower end is blocked by a red bindu which is the nature of heat. Meditate that within the life channel, at the level of the heart, there is the essence of the *vāyu* and the mind as an unwavering, white TĀṂ syllable radiating light rays.

When this is imagined clearly, expel the stale air. Due to holding the “flask breath”, the purple wind of life arises from the TĀṂ, and fills the interior of the life channel, so that there is no movement of entry or departure. Focus the mind upon that visualisation.

2. The Completion Process without Characteristics

Light-rays radiate from the seed-syllable in your heart. All appearances and beings that have been transformed into the maṇḍala of Tārā, are changed into light. This merges into the divine palace. That melts into light and merges into you. You and your seat dissolve simultaneously from the upper and lower extremity and merge into the wheel at the heart. That merges into the syllables. They

merge into the syllable TĀṂ. Its *a-chung*⁵⁰ merges into the TĀ. The TĀ merges into the crescent. The crescent merges into the bindu. That becomes finer and finer until it finally disappears. Then rest in a meditative equanimity, which is without any subject and object whatsoever remaining, the supreme emptiness that is as pure as the expanse of space, the natural fundamental clarity.

In this, do not pursue the past, do not contemplate the future, do not examine the present. Rest with relaxation, in fresh, uncontrived naturalness, with the appropriate balance between looseness and tightness, without fixating on any identification, free from concepts to reference points such as “meditation” and “meditator”, in that true nature where there is no reference to anything such as saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.

If thoughts suddenly arise, do not hold onto them, do not have one following on from another, but cut through them completely. Rest in the natural state of discriminating wisdom, and through that see that the true nature of all phenomena is primordially pure.

It is natural fundamental clarity, the union of clarity and emptiness, the inseparability of awareness and space, unstained by any dualistic conceptual complication, such as existence and non-existence, truth and falsehood, etc. This connate awareness is not anything at all, but appears as anything whatsoever.⁵¹ It is free from origination,

50. The vowel lengthening sign at the bottom of the syllable.

51. At this point a verse by Jonang Tāranātha comes to mind. It is contained in his extensive Tārā-yoginī sadhana: “This consciousness that is mere appearance, is

cessation and existence. Like the centre of pure space, it is bright and clear, all pervading, free of the concepts of limit and centre. See this, by not seeing anything, with self-knowing awareness.

Vipaśyanā is seeing clearly the nature of phenomena, which transcends concepts, through not meditating deliberately, but by resting in an inactive, uncontrived, natural way.

Śamatha is resting naturally and effortlessly free from the fixations upon “meditation” and “one who meditates”.

Alternatively, śamatha is when conceptualisation has subsided by itself, and one rests in a state that does not examine itself. Vipāśyanā is when that nature is known without conceptual elaboration, and certain realisation manifests. You must know that the union of those two is the unsurpassable, transcendent union of vipāśyanā and śamatha.

This is the very quintessence of what should continuously be one’s practice, like the ever-present flow of a river. At the conclusion of all visualisation and mantra-repetition practices one should practise this. That is the basic practice. If one can then, during the main practice itself, join resting in meditation with the visualisation and mantra practice, then this will be the “yoga of union”.

perceived to be just mind. This mind, existing as a vajra in space, is not a thing and has no reality.”



THE CONCLUSION OF THE PRACTICE

From that state of fundamental clarity, you instantaneously appear, like a fish leaping out of water, as the complete body of Cintāmaṇi-cakra with all its features. Like an illusion, it is neither truth nor falsehood. At the forehead there is a white OM, at the throat a red ĀḤ and at the heart a blue HŪṢ, that are the three vajras, so that no obstacle will be able to affect the body, speech or mind.

All phenomena comprised of appearances, sound and thought are ultimately without any real nature, their apparent aspect being pure as the nature of the body, speech, mind and awareness of the Bhaṭṭārikā. In that way, adopt as the path, the great view of the utpattikrama [the creation process].

In the periods between sessions, without separating from that meditative state, practise and apply yourself to whatever virtuous actions you can, such as offering tormas and maṇḍala, reciting praises, performing circumambulations, making tsa-tsas, practising ritual cleansing, making supplications for the fulfilment of your wishes, giving water, ransoming life and performing acts of generosity.

Due to that, you will accomplish within just some years or months, that which you desire, such as the temporal attainments of life, intelligence, wealth, etc., and the ultimate siddhis, such as the wisdom of bliss and emptiness. In all your lives you will be cared for by the Bhagavatī and will manifest the supreme emptiness, the Prajñāpāramitā.



This instruction for long life was previously a widespread tradition within the Karma Kamtsang, but since then only the empowerment and textual transmission has been maintained, the transmission of instructions having ceased. Lord Künkhyen Chenpo [“The Great Omniscient One”]⁵² received these instructions from Rigdzin Chenpo [“Great Vidyadhara”],⁵³ and he had received them from a siddha from Üchu Lhopa [“South of the Tsangpo river in the region of Ü”],⁵⁴ however no description of the lineage was written. However it is said that this lineage was a branch from that of the Mahapandita Jamlingpa.⁵⁵ It seems they taught and studied from the instructions written by Nyukla Panchen Ngawang Drakpa,⁵⁶ but that lineage has now died out.

52. The Eighth Tai Situpa Chökyi Jungne [1700-1774].

53. Khatog Rigdzin Tsewang Norbu [1698-1755].

54. This could be the Jonang master Künsang Wangpo [17th/18th century]. He was a student of Ngawang Thrinle [1657-1723], who was a student of Tāranātha’s nephew Khedrub Lodrö Namgyal [1618-1683], and spent many years in solitary retreat in southern Central Tibet. Khatog Rigdzin Tsewang Norbu received many transmissions from him, including the works of Dolpopa [1292-1361] and Tāranātha.

55. I can only speculate here, but this could be Jampa Lingpa Sönam Namgyal [1401-1475], founder of the Jampa Ling monastery in Lokha/Central Tibet.

56. I was unable to identify this master.

However, the “golden garland”⁵⁷ described in the lineage prayer is a basis, due to being an unbroken transmission of blessing. Like the liquid from one vase being poured into another, it holds every transmission of essential meaning. Not only that, but on the outer level, it is an unbroken lineage of taking the Bhaṭṭārikā as a yidam deity and receiving visions of her. Therefore, there is no need to describe the lineage previous to Lord Dharmākara.⁵⁸

Dūdül Dorje⁵⁹ and his spiritual son, Pema Nyinje⁶⁰ also practised the Bhaṭṭārikā as their yidam and it is obvious that they attained superior siddhi of life and true realisation. I myself received empowerments, etc., from Vajradhara with the name Pema⁶¹ and his heart son. However, I especially received White Tārā instructions from the lord guru Tegchok Tenpel,⁶² the root instructions being based on the sutras and instructions in accordance with *The Hundred Instructions of Jonang*.⁶³ I received these teachings once, and practised

57. In this case, the Karma Kamtsang lineage.

58. The Eighth Tai Situpa, Dharmākara is the Sanskrit for Chökyi Jungne. He is also known by the name of Tenpe Nyinje, under which he composed a widely used daily practice manual for White Tārā.

59. The Thirteenth Karmapa [1733-1797].

60. The Ninth Tai Situpa [1774-1853], Kongtrul’s teacher.

61. Pema Nyinje Wangpo, the Ninth Tai Situpa.

62. That would be the Ongen Choktrul Rinpoche of Palpung monastery, one of several incarnated masters who are associated closely with Palpung and the Tai Situpas.

63. A famous collection of concise instructions, compiled and partly composed by Jonang Kunga Drölchog Losal Gyatso [1507-1566], a predecessor in the incarnation lineage of Jonang Tāranātha. Kongtrul included these teachings in his *gdams ngag mdzod* collection. The Jonang school had been brutally suppressed in Central Tibet

them for six months. Even if I did not supplicate him, he looked upon me with compassion and he bestowed upon me the empowerment, the textual transmission and detailed instructions. Even though it seems as if the transmission of a cohesive set of instructions had died out, the essential meaning, as previously described, was still being passed on. Not only that, there existed combinations of textual transmission and instruction, as in the extensive White Tārā text by the Ninth Karmapa.

I myself received these and the subdivision of *The Hundred Instructions of Jonang*, and in particular, I received from the omniscient Mañjuśrī⁶⁴ the extensive long-life instructions from the Bari tradition⁶⁵ and practise them all equally. This instruction text then extracts the quintessence of the Ninth Karmapa's work, uses as its

in the 7th century by the Lhasa administration under the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso [1617-1682], its monasteries closed or forcibly converted into Gelug establishments. The prints and woodblocks of the collected works of such masters as Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltsen and Jonang Tāranātha were put under lock and key so as to prevent the spreading of their teachings. However, the Jonangpas managed to survive this militant suppression in the remote areas of Amdo and Golok in Tibet's far north-east, where there are more than fifty Jonang monasteries nowadays. Khatog Rigdzin Tsewang Norbu and the Eighth Tai Situpa played an important role in the revival of the Jonang teachings in Central Tibet and Kham.

64. Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo [1820-1892], who was a major influence on Kongtrul. They were both teacher and student to each other, frequently exchanging empowerments, reading transmissions and instructions of many rare cycles of teachings.

65. The White Tārā tradition introduced into Tibet by Bari Lotsāwa [1040-1111], who was a student of the Indian master Amoghavajra, himself a student of Vāgīśvarakīrti, the Indian originator of the White Tārā instructions.

basis the teaching given by the Great Omniscient One [the Eighth Tai Situpa], and is adorned by teachings from the lineage of the precious noble Lord.⁶⁶

Therefore, from now on, those who maintain our tradition do not need to create mistakes for themselves. If they can maintain this tradition of instruction, that will be of extremely crucial importance.

Due to weak aspiration and the passage of time,
The tradition of instructions was like scattered water vanishing
into the ground,
When the faithful and diligent dug water channels.
These Dharma Lords and their followers should be relied upon as
if they are amṛita.

Those who run after fame will not be liked by anyone.
The dry fame and material wealth, gained through one's own
natural capabilities,
Is the profit and wealth of a rubbish heap.
Therefore, I implore you that your [worldly] life's activities be only
to keep your stomach filled.

May those who are the lamps illuminating Shakyamuni's teachings
have long lives.
May the splendour of the Dharma of learning and realisation
increase.

66. Jonang Tāranātha.

May even I be cared for by Guru Cintāmaṇicakra throughout my
lifetimes,

And may I nourish beings with the essence of deathlessness.

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, who has the three kinds of kindness,
is the spiritual guide for the whole of the Buddha’s teachings. The
liquid mantra of the moonbeams of his instruction, created a few
kumuda blossoms.⁶⁷

Then, in order to facilitate those who wish good for themselves, I,
Karma Ngawang Yönten Gyatso,⁶⁸ a student of Lord Maitreya,⁶⁹ the
Tai Situpa, wrote this text at the auspicious time of “the increase of
the six wealths”, in the hermitage Künsang Dechen Ösal Ling,⁷⁰ at
Palpung, the great seat, where there has been an uninterrupted suc-
cession of scholars and siddhas.

May Goodness Increase!

*Translated by Thomas Roth [Sherab Drime] originally in April 1991. Edited and
revised in 1998 and 2003. Added and corrected some footnotes in October 2005
and November 2008. Thanks to Edward Henning for several corrections and
useful suggestions and for the Sanskrit diacritics.*

67. The “white water lily”, it blossoms in the moonlight.

68. The name that Kongtrul received when taking his monastic ordination in the
“western” [Kashmiri] Kagyu tradition, with the Ninth Tai Situpa at Palpung in 1833 at
the age of twenty. He had already taken ordination in the “eastern” tradition of the
Nyingma school when staying at Shechen monastery, prior to his move to Palpung.

69. The so-called emanation basis [*sprul gzhî*] of the Tai Situpas.

70. Kongtrul’s famous hermitage, also known as Tsadra Rinchen Drag, a few hours
walk behind and above Palpung monastery.

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BENCHEN PUBLICATIONS

BENCHEN LEKSHE GYUNKYONG KHANG

P.O. Box 2072, Swayambhu-15, Chhauni, Hospital Road 497, Kathmandu, Nepal

Email: benchenlibrary@gmail.com

benchen.org

Print edition © Benchen Publications

ISBN-13: 978-1-60832-578-8

Translation: Lama Sherab Drime (Thomas Roth)

eBook editing: Jo Gibson

Cover and layout: Beata Tashi Drolkar

First eBook edition: July 2025

dharmaebooks.org



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