

# *Vajrasattva*

## *Guiding Instructions on the Hundred-Syllable Mantra*

by Jetsun Tāranātha and Bamda Gelek Gyatso



Translated and edited by Adele Tomlin

*Vajrasattva: Guiding Instructions on the Hundred-Syllable Mantra*

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TO BE READ ONLY BY THOSE WITH A KALACAKRA EMPOWERMENT FROM A  
QUALIFIED TEACHER.

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In two of the main texts on the Kālacakra practices within the Jonang Dro Kālacakra tradition (*A Hundred Blazing Lights: A Supplementary Commentary on 'Meaningful to See'* by Jetsun Tāranātha and *The Chariot that Transports to the Four Kāyas* by Bamda Gelek Gyatso) the preliminary practice of Vajrasattva and the hundred syllable (*yig brgya*) mantra is explained in detail. Excerpts from my translations of both these texts are published here the first time online in this article. See Bibliography for details and further suggested reading.

### **1) The Main Categories of 'the Hundred Syllable mantra'**

First, Tāranātha gives an explanation of the 'hundred syllable' mantra and why it is called that, as well as the two main categories of the Vajrasattva one hundred syllable practice: peaceful and wrathful. The wrathful Heruka Vajrasattva mantra is practised in the Dro Kālacakra tradition, and the mantra is slightly different with the name 'Heruka' replacing the 'sattva' in the peaceful form of the mantra. Here are both mantras below:

#### Peaceful

Vajrasattva (5) samayam (8)anupālaya (13) Vajrasattva (17) tvenopatiṣṭha (22) |  
 Ḍṛḍho me bhava (27) | Sutoṣyo me bhava (33) | Supoṣyo me bhava (39) | Anurakto me  
 bhava (46) | Sarva siddhiṃ (50) me prayaccha (54) | Sarvakarmasu (59) ca me  
 (61)cittam śreyaḥ kuru hūṃ (68) |Ha ha ha ha hoḥ (73) Bhagavan (76) sarva (78)  
 Tathāgata (82) Vajra (84)mā me muñca (88) | Vajrī bhava (92) mahāsamaya (97) sattva  
 āḥ (100) ||

#### Wrathful

*Oṃ śrī vajraheruka samayamanupālaya vajraherukatvenopatiṣṭha, ḍṛḍho me bhava  
 sutoṣyo me bhava anurakto me bhava supoṣyo me bhava sarvasiddhiṃ me prayaccha  
 sarvakarmasu ca me cittam śreyaḥ kuru hūṃ ha ha ha ha hoḥ bhagavan vajra heruka mā  
 me muñca herukabhava mahā samaya sattva āḥ hūṃ phet*

Tāranātha explains that:

Generally, in terms of the hundred syllable mantra for purifying obscurations, there are two completely different types: 1) the *hundred syllables of the Tathagatas* and 2) the *hundred syllables of Vajrasattva*.

The first, comes from the *Tantra of the Arrangement of the Three Samayas*. In terms of the second, there are innumerable types of supramundane deities in the classes of tantra whose individual names can be used in the one hundred syllable mantra. So even though some [of the mantras] do not have an exact fixed number of one hundred syllables, they are called 'one hundred syllables' since they are of the same class of mantra. They are different [in terms of syllables] due to the names of the deities being longer or shorter[i]. In terms of those [hundred syllable mantras] that have not [had the name] changed or added, there are two main categories: the hundred syllables of *peaceful Vajrasattva* and the hundred syllables of *wrathful Heruka Vajrasattva*.

In terms of the first [peaceful Vajrasattva], these days, this is the most well-known hundred syllable mantra of Vajrasattva. Also, in the Yoga Tantras and that which is accordant with it, [Vajrasattva] is meditated on as a Sovereign of the Bodhisattvas, as one single hero. In the tradition of Secret Mantra [the highest tantra], one meditates on the innately arisen Tathagata, face-to-face in union with consort as two. The mantra is the same.

In terms of the hundred syllables of Heruka, the mantra is mostly the same as before. It has not been added to [in terms of the name]. It was clearly taught in *Glorious Tantra of Unexcelled Utterance*. At this time, in other traditions of Vajrasattva, there has originated[a form of the deity], which is boasted as being in the tradition of Kālacakra , that is blue with three faces and six hands. This is nothing but a self-fabrication alone. Why is that? Even though that deity is taught in the Kālacakra Tantra, it did not state it has a purpose in terms of purifying negativities and obscurations. Also, the mantra [of that deity] is not one hundred syllables. The hundred syllables here purifies negativities, repairs degenerated and broken [vows and commitments] and for supplicating the deity. But not all mantras of Vajrasattva are like that. Meditating on the deity like that, one recites the one hundred syllable mantra. By meditating on that deity [form of Vajrasattva] and reciting the hundred syllable mantra, they are merely thinking that all Vajrasattvas are the same type. For example, it is not suitable to meditate on the three-faced, six-armed deity Vairochana of the *Net of Illusion* (Guhyagarbha Tantra) (*sngags ngan song sbyong rgyud*) while reciting the mantra of Durga that originates in the *Tantra that Purifies From the Lower Realms*. Some previous lamas of the Dro tradition had the male consort as peaceful, white Vajrasttva embracing a red, female consort and reciting the peaceful hundred syllable mantra. Generally, it is not that this is *not* good, however, in the guidance instructions of the omniscient Buddha of the three

times, Dolpopa on upwards, the Heruka Vajrasattva is generally done as it is considered to be very good and from an excellent source.

So, in this tradition, Vajrasattva is the wrathful Heruka form and mantra, and both himself and consort are naked, apart from bone ornaments. Tāranātha goes on to give more specific instructions on the visualisations and contemplations to be done during the practice itself.

## **2) *The nature of karma***

Tāranātha also explains karma as originating from 'mental intention' and describes what is virtuous and non-virtuous:

In particular, one needs to identify the nature of non-virtuous karma which is harmful and negative actions. Actions committed out of the three [poisonous mental states], ignorance, aversion and attachment are non-virtuous it is said like that. Craving for pleasures and desires and becoming angry and averse, the karma and result of such actions motivated by blind ignorance, are all negative and non-virtuous karma.

The actual nature of karma is the mental intention (sems pa) combined with the mental formations and others. If it is not connected to the actions of body and speech then it is mental karma or the karma of mental intention. When it is joined together with the body and speech it gives them the power to come out. This conditioned intention is directly connected to what incites and encourages the attitude and appearance of body and mind is Mentally motivated actions or actions of speech and mind. Since all actions of body and speech, are beforehand directed and preceded by mind, one must understand that the karma of body and speech are solely mental karma.

For most people, generally, negative karma is included in the ten non-virtuous actions. In terms of others others, they are related to property and wrong livelihood and so on. Generally, speaking the number of non-virtuous actions of negative karma is infinite. When these [karmas] *ripen* they propel one into the three lower realms.

From Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland of Advice*:

From attachment, one becomes a hungry ghost.

From anger, one is propelled into the hell realms.

As a result of dull ignorance, one mostly becomes an animal.

It is said like that. If one commits heavy negative actions, one will go to hell. If one commits medium negative actions, one becomes a hungry ghost. For small negative actions, one is propelled into the animal realms. Giving rise to those there is infinite, heavy suffering for a very long time.

### **3) The four 'opponent powers'**

Tāranātha also gives instructions on the four 'opponent powers', stressing that the 'power of vowing not to repeat' is the most important:

What are the four [powers]? Here we will see.

- The power of support,
- The power of application,
- The power of remorse,
- The power of vowing not to repeat,

So, at the time of confessing one's previous negative actions, one has a mind of strong regret, like the intense mental regret at having drunk poison, that is the power of remorse. The mind that strongly vows not to do those actions again, even at the cost of my life, is the power of not wanting to repeat it. Here in this context, it is unsuitable for there not to be present both the mind of regret and the mind that vows, they are equal. If there is no mind of turning away [from the negativity] then even if one has a mind of regret, it is not a pure confession and so it will be merely reciting words. For that reason, the mind that vows [not to repeat] is the most important one.

As for number 2) the 'power of application', Tāranātha explains in detail the 'six renowned methods' of the power of application:

Generally even though doing virtuous actions are the antidote to transforming negative actions. However, in this context, specifically applying an antidote to one's negativities and to accomplishing virtue, is called the 'power of application'. So, when we are specifically intending to purify negativities and do any kind of virtuous action that can be considered applying the remedy. In terms of the renowned *six methods of the power of the application*, they are easy to practice and have great benefit and are a summary of all the important necessary points.

These are:

- reciting the names [of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas];

- constructing images and material representations [of the Buddha, stupas and dharma texts];
- making offerings;
- relying on the profound teachings;
- reciting mantras; and
- belief in emptiness.

Tāranātha gives examples of the types of 'negativities' that the hundred syllable mantra purifies:

At this time, here [the third preliminary] the negative actions referred to in the instructions on the hundred syllables that purify the obscurations and negativities, are those coarse negative actions and obscurations, meaning the gross ones that can suddenly arise as obstacles and interfere with our experience of the main practices of the vajra-yogas. In addition, in terms of those negative actions, obscurations, faults and downfalls, they are the negativities we have accumulated in this life since they are closer in time, and are the strongest in terms of experiences arising [during practice of the vajra-yogas]. Also, other negative actions, such as the downfalls which transgress the three types of vows are also extremely serious obstacles [to practice]. In particular, mistakes and transgressions of samaya commitments and the negativity of having used the religious offerings, business and food are particularly big obstacles to experiences arising [in practice]. In order to purify these [negativities] meditating on and reciting the hundred syllables of Vajrasattva is highly recommended.

#### **4) *The necessity of purification***

Tāranātha also gives a detailed description why it is important and necessary to practice Vajrasattva, using Atisha's famous example of the continual accumulation of downfalls in the Secret Mantra, which collect like dust on a mandala plate:

Lord Atisha taught that: The subtle faults and downfalls of the secret mantra are continually arising. For example, if one is in a place that is full of dust and one places a mandala plate outside, it will immediately become full of dust, like that. So then, surely the path in one's mental continuum will not arise? [Atisha's reply]: Since the Secret Mantra has many skilful means and there is huge amount of subtle downfalls and faults, one method can purify them in an instant: meditation on Vajrasattva and the recitation of the hundred syllables, he explained is a profound and extensive purification. If one is diligent [in the practice] then all of the subtle and medium faults and downfalls can be

completely purified at their root. As for the huge downfalls, they won't increase and will be suppressed, and gradually they will be purified.

Previously in Tibet, there were many oral instructions on the hundred syllables of Secret Mantra practitioners. However, their students were few in number, so it did not become generally widespread. However, due to this teaching by Jowo [Atisha], among all the new [ii] and old Tantric practitioners a lot of clamour and interest arose in doing this practice, it is said."

### 5) *The meaning of the hundred-syllable mantra*

In the '*Chariot that Transports to the Four Kāyas*', Bamda Gelek Gyamtso gives an extended explanation of the meaning of the wrathful Vajrasattva Heruka hundred-syllable mantra. My translation of that section is reproduced in full below:

Since there are very few who meditate on Vajrasattva who understand the meaning of the mantra, there are not a great number who recite it with a mind that understands its meaning. Generally, it is not absolutely necessary to meditate on it [the mantra] when the nectar is descending. However, it is better to recite the mantra together with a mind that understands the meaning and also with a mind of regret for one's negative actions and downfalls together with a mind that promises not to repeat them. Tāranātha explained this about reciting the mantra in his *Supplementary Commentary on Meaningful to See*.

There are two ways of explaining the recitation of the mantra:

- a) the translation of the words of the mantra; and
- b) reciting the mantra with a mind that understands the meaning

#### a) Translation of the Words of the Mantra

First, here is the one hundred syllable mantra of Heruka<sup>1</sup>. **Om** represents and symbolises the *vajra body of the Buddha*; **śrī** means *glorious*; **vajra** means *thunderbolt*<sup>2</sup>; **heruka** means '*the one who drinks blood*'. So if one joins them together: '*Hey! Glorious Thunderbolt Blood-Drinker; vajra body of the Buddha*'. This is calling out the name to invoke the commitment deity, Vajrasattva. After inviting and calling out to the commitment deity, what does one request? **Samayamanupālaya**: **samaya** in Tibetan, means *commitment pledge which one never forsakes*; **anupālaya** means *please protect*

the *samaya*. Since there is a particle one puts after the *ya* it makes it *yam* and so the *a* after *samaya* becomes *samayamanupālaya*, which means: *never be separated from nor forsake your samaya*<sup>iii</sup>.

**Vajraheruka** is as it was explained before. **Tvena** means ‘You’; **upa tiṣṭha** means ‘please remain (or stay) close’; **upa** means *near*; **tiṣṭha** means *stay* (or *remain*). The words ‘remain’ and ‘stay’ have similar meanings<sup>iv</sup>. The equivalent term for **ḍṛiḍha** is ‘support’. The Sanskrit equivalent of the Tibetan particle for ‘as’ makes it **ḍṛiḍho**, ‘as support’<sup>v</sup>. **Me** means ‘I’ is pronounced as **mā** but the Sanskrit particle used for ‘to’ here makes it **me: ‘to me’**. **Bhava** is a word-ending that means ‘please do that...’ So that joined together with **driddoh** and **me** becomes **ḍṛiḍho mebhava**. Thus, the direct translation of **vajra heruka tvenopa tiṣṭha, ḍṛiḍho mebhava** is: *O Vajraheruka, stay close to me, however you remain, may it be stable. Wherever you stay, may it be with me.* Which when stated in Tibetan is: ‘O Vajra Heruka, please may you remain close and stable in my mindstream’. In that [sentence], *you* means, ‘you who is called Vajraheruka’. Since Heruka is the one who is doing the remaining in one’s mindstream, in Sanskrit one adds an agentive particle, so **te ne** in Tibetan if one adds an agentive particle like that it has an opposite meaning, one should understand that the agentive particle is taken away.

The closest translation of **su** has the meaning *good* or *very*. Here the **su** that is before the **tokayo** means *satisfied* or *pleased*. Then the particle at the end of **tokayo** [which means satisfied] is replaced and so one gets **tokya**. So **sutokaya** means *excellently* or *very satisfied*. Additionally, since *satisfied* has the meaning of being *pleased*, it can also mean *excellently pleased* or *very pleased*. **Me** means *to me* and **bhava** means ‘please be that’<sup>vi</sup>. If one joins that altogether it is: ‘Please make me extremely pleased (or extremely satisfied)’<sup>vii</sup>.

The closest translation of **anu** that follows after, and comes before **rakto**, has the meaning of *with passion*, this is changed into **rakta**; **me** and **bhava** are the same like before. If they are joined together **anurakto me bhava** means ‘Please look on me with passion’<sup>viii</sup>.

As was said before, with the **anurakto me bhava, supoṣyo me bhava** means: ‘make me extremely vast’.

**Sarva** means *all*; **siddhi** means *accomplishments*. The particle that is added afterwards makes it **siddhiṃ**. **Me** means *on me*. The closest translation of **pra** before **yaccha** is *completely bestow*. So **sarvasiddhiṃ me prayaccha** means: '*completely bestow on me all accomplishments*'.<sup>ix</sup>

Again **sarva** means *all*, **karma** means *actions*, **ca** means *endless*, **me** means *my*; **citta** means *mind*. The particle **aṃ** that makes it *to the mind* makes it **cittaṃ**; **śreyaḥ** means *virtuous*. **Kuru**<sup>x</sup> means *make it*. **Sarvakarmasu ca me cittaṃ śreyaḥ kuru** means: '*Make my mind and all my actions virtuous*'. In Sanskrit one is not able to say '*to my mind*'.

**Hūṃ** is the seed mantra of Vajraheruka and symbolizes and represents the five primordial awarenesses in the heart. The four **ha**-s represent and symbolize the four joys<sup>xi</sup> and five primordial awarenesses. **Hoḥ** represents purified of dualistic illusory appearances. With all the completely perfect qualities is **bhagavān heruka**. **Bhagavān** means the **Victorious One**; **hūṃ ha ha ha ha hoḥ bhagavān vajra heruka**.

**Mā me muñca**. **Mā** is a negation word; **me** means *I*; **muñca** means *abandon*. So it means: '*don't abandon me*'. If one asks how will he not *abandon me*: **herukabhava**. **Heruka** means one who 'is Heruka'; **bhava** means 'make it so'. So it means: *make me into Heruka!*

Then **mahā** means *great*; **samaya** means *commitment*; **sattva** means 'hero'; **āḥ** means the *dharmakāya emptiness*; **hūṃ** represents the *non-dual primordial awareness*; **phet** means the one whose *purpose is to liberate*. So together, **mahā samaya sattva āḥ hūṃ phet** means: '*Great Samaya Hero! Liberate us from all illusory dualistic appearances into the non-dualistic primordial awareness and emptiness-dharmata*'<sup>xii</sup>.

Furthermore, **śrī** means *glorious* in terms of non-dual primordial awareness. **Vajra heruka** means the essence of the vajra body itself or the dharmakāya emptiness. As for **Heruka**; **he** means free from the cause, **ru** means free from accumulation and **ka** means not abiding anywhere whatsoever. It is taught like that<sup>xiii</sup>. Together they mean the realisation of emptiness in these three ways: the emptiness of the cause, the result and the nature. This emptiness causes all of the confusion of dualistic appearances to be exhausted and the result is the primordial awareness dharmakāya. So the meaning of **vajra heruka** means: '*the ultimate reality that is the inseparability of primordial awareness and the absolute expanse*'. He is called 'blood drinker' because the *non-*

*dualistic primordial awareness 'drinks' the 'blood' of the illusory dualistic appearances.*  
That is the meaning of **heruka**.

**Bhagavān** (*bcom ldan 'das*) literally means *the victor endowed with transcendence*; who is victorious [*bcom*] over the four māras<sup>xiv</sup> and is endowed (*ldan*) with the *six excellent possessions*<sup>xv</sup>. It is not connected to the name of a great non-Buddhist deity, who is also called Bhagavan<sup>xvi</sup>. The lotsāwas [translators] added the word 'transcendent' ['das] as an excellent method for saying 'having transcended the limits of existence and peace.'

**Mahā samaya sattva** means *great commitment hero*. *Commitment* [samaya] means never forsaking the three doors of the vajras of the Buddha's body, speech and mind; and unchanging. *Hero* [sattva] means the one endowed with a mind of objectless compassion that is the essence of the great bliss that resides in the central channel of all illusory appearances<sup>xvii</sup>.

b) **Recitation of the mantra with a mind that understands the meaning**

Second, is the recitation of the mantra with a mind that understands the meaning<sup>xviii</sup>. After reciting the supplication: '*Bhagavan, I and all sentient beings.....*' One contemplates, with a mind of regret and remorse, the wish to confess and repair negativities and downfalls.

*Oṃ śrī vajraheruka* means 'O vajra heruka, the *vajra body* of the Buddha'; it is calling on Vajrasattva by his name.

*samayamanupālaya* ....'Honour the samaya with me. With your three doors, of body, speech and mind, do not abandon me; protect me.'

*vajraherukatvenopatiṣṭha, dṛḍho me bhava*.... 'O Vajra Heruka, remain steadfast in my mindstream, stay close to my mind'.

*sutoṣyo me bhava* ....'Please satisfy my mindstream with the taste of great, immutable bliss'.

*anurakto me bhava* ....'Please look on me passionately, with the great, referenceless compassion, and never abandon me'.

*supoṣyo me bhava* ....'Make my mindstream the extremely vast primordial awareness of bliss-emptiness'.

*sarvasiddhiṃ me prayaccha* ....'Bestow on me all the ordinary and supreme accomplishments without exception'.

*sarvakarmasu ca me cittaṃ śreyaḥ kuru* .....‘Make my mental intentions virtuous from the outset, and all activities and so on be accomplished and never cut off from Dharma’.

*hūṃ ha ha ha ha hoḥ bhagavan vajra heruka*.....‘O the one with all the perfectly complete excellent qualities purified of dualistic appearances and the four joys and five primordial awarenesses. O Foe-Destroyer Vajra Heruka!’ One calls on [the deity] by name and proclaims his qualities.

*mā me muñca* .....‘Don’t abandon me!’

*herukabhava*.....‘Make me Heruka!’

*mahā samaya sattva āḥ hūṃ phet* .....‘Great samaya hero! Liberate us from all illusory, dualistic appearances into the non-dualistic primordial awareness and emptiness-dharmata’.

Recite it again and again with the mind that understands the meaning like that. At the time of the main practices of the completion stage, if one knows [the mantra], reciting it only with a mind that understands the meaning is permissible. If one doesn’t know it, recite [the mantra] while purifying oneself with the nectar descending as before.’

**Appendix: Visual of the meaning of the hundred-syllable mantra**

Edited translation based on an explanation by Bamda Gelek Gyatso

ཨོ་ཤྱི་བཙུ་ཉེ་ཅུ་གླ།

**oṃ śrī vajra heruka**

O Glorious Vajra Heruka, the Buddha vajrakāya itself!

ས་མ་ཡ་མ་རྩ་སྐ་ལ་ཡ།

**samaya manu pālaya,**

Protect and honour the samaya with me.

བཙུ་ཉེ་ཅུ་གླ་ཏུ་མ་ཉེ་བུ། དྲི་ཤོ་མེ་གླ་མ།

**vajra heruka tvenopa tiṣṭha, ḍṛiḍho me bhava,**

O Vajra Heruka! Remain steadfast in my mind, stay close to me.

སྤོ་ཏོ་ཕྱོ་མེ་གླ་བ།

**supoṣyo me bhava,**

Satisfy completely my mindstream with the taste of great, immutable bliss.

ཨ་རུ་རྩོ་མེ་གླ་མ།

**anu rakto me bhava,**

Look on me passionately, with vast, objectless compassion; never abandon me.

སྤོ་ཏོ་ཕྱོ་མེ་གླ་མ།

**supoṣyo me bhava,**

Make my mind the extremely vast primordial awareness of bliss-emptiness.

སང་སྒྲིལ་པ་ཡོད་པའི་མཁུན་ལྷོ་མཁུན་

**sarvasiddhiṃ me prayaccha**

Bestow on me all ordinary and supreme accomplishments, without exception.

སང་ཀམ་སུ་ཚ་མེ། ཅོད་ཤི་ཡི་ཀུ་རྩ།

**sarva karma suchame, chittaṃ shriaṃ kuru**

Ensure my motivation is always virtuous and all activities be accomplished and never cut off from Dharma.

ཧཱུྃ་ཏ་ཏ་ཏ་ཏ་ཏོ།

**hūṃ ha ha ha ha hoḥ,**

HUM the perfect joys, wisdoms and qualities!

(‘Ha ha ha ha’ represents the five primordial awarenesses, the four joys, and all the qualities of purified illusory dualistic appearances.)

ལྷ་ག་ལྷ་མེ། བཟོ་ཏེ་རྩ་ཀ་ལྷ་མེ་སུ་ལྷ།

**bhagavān vajra heruka, mā me muñca,**

O Bhagavan Vajra Heruka! Don’t abandon me!

ཏེ་རྩ་ཀོ་ལྷ་མེ་མ་རྒྱ་ས་མ་ཡ་ས་ཏུ།

**heruko bhawa, mahā samayasattva**

Make me into 'Vajra Heruka'! Great hero of all samayas.

ཨཱཱྃ་ཧཱུྃ་ཕཱ།

**āḥ hūṃ phaṭ**

Liberate illusory dualistic appearances into non-dual primordial awareness and ultimate emptiness!

The meaning and translation of the *Vajrasattva Heruka One Hundred Syllable Mantra* here is an edited version, based on Bamda Gelek’s explanation in *The Chariot that Transports to the Kingdom of the Four Kāyas: Stages of Meditation on the Excellent Path*. Translated and edited by Adele Tomlin, 2019.

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- *'Celestial Stairway: Preliminary Practice Recitations of the Profound Path of the Vajra-Yogas'* by Tāranātha. (*Kālacakra Six Yogas Monastery*, 2017). Translated and edited by Edward Henning and Adele Tomlin.
- *'Chariot that Transports to the Four Kāyas: Excellent Path of Meditation on the Vajra-Yogas' (CTK)* by Bamda Gelek Gyamtso. Translated and edited by Adele Tomlin (LTWA, 2019). For details on the book and how to purchase it see [here](#).
- *'Hundred Blazing Lights: A Supplementary Commentary on 'Meaningful to See'' (HBL)* by Jetsun Tāranātha. Translated and edited by Adele Tomlin (forthcoming publication, 2020).
- *'Meaningful to See: Guidance on the Profound Path of the Vajra-Yogas'* by Jetsun Tāranātha. Translated and edited by Adele Tomlin (Dakini Publications, 2020).
- *'Innate Kālacakra: A Collection of Essential Texts'*. Translated and edited by Adele Tomlin (Dakini Publications, 2019). Available for free download [here](#).

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<sup>i</sup> Here I have used the Sanskrit mantra with diacritics, and not the Tibetan version. I have based it on the version from the interesting and useful article 'The Hundred Syllable Vajrasattva Mantra' by Dharmacārī Jayarava at <http://www.westernbuddhistreview.com/vol5/vajrasattva-mantra.pdf>.

<sup>ii</sup> Jayarava states that:

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The vajra was the weapon of Indra who, like the Greek Zeus, hurled thunderbolts at his enemies and was sometimes called Vajrapāṇi (thunderbolt wielder). The word (as Pāli vajira) is not unknown in this sense in early Buddhist texts but in Tantra it is very prominent, and by this time also means 'diamond', and metaphorically 'reality'. It's difficult to translate vajra in a way that conveys what is intended and for that reason it's often left untranslated.' I also think it is better to keep the words 'Vajra Heruka' here.

iii According to JAYARAVA:

The phrase samayamanupālaya could be either samaya manupālaya or samayam anupālaya. Both are commonly seen and the former is a traditional Tibetan approach, but samayam anupālaya is a natural Sanskrit sentence with samayam (in the accusative case) being the object of the verb anupālaya. Anu + √pāl means 'preserve' and anupālaya is the second person singular imperative. Samayam means 'coming together' or 'meeting' and is used in the sense of 'coming to an agreement'. As a technical term in Tantric Buddhism it specifically refers to agreements the practitioner takes on when receiving abhiṣeka. These agreements are sometimes referred to as a vow or pledge. To preserve an agreement is to honour it, so vajrasattva samayam anupālaya means: 'O Vajrasattva honour the agreement', or 'preserve the coming together' – the coming together of Buddha and disciple, or of guru and cela.

iv According to JAYARAVA:

The verb here is upatiṣṭha a passive past-participle from upa + √sthā 'stood near, was present, approached, supported, worshipped; revealed one's self or appeared'. So the phrase means 'manifest as Vajrasattva'.

v According to JAYARAVA:

First we have 'be dṛḍhaḥ' 'firm, steady, strong'. The sandhi rule is that an ending with aḥ changes to o when followed by bha: so dṛḍhaḥ > dṛḍho. Dṛḍho me bhava means 'be steadfast for me'. There are a series of phrases with the verb bhava which is the second person singular imperative of √bhū 'to be'. They also contain the particle me which in this case is the abbreviated form of the 1st person pronoun in the dative 'for me'. The form then is 'be X for me'.

vii According to JAYARAVA:

Sutoṣyaḥ is a compound of the prefix su- meaning 'well, good, complete' and toṣya from √tuṣ 'satisfaction, contentment, pleasure, joy'.

viii According to JAYARAVA:

Here the Tibetan that is used is *chags pa*, which means lust and passion. Anuraktaḥ is anu + rakta. Rakta is a past-participle from √rañj and the dictionary gives 'fond of, attached, pleased'. In his seminar on the mantra Sangharakshita suggests 'passionate' and this seems to fit better with √rañj which literally means 'to glow red, or to redden'. We can translate anurakto me bhava as 'be passionate for me', or as Sthiramati suggests 'love me passionately'.

ix The Tibetan term that is used here is *dnogs grub* which is normally translated as 'attainment' or 'accomplishment'. According to JAYARAVA:

Prayaccha is a verb from the root √iṣ 'to desire, to wish' and means 'to grant'. (√iṣ forms a stem iccha; and pra + iccha > prayaccha - which is also the second person singular imperative). Sarva is a pronoun meaning 'all, every, universal' and *siddhi* is a multivalent term which can mean 'magical powers, perfection, success, attainment'. So *sarvasiddhiṃ me prayaccha* must mean 'grant me every success' or 'give me success in all things'. Note that *sarvasiddhiṃ* is an accusative singular so it can't mean 'all the attainments' (plural).'

x According to JAYARAVA:

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The next line is somewhat longer and more complex: *sarvakarmasu ca me cittam śreyah kuru*. *Ca* is the connector 'and', which indicates that we should take this phrase with the previous line. *Sarvakarmasu* is a locative plural. The locative case is being used to indicate where in time and space the action takes place. *Sarva* we saw just above and *karma* means action - so this word means 'in all actions'. *Me* here is a genitive 'my'. *Cittam* is mind and is in the accusative case, so it is the object of the verb *kuru* which is the 2.p.s. imp of √kr 'to do, to make'. *Śreyah* is from *śrī* which has a wide range of connotations: 'light, lustre, radiance; prosperity, welfare, good fortune, success, auspiciousness; high rank, royalty'. I think 'lucid' would be a good choice in this case. It is the comparative so it means 'more śrī'. Putting all this together we find that *sarvakarmasu ca me cittam śreyah kuru hūṃ* means 'and in all actions make my mind more lucid!'

<sup>xi</sup> **The four joys** (*catvārimuditā; dga' ba bzhi*) are four increasingly subtle experiences of bliss-emptiness connected with the advanced practices of tsa-lung; they transcend ordinary feelings of joy or pleasure. They are:

1. joy (*muditā; dga' ba*),
2. supreme joy (*pramuditā; mchog dga'*),
3. special joy (*viśeṣamuditā; khyad dga'*) and
4. innate joy (*sahajamuditā; lhan skyes kyi dga' ba*).

They are experienced when the white bodhicitta drop, (also called white essence), ascends from the lowest chakra to the navel, heart, throat, and crown chakras.

<sup>xii</sup> Bamda Gelek states *chos nyid (dharmatā)* here suggesting that he sees it as interchangeable with the word *chos sku (dharmakāya)* which he used previously to describe the syllable *āḥ*.

<sup>xiii</sup> This is found in the Hevajra Tantra. Although in the tantra the Tibetan is different and it states the *he is the emptiness of the cause (shrI ni gnyis med ye shes te/\_/he ni rgyu sogs stong pa nyid/\_/ru ni tshogs dang bral ba nyid/\_/ka ni gang du'ang mi gnas pa'o/)* D417 *kye'i rdo rje zhes bya ba rgyud kyi rgyal po*, rgyud, nga 1b1-13b5 (vol. 80).

<sup>xiv</sup> **The four demons or maras** (*bdud bzhi*): **the demon of the aggregates** (*phung po'i bdud*) which symbolizes our clinging to forms, perceptions, and mental states as 'real'; **the demon of the afflictive emotions** (*nyon mongs pa'i bdud*), which symbolizes our addiction to habitual patterns of negative emotion; **the demon of the Lord of Death** (*'chi bdag gi bdud*), which symbolizes both death itself, which cuts short our precious human birth, and also our fear of change, impermanence, and death; and **the demon of the godly son** (*lha'i bu'i bdud*), which symbolizes our craving for pleasure, convenience, and 'peace'.

<sup>xv</sup> **The six excellent possessions** (*skal ba drug*): 1) excellent possession of power and wealth (*dbang phyag phun sum tshogs pa*); 2) excellent possession of form (*gzugs phun sum tshogs pa*); 3) excellent possession of glory (*dpal phun sum tshogs pa*); 4) excellent possession of reputation (*grags pa phun sum tshogs pa*); 5) excellent possession of wisdom (*ye shes phun sum tshogs pa*); 6) excellent possession of enthusiastic perseverance (*brtson 'grus phun sum tshogs pa*).

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<sup>xvi</sup> This is referring particularly to Krishna and other avatars of Vishnu in Vaishnavism, as well as for Shiva in the Shaivism tradition of Hinduism. Bhagavān is synonymous with Ishvara, Devatā, Hari or Prabhu, in some schools of Hinduism.

<sup>xvii</sup> Chokyi Nangwa Rinpoche explained that:

Dualistic appearances are considered to be confusion and their cause is the very subtle wind energies that move in our being. They are very subtle winds that our minds rise on, these are the source of our dualistic appearances. These winds however, through the practice, can be brought into the central channel and when they are brought into the central channel the confused appearances of duality are purified. They disappear. When that happens then the great bliss of primordial awareness arises which is inseparable from non-referential compassion, and the individual whose mind is so endowed becomes a *sempa*, or hero. In summary, it is through the skillful means of the practices of the mantrayana, that these subtle winds, which are the causes of our dualistic appearances, are brought into the central channel, causing dualistic appearances to cease and the primordial awareness of great bliss and non-referential compassion to arise, and such a person is called a *sempa*, a hero. Vajrasattva is therefore called not only the glorious Heruka, but also the hero of all samayas.

<sup>xviii</sup> According to some sources, Tibetan translators developed three general methods of translation of the words, translating them directly in their order in the original Sanskrit, translating them backwards in the opposite order, or doing a mixture of the two. There are treatises on how they used these different methods to produce translations into Tibetan. These are contained in the **Two-Volume Lexicon** (*sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*) or **Madhyavyutpatti** (*bye brag tu rtogs byed 'bring po*) is a text containing guidelines for translation produced during **King Senalek** Jingyön (*sad na legs mjing yon*)'s reign (761–815) by several panditas and lotsawas, especially panditas Jinamitra and Danashila, and lotsawa Shyang Yeshé Dé. It is considered a commentary on the *Mahavyutpatti*. See <https://www2.hf.uio.no/polyglotta/index.php?page=volume&vid=263#permlink>, for a translation.