Chittamani Tara Retreat Sadhana

Original translation by Lama Thubten Yeshe
with contributions by Ven. George Churinoff and Martin Willson

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Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition
Education Department
P. O. Box 888
Taos, NM 87571 USA

Tel: (505) 737-0550
Fax: (505) 758-7765
Email: materials @fpmt.org
www.fpmt.org/shop

Practice Requirements

A highest (maha-anuttara) yoga tantric empowerment of Chittamani Tara (with body mandala) is required to perform the practice text contained in this booklet.

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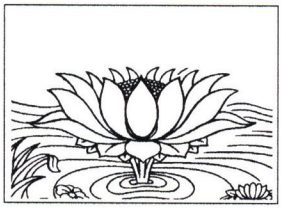
(chantable Tibetan and English versions)

Chittamani Tara Retreat Sadhana



The Collected Arrangement of Recitations of an Extended Sadhana of Chittamani Tara, the Oral Precepts of the Arya Mother in the Close Lineage Highest Yoga Tantra Tradition of Venerable Green Tara

Original translation by Lama Thubten Yeshe
Edited by Sylvia Wetzel
Contributions by Ven. George Churinoff and Martin Willson

Additional instructions according to Jetsun Pabongkha Rinpoche

This booklet [contains] the meditations on Chittamani Tara as [transmitted] orally through the close lineage from the Supreme Mother [presented] in the maha-anuttara yoga aspect of the divine Mother Tara.

Here is the pure vision of the two, Kadrub Chenpo Tagphuwa Ngawang Lodrub Gyatso, whose esoteric name is Zhepa Dorje, and Namkhai Naljor Garwang Padmeshvara. By merely remembering their names, outer and inner hindrances are pacified. By wishing to practice the close lineage that leads to the perfection of Tara Chittamani, supreme and common realizations are very quickly attained.

Be in an isolated place. In your room place an image (of the yidam); in front of this, on a neat table are offerings and tormas for the front generation deity and for oneself as Tara. In front of yourself, put neatly inner offering, dorje and bell etc., whatever is necessary. Then sit down on a comfortable bed (or cushion) and start with the distinguished enlightenment attitude.**

Chittamani Tara Retreat Sadhana

Praise to the Lineage

NAMO GURU ARYA TARAYE

Treasure of compassion, unity of the Three Supreme Jewels,
Guru, divine transcendental mother,
To the lotus feet that remove the fears of samsara and nirvana, I devote myself.
Please bestow supreme goodness.

Taking Refuge**

[Visualize the Twenty-One Taras as the object of refuge.]

I, and all living beings equal in number to the extent of space, from this time forth, until the attainment of the essence of enlightenment, go for refuge to the glorious, sacred gurus.
We go for refuge to the fully enlightened bhagavan-buddhas.
We go for refuge to the sacred Dharma teachings.
We go for refuge to the Sangha community of arya noble ones. *(3x)*

Taking Refuge and Generating Bodhichitta

I go for refuge until I am enlightened
To the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Supreme Assembly.
By my practice of giving and other perfections,
May I become a buddha to benefit all sentient beings. *(3x)*

Special Generation of Bodhichitta**

In particular, for the sake of all mother sentient beings, I must quickly, quickly somehow obtain the precious state of complete and perfect buddhahood. Therefore, I shall practice the yoga of venerable Arya Tara.

The Four Immeasurable Thoughts**

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were to abide in equanimity, free from hatred and attachment.
May they abide in equanimity.
I myself will cause them to abide in equanimity.
Please, guru-deity, grant me blessings to be able to do this.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings had happiness and the cause of happiness.
May they have happiness and its cause.
I myself will cause them to have happiness and its cause.
Please, guru-deity, grant me blessings to be able to do this.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were free from suffering and its cause.
May they be free of suffering and its cause.
I myself will free them from suffering and its cause.
Please, guru-deity, grant me blessings to be able to do this.

How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were never separated from the happiness of higher rebirth and liberation.
May they never be separated from these.
I myself will cause them never to be separated from these.
Please, guru-deity, grant me blessings to be able to do this. *(3x)*

Meditate on these four limitless attitudes and unify them with your mind.

Absorption of the refuge object: The twenty-one Taras absorb into the central Arya Tara. She comes to the top of my head, dissolves into light, and absorbs into me.

[Breathing meditation]

Request to the Gurus of the Close Lineage for Blessings and Inspiration

[Visualize Arya Tara and the ten gurus of the close lineage on the crown of your head. Make requests to them and absorb them one by one.]

NAMO GURU ARYA TAREYA

Homage to Guru Arya Tara.

Source of the most perfect actions of all the infinite buddhas,
Having the body of a fascinating and beautiful goddess,
To the Divine Mother, liberated from the fears of samsara and nirvana,
To you I make this request: Bestow on me the highest and common realizations.

To you Gargyi Wangpo who is guided by the Divine Mother
And has reached the stage of the eighth Ishvara;
To the treasure-hold of the vast and profound holy Dharma of Losang Gyalwa [Lama Tsongkhapa]
To you I make this request: Bestow on me the highest and common realizations.

To the powerful lama who, like a wish-granting tree, bestows highest realizations,
Which arise from the indestructible root of wisdom and the branches of magnificent understanding,
Holding the fresh and sweet flavor of teaching and practice,
To you I make this request: Bestow on me the highest and common realizations.

To the powerful jewel ornament of the nagas, embracing all existence,
Who is skillful in causing the four streams of activity to flow
From the vast ocean of his mind
With waves of deep and clear understanding;
To you I make this request: Bestow on me the highest and common realizations.

To the wish-granting gem,
Treasure store of precious oral teachings and realizations, rich in pure morality,
Who ripens all sentient beings' wishes and fulfills them like a fall of rain,
Thus leading them to liberation;
To you I make this request: Bestow on me the highest and common realizations.

Your magnificent wisdom is like one thousand eyes,
Seeing completely all sutras and tantras of the Buddha;
These transcendental teachings are like the secret treasure;
To the powerful one who holds the dorje,
To you I make this request: Bestow on me the highest and common realizations.

To the most divine and powerful mahasiddha,
Who is like a perfect victory banner and guide to all sentient beings,
Who holds unceasingly the perfect teachings of Jampal Nyingpo [Lama Tsongkhapa];
To you I make this request: Bestow on me the highest and common realizations.

To the one rich in realizations,
Unrivalled in preserving the essence
Of the method and wisdom teachings of Losang Jampalyang]Lama Tsongkhapa],
Who causes rain of great siddhis to fall.
To you I make this request: Bestow on me the highest and common realizations.

To you who is the magnificent ornament
Of all those holding the essence of Losang Gyalwa's teachings,
Having great realizations of wisdom and loving kindness,
Your divine actions are like a limitless ocean;
To you I make this request: Bestow on me the highest and common realizations.

By the [inspiration and] blessings of the lama and the yidam [Tara]
And by accomplishing the common path,
I can fully comprehend the two profound gradual paths.
Thus may I quickly see the unity face of the transcendental mother.

Even if this is not done, at the time of death,
By actualizing the path that unifies the fundamental path and the four emptinesses,
May I enter the quick path, which unifies technically the illusory body and the clear light.
Thus may I be blessed to destroy the assembly of the enemies, the four maras.

May I never be parted in all my lives from perfect gurus.
May I put the glorious Dharma to good use.
By completely achieving all the stages and paths,
May I quickly attain the enlightened state of Vajradhara.

The Uncommon Guru Yoga Method

My body is in ordinary form. On my crown on a lotus, inseparable from Tara, the mother of the victorious ones, the great treasure of compassion, [is seated] my kind root guru. His complexion is white with a slight red vibration, and he is youthful looking.

His right hand is in the mudra of giving teachings, holding a dorje and a white lotus. His left hand [in the mudra of concentration] [is holding] a bell and a white lotus, the open petals at the height of his ear. He is wearing the three robes of a monk and a beautiful pandit's hat. He is seated in the vajra position in the midst of an aura.

At his heart is the transcendental yogini [the yidam Tara], of emerald color. Her right hand [is] in the mudra of granting the highest siddhis; her left [hand] is in the mudra of the Triple Gem. At her heart both hands [are] holding the stem of an utpala flower. She is wearing delicate light robes and precious ornaments. Her right leg is stretched, and her left bent. At her heart is [the letter] TAM radiating green light.

Concentrate on these three objects of concentration and on the five chakras of the guru, which are marked by the five seed syllables, OM AH HUM SVA HA.

All this is a psychic vision, like a reflection in a mirror, and at the same time of non-dual and blissful wisdom character.

Invocation

From [my lama's] heart light radiates and invokes all refuge objects [and] the supreme wisdom energy of all the tathagatas. These melt into light, are absorbed into my lama's heart, and become oneness. [The guru becomes in actuality the unity of all existing refuge objects.]

Seven-Limb Prayer

Stay on the jewel crown [of my head] until I discover enlightenment
With faith I prostrate with my body, speech, and mind.
I make each and every offering including those really performed and those mentally transformed.
I confess every negative action collected from the beginninglessness of samsaric life
And rejoice in all ordinary beings' and noble beings' virtuous actions.
Please, Buddha, by living as our guide until samsara ends [the void of samsara]
Reveal the teachings to sentient beings.
I dedicate my own virtues and those of others to the great enlightenment.

Mantra Recitation: Contemplating the TAM and the Mantra Syllables

In the heart [of my lama and yidam] is the concentration being [the seed syllable TAM in the tigle of the HUM].
[Contemplate this.]

Standing on the moon in a counter-clockwise direction are the letters of the ten-syllable mantra.

OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SVAHA

[Contemplate these while you recite the mantra.]

[Then, to request blessings, recite your guru's name mantra 21 or 108 times.]

Purification with Light from the Guru

By the force of my strong requests, from my lama's crown, throat, and heart chakras, white, red, and blue light radiates to my three centers [brow, throat, and heart], purifying them of all negativities. The vase, secret, and wisdom empowerments are received.

Then again, from the [OM, AH, HUM, and] SVA and HA [at the navel and lower chakra], various colored light rays emanate [like a rainbow] and enter my five places [purifying the five specific delusions]. I receive the four empowerments that enable me to achieve the four kayas [of a buddha].

You must do these visualizations of receiving the four empowerments and the guru entering your heart. This guru yoga is like the central pillar of the path, or a staircase leading to liberation. You must not be without it. Since all blessings and realizations arise from devotion to your guru, you should definitely practice it.

The Guru Entering the Heart

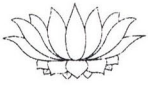
Glorious and precious, magnificent root guru,
Stay at the lotus in my heart.
With your great kindness, take care of me, and I request you,
Please grant me the powerful realizations of your divine body,
speech, and mind.

The guru becomes smaller and smaller. He sinks down through the crown of my head, down my central channel, and absorbs into my heart.

Self-Generation as Tara

[Here one should meditate on the death evolution and the three kayas.]

I immediately transform myself into divine transcendental Mother Tara.



Blessing the Inner Offering

[To eliminate interferences and spirits:]
OM VAJRA AMRITA KUNDALI HANA HANA HUM PHAT

[Shunyata mantra eliminating ordinary concepts and dual view:]
OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHA SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDHO HAM
[All existent phenomena are inherently pure, of non-dual character.]
All becomes void.

Out of the [non-dual] void [appears the seed syllable] YAM. From the YAM [comes] wind. [Above the YAM] [the seed syllable] RAM [appears]. From that [comes] fire. [OM AH HUM transform into three heads which support] the letter AH, from which comes a wisdom skullcup *[kapala]* [outside white, inside red], vast and spacious. Inside are the five meats and the five nectars: from the mixing of these arises a great ocean of wisdom nectar.

OM AH HUM *(3x)*

By [saying this] three times, the three syllables sink into the skullcup and bless the offerings.

Blessing the Outer Offerings

[To eliminate interferences and spirits:]
OM VAJRA AMRITA KUNDALI HANA HANA HUM PHAT

[Shunyata mantra eliminating ordinary concepts and dual view:]
OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHA SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDHO HAM
[All existent phenomena are inherently pure, of non-dual character.]
All becomes void.

Out of the [non-dual] void [the letter] KAM [appears]. From it [appear eight] skullcups. Inside [each is the letter] HUM, from which come the offering substances. These are void of inherent existence, but have the aspect of the individual offering substances. As these aspects function as objects of the six senses, they give uncontaminated inexhaustible bliss.

Bless the offerings, visualizing OM AH HUM sinking into each skullcup.

OM ARGHAM AH HUM	*nectar*
OM PADYAM AH HUM	*water*
OM VAJRA PUSHPE AH HUM	*flowers*
OM VAJRA DHUPE AH HUM	*incense*
OM VAJRA ALOKE AH HUM	*light*
OM VAJRA GANDHE AH HUM	*perfume*
OM VAJRA NAIVIDYA AH HUM	*food*
OM VAJRA SHAPTA AH HUM	*music*

Invocation

I am the divine Mother Tara. From the seed syllable TAM that is resting on the moon seat in my heart, light rays emanate. From the place of self-nature *[dharmakaya]*, [from] the divine mother who is indistinguishable from the lama [in my heart], the assembly of buddhas, bodhisattvas, and their entourage are invoked [and all space is filled with buddhas, bodhisattvas, protectors, and deities, all surrounding the principal deity, Chittamani Tara.]

Prostration

I prostrate to your indestructible lotus feet, O jewel-like guru.
By your great kindness the state of great bliss can be attained in one moment.

I prostrate to the mother holding the utpalas,
To the divine wisdom action of all the three times' buddhas,
Swift one, green in color, with one face and two arms,
My yidam from previous lives.

Offerings to the Merit Field

OM GURU ARYA TARA SAPARIVARA ARGHAM PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA
OM GURU ARYA TARA SAPARIVARA PADYAM PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA
OM GURU ARYA TARA SAPARIVARA PUSHPE PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA
OM GURU ARYA TARA SAPARIVARA DHUPE PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA

OM GURU ARYA TARA SAPARIVARA ALOKE PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA
OM GURU ARYA TARA SAPARIVARA GANDHE PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA
OM GURU ARYA TARA SAPARIVARA NAIVIDYA PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA
OM GURU ARYA TARA SAPARIVARA SHAPTA PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA

Prayer of the Bodhisattva Vows

I go for refuge to the Triple Gem.
I confess all negativities.
I rejoice in all the merits of all migrating beings.
I hold bodhichitta well in my mind.

Until I reach enlightenment
I go for refuge to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.
In order to attain the purposes of self and others
I will generate the awakening mind.

Having generated bodhichitta,
I will keep all sentient beings as my guest.
I will make use of the supreme bodhichitta action.
May I become a buddha for the sake of all migrating beings.

The Four Limitless Thoughts

May all mother sentient beings have happiness and its cause.
May all mother sentient beings be free from suffering and its cause.
May all sentient beings never be separated from the happiness that is without suffering.
May all mother sentient beings abide in equanimity, free from both attachment and hatred, not holding some close and others distant.

Absorption

The merit field sinks into me, and I am blessed [unified].

[As the merit field sinks into me, all universal phenomena, starting with my immediate surroundings] melt into light, enter my brow chakra and sink into me. [My radiance becomes strong, like a billion suns.]
This is the earth element sinking into the water element, and I experience an inner vision of a silver blue mirage.

Then Tara absorbs downward from her head and upward from her feet into her heart, into the seed syllable TAM. This is the water element sinking into the fire element, and a vision of smoke arises.

Then the A CHUNG ( ) absorbs into the letter TA.
This is the fire element being absorbed into the air element, and I see the vision of sparks in the darkness.

Then the TA absorbs from the bottom into the TA head, the horizontal stroke.
This is the air element being absorbed, and there is the vision of dim red-blue light, like the last flickering of a candle.

Then the TA head sinks into the crescent moon (*datse*), and I experience the white vision.

The crescent moon sinks into the dot *(tigle)*, and I see the red vision.

The dot absorbs into the flame *(nada)*, and there is the vision of dark and empty space.

Then the flame absorbs from the bottom upward, and I experience the vision of clear light, the vision of complete emptiness.

Then meditate on the three kayas.

[Shunyata mantra eliminating ordinary concepts and dual view:]

OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHA SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDHO HAM

[All existent phenomena are inherently pure, of non-dual character.]

All becomes void.

[Recite this mantra and contemplate until you touch its meaning.]

From the non-dual void appears the ground, blue like lapis lazuli, smooth like the palm of the hand, surrounded by a garden of lotuses and utpalas. A fragrant odor permeates the air. Around is an ocean of milk decorated with islands; various water birds are playing and flying around.

Think that all this is the reflection of your own dharmakaya wisdom appearing like a rainbow with each color seen distinctly one by one.

In the middle [of the ocean of milk,] [which is] clean and clear, [appears the letter] PAM, and from that an eight-petaled lotus. [In the middle] a TAM, [your own sambhogakaya nature], green in color, radiates light that accomplishes the two purposes [: making offerings to the tathagatas, who take the aspect of Arya Tara; and purifying all sentient beings, who also take the aspect of Tara.] The light absorbs back into the TAM, which itself absorbs, and a blue utpala flower and a TAM arise anew.

This TAM then melts into light, and I arise as the Divine Wisdom Mother, of emerald color, perfectly green, peaceful and loving, with one face and two arms. Half of my hair is tied up in a knot and decorated with precious ornaments and utpala flowers. My eyes are long and narrow.

My right hand is in the mudra of giving sublime realizations; my left at the heart is in the mudra of the Triple Gem. Each hand holds the stem of a blue utpala flower.

My breasts are full. I am adorned with all the precious ornaments and with various light scarves in different colors.

My right foot is stretched, and my left is bent. Behind me is a full moon. I have clearly and fully accomplished the [thirty-two] signs and [eighty] exemplifications [of a buddha].

At my crown is the essence of the indestructible body, a white OM; at my throat is the essence of indestructible speech, a red AH; at my heart is the essence of indestructible mind, a blue HUM.

From the TAM [in the tigle of the HUM at the heart] light radiates, and from the place of self-nature, *(dharmakaya)*, the principal Chittamani Tara and around her twenty Taras [are invoked.]
[Damaru and bell]

Invocation and Prostration

From the supreme abode of the Potala,
One born from the green letter TAM,
Your crown adorned by Amitabha Buddha,
Mother of the skillful actions of all buddhas of the three times,
Tara, please come with your entourage.

The gods and demigods with their crowns
Bow down to your lotus feet.
Divine Mother who liberates from all struggles and dissatisfaction,
To you, Mother Tara, I prostrate.

Seven-Limb Prayer

I prostrate with a pure state of mind to divine Arya Tara and all the buddhas and bodhisattvas abiding in the three times and ten directions.

I make offerings of flowers, incense, light, perfume, delicious food, music, and so on, actually performed and mentally transformed. Divine mother and your assembly, please accept these.

I confess the ten non-virtuous actions, the five immediate negative actions, and all other negative actions committed from beginningless time until now with a mind overwhelmed by delusions.

I rejoice in the merit of all virtuous actions accumulated in the three times by shravakas, pratyekabuddhas, bodhisattvas, and ordinary beings.

I request you to return the wheel of the great, small, and common vehicles according to the attitudes and propensities of the minds of all sentient beings.

I request you not to pass into nirvana until samsara ends, and to look with compassion upon all the beings who are immersed in the ocean of suffering.

By the merit I have gathered, having become the cause of enlightenment, may I swiftly become the glorious liberator of all sentient beings.

Praises to the Twenty-one Taras

Recite the complete praises to the Twenty-one Taras or alternatively, the condensed form in one verse that follows on p. 23. Chantable Tibetan and English versions of the Praises can be found on pages 70-1.

Recite this prayer [once and/or offer prostrations] and think like this: Praising and prostrating each time, like one spark of fire comes from another, a replica of [the respective] Tara manifests and sinks into you.

OM Homage to the Venerable Arya Tara

Homage to you, Tara, the swift heroine,
Whose eyes are like an instant flash of lightning,
Whose water-born face arises from the blooming lotus
Of Avalokiteshvara: Protector of the three worlds.

Homage to you, Tara, whose face is like
One hundred full autumn moons gathered together,
Blazing with the expanding light
Of a thousand stars assembled.

Homage to you, Tara, born from a golden-blue lotus,
Whose hands are beautifully adorned with lotus flowers,
You who are the embodiment of giving, joyous effort, asceticism,
Pacification, patience, concentration and all objects of practice.

Homage to you, Tara, the crown pinnacle of Those Thus Gone,
Whose deeds overcome infinite evils,
Who have attained transcendent perfections without exception,
And upon whom the sons of the Victorious Ones rely.

Homage to you, Tara who with the letters TUTTARA HUM
Fill the [realms of] desire, direction and space,
Whose feet trample on the seven worlds
And who are able to draw all beings to you.

Homage to you, Tara, venerated by Indra, Agni, Brahma, Vayu, and Ishvara,
Praised by the assembly of spirits, raised corpses,
Ghandaravas and all yakshas.

Homage to you, Tara, whose TRAD and PHAT
Destroy entirely the magical wheels of others
With your right leg bent and left out-stretched and pressing,
You burn intensely within a whirl of fire.

Homage to you, Tara, the great fearful one,
Whose letter TURE destroys the mighty demons completely,
Who with a wrathful expression on your water-born face
Slay all enemies without an exception.

Homage to you, Tara, whose fingers adorn your heart
With the gesture of the Sublime Precious Three,
Adorned with a wheel striking all directions without exception
With the totality of your own rays of light.

Homage to you, Tara, whose radiant crown ornament,
Joyful and magnificent, extends a garland of light,
And who, by your laughter of TUTTARA,
Conquer the demons and all of the worlds.

Homage to you, Tara, who are able to invoke
The entire assembly of local protectors,

Whose wrathful expression fiercely shakes,
Rescuing the impoverished through the letter HUM.

Homage to you, Tara, whose crown is adorned
With the crescent moon, wearing ornaments exceedingly bright;
From your hair knot the Buddha Amitabha
Radiates eternally with great beams of light.

Homage to you, Tara, who dwell within a blazing garland
That resembles the fire at the end of this world age;
Surrounded by joy, you sit with your right leg extended
And left withdrawn, completely destroying all the masses of enemies.

Homage to you, Tara, with hand on the ground by your side,
Pressing your heel and stamping your foot on the earth;
With a wrathful glance from your eyes you subdue
All seven levels through the syllable HUM.

Homage to you, Tara, O happy, virtuous and peaceful one,
The very object of practice, passed beyond sorrow.
You are perfectly endowed with SVAHA and OM,
Overcoming completely all the great evils.

Homage to you, Tara, surrounded by the joyous ones,
You completely subdue the bodies of all enemies;
Your speech is adorned with the ten syllables
And you rescue all through the knowledge-letter HUM.

Homage to you, Tara, stamping your feet and proclaiming TURE;
Your seed-syllable itself in the aspect of HUM
Causes Meru, Mandhara, and the Vindhya mountains
And all the three worlds to tremble and shake.

Homage to you, Tara, who hold in your hand
The hare-marked moon like the celestial ocean;
By uttering TARA twice and the letter PHAT
You dispel all poisons without an exception.

Homage to you, Tara, upon whom the kings of the assembled gods,
The gods themselves and all kinnaras rely;
Whose magnificent armour gives joy to all,
You who dispel all disputes and bad dreams.

Homage to you, Tara, whose two eyes – the sun and the moon –
Radiate an excellent, illuminating light;
By uttering HARA twice and TUTTARA,
You dispel all violent epidemic disease.

Homage to you, Tara, adorned by the three suchnesses,
Perfectly endowed with the power of serenity,
You who destroy the host of evil spirits, raises corpses and yakshas –
O TURE, most excellent and sublime!

Thus concludes this praise of the root mantra
and the offering of the twenty-one homages.

You may choose alternatively to recite the condensed single verse praise below.

Praise to the Mantra in One Verse:

OM CHOM DÄN DÄ MA PHAGMA DRÖLMA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO
CHHAG TSHÄL DRÖLMA TARE PÄLMO
TUTTARE YI JIG KÜN SELMA
TURE DÖN NAM THAM CHÄ TER MA
SVAHA YI GER CHE LA RAB DU

OM Homage to the lady Arya Tara.
Homage! Savioress TARE, heroine.
With TUTTARE dispelling all fears.
Granting all benefits with TURE.
To her with sound SVAHA, I bow.

Praises and Requests to the Assembly of Deities of the Venerable Mother of the Twenty-One Homages

rJe btsun ma phyag 'tshal nyer gcig gi lha tshogs la bstod cing gsol ba 'debs pa
by Matisara (Lodrö Gyatso)
Translation by Martin Willson

Homage to Arya Tara!

Praises

Well-born of the holy actions of all universal
Conquerors! Supreme refuge of all the three realms'
Beings! Venerable treasure of compassion! –
I bow at your lotus feet, Tara, mother of conqu'rors!

With divine actions quick as instant lightning,
You make the foes of the conquerors or objects of practice,
And Ganesh and others, all as obedient as slaves –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

Demons of sickness and plague and evil spirits,
Untimely death, bad dreams and obscurations –
All such dark adversity you quell! –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

All qualities, good collections, merits and power,
Glory, excellence, and two kinds of realizations,
And the aryas' seven treasures, you fully develop –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

Of beings and world you increase all the splendor and majesty,
Granting the special, deathless, supreme siddhi,
And you conquer in battle the Lord of Death! –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

As requisites for practitioners travelling to freedom,
You quickly summon each and every pleasing

And longed-for collection and do conducive actions –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

By the mere mental thought of you, you make
All assemblies of spirits, such as the ten
Directional guardians, gather with servile devotion –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

Should evil ones, thinking and acting to injure others,
Bring down on us magic spells, curses, imprecations
And so on, you turn all their power back upon themselves –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

From noxious beings, who injure the Conqueror's doctrine,
Perversely rebelling against right Dharma conduct,
You quickly separate the life and body –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

From outer and inner adversities and harm
Through producers of suffering physical and mental,
You guard and protect us in this and all future lives –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

If one seeks refuge in you, you quell his injurious
Maras, and perverse thought of tirthika conduct,
And then apply him to the perfect path –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

With torrents of rain of all desired precious things,
Such as food and wealth and stores of enjoyments and beasts,
You eliminate every poverty, hunger and thirst –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

You let us achieve every aim we intend, as we wish;
With mundane and supermundane auspiciousness and
Goodness, you fill the directions all the time –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

For hindering demons, obstructions and evil signs,
Just by one's mentally recollecting your form,
You put him in a vajra tent, without fear –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

With frowning, very active, open eyes,
You smash as if into atoms all bearers in min
Of cruelty, Ganesha and his hindering demons –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

All sins and obscurations of karma and klesha
Which throw one into the realms of woe, you cleanse
And purify, Mother, just through recalling your face –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

Deep wisdom which realized true nature's meaning; explaining,
Debating and writing; the wisdoms of listening, thinking,
And meditation – all these you increase and develop! –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

With power that shakes all the three worlds in an instant,
Every enemy, robber and thief, without
Exception, victorious mother, you bind and subdue –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

Harm from poison and contagion, and all
Poisoning by noxious nagas and earth-owning spirits,
You quickly allay till the very name does not exist –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

Mutual conflict, torment by the law
Through fear of the king, and bad dreams – on all such things
You perform the action of rapidly pacifying –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

Most violent and unbearable sickness and plagues
And every adverse and injurious group –
All these you protect from, and totally pacify! –

Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

Your universal actions, like calming spirits,
Corpse-raisers, yakshas and fears; increasing, subduing
And fierceness; and all aims, you accomplish at will –
Devout, I prostrate at your feet, Tara, mother of conquerors!

Song of Longing, and Making Requests

Alas! Lady Arya, listen a little to me!
All qualities of your body, speech, and mind
Are manifested for sentient beings' sake.

You understand well the thoughts of your disciples,
And in all the universal conquerors' holy
Actions, O goddess, you directly appear!

So, as soon as this name of Her Who Quickly Liberates
From the samsaric ocean falls on my ears,
Like the beloved in the heart of a lover,
Again and again, your moon-like body's reflection
Appears in the dancing lake of my mental devotion.

Since, in my previous lives without beginning,
I've gathered unwholesome karma through defilements,
Again and again I have fallen to realms of woe,
And experienced endless, unbearable, violent suffering.

Of the bodies I've taken in human migrations alone,
The blood and pus would, collected, exceed a great ocean;
The flesh and bones, heaped up, would be taller than Meru.

But though I have thus experienced violent suffering,
If, supreme refuge, you don't seize me with your compassion,
Still I shall have to wander much more than that.
Alas! O rescue me from the fears of samsara!

Of yore, in the perfect deity land of Tushita,
The supreme holy teacher gave utterance to

The conquerors' son Manjushri, pronouncing that those
Who praised with the supreme praises that are taught
In the King of Tantras would win immeasurable virtues.

If, although with my effort I've praised with these praises,
Recited and practiced, made offerings and requested,
You see the foul conduct of beings of times of decline
And, Arya Mother, act with indifference towards us,
Then what is the use of your names of 'Specially Loving
Towards Inferior Beings,' 'Swift One,' and 'Saviour'?

However, since your loving compassion is free
Of near and far, it applies to everyone;
Therefore, although, with inferior fortune, I suffer
From my karmic obscurations, at present
I've not found another refuge superior to you;

So in all future lives, superior deity, will you
Look after me without parting for even an instant,
And manifest your supreme face as visual nectar!

Rescuing from the eight fears, outer and inner;
Your twenty-one ways of action, and all such
Universal actions – just by thinking,
Make all these quickly spontaneously arise!

All that hinder my practice of the Dharma –
Assemblies of human beings, ghosts, and spirits,
And all interruptions such as the eight fears –
Please will you pacify without exception!

Especially, supreme refuge, from your compassion,
In my mindstream let not perverse thoughts
Be born for even an instant, but let only
Wholesome minds arise – inspire me thus!

Especially, on the sole base of all good collections'
Arising, a qualified, supreme, holy guru,

Let me rely correctly with thoughts and actions
And follow him as he wishes – inspire me thus!

The base with which buddhahood can be achieved in one life,
This opportune, fortunate rebirth, found but once,
Perishes fast as lightning. Let me produce
This thought, and grasp its essence – inspire me thus!

Driven by fear of woeful rebirth after death,
Let me abandon nonvirtue and practice virtue,
Confess with regret all the sins I've created before,
And be able to stop them henceforth – inspire me thus!

Like seeing filthy sewage as amrita,
Let me not see samsara's perfections as bliss,
But produce the mind that wants to be free of it quickly,
And train in the Conqueror's doctrine – inspire me thus!

Since they are tortured by suffering and poor in happiness,
Let me produce well the thought of supreme awakening,
Which sets in buddhahood sentient beings, my mothers,
And train in the powerful conduct – inspire me thus!

Especially, let the path uniting calm
And insight – the middle view, excellent and profound –
Be born within my mindstream well and truly,
And grasping at extremes uprooted – inspire me thus!

Then let me enter the Supreme Vehicle teaching
And ripen my mind with the rivers of pure empowerments,
Protecting the vows and pledges that I've taken
As the apple of my eye – inspire me thus!

Let me understand right the two stages, heart of the various
Tantras, then quickly, by good meditation, produce
In my mindstream the state of union of the four kayas,
A wish-fulfilling jewel – inspire me thus!

Showing before each mother sentient being
Countless emanations, when I'm buddha earlier,
Let me transfer them to buddhahood, through the abandonment
Of all their two obscurations – inspire me thus!

Let the realm where I accomplish a conqueror's deeds,
My entourage, the measure of my incarnation,
And so on, all far surpass even Sugata All-Seeing's –
To gain these excellent qualities, please inspire me!

From now until I reach the supreme point of enlightenment,
Let me know well that the root of all good collections,
Samsaric and beyond, is only the Conqueror's doctrine,
And strive to support and enact it – inspire me thus!

Wealth, respect, fame, desires, entertainments, diversions –
Let me not enter such actions blamed by the holy,
But sticking to solitude, think well on meanings I've learned,
And do the essential practice – inspire me thus!

Let me realize easily and correctly
The subtlest intentions of the Conqueror!
May all qualities, such as the aryas' treasures,
Completely fill my mindstream – inspire me thus!

Through the infinite virtues arisen from this,
May I and all other beings without exception
Be well upheld by the holy protector's compassion,
Never becoming separate from the pure path!

Original colophon:
One overcome by obscurations, called Matisara, made this request for his own wishes in the Nyima Ding (Sun Plateau) retreat.

Drawing by Andy Weber

Mandala Offering

Then [you offer the mandala]:

Long Mandala Offering in Twenty-three Heaps

Zhing kham ül war gyi wo ...
OM vajra bhumi AH HUM / wang chhen ser gyi sa zhi

OM vajra rekhe AH HUM / chhi chag ri khor yug gi kor wäi ü su / rii gyäl po ri rab / shar lü phag po / lho dzam bu ling / nub ba lang chö / jang dra mi nyän / lü dang lü phag / nga yab dang nga yab zhän / yo dän dang lam chhog dro / dra mi nyän dang dra mi nyän gyi da

Shar du lang po rin po chhe / lhor kyin dag rin po chhe / nub tu ta rin po chhe / jang du tsün mo rin po chhe /shar lhor mag pön rin po chhe / lho nub tu khor lo rin po chhe / nub jang du nor bu rin po chhe / jang shar du ter chen pöi bum pa
Nang gi shar du nyi ma / nub tu da wa

Dag zhän lü ngag yi sum long chö du sum ge tshog chä
Rin chhen mandala zang po kün zang chhö päi tshog chä pa
Lo yi lang nä la ma yi dam kön chhog sum la bül
Thug jei wang gi zhe nä dag la jin gyi lab tu söl

Short Mandala Offering

Sa zhi pö kyi jug shing me tog tram
Ri rab ling zhi nyi dä gyän pa di
Sang gyä zhing du mig te ül wa yi
Dro kün nam dag zhing la chö par shog

IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIRYATAYAMI

Mandala Offering

Then [you offer the mandala]:

Long Mandala Offering in Twenty-three Heaps

Let us offer a buddha-field ...
OM vajra ground AH HUM, mighty golden ground. OM vajra fence AH HUM.

Outside it is encircled by a wall of iron mountains. At the center is Meru, king of mountains; the eastern continent, Videha (Tall-body Land), the southern, Jambudvipa (Rose-apple Land), the western, Godaniya (Cattle-gift Land), the northern, Kuru; [the eastern minor continents] Deha and Videha, [the southern], Chamara and Aparachamara (Chowrie-land and western Chowrie-land), [the western], Satha and Uttara-mantrin (Lands of the Deceitful and the Skilled in Mantra), [and the northern], Kuru and Kaurava. In the east, the the precious elephant; in the south, the precious housekeeper, in the west, the precious horse; in the north, the precious queen.

In the southeast, the precious general; in the southwest, the precious wheel; in the northwest, the precious jewel; in the northeast, the great treasure vase. In the east, the sun; in the west, the moon.

My own and others' body, speech, and mind, wealth, and virtues of the three times,
This pure, precious mandala and a mass of Samantabhadra offerings,
I mentally take and offer to my guru-yidam and the Three Precious Ones,
Please accept them through compassion and bestow your inspiration.

Short Mandala Offering

This ground, anointed with perfume, strewn with flowers,
Adorned with Mount Meru, four continents, the sun and the moon:
I imagine this as a buddha-field and offer it.
May all living beings enjoy this pure land!

IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIRYATAYAMI

Request

You, the wisdom mother,
Who gives birth to those blissfully gone, all the buddhas of the three times.
Great treasure of divine compassion, O transcendental Mother Tara, I request you:
Please purify my negativities and obscurations.

This request is made with much respect and appreciation.

Purification [by the principal Tara in front of you]

[Focus on the principal Tara in space in front]

The left hand [is] in the mudra of giving refuge. At my request, from [the thumb and] ring finger much light goes out, enters my brow chakra and hooks into my central channel *[shushuma]*. Powerful nectar flows like a stream of milk, and as my whole body is filled, all negativities, the two obscurations, and all stains are purified. Then my body becomes clear like crystal glass.
Contemplate this.

Absorption of the Merit Field of the Twenty-one Taras

The twenty surrounding Taras melt into light and sink into the principal Tara. The principal Tara [melts into light] [and] sinks into me, and we become non-dual.

JAH HUM BAM HOH

Invocation

From the seed syllable at my heart light beams are emitted and invoke [the mandala of the] lords of the five buddha families, with Amitabha as the principal deity.

Then I make offerings.

OM PANCHA KULA SAPARIVARA ARGHAM (etc.) PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA

Make request for initiation.

I request you, please grant me initiation.
Thus requested, the empowering deities lift up their vases filled with wisdom amrita.

OM SARVA TATHAGATA ABHISHEKATA SAMAYA SHRIYE AH HUM

As the amrita is poured, the initiation is made. As my body is filled, all stains are purified. From the excess amrita forming a swirl [appears] Amitabha Buddha who adorns my crown [and is seated on a lotus and moon].
Then all the initiation deities [the five tathagatas] melt into light and sink into me.

Again I make offerings:

[To eliminate interferences and spirits:]
OM VAJRA AMRITA KUNDALI HANA HANA HUM PHAT

[Shunyata mantra eliminating ordinary concepts and dual view:]
OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHA SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDHO HAM
[All existent phenomena are inherently pure, of non-dual character.]
All becomes void.

Out of the [non-dual] void [the letter] KAM [appears] and from it [eight] skullcups. [Inside each is the letter] HUM, from which [come] offering substances. These are void of inherent existence [void of self-nature], but have the aspect of the individual offering substances. As these aspects function as the object of the six senses they give uncontaminated, inexhaustible bliss.

[I bless each offering, visualizing OM AH HUM sinking into each skullcup.]

OM ARGHAM AH HUM
OM PADYAM AH HUM
OM VAJRA PUSHPE AH HUM
OM VAJRA DHUPE AH HUM

OM VAJRA ALOKE AH HUM
OM VAJRA GANDHE AH HUM
OM VAJRA NAIVIDYA AH HUM
OM VAJRA SHAPTA AH HUM

Offerings

OM ARYA TARE SAPARIVARA ARGHAM (PADYAM, PUSHPE, DHUPE, ALOKE, GANDHE, NAIVIDYA, SHAPTA) PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA

Inner Offering

OM ARYA TARE SAPARIVARA OM AH HUM

[Visualize that Arya Tara appears from my heart and offers the skullcup with the blissful wisdom-amrita to the twenty Taras outside.]

Prostration and Praise

I prostrate to the mother holding the utpalas,
Swift one, green in color, with one face and two arms,
To divine wisdom action of all the three times' buddhas,
My yidam from previous lives.

The rainbow body of the deity lacks self-nature, and is of non-dual character, [a unity of non-duality and clean clear light vision]. If you can contemplate on it as much as possible, as it is essential. If you cannot do that, enter into the recitation of mantras.

Meditation on the Body Mandala

The meditation should be done as follows.

I am the deity. From the crown chakra of my clear light body, the chakra of great bliss, thirty-two branch nadis go out. In the center appears a white TAM. This transforms into a white Tara with thirty-two Taras in similar aspect around.

From the heart chakra, the Dharma chakra, eight branch nadis go out. In the center appears a blue TAM. This transforms into a blue Tara with eight Taras in similar aspect around.

From the navel chakra, the chakra of emanation, sixty-four branch nadis go out. In the center appears a yellow TAM. This transforms into a yellow Tara with sixty-four Taras in similar aspect around.

From the lower chakra [the secret place] the chakra which holds bliss, thirty-two branch nadis go out. In the center appears a green TAM. This transforms into a green Tara, with thirty-two Taras in similar aspect around.

At the heart, in the center of the Dharma chakra, at the heart of the blue Tara is a crystal clear moon mandala: on it stands [a blue HUM, in its tigle is the green seed syllable] TAM. Around the edge of the moon, standing counter clockwise, are the ten letters of the mantra.

Contemplate this visualization.

From the deities of the five chakras and the mantra garland much light is radiating which touches all the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions. All the victorious ones and their sons are invoked. As a great rain showers down and sinks into me, it blesses [my chakras, my psychic points, and] my mindstream.

Contemplate this.

[Again] from the divine mother at the heart, countless similar aspects [Taras] are sent forth and go out through the right nostril. They purify the hatred of all angersome sentient beings, who discover the dharmadatu wisdom and achieve the state of Akshobhya Buddha; assuming the body of Blue Tara, they all recite the mantra together. When all the deities, who emanated from myself, are assembled they sink into the deity of my own heart.

From the divine mother at my ***crown,*** countless Taras in similar aspect emanate, and they purify the closed-mindedness of all closed-minded

sentient beings, who discover the mirror-like wisdom and achieve the state of Vairocana; assuming the body of White Tara, they recite the mantra together. All the deities who emanated from me return and sink into the deity at my own crown.

From the divine mother at my ***navel,*** countless Taras in similar aspect emanate, and they purify the miserliness of all miserly sentient beings, who discover the wisdom of equality and achieve the state of Ratnasambhava; assuming the body of Yellow Tara, they all recite the mantra together. All the deities who emanated from me return and sink into the deity at my own navel.

From the divine mother at my ***throat,*** countless Taras in similar aspect emanate, and they purify the craving desire of all sentient beings with craving desire; they discover [the wisdom perceiving distinctly] the discriminating wisdom and achieve the state of Amitabha; assuming the body of Red Tara they recite the mantra together. All the deities who emanated from me return and sink into the deity at my own throat.

From the divine mother at my ***lower chakra*** countless Taras in similar aspect emanate and they purify the jealousy of all jealous sentient beings, who discover the all-accomplishing wisdom and achieve the state of Amoghasiddhi; assuming the body of Green Tara they all recite the mantra together. All the deities who emanated from me return and sink into the deity at my own lower chakra.

All the deities [in my nervous system] are divine Mother Tara and are in essence the buddhas of the five families. They all recite the mantra together.

OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SVAHA

Meaning of the Mantra

OM: magnificent; total purity and unity of body, speech and mind.
TARE: liberated or liberator of lower scope beings.
TUTTARE: more greatly liberated or greatest liberator of middle scope beings.
TURE: most greatly liberated or greatest liberator of higher scope beings. In these three words the whole Lam.rim is contained with all three scopes.
SVAHA: the foundation of all siddhis of Tara; this foundation is in your heart.

As much as possible meditate on this while reciting the mantra. Do a retreat with sign until you receive a sign; or a counting retreat of one million mantras; or a timed retreat of six months.

Before the session finishes recite the hundred-syllable mantra of Padmasattva three times.

OM PADMA SATTVA SAMAYA / MANUPALAYA / PADMA SATTVA TVENOPATISHTHA / DRIDHO ME BHAVA / SUTOSHYO ME BHAVA / SUPOSHYO ME BHAVA / ANURAKTO ME BHAVA / SARVA SIDDHIM ME PRAYACCHA / SARVA KARMA SUCHAME / CHITTAM SHRIYAM KURU HUM / HA HA HA HA HOH / BHAGAVAN / SARVA TATHAGATA / PADMA MAME MUNCHA / PADMA BHAVA / MAHA SAMAYA SATTVA AH HUM PHAT *(3x)*

Offerings

OM ARYA TARE SAPARIVARA ARGHAM (PADYAM, PUSHPE, DHUPE, ALOKE, GANDHE, NAIVIDYA, SHAPTA) PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA

Inner Offering

OM ARYA TARE SAPARIVARA OM AH HUM

Prostration and Praise

I prostrate to the mother holding the utpalas,
Swift one, green in color, with one face and two arms,
To divine wisdom action of all the three times' buddhas,
My yidam from previous lives.

Torma Offering

If you wish to offer torma then [do as follows]:

[To eliminate interferences and spirits:]
OM VAJRA AMRITA KUNDALI HANA HANA HUM PHAT

[Shunyata mantra eliminating ordinary concepts and dual view:]
OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHA SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDHO HAM
[All existent phenomena are inherently pure, of non-dual character.]
All becomes void.

Out of the [non-dual] void [the letter] YAM [appears]. From the YAM [comes] wind. [Above the YAM] [the seed syllable] RAM [appears]. From that [comes] fire. [OM AH HUM transform into three heads which support] the letter AH, from which comes a wisdom kapala [outside white, inside red], vast and spacious. Inside are the five meats and the five nectars: from the mixing of these arises a great ocean of wisdom amrita.

OM AH HUM *(3x)*

By saying this three times, the three letters sink into the skullcup and bless the offering.

From the seed syllable at my heart light emanates, and the assembly of buddhas and bodhisattvas, and the divine mother are invoked. From her indestructible tongue a straw made of light comes and Tara drinks the [amrita] offering:

OM ARYA TARE SAPARIVARA IDAM BALIMTA KHA KHA KHAHI KHAHI *(3x)*

Offerings

OM ARYA TARE SAPARIVARA ARGHAM (PADYAM, PUSHPE, DHUPE, ALOKE, GANDHE, NAIVIDYA, SHAPTA) PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA

Inner Offering

OM ARYA TARE SAPARIVARA OM AH HUM

Praise to the Twenty-one Taras

Recite here the Homages to the Twenty-one Taras. With each verse, a replica of that Tara is emanated from the Twenty-one Taras before you, just as one flame lights another, and sinks into you. Chantable Tibetan and English version s of the Praise can be found on pages 70-1.

From your sublime abode at the Potala,
O Tara - born from the green letter TAM
Whose light rescues all beings -
Come with your retinue, I beg you.

The gods and demi-gods bow
To your lotus feet, O Tara,
You who rescue all who are destitute.
To you, Mother Tara, I pay homage.

OM Homage to the Venerable Arya Tara

Homage to you, Tara, the swift heroine,
Whose eyes are like an instant flash of lightning,
Whose water-born face arises from the blooming lotus
Of Avalokiteshvara: Protector of the three worlds.

Homage to you, Tara, whose face is like
One hundred full autumn moons gathered together,
Blazing with the expanding light
Of a thousand stars assembled.

Homage to you, Tara, born from a golden-blue lotus,
Whose hands are beautifully adorned with lotus flowers,
You who are the embodiment of giving, joyous effort, asceticism,
Pacification, patience, concentration and all objects of practice.

Homage to you, Tara, the crown pinnacle of Those Thus Gone,
Whose deeds overcome infinite evils,
Who have attained transcendent perfections without exception,
And upon whom the sons of the Victorious Ones rely.

Homage to you, Tara who with the letters TUTTARA HUM
Fill the [realms of] desire, direction and space,
Whose feet trample on the seven worlds
And who are able to draw all beings to you.

Homage to you, Tara, venerated by Indra, Agni, Brahma, Vayu and Ishvara,
Praised by the assembly of spirits, raised corpses,
Ghandaravas and all yakshas.

Homage to you, Tara, whose TRAD and PHAT
Destroy entirely the magical wheels of others
With your right leg bent and left out-stretched and pressing,
You burn intensely within a whirl of fire.

Homage to you, Tara, the great fearful one,
Whose letter TURE destroys the mighty demons completely,
Who with a wrathful expression on your water-born face
Slay all enemies without an exception.

Homage to you, Tara, whose fingers adorn your hearty
With the gesture of the Sublime Precious Three,
Adorned with a wheel striking all directions without exception

With the totality of your own rays of light.

Homage to you, Tara, whose radiant crown ornament,
Joyful and magnificent, extends a garland of light,
And who, by your laughter of TUTTARA,
Conquer the demons and all of the worlds.

Homage to you, Tara, who are able to invoke
The entire assembly of local protectors,
Whose wrathful expression fiercely shakes,
Rescuing the impoverished through the letter HUM.

Homage to you, Tara, whose crown is adorned
With the crescent moon, wearing ornaments exceedingly bright;
From your hair knot the Buddha Amitabha
Radiates eternally with great beams of light.

Homage to you, Tara, who dwell within a blazing garland
That resembles the fire at the end of this world age;
Surrounded by joy, you sit with your right leg extended
And left withdrawn, completely destroying all the masses of enemies.

Homage to you, Tara, with hand on the ground by your side,
Pressing your heel and stamping your foot on the earth;
With a wrathful glance from your eyes you subdue
All seven levels through the syllable HUM.

Homage to you, Tara, O happy, virtuous and peaceful one,
The very object of practice, passed beyond sorrow.
You are perfectly endowed with SVAHA and OM,
Overcoming completely all the great evils.

Homage to you, Tara, surrounded by the joyous ones,
You completely subdue the bodies of all enemies;
Your speech is adorned with the ten syllables
And you rescue all through the knowledge-letter HUM.

Homage to you, Tara, stamping your feet and proclaiming TURE;

Your seed-syllable itself in the aspect of HUM
Causes Meru, Mandhara, and the Vindhya mountains
And all the three worlds to tremble and shake.

Homage to you, Tara, who hold in your hand
The hare-marked moon like the celestial ocean;
By uttering TARA twice and the letter PHAT
You dispel all poisons without an exception.

Homage to you, Tara, upon whom the kings of the assembled gods,
The gods themselves and all Kinnaras rely;
Whose magnificent armour gives joy to all,
You who dispel all disputes and bad dreams.

Homage to you, Tara, whose two eyes – the sun and the moon –
Radiate an excellent, illuminating light;
By uttering HARA twice and TUTTARA,
You dispel all violent epidemic disease.

Homage to you, Tara, adorned by the three suchnesses,
Perfectly endowed with the power of serenity,
You who destroy the host of evil spirits, raises corpses and yakshas –
O TURE, most excellent and sublime!

Thus concludes this praise of the root mantra
and the offering of the twenty-one homages.

You may choose alternatively to recite the condensed single verse praise below.

Praise to the Mantra in One Verse:

OM CHOM DÄN DÄ MA PHAGMA DRÖLMA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO
CHHAG TSHÄL DRÖLMA TARE PÄLMO
TUTTARE YI JIG KÜN SELMA
TURE DÖN NAM THAM CHÄ TER MA
SVAHA YI GER CHE LA RAB DU

OM Homage to the lady Arya Tara.
Homage! Savioress TARE, heroine.
With TUTTARE dispelling all fears.
Granting all benefits with TURE.
To her with sound SVAHA, I bow.

Making Requests

O compassionate and venerable subduing goddeses,
May the infinite beings, including myself,
Soon purify the two obscurations and complete both collections
So that we may attain full and perfect enlightenment.

For all of my lifetimes, until I reach this stage,
May I know the sublime happiness of humans and gods.
And so I might become fully omniscient,
Please pacify quickly all obstacles, spirits,

Obstructions, epidemics, diseases, and so forth,
The various causes of untimely death,
Bad dreams and omens, the eight fears and other afflictions,
And make it so that they no longer exist.

May the mundane and supramundane collections
Of all excellent auspicious qualities and happiness
Increase and develop, and may all wishes
Be fulfilled naturally and effortlessly,
without an exception.

May I strive to realize and increase the sacred Dharma,
Accomplishing your stage and beholding your sublime face:
May my understanding of emptiness and the precious
Mind of enlightenment increase like the moon waxing full.

May I be reborn from an extremely beautiful and holy lotus
In the joyous and noble mandala of the Conqueror,
And may I attain whatever prophesy I receive
In the presence of Amitabha, Buddha of Infinite Light.

O deity, whom I have accomplished from previous lifetimes –
The enlightened action of the buddhas of the three times,
Blue-green, one face and two arms, the swift pacifier –
O mother holding an utpala flower, may you be auspicious!

Whatever your body, O mother of conquerors,
Whatever your retinue, your life span and pure land,
Whatever your name, most noble and holy –
May I and all others attain only these.

By the force of these praises and requests made to you
May all diseases, poverty, fighting and quarrels be calmed,
And may the precious Dharma and everything auspicious increase
Throughout the worlds and directions where I and all others dwell.

The Garland of Jewels:
A Song of Longing for Venerable Arya Tara

rJe btsun sgrol ma'i gdung 'bod ratna'i phreng [ba] zhes bya ba
by Matisara (Lodrö Gyatso)
Translation by Martin Willson

Homage to Guru Manjughosha!

Dispelling the eight fears of whoever remembers you,
Treasure of love, never tired of helping others,
Constant protector, venerable Tara –
I touch my head to the lotus of your feet.
Listen a little, while I lament my sorrows!

While in the endless dense forest of samsara,
I wander, careless, drenched in both kinds of defilements,
Arya Mother, where is your hook of compassion?

Ah me! Alas! O loving, kind-natured mother!
All the conquerors of the ten directions
Ordained and appointed you a refuge for beings.

Unattached to enjoying your own nirvanic bliss,
You help migrators, I've long heard it said.
So, turning my mind in your direction, I
Renounce other refuges and seek refuge in you.

If now, Arya Mother, without a glance
You abandon me amid my mass of sins,
Where has your loving Mother's Compassion gone?
If you clamp down your surging bodhichitta,
In your sacred office, is this quite the thing?

Of yore, you've shown your face and cared for people
Times past counting, here in Tibet, I've heard.
Arya, is this a lie, or have you favorites?

Well, if you're specially kind to inferior beings,
Then, this minute, come and show your face!
With the nectar of your voice, give me refreshment,
Wash off all my stains of evil actions!

Next, as soon as I leave this life's formations,
In his wonderful pure land, Sukhavati,
Near the protector, Amitabha Buddha,
May I taste his speech's nectar – inspire me thus!

From that most excellent realm, to other pure lands
Let me be able to travel through magical power,
And saving migrating beings by my emanations,
Let me become like Lord Avalokita!

Throughout all my lifetimes yet to come,
Let me meet the Venerable Lady,
Tara, hear her speech, be cared for by her,
And carry out her orders – inspire me thus!

With rank, wealth, fortune, wisdom, great compassion,
Faith, renunciation, and firm intention,
Let me always strive to achieve enlightenment,
While ev'ry hindrance is quelled – inspire me thus!

From my ordination, as long as I live,
Contrary to my pratimoksha vows
Let me not perform the slightest action,
But practice the common path – inspire me thus!

The best of samsara's a razor-edge sticking up;
This life's appearances just a play of illusion –
This knowledge born in my mind, let me strive in the means
Of reaching omniscience – please inspire me thus!

In the six perfections which ripen one's own mindstream,
And four attractions whose purpose is helping others,
Let me train with the force of continuous effort,

Growing them right in my mindstream – inspire me thus!

Then, let me enter swiftly the profound
Uncommon path, the path of the Vajra Vehicle,
And from a fully qualified spiritual friend
Receive the four pure empowerments – inspire me thus!

Through practicing well the path of the first tantric stage,
May I purify all the stains of birth, death, and bardo,
And seeing the circle of deities of great bliss,
Train in the second stage – inspire me thus!

One the second stage also, as taught in the tantras,
Let me gain the full experience of each level,
And having perfected the learning union, gain
The union beyond learning – inspire me thus!

After that, to many impure lands
Let me send out many emanations,
And by the mantra path linked with the view of emptiness
Guide ev'ry sentient being – inspire me thus!

Through your compassion, Venerable Lady,
May my sincere words, just as I've expressed them,
Be fulfilled! In short, may all my wishes
Without exception easily come to pass!

This is a song of longing, the Garland of Jewels.
When a faithful disciple strongly urged
That an exhortation to the venerable supreme Mother of conquerors of the three times
Would have immeas'rable blessings, and in that way
One should strive devotedly with the three doors,
The Buddhist monk, Lo-dr'ö Gyats'o, composed it, having
With unchanging faith in the Manjughosha guru
Tsongk'a-pa, long revered as his special deity
Venerable Tara, so that by
These merits, all beings may gain omniscience.

A Song of Longing for Tara, the Infallible

Dung bö lu me ma
by Losang Tänpa Gyältsän

Namo Guru Arya Tareya

From my heart I bow to the Divine Mother Tara, essence of love and compassion, the most precious objects of refuge gathered into one. From now until I reach enlightenment hook me with your great love and kindness to liberate me.

By the witness of the Three Jewels, not just from my mouth but from the depth of my most innermost heart and bones I pray to you morning and evening. Show your blissful face to me. Loving one grant me the nectar of your speech.

Great gurus and small gurus cheat us with their made-up teachings, selling Dharma, teaching without comprehension, not observing who is qualified and who is not, being concerned about their own happiness and the eight worldly dharmas.

Since I cannot trust friends of this degenerate age any more, you are my principal guru. Bless me: divine mother, essence of love, arise the great power of your compassion and think of me.

I take refuge in you, Tara; like you, no buddha could ever deceive me. But by understanding the odd character of these times most buddhas went into the bliss of nirvana – even though they have great compassion, we have no connection.

Since for me there are no other deities, you are my principal deity. Bestow realizations upon me. Divine mother, essence of love, arise the great power of your compassion and think of me.

Most Dharma protectors do not show their powers; tired of those who evoke them, they do not act. Other protectors, lacking insight,

but proud of their power, may be friendly for a while, but will later do me harm.

But since I cannot rely on other protectors you are my principal protector; with divine action, wisdom mother, essence of love, arise the great power of your compassion and think of me.

To ordinary view the names of objects are the same as their meaning, [like this] they produce delusions and bind to samsara. When it is time to die, unless I understand true nature, can a wish-fulfilling gem let me carry even a sesame seed?

But since I do not trust in illusions, you are my real richness; please grant my desires. Divine mother, essence of love, arise the great power of your compassion and think of me.

I cannot rely on non-virtuous friends for even a day, they pretend they are close to me and all the while have in mind the opposite; [they are] friends when they wish it and enemies when they don't.

But since I cannot trust in this kind of friend, you are my best friend; be close to me, divine mother, essence of love, raise the great power of your compassion and think of me.

You are my guru, my yidam, my protector, my refuge, my food, my clothes, my possessions, and my friend; since your divine quality is everything to me, let me spontaneously achieve all that I wish.

Although I am overwhelmed by my habitual, uncontrolled mind, please cut these self-cherishing thoughts so I'll be able to give my body and life millions of times without any difficulty, to each sentient being; bless me to be able to develop this kind of compassion to benefit all.

Empower me to cut the root of samsara, the ego-grasping, and to understand the pure doctrine; the most difficult middle way, free from the errors of extremes.

Bless me to practice as a bodhisattva, turned away from the world,

dedicating all my virtues to the teaching of living beings, never for even one instant thinking of my own happiness; let me wish to attain buddhahood for the sake of others.

Empower me to actualize as much as possible the most subtle ordinations and to keep them without a careless mind, thus becoming the most perfect bodhisattva.

Let me be simple in my practice on the outside and inwardly actualize the depth of the diamond vehicle, having the strong wish to practice the two paths, bless me to attain enlightenment quickly for the benefit of all.

Divine wisdom Mother Tara, you know everything about my life, my ups and downs, my good and bad; think lovingly of me, my only mother.

I give myself to you and all who trust in me, divine wisdom Mother Tara, being completely open to you, let us be born in the highest pure land; set me there quickly with no births in between.

May the hook of your compassion and your skilful means transform my mind into dharma and transform the minds of all beings; whoever they are, they have all been my mother [the mother of one unable to follow the Conqueror's teaching.]

By reciting this prayer three times a day and by remembering the divine wisdom Mother Tara, may I and all beings who are connected to me reach whatever pure land we wish.

May the three precious jewels and especially the divine wisdom mother, whose essence is compassion, hold me dear, until I reach enlightenment; may I quickly conquer the four maras.

If, as long as you live, you recite this prayer three times every day, not just from the mouth [in words only], but strongly linked with your mind, you will have a close connection and you will see Tara's face. No hindrances will be received, and all wishes will be fulfilled.

Then continue to pray as much as possible.

Dedication

By this virtue may I quickly
Become the venerable Tara,
And may I lead every migrating being
Without exception to her most supreme state.

Prayer Containing All the Subjects of Chittamani Tara

Due to the immaculate merits of meditating on the sublime form of Arya Tara, adorned with beautiful marks flowing from the lake of a pure mind, by reciting the verses of praise and by making offerings, may I be cared for by a most perfectly qualified Vajrayana teacher.

Through his great kindness, developing aversion to the perfections of samsara, may I generate strong renunciation which propels my mind to generate the wishing and actual thought of supreme enlightenment. After that may I live by the conduct of the four means of assembling [disciples,] [the four qualities of a bodhisattva, and the six paramitas].

Then having perfectly matured my mind by means of the four perfect initiations, and the general and uncommon methods of the body-mandala received from a fully qualified Vajrayana teacher, may I protect the vows of my samaya as I protect my eyes.

By properly practicing the supreme method of guru yoga that leads to the realization of the unity of non-duality and great bliss, may I be blessed with siddhis falling like rain upon my mind.

Having made preparations for the great retreat, by completing the preliminaries and the four main practices [recitation, offerings, reciting praises, and meditating on the body mandala], which are contained in the clear, unified, non-dual yoga meditation, then may I spontaneously be successful in attaining the twenty-seven accomplishments, such as pacification, rainmaking, and so on, and complete the evolutionary yoga method.

The Completion Stage

Having purified the interferences of the three [upper] and four [lower] chakras of my precious vajra body, then concentrating on the seed syllable TAM at the chakra of emanation [the navel chakra], [heat is produced] which automatically generates great bliss at the crown chakra, extinguishing all sluggishness and distracted thought.

Then the power of bringing to their upper and lower [male and female] airs causes all energy to enter, remain, and totally sink into the *shushuma* and I absorb completely into the navel chakra. By the transformation and the subsequent actions may I receive the illusory body of the deity, insubstantial and non-dual, unified with the clear light and the four emptinesses.

In the seed at the crown is an AH, at the navel HA, as they burn and melt heat rises; and as moonlight, kundalini energy melts at the crown and flows down; thus bliss rises in all chakras. This stream of nectar having perfectly melted descends to the four chakras, at the crown, throat, heart and navel, unifying the four stages of bliss with the four emptinesses. Through this may I actualize the union of bliss and voidness.

As the blissful energy spreads, it embraces the whole nervous system, it rises to the crown chakra and the essence of the divine energy completely pervades the whole body: by this may I experience the innate transcendental bliss.

At that time, having gained control over the winds, the energy and the chakras, by correctly relying on the good path of a field – or mantra-born dakini, may I discover in this life the state of Vajradhara.

Otherwise, by training the rainbow body, through the path of transference [of the consciousness], may I quickly enter the pure land; or in transforming the bardo body into the sambhogakaya, may I actualize and accomplish all skilful means.

Conclusion

In brief, until I discover complete buddhahood, [having extinguished all delusions and accomplished everything] may I be held and blessed by Arya Tara. May I complete the stages and paths without interference and attain the unity-state of the four kayas.

By the blessings of the buddhas and their magnificent sons,
By the truth of the infallible law of interdependent arising,
And by the power of my pure motivation,
May all wishes of this immaculate prayer be fulfilled.

Having recited this, then [recite]:

OM PADMA SATTVA SAMAYA / MANUPALAYA / PADMA SATTVA TVENOPATISHTHA / DRIDHO ME BHAVA / SUTOSHYO ME BHAVA / SUPOSHYO ME BHAVA / ANURAKTO ME BHAVA / SARVA SIDDHIM ME PRAYACCHA / SARVA KARMA SUCHAME / CHITTAM SHRIYAM KURU HUM / HA HA HA HA HOH / BHAGAVAN / SARVA TATHAGATA / PADMA MAME MUNCHA / PADMA BHAVA / MAHA SAMAYA SATTVA AH HUM PHAT *(3x)*

Prayer for Forgiveness and Request for Realizations

For all those offerings not fully done and those degenerated,
For all those done or caused to be done with my ignorant mind,
I request you, please forgive me.

For all I have done too much or too little,
For all the degenerate practice of the yoga method,
And for whatever I have forgotten to do,
I request you, please forgive me.

Bestow on me the most perfect realizations
And the result of single-pointed concentration.
Whatever all sentient beings may wish,
Bestow on them peerless realizations.

Thus, the prayer for forgiveness and request for attainment was recited.

OM VAJRA MUH

The transcendental wisdom beings return to the place of self nature. The samaya beings sink into me.

Contemplate this.

Absorption

From my heart as the deity, light radiates. It goes out into space, embracing all the universal environment. All becomes a pure land, and all sentient beings become Chittamani Tara. Then all the environment melts into light and sinks into the manifestations of Tara; these melt into light and sink into me.

All the deities of the five chakras absorb into the principal deity at my heart. Then my body melts into light from above and below and sinks into the deity at my heart. This absorbs into the TAM. The TAM dissolves into the HUM. The U of the HUM absorbs into the HA. The HA into the head. The head absorbs into the crescent (*datse*). That absorbs into the *tigle* (the dot). That absorbs into the *nada* (the flame), which becomes smaller and smaller, until it is so subtle that it disappears, becoming imperceptible.

Here, concentrate single-pointedly on shunyata.

Out of the [non-dual] void, like a fish springing out of the water, I manifest as the divine mother. My brow is marked with an OM, my throat with an AH, and my heart with a HUM.

Verses of Auspiciousness

Translation by Ven. Thubten Tsultrim (George Churinoff)

While uttering these verses, fill all directions with individual flowers.

May the three realms be pervaded by an ocean of virtuous omens of the reciting of auspicious verses and the raining of flowers by an assembly of the noble goddess completely filling the vast immortal path and the extent of prosperity.

May there be the auspiciousness of the perfect virtue and goodness of the quick protectress who gives birth to the conquerors of the three times and of the root and lineage gurus—Chökyi Wangchug, Tänpäi Ngödrub, and the others[1] – the meditational deities and the buddhas.

May there be the auspiciousness of the perfect virtue and goodness of the holy Dharma of scripture and realization such as the practice of the four tantra sets—the essence of the eighty-thousand aggregates of Dharma—especially the definitive final secret, the two stages of the noble lady.

May there be the auspiciousness of the perfect virtue and goodness of the innumerable lords of the heroes and heroines residing in wonderful places, of the holy dharma of this tradition, and of the spiritual community, from those who uphold a mere portion of it on upwards.

In short, due to the great lady, the treasury of compassion of all the conquerors, may there be the auspiciousness of the perfect virtue and goodness of actually seeing her face as did the Gargyi Wangpo[2] and of being happily cared for with the nectar of her speech.

Short Long Life Prayers

For His Holiness the Dalai Lama

In the land encircled by snow mountains
You are the source of all happiness and good;
All-powerful Chenrezig, Tenzin Gyatso,
Please remain until samsara ends.

For Lama Zopa Rinpoche

You who uphold the Subduer's moral way;
Who serve as the bountiful bearer of-all,
Sustaining, preserving, and spreading Manjunath's victorious doctrine;
Who masterfully accomplish magnificent prayers honoring the Three Jewels,
Savior of myself and others, your disciples: please, please live long!

During the break time, meditate on recognizing yourself as the deity.

Also in between sessions practice the yoga of the three recognitions: [see all sentient beings as a manifestation of Tara, see all the environment as the pure land of Tara, and hear all sounds as her mantra]. While sleeping and waking, washing and eating, dressing and other activities, act as explained in the commentary.

Notes

1. The two names refer to the first two of the lineage gurus.
2. Gargyi Wangpo is the name of the source of this close lineage of Tara Chittamani, Tagphu Dorje Chang, who had a direct vision of Arya Tara.

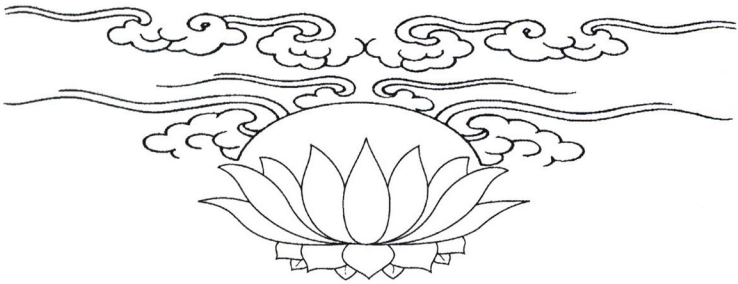
At the End of Retreat: The Yeshe Pä-nga Mantra

If you have completed the recitation of 600,000 Tara mantras, you recite 60,000 Yeshe Pä-nga mantras.

OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SVAHA HUM AH ANTSÄ

While reciting this mantra, do as follows:
First, do the sadhana of Chittamani Tara up to the mantra recitation. Recite some OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SVAHA mantras. Then continue with reciting the Yeshe Pä-nga mantra and visualize as follows:

From the seed syllable TAM and the mantra garland at your heart, much radiating light goes out and hooks back into your heart whatever you need. For example, if you want a son or a daughter, a husband or a wife, you radiate light and this light hooks and brings you a son, a daughter, a husband, or a wife. As well, all universal supreme beings, all the buddhas, bodhisattvas, dakinis, and so on have to sink into you. With them, all their divine realizations and siddhis sink into you, like a fall of rain, as you recite this mantra.



Colophon from the original publication of the Lama Yeshe translation:

This edition was translated by Lama Thubten Yeshe. It was dictated to and roughly edited by Sylvia Wetzel and is likely to contain some mistakes.
Instructions and clarifying phrases in the text that were added by Lama Yeshe and/or the editor are enclosed in brackets.
First published January 1979 for the retreat at Kopan.
Second edition published August 1979 for the retreats at Manjushri Institute and Tara Institute.
This edition has been edited and formatted by Ven. Constance Miller, January–March 2004. Translations of prayers that were missing from the original publication have been added from other sources (see individual colophons below). All errors are the responsibility of this editor.

The prayers of taking refuge, the special generation of bodhichitta, and the extensive prayer of the four immeasurables were drawn from the February 1984 sadhana translation of Martin Willson. These are marked by double asterisks (**) located next to the title of each prayer.

Praises and Requests to the Assembly of Deities of the Venerable Mother of the Twenty-one Homages

Translator's colophon:

Translated from the Tibetan by Martin Willson at Nalanda Monastery in France, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month of the Iron Bird year (14 September 1981), and subsequently revised with advice from Venerable Geshe Rabten. May it be auspicious!
Reprinted by permission from *In Praise of Tara* by Martin Willson, published by Wisdom Publications, Boston, Massachusetts.

The Garland of Jewels: A Song of Longing for Venerable Arya Tara

Translator's colophon:

Translated from the Tibetan by Martin Willson.
Reprinted by permission from *In Praise of Tara* by Martin Willson, published by Wisdom Publications, Boston, Massachusetts.

Verses of Auspiciousness

Translator's colophon:

Extracted from the translation of the Tara Chittamani Self-Initiation by Gelong Thubten Tsültrim (George Churinoff) from the text included in the Collections of Activities (Tib: *Läs.tsogs*) of Tara Çhittamani, pp. 305–10, which gives no indication of the author of the ritual. Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa, 23 December 1993.

Commentary

from Lama Zopa Rinpoche

Seven-Limbed Prayer

The limb of requesting to turn the wheel of Dharma is a special remedy to ignorance and criticism towards the teachings of Mahayana sutra and tantra, as well as the four traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. For instance, some Hinayana followers claimed that Mahayana teachings were not taught by Buddha. Likewise, some Chinese masters, without thorough studies, concluded that tantra was not Buddha's teachings and was merely fabricated by Tibetan lamas. Other negativities include selling Dharma materials for business purpose without the thought of benefiting sentient beings, and disrespecting Dharma like burning holy scriptures. The result of offering this limb is to achieve Buddha's holy speech, the Brahma voice having 60 qualities, to expound the 84,000 teachings. You will also be guided by Buddha and the deity in all your lives, meet the Dharma again in future lives, and teach the Dharma to others.

The limb of requesting the guru to have a stable life and not to pass away into the sorrowless state is a special remedy to criticizing spiritual masters with whom you have Dharma connections. Disturbing the holy mind and displeasing your guru are the greatest obstacles to realization as every realization originates from pleasing your virtuous friend. The more your virtuous friend is pleased with you, the more your heaviest karma is purified and extensive merit is accumulated, which is the quickest way to achieve enlightenment. Offering long life pujas and doing the seven-limb practice in your daily sadhana practice help to achieve the holy vajra body of the deity.

Dedication is to purify heresy to the Triple Gem and to Buddha's teachings on cause and effect, as well as toward your virtuous friend. The result of this practice is to achieve all the qualities of Buddha.

The seven-limb prayer has three sections: accumulating merit, purifying negativities, and increasing our merit. The limbs of rejoicing and dedication have the power to increase the merit that we have created.

Mandala Offering

Offering the mandala is one of the means to collect infinite merit and good luck like limitless sky. Lama Tsongkhapa offered hundreds of thousands of mandalas on a stone plate at the hermitage called Wosel Cholung. With this practice, he completed the whole path and achieved enlightenment. Likewise Gelongma Palmo realized bodhichitta and achieved the Buddha of Compassion by offering mandalas. By offering all those jeweled mountains, golden mountains, all the precious materials and the entire universe by your visualization, the amount of merit that you create has not the slightest difference from offering the actual materials. And just by offering the golden base, every atom of it allows you to take rebirth as a wheel-turning king many many times. For instance, King Ashoka, with his wealth and power, was able to erect ten million stupas in one day, building many monasteries and offering services to the Sangha community, Buddhas and sentient beings. This was because in his previous lifetime when he was a child he met Buddha asking for alms. He offered a handful of sand to Buddha's begging bowl and imagined that it was gold. By this merit this child became King Ashoka. The other two children playing with him also followed suit. As Buddha's body was very tall, they climbed onto the shoulders of each other and made offerings, who were both born as ministers at King Ashoka's time. But King Ashoka's merit didn't finish in just his lifetime. As karma is expandable, he was able experience the result of his virtuous deed for many, many rebirths, eventually achieving liberation and enlightenment.

Reciting the short mandala offering verse (*sa zhi po kyi...*) is a request for the realizations of the path. You can also change the wording for the specific realization you want to achieve, while at your heart you can make particular wishes or prayers for anyone, requesting the Triple Gem to grant success.

Praise to the Twenty-one Taras and Their Individual Mantras

This praise is extremely common and renowned amongst the four Mahayana traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. Not only the great meditators, yogis, and pandits, but the common people who rely on Tara experience quick success and achieve the happiness they desire. The embodiment of Buddha's actions, Tara benefits sentient beings by granting temporary and ultimate happiness, including the peerless happiness of enlightenment. By reaching the perfect state of enlightenment, you can thus liberate sentient beings by ceasing their sufferings and the causes of sufferings, bringing them to the state of omniscience.

Doing meditation on Tara and reciting her praise also makes it easier to achieve the Buddha of Compassion. As mentioned by one of my gurus, the color green of Tara's holy body signifies the purified state of the wind element of Amoghasiddhi, the Buddha of Accomplishment among the five Dhyani Buddhas. This is the reason for Tara's quick action to grant success. Lama Atisha's success to bring extensive benefits to Buddha's teachings and sentient beings also came from Tara. So it is important to have full trust when reciting the praise. Not to mention ordinary success, like achieving a deva or human body in future lives or taking rebirth in a pure land, the best success of realizing guru devotion and the foundation of tantra – renunciation, bodhichitta and emptiness – as well as the two stages of the highest yoga tantra can also be achieved by praying to Tara.

If you have the great initiation, or the highest yoga tantra initiation, of Chittamani Tara, you can generate yourself as Tara. Otherwise, you visualize Tara in front of you in a beautiful park like Tara's or Amitabha's pure land. On the water pond there appears a lotus with twenty-one petals. The principal Tara sits in the middle of the lotus, surrounded by the twenty-one Taras in a clockwise direction, starting with the first Tara, the Quick Heroine. With each verse you imagine nectar beams showering forth and purifying yourself, any family members or friends who are caught up with sicknesses, court cases or any troubles. Then visualize a replica of that Tara absorbing into you when

you recite "chhag tshäl lo" ("homage") at the end of each verse, generating strong faith that you have acquired all the qualities of that particular Tara, endowing you with the power to eliminate obstacles, and granting you all the successes of this life up to achieving enlightenment to benefit sentient beings and Buddha's teachings. This point is extremely crucial in this practice.

Whatever problems you have, stop at the Tara whose function is to pacify that problem and recite her mantra. This is how you can use different mantras to benefit yourself and other beings. If you check you will see there's nothing that cannot be pacified with this praise.

People generally offer the four mandala offerings puja to Tara for success to have children or eliminate major obstacles like business failure. They will sponsor the monastery to recite 100,000 Praises to the Twenty-one Taras. Apart from collecting merits by reciting the Tara prayer, the sponsors also accumulate virtue by offering to the Sangha community, be it food, tea, or money offerings, as mentioned by the Buddha in the sutra teachings. There was once a poor couple who had nothing to offer but medicinal drinks. They offered the drinks to four monks living in full ordination. By the merit they accumulated, they took rebirth as kings in India with much wealth, power, and enjoyments.

Even by making an offering to one monk living in full ordination, you can create lots of virtues, not to mention offering to the whole monastery where there are hundreds of thousands of monks. You can then collect great merits by making tea offerings and the like to gain success in business.

If important matters occur the next day, like court cases, it will be beneficial if you invite Sangha to perform a puja at your home. But if no Sangha are available in your country, you can imagine putting your head at the extended foot of Tara, holding her foot with both hands. Then from the bottom of your heart recite the prayer and make requests accordingly.

Praises to the Twenty-one Taras and the Benefits of Recitation

1. Quick Heroine is red. Her right hand, in the mudra of granting sublime realizations, holds a red vase that bestows the power of controlling.
   OM TARE TUTTARE TURE VASHAM KURU SVAHA

2. Great Peaceful One is white and holds a white vase that pacifies the negative karma and delusions that cause disease, spirit harm, and so on.
   OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SHINGTIM KURU SVAHA

3. Increasing One is golden yellow and holds a vase bestowing the power of increase of life, merit, wealth, and fame.
   OM TARE TUTTARE TURE PUSHTIM KURU SVAHA

4. Tara for Long Life is yellow and holds a vase that grants long life.
   OM TARE TUTTARE TURE AYU JNANA SHRIYE BHRUM SVAHA

5. Tara Making the Sound of HUM is orange. She holds a vase bestowing you the power of attraction, the main purpose of which is to bring Dharma to the person whom you want to subdue and lead that person to liberation and enlightenment.
   OM TARE TUTTARE TURE (your name or the person's name) AKAR CHAYA HRIH SVAHA

6. Victorious Over the Three Worlds is dark red, holding a vase that carries the power to intoxicate and craze the yakshas and spirits.
   OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SARVA TUTTI CHURU SVAHA

7. Destroying Others' Black Magic is black with a slightly wrathful demeanor and holds a vase that bestows the power to destroy black magic.
   OM TARE TUTTARE TURE BEDYE BUDDHO VARANAYA ZHU SVAHA

8. Destroyer of the Enemy, Mara, is dark red. She holds a vase that grants the power of this action.
   OM TARE TUTTARE TURE AMAGASHATRUM MARAYA HUM PHAT SVAHA

9. Signifying the Three Rare Sublime Ones is white, holding a vase that carries the power to protect others from fears and dangers.
   OM TARE TUTTARE TURE NUPA SARVA RAKSHA SVAHA

10. Destroyer of the Maras and Controlling the World is red, holding a vase that grants the power to destroy the maras that control the world.
    OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SARVA MARA PRAMA TAYA HUM PHAT SVAHA

11. Eliminating Poverty is orange, holding a vase that has the power to eliminate poverty.
    OM TARE TUTTARE TURE VASU DARE SVAHA

12. Making Everything Auspicious is orange, holding a vase that bestows auspiciousness.
    OM TARE TUTTARE TURE MANGALAM PUSHTIM KURU SVAHA

13. The Flaming Blazing One is red, holding a vase that carries the power to destroy and pierce your enemy. The main purpose of this is for you to be able to actualize the path to enlightenment for all beings and spread Buddha's teachings and to prevent your enemy from creating more negativities, bring Dharma to him, and eventually lead him to liberation and enlightenment.
    OM TARE TUTTARE TURE PUTAYA BASMI KURU SVAHA

14. Wrathful Wrinkled One is black with a slightly wrathful demeanor, holding a vase that grants the power to suppress the interferers that create obstacles.
    OM TARE TUTTARE TURE VAJRA MAHA PUTAYA BASMI KURU SVAHA

15. Great Pacifying One is white, holding a vase that grants the power to pacify.
    OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SARVA PAPAM PUTA MANAYE SVAHA

16. Liberating from Wisdom HUM is red, holding a vase that has the power to increase the power of mantra.
    OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SARVA DHARMA PRATI SHUDDHA YA SVAHA

17. Shaking the Three Worlds is orange, holding a vase that carries the power to control and destroy the power of black mantra.
    OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SARVA TAM BANE DELE SVAHA

18. Eliminating Poison is white, holding a vase that grants the power to eliminate poison.
    OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SARVA NAGA BIKSHA SHANTING KURU SVAHA

19. Eliminating Quarrels and Bad Dreams is white, holding a vase that bestows the power to eliminate quarrels, like court cases, as well as nightmares.
    OM TARE TUTTARE TURE MUCHA NAYA SVAHA

20. Eliminating Epidemic Diseases is orange, holding a vase that has the power to destroy all contagious diseases.
    OM TARE TUTTARE TURE VISARE SVAHA

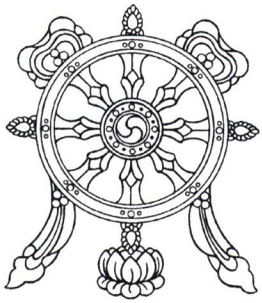
21. For All the Actions is white, holding a vase that bestows the power to complete all activities successfully.
    OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SARVA SIDDHI SVAHA

Dedication

Dedicating for the spread of the teachings and the long lives of our teachers helps to spread the teachings of the Buddha and enhance our scriptural understandings and the realizations of ourselves and other sentient beings. The success of this depends on the long life of all the holy beings, including our own virtuous friends, otherwise it would be impossible for us and other sentient beings to develop any realization.

> Due to all the merits of the three times collected by me, the buddhas and bodhisattvas, and all other sentient beings, who are totally empty from their own side, may the I, who is totally empty from its own side, achieve Tara's enlightenment, which is also totally empty from its own side, and lead all sentient beings, who are totally empty from their own side, to that enlightenment, which is totally empty from its own side, by myself alone, who is totally empty from its own side.

Dedicating in this way makes the merit inexhaustible. Even after enlightenment, we can still continuously benefit sentient beings with our merit. It is extremely important to make such a dedication as this can prevent our merit from finishing after experiencing the result.



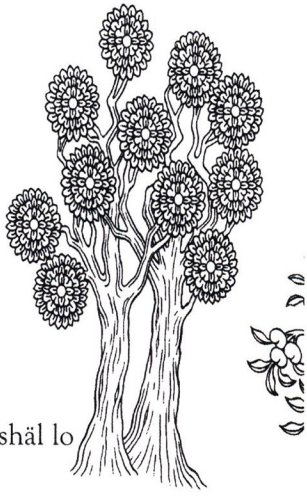
Praises to the Twenty-one Taras

Invocation

Po ta la yi nä chhog nä
TAM yig jang khu lä thrung shing
Ö pag me kyi u la gyän
Dü sum sang gyä thrin lä ma
Dröl ma khor chä sheg su söl

Prostration

Lha dang lha min chö pän gyi
Zhab kyi pä mo la tü de
Phong pa kün lä dröl dzä ma
Dröl ma yum la chhag tshäl lo



The Praises

OM je tsün ma phag ma dröl ma la chhag tshäl lo

Chhag tshäl dröl ma nyur ma pa mo
Chän ni kä chig log dang dra ma
Jig ten sum gön chhu kye zhäl gyi
Ge sar je wa lä ni jung ma

Chhag tshäl tön käi da wa kün tu
Gang wa gya ni tseg päi zhäl ma
Kar ma tong thrag tshog pa nam kyi
Rab tu chhe wäi ö rab bar ma

Praises to the Twenty-one Taras

(Chantable English version)

Recite these praises and offer prostrations (optional). As you recite, contemplate as follows: with each praise and prostration, just as one spark of fire comes from another, a replica of (the respective) Tara manifests and sinks into you.

Invocation

From your sublime abode at the Potala,
O Tara, born from the green letter TAM
Your crown adorned with Amitabha,
Action-mother of the buddhas of the three times,
Tara, please come with your attendants.

Prostration

The gods and demi-gods bow
To your lotus feet, O Tara;
You who rescue all who are destitute,
To you, Mother Tara, I pay homage.

The Praises

OM I prostrate to the noble transcendent liberator.

Homage! Tara, swift, heroic!
Eyes like lightning instantaneous!
Sprung from op'ning stamens of the
Lord of three world's tear-born lotus!

Homage! She whose face combines a
Hundred autumn moons at fullest!
Blazing with light rays resplendent
As a thousand star collection!

Chhag tshäl ser ngo chhu nä kye kyi
Pä mä chhag ni nam par gyän ma
Jin pa tsön drü ka thub zhi wa
Zö pa sam tän chö yül nyi ma

Chhag tshäl de zhin sheg päi tsug tor
Tha yä nam par gyäl war chö ma
Ma lü pha röl chhin pa thob päi
Gyäl wäi sä kyi shin tu ten ma

Chhag tshäl TUTTARA HUM yi ge
Dö dang chhog dang nam kha gang ma
Jig ten dün po zhab kyi nän te
Lü pa me par gug par nü ma

Chhag tshäl gya jin me lha tshang pa
Lung lha na tshog wang chhug chhö ma
Jung po ro lang dri za nam dang
Nö jin tshog kyi dün nä tö ma

Chhag tshäl TRAD che ja dang PHAT kyi
Pha röl thrül khor rab tu jom ma
Yä kum yön kyang zhab kyi nän te
Me bar thrug pa shin tu bar ma

Chhag tshäl TURE jig pa chhen po
Dü kyi pa wo nam par jom ma
Chhu kye zhäl ni thro nyer dän dzä
Dra wo tham chä ma lü sö ma

Chhag tshäl kön chhog sum tshön chhag gyäi
Sor mö thug kar nam par gyän ma
Ma lü chhog kyi khor lö gyän päi
Rang gi ö kyi tshog nam thrug ma

Chhag tshäl rab tu ga wa ji päi
U gyän ö kyi threng wa pel ma
Zhe pa rab zhä TUTTARA yi
Dü dang jig ten wang du dzä ma

Homage! Golden-blue one, lotus
Water born, in hand adorned!
Giving, effort, calm, austerities,
Patience, meditation her sphere!

Homage! Crown of tathagatas,
Actions triumph without limit!
Relied on by conquerors' children,
Having reached ev'ry perfection!

Homage! Filling with TUTTARE,
HUM, desire, direction, and space!
Trampling with her feet the seven worlds,
Able to draw forth all beings!

Homage! Worshipped by the all-lords,
Shakra, Agni, Brahma, Marut!
Honored by the hosts of spirits,
Corpse-raisers, gandharvas, yakshas!

Homage! With Her TRAD and PHAT sounds
Destroying foes' magic diagrams!
Her feet pressing, left out, right in,
Blazing in a raging fire-blaze!

Homage! TURE, very dreadful!
Destroyer of Mara's champion(s)!
She with frowning lotus visage
Who is slayer of all enemies!

Homage! At the heart her fingers,
Adorn her with Three Jewel mudra!
Light-ray masses all excited!
All directions' wheels adorn her!

Homage! She so joyous, radiant,
Crown emitting garlands of light!
Mirthful, laughing with TUTTARE,
Subjugating maras, devas!

Chhag tshäl sa zhi kyong wäi tshog nam
Tham chä gug par nü ma nyi ma
Thro nyer yo wäi yi ge HUM gi
Phong pa tham chä nam par dröl ma

Chhag tshäl da wäi dum bü u gyän
Gyän pa tham chä shin tu bar ma
Räl päi khur na ö pag me lä
Tag par shin tu ö rab dzä ma

Chhag tshäl käl päi tha mäi me tar
Bar wäi threng wäi ü na nä ma
Yä kyang yön kum kün nä kor gäi
Dra yi pung ni nam par jom ma

Chhag tshäl sa zhii ngö la chhag gi
Thil gyi nün ching zhab kyi dung ma
Thro nyer chän dzä yi ge HUM gi
Rim pa dün po nam ni gem ma

Chhag tshäl de ma ge ma zhi ma
Nya ngän dä zhi chö yül nyi ma
SVAHA OM dang yang dag dän pä
Dig pa chhen po jom pa nyi ma

Chhag tshäl kün nä kor rab ga wäi
Dra yi lü ni nam par gem ma
Yi ge chu päi ngag ni kö päi
Rig pa HUM lä dröl ma nyi ma

Chhag tshäl TURE zhab ni deb pä
HUM gi nam päi sa bön nyi ma
Ri rab Mandhara dang big je
Jig ten sum nam yo wa nyi ma

Chhag tshäl lha yi tsho yi nam päi
Ri dag tag chän chhag na nam ma
TARA nyi jö PHAT kyi yi ge
Dug nam ma lü pa ni sel ma

Homage! She able to summon
All earth-guardians' assembly!
Shaking, frowning, with her HUM sign
Saving from every misfortune!

Homage! Crown adorned with crescent
Moon, all ornaments most shining!
Amitabha in her hair-knot
Sending out much light eternal!

Homage! She 'mid wreath ablaze like
Eon-ending fire abiding!
Right stretched, left bent, joy surrounds you
Troops of enemies destroying!

Homage! She who strikes the ground with
Her palm, and with her foot beats it!
Scowling, with the letter HUM the
Seven levels she does conquer!

Homage! Happy, virtuous, peaceful!
She whose field is peace, nirvana!
She endowed with OM and SVAHA,
Destroyer of the great evil!

Homage! She with joy surrounded
Tearing foes' bodies asunder,
Frees with HUM and knowledge mantra,
Arrangement of the ten letters!

Homage! TURE! With seed letter
Of the shape of syllable HUM!
By foot stamping shakes the three worlds,
Meru, Mandara, and Vindhya!

Homage! Holding in her hand the
Deer-marked moon of deva-lake form!
With twicespoken TARA and PHAT,
Totally dispelling poison!

Chhag tshäl lha yi tshog nam gyäl po
Lha dang mi am chi yi ten ma
Kün nä go chha ga wäi ji gyi
Tsö dang mi lam ngän pa sel ma

Chhag tshäl nyi ma da wa gyä päi
Chän nyi po la ö rab säl ma
HARA nyi jö TUTTARA yi
Shin tu drag pöi rim nä sel ma

Chhag tshäl de nyi sum nam kö pä
Zhi wäi thü dang yang dag dän ma
Dön dang ro lang nö jin tshog nam
Jom pa TURE rab chhog nyi ma

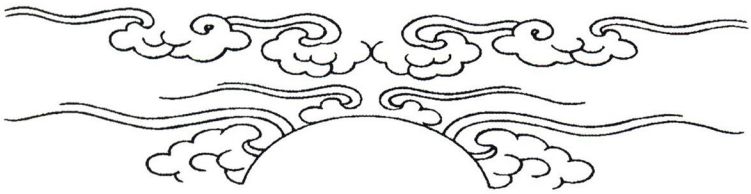
Tsa wäi ngag kyi tö pa di dang
Chhag tshäl wa ni nyi shu tsa chig

Homage! She whom gods and their kings,
And the kinnaras do honour!
Armoured in all joyful splendor,
She dispels bad dreams and conflicts!

Homage! She whose two eyes bright with
Radiance of sun and full moon!
With twice HARA and TUTTARE
She dispels severe contagion!

Homage! Full of liberating
Pow'r by the set of three natures!
Destroys hosts of spirits, yakshas,
And raised corpses! Supreme! TURE!

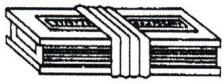
These praises with the root mantras
And prostrations thus are twenty-one!



Colophon

Based on Martin Willson's chantable translation of the *Praises to the Twenty-one Taras*, this version was additionally checked against the Tibetan and for euphony by the staff of the FPMT Education Department with the assistance of Ven. George Churinoff, January 2001.

Care of Dharma Books



Dharma books contain the teachings of the Buddha; they have the power to protect against lower rebirth and to point the way to liberation. Therefore, they should be treated with respect – kept off the floor and places where people sit or walk – and not stepped over. They should be covered or protected for transporting and kept in a high, clean place separate from more mundane materials. Other objects should not be placed on top of Dharma books and materials. Licking the fingers to turn pages is considered bad form as well as negative karma. If it is necessary to dispose of written Dharma materials, they should be burned rather than thrown in the trash. When burning Dharma texts, it is taught to first recite a prayer or mantra, such as OM, AH, HUM. Then, you can visualize the letters of the texts (to be burned) absorbing into the AH and the AH absorbing into you, transmitting their wisdom to your mindstream. After that, as you continue to recite OM, AH, HUM, you can burn the texts.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche has recommended that photos or images of holy beings, deities, or other holy objects not be burned. Instead, they should be placed with respect in a stupa, tree, or other high, clean place. It has been suggested to put them into a small structure like a bird house and then seal the house. In this way, the holy images do not end up on the ground.

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FPMT, Inc.
P. O. Box 888, Taos, New Mexico 87571 USA
Tel: (505) 758-7766 Fax: (505) 758-7765 Email: info@fpmt.org
www.fpmt.org

FPMT Education Department

The aim of the Education Department at FPMT International Office is to serve the needs of Dharma centers and individuals in the area of Tibetan Buddhist educational and spiritual materials. This includes prayers and practice texts, retreat sadhanas and other practice materials, a variety of study texts and translations, deity images for meditation, and curricular materials for study programs in FPMT Dharma centers.

One of our principal objectives is to serve as a repository for a wide variety of practice texts primarily within the Gelug tradition, especially those authored or translated by Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Lama Thubten Yeshe. We work in close collaboration with the Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive, Boston, Massachusetts, which serves as a repository for the commentaries and transcripts of teachings by Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Lama Yeshe.

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