

བྱུག་ན་རྡོ་རྗེ་གསང་བ་བསྟན་པ།

# Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation

*Guhyavajrapāṇyabhideśa*

དཔལ་ཕྱག་ན་རྡོ་རྗེ་གསང་བ་བསྟན་པའི་རྒྱུད།

dpal phyag na rdo rje gsang ba bstan pa'i rgyud

The Tantra of Glorious Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation

*Śrīguhyavajrapāṇyabhidesatantranāma*

· Toh 463 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 83 (rgyud 'bum, ja), folios 68.a–69.a

For referencing Tibetan sources, please see our [Scholar's Edition](#)



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## Summary

- s.1 *The Tantra of Glorious Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation* consists of seven short chapters of instructions that unfold as part of a dialogue between the Blessed One and the goddess Vīreśvarī. Prompted by Vīreśvarī's questions, the Blessed One provides a brief outline of various aspects of the practice of generating the deity Vajrapāṇi.

## Acknowledgments

- ac.1 This publication was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.
- ac.2 The text was translated, edited, and introduced by the 84000 translation team. Adam C. Krug produced the translation and wrote the introduction. Ryan Damron edited the translation and the introduction, and Dawn Collins copyedited the text. Martina Cotter was in charge of the digital publication process.

## Introduction

- i.1 *The Tantra of Glorious Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation*<sup>1</sup> contains a dialogue between the Blessed One and the goddess Vīreśvarī that takes place in Aḍakavatī palace which, in this tantra, is located in the highest heavenly realm of Akaniṣṭha.
- i.2 The tantra consists of seven chapters, each of which is framed as a brief response to the goddess Vīreśvarī's questions about practices for the deity Vajrapāṇi. The topics covered are the type of person who practices Vajrapāṇi, the locations where Vajrapāṇi can be practiced, instructions on the visualization, instructions on his retinue, a presentation of the deity's vidyā mantras, and the fire offering. The maṇḍala retinue of this form of Vajrapāṇi is described as having an inner circle of four deities, a middling circle of eight deities, and an outer circle of five-hundred deities, who are correlated to his mind, speech, and body, respectively.
- i.3 The colophon to *Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation* notes that the text was translated by the Indian paṇḍita Valacandra and the Tibetan translator Lanchung Darma Tsultrim, both of whom were active during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.<sup>2</sup> The text does not appear to have survived in Sanskrit, nor does it appear to have been translated into Chinese.<sup>3</sup>
- i.4 This translation was prepared based on the Tibetan translation of *Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation* in the Tantra Collection (*rgyud 'bum*) of the Degé Kangyur in consultation with the Comparative Edition of the Kangyur (*dpa bsdur ma*) and the Stok Palace Kangyur.

## **The Translation**

### **1. The Tantra of Glorious Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation**

#### **1.1 Homage to the glorious Lord of Guhyakas.<sup>4</sup>**

## Chapter 1: The Instruction on the Practitioner

- 1.2 Thus did I hear at one time. The glorious great Blessed One was dwelling in the Aḍakavatī palace in Akaniṣṭha surrounded by a host of vidyāmantra deities, when Vīreśvarī addressed him:
- 1.3 “Blessed One, what kind of yogin will accomplish the Lord of Guhyakas?”  
The Blessed One replied,
- 1.4 “One who is compassionate and has great wisdom,  
Who is patient and extremely diligent,  
Who has received the external, internal, and secret empowerments,  
And who is well-versed in the three trainings  
Will accomplish the Hero.”
- 1.5 This is the first chapter from *The Tantra of the Secret Revelation*, “The Instruction on the Practitioner.”<sup>5</sup>

## Chapter 2: The Instruction on the Place where it should be Practiced

1.6 Vīrā again asked:

“Blessed One, in what kind of location should the Hero be practiced?”

The Blessed One replied:

1.7 “In a remote, pleasant, and beautiful place,  
One that is auspicious, prosperous, and powerful,  
A frightening place like a great charnel ground;  
The peak of a group of three mountains or a massif of blue rock,  
Or a place that resembles his wrathful regalia—  
These are conducive for practicing the Hero.”<sup>6</sup>

1.8 This is the second chapter from *The Tantra of the Secret Revelation*, “The Instruction on the Place of Practice.”

## Chapter 3: The Instruction on the Generation Visualization

1.9 Vīrā again asked:

“Blessed One, what is the visualization for generating this Hero?”

The Blessed One replied:

1.10 “First, it is empty and devoid of self.

It shines forth and all phenomena of existence

Are naturally purified.

In such a true reality,

Buddhas and beings are not two.

1.11 “It appears and shines forth without meditation or conceptual thought.

It is free from extremes, equal to space, and the object of the middle-way.

Such is the inherent nature of the mind.

For beings who do not realize this,

One should cultivate an unbiased compassion,

That would see them free from all suffering.

1.12 “The primary cause for the arising of all buddhas

Is one’s own mind, the syllable *hūṃ*.

After the letter *hūṃ* radiates out and gathers in,<sup>7</sup>

One should generate the palace and deity’s seat

From the deity’s seed syllable

Following the proper sequence.”

1.13 This is the third chapter from *The Tantra of the Secret Revelation*, “The Instruction on the Generation Visualization.”

## Chapter 4: The Instruction on the Inconceivable Visualization

- 1.15 Virā again asked:  
“Blessed One, what is the inconceivable visualization of this Lord of Vidyāmantras?”  
The Blessed One replied:
- 1.16 “After completing the generation visualization,  
One should meditate on the gnosis being in their heart center.<sup>8</sup>  
In the heart center of the gnosis being  
Is a four-petaled lotus the size of a pea.
- 1.17 “In the middle of that is a sun and moon palace.  
Inside the palace, one should meditate on<sup>9</sup>  
The syllable *a*’s vertical stroke<sup>10</sup> as the tip of a lamp’s flame.  
After completing that visualization,  
One should not imagine anything at all.
- 1.18 “Because one has conceived the inconceivable,  
One will then attain gnosis.  
When it is clear, one will develop  
The nonconceptual vidyā body referred to as *gnosis*.
- 1.19 This is the fourth chapter from *The Tantra of the Secret Revelation*, “The Instruction on the Inconceivable Visualization.”

## Chapter 5: The Instruction on the Retinue

1.20 Virā again asked:

1.21 “Blessed One, what is the Lord of Guhyakas’ retinue?”

The Blessed One replied:

1.22 “The retinue of the Great Hero is defined as

The fourfold retinue of his mind,

The eightfold retinue of his speech,

And the five-hundredfold retinue of his body.”<sup>11</sup>

1.23 This is the fifth chapter from *The Tantra of the Secret Revelation*, “Instruction on the Retinue.”

## Chapter 6: The Presentation of Vidyās

1.24 Vīrā again asked:

“Blessed One, what are the Great Hero’s vidyās?”

The Blessed One replied:<sup>12</sup>

*om vajrapāṇi hūm hūm phaṭ phaṭ svāhā*

*om vajrakrodhanī lām varadhara vajrapāṇi hūm hūm phaṭ phaṭ svāhā*

*om vajrapāṇi krodhamahācaṇḍaroṣaṇa hūm hūm phaṭ phaṭ svāhā*

1.25 Then, he presented the vidyās of the fourfold retinue:

*om vajrakrodhamahākālāya hūm hūm phaṭ phaṭ cittakrocidunja<sup>13</sup>*

*om vajrakrodha trailokyavijaya hūm hūm phaṭ phaṭ | bam mārāya citta I implore you, I implore you<sup>14</sup>*

*om vajrakrodha nāgaspuśa hūm hūm phaṭ phaṭ | mārāya rakta suck suck! I implore you*

*om vajrakrodhakubaira hūm hūm phaṭ phaṭ mārāya ke choṁ choṁ I implore you*

1.26 The Blessed One then presented the vidyās for the eight classes of gods and demons in the Hero’s retinue:

*mahādeva mārāya kill kill!*

*mahānāga mārāya kill kill!*

*ja jaḥ mahādevi mārāya hana hana*

*mahāmani mārāya slice slice!*

*mahāsiddha mārāya tiṣṭha tiṣṭha*

*mahāyakṣa mārāya bhinda bhinda*

*mahātriṣa māraya burst burst!*

*mahāmanibindha māraya trample trample!*

*mahāvajra hūṃ phaṭ*

- 1.27 The Blessed One then presented the vidyā for the five-hundred fold blue-clad retinue:

*māraya rudha rudha hūṃ hūṃ phaṭ phaṭ*

- 1.28 This is the sixth chapter from *The Tantra of the Secret Revelation*, “The Presentation of Vidyās.”

## Chapter 7: The Fire Offering

1.29 Virā again asked:

“Blessed One, should one conclude the performance of this Hero’s rites with a fire offering or not?”<sup>15</sup>

The Blessed One replied:

1.30 “There are three types of fire offering.

The three are external, internal, and secret.

Each one is said to have four types.

These fire offerings are described as pacifying,

Increasing, enthralling, and hostile.”

1.31 This is the seventh chapter from *The Tantra of the Secret Revelation*, “The Fire Offering.”

1.32 The great glorious Blessed One finished speaking, and Vīreśvarī and the host of vidyā deities rejoiced and praised what the great glorious one had said.

1.33 This concludes *The Tantra of Glorious Fierce Vajrapāṇi’s Secret Revelation*.

## Colophon

- c.1 This was translated, edited, and finalized by the Indian paṇḍita Valacandra and the translator Lenchung Darma Tsultrim.<sup>16</sup>

## Abbreviations

D *sde dge bka' 'gyur* Degé

K *kang shi* Kangxi

S *stog pho 'brang* Stok Palace

Y *g.yong lo* Yongle

## Notes

1. The Sanskrit title given in the Degé version of the Tibetan translation presents some interpretive problems and is either corrupted or represents an attempted back translation of the Tibetan title. Compare this title to that of the next text in the Degé Kangyur, the *Vajrapāṇiguhyābhideśatantrarāja* (*phyag na rdo rje gsang ba mngon par bstan pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po*). *Vajrapāṇiguhyābhideśatantra* would be a more plausible rendering of the text translated here as well.
2. Valacandra (*wa la tsan+d+ra*) or Varacandra (*zla ba bzang po*) also collaborated with Darma Tsultrim on the similarly titled *Vajrapāṇiguhyābhideśatantrarāja* (*phyag na rdo rje gsang ba mngon par bstan pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po*), a longer work that shares some content with the text translated here. A number of translations by the same duo are found in the Tengyur, including the translations of two works by Karmavajra—the *Mahāyakṣasenāpatinīlāmbadaravajrapāṇigarudasādhana* and *Vajracandamaṇḍalavidhi*—and two works by the female master Siddharājñī—the *Aparamitāyushomavidhi* and the *Hayagrīvasādhana*. Tibetan historical sources link Darma Tsultrim to Milarepa (mi la ras pa; 1040–1123) and both Valacandra and Darma Tsultrim to Milarepa's disciple Rechungpa (ras chung pa; 1082–1161). See Halkias 2016, pp. 227–29 and Martin 1981, pp. 53–54.
3. According to Tarthang Tulku's catalogue of the Nyingma edition of the Degé Kangyur, the authenticity of this text was called into question by Bü Stön. See Tarthang Tulku, *The Nyingma Edition of the Sde-dge bKa'-gyur* vol. 2, p. 462.
4. S reads: "Homage to the glorious luminous Guhyaka!" (*dpal 'od gser gsang ba po la phyag 'tshal lo*).
5. Following D and S: *sgrub pa po gang zag*. Y: *bsgrub pa'i gang zag*; K: *bsgrub pa gang zag*.
6. The translation in S contains additional material: "In a remote, pleasant, and beautiful place, / One that is auspicious, prosperous, and powerful, / A frightening place like a great charnel ground, / The peak of a group of three mountains, the base of a tree, / A cave, abandoned shrine, a massif that appears blue, / Or a place that resembles his wrathful regalia— / These are conducive for practicing the Hero (*dben la nyams dga' yid 'ong ba / bkra shis dpal 'phel dbang yang 'dzin / dur khrod chen po 'jigs gnas pa / ri gsum rtse shing 'am shing drung ngam / phug gam lha khang stong pa dang / brag ri sngon po'i mdog 'dra ba / khro bo'i cha byad 'dra ba'i gnas / der ni dpa' bo sgrub par shis*).
7. This line seems to refer to rays of light that emanate out from and are gathered back into the seed syllable *hūṃ*, which is a common feature of this stage of deity visualization.
8. K and Y read, "at one's own heart center" (*rang gi snying khar*).
9. Following Y: *bsgom*. D reads: *sgom*.
10. This refers to vertical stroke in the Sanskrit syllable *a*. This syllable would be rendered differently depending on which Sanskrit script was used, but in Devanāgarī it would be ञ.
11. S reads "The fivefold retinue of his body" (*sku'i 'khor lnga ru nges so*).
12. The following mantras are rendered as they appear in the Degé version of the translation, with only minor emendations made for clarity of the Sanskrit terminology and syntax. Ambiguous and potentially corrupted terms that could not be readily resolved have been left as they appear in Tibetan

transliteration. Tibetan terms that have been incorporated into the Sanskrit formulas have been translated into English. There are substantive variants in other Tibetan sources, especially S, but they have not been noted here unless they influenced the given reading.

13. Following D: *tsit+ta kro tsi dun dza*. Y reads: *snying tsit+ta kro tsi dun dza*. S reads: *snying tsit+ta kro tsi dun dzra*. The transliteration appears to be corrupted here.
14. This translation of *rbad rbad* is tentative. Though it used here in a manner that suggests the imperative mode, this spelling of the verb *rbod* is typically reserved for the past, present, and future tenses.
15. S reads, “Blessed One, should we conclude the treatise on the activities with the fire offering, or not?” (*bcom ldan ’das ’phrin las kyi gzhung sbyin sreg gis bsdu ’tshal lam mi ’tshal cies gsol pa*).
16. The colophon in S does not mention Valacandra. It simply says, “It was translated by the lotsāwa Darma Tsultrim” (*lo tsa ba dar ma tshul khrims kyi bsgyur ba’o*).

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## Glossary

### **Aḍakavatī**

*lcang lo can*

ལང་ལོ་ཅན།

*aḍakavatī*

A city of yakṣas ruled by Kubera. It is typically located on Mount Sumeru, however, in this text it is said to be in Akaniṣṭha.

### **Akaniṣṭha**

*'og min*

འོག་མིན།

*akaniṣṭha*

The eighth and highest level of the Realm of Form (*rūpadhātu*), the last of the five pure abodes (*śuddhāvāsa*); it is only accessible as the result of specific states of *dhyāna*. According to some texts this is where non-returners (*anāgāmin*) dwell in their last lives. In other texts it is the realm of the enjoyment body (*saṃbhogakāya*) and is a buddhafield associated with the Buddha Vairocana; it is accessible only to bodhisattvas on the tenth level.

### **blue-clad**

*gos sngon can*

གོས་སྟོན་ཅན།

*nīlāmbaradhara*

Vajrapāṇi is frequently referred to as “the Blue-clad One,” a description that can also be applied to his maṇḍala deities and human followers.

### **gnosis being**

*ye shes sems dpa'*

ཡེ་ཤེས་སེམས་དཔའ།

*jñānasattva*

In this text, the deity that is visualized in the heart center. The term typically refers to the actual deity that merges with and thus empowers the samaya being (samayasattva), the form of the deity visualized by the practitioner.

### **Great Hero**

*dpa' bo chen po*

དཔའ་བོ་ཆེན་པོ།

An epithet for Vajrapāṇi in *The Glorious Tantra: Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation*.

### **Hero**

*dpa' bo*

དཔའ་བོ།

*vīra*

An epithet for Vajrapāṇi in *The Glorious Tantra: Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation*.

### **Lenchung Darma Tsultrim**

*glan chung dar ma tshul khirms*

གླན་ཆུང་དར་མ་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས།

The name of a Tibetan translator who translated *The Glorious Tantra: Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation*. He can be tentatively dated to the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries.

### **Lord of Guhyakas**

*gsang ba'i bdag po*

གསང་བའི་བདག་པོ།

*guhyakādhīpati*

An epithet for Vajrapāṇi.

### **Lord of Vidyāmantras**

*rig sngags kyi bdag po*

རིག་པ་ལྷ་མོ་གྱི་བདག་པོ།

An epithet for Vajrapāṇi in *The Glorious Tantra: Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation*.

### **The Tantra of the Secret Revelation**

*gsang ba bstan pa'i rgyud*

གསང་བ་བསྟན་པའི་རྒྱུད།

An alternate title that appears in the chapter colophons for *The Glorious Tantra of Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation*.

### **three trainings**

*bslab pa gsum*

བསྐྱེད་པ་གསུམ།

*śikṣātraya*

Training in ethics (śīla), meditative absorption (samādhi), and wisdom (prajñā).

### **Vajrapāṇi**

*phyag na rdo rje*

ཕྱག་ན་རྡོ་རྗེ།

*vajrapāṇi*

Vajrapāṇi means “Wielder of the Vajra.” In the Pali canon, he appears as a yakṣa guardian in the retinue of the Buddha. In the Mahāyāna scriptures he is a bodhisattva and one of the “eight close sons of the Buddha.” In the tantras, he is also regarded as an important Buddhist deity and instrumental in the transmission of tantric scriptures.

### **Valacandra**

*wa la tsan+d+ra*

ཨ་ལ་ཙ་ན།

*valacandra*

The name of an Indian paṇḍita who translated *The Glorious Tantra: Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation*. He can be tentatively dated to the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries.

**vidyā**

*rig pa*

རིག་པ།

*vidyā*

The name for a type of mantra or spell and the being or beings (usually female) associated with that spell.

**Vireśvarī**

*dpa' mo'i dbang phyug*

དཔའ་མོའི་དབང་ཕྱུག

*vīreśvarī, vīrā*

The name of the vidyā goddess who is the primary interlocutor in *The Glorious Tantra: Vajrapāṇi's Secret Revelation*.