Praises to the Twenty-one Taras
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Praises to the Twenty-one Taras

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 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 and 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,
And praised by the assembly of spirits, raised corpses,
Gandharvas, 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 outstretched 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.
Chhag tshäl sa zhi kyöng wäi tshog nam  
Tham chá gug par nû ma nìi ma  
Thro nuer yo wäi yi ge HUM gi  
Phong pa tham chá nam par dröl ma

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.

Chhag tshäl da wäi dum bû u gyân  
Gyân pa tham chá shîn tu bar ma  
Râl pâi khur na ô pag me là  
Tag pâr shîn tu ô râb dâa ma

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.

Chhag tshäl kâl pâi tha mäi me tar  
Bar wäi threu ngû u na nà ma  
Yâ kyang yôn kum kûn nà kör gâi  
Dra yi pung nî nam par jôm ma

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.

Chhag tshäl de ma ge ma zhi ma  
Nya ngân dâ zhi chô yûl nû my ma  
SVÄHA OM dang yang dag dâm pâ  
Dig pa chhen po jôm pa nî my ma

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.

Chhag tshäl kûn nà kor rab ga wäi  
Dra yi lu nî nam par gem ma  
Yi ge chu pâi ngag nî kô pâi  
Rig pa HUM lâ dröl ma nî my ma

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

Chhag tshäl TURE zhab ni deb pâ  
HUM gi nam pâi sa bûn nû my ma  
Rî rab Mandhâra dang big je  
Jig ten sum nam yo wa nî my ma

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.

Chhag tshäl lha yi tsho yi nam pâi  
Rî dag tag chân chhag na nâm ma  
TARA nî jô PHAT kyi yi ge  
Dug nam ma lû pa nî sel ma

Homage to you, Tara, stamping your feet and proclaiming TURE.  
Your seed-syllable itself in the aspect of HUM  
Causes Meru, Mandhâra, and the Vindhyâ 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 armor 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, raised 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.

Colophon
Praise to the Twenty-one Taras

(abbreviated version)

OM chom dän dä ma lha mo dröl ma la chhag tshäl lo
Chhag tshäl dröl ma TARE päl mo
TUTTARA yi jig kün sel ma
TURE dön nam tham chà ter ma
SVAHA yi ger chà la rab dü

This abbreviation in a single verse of the praises to the twenty-one Taras was received directly from Arşa Tara by the great teacher, Jowo Atisha, for the swift collection of meritorious energy.

OM I prostrate to the goddess foe destroyer, liberating lady Tara,
Homage to TARE, saviouress, heroine,
With TUTTARE dispelling all fears,
Granting all benefits with TURE,
To her with sound SVAHA, I bow.

Tara’s Mantra

OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SVAHA

.Drawing by Andy Weber
Praises to the Twenty-one Taras

(English version for chanting)

OM I prostrate to the noble transcendent liberator.
OM je tsün ma phag ma dröl ma la chhag tshäl lo

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

14. 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!
15. Homage! Happy, virtuous, peaceful!  
She whose field is peace, nirvana!  
She endowed with OM and SVAHA,  
Destroyer of the great evil!

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

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

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

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

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

21. 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 theTwenty-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.
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.